

Experiential Marketing in Retail during COVID-19

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Abstract

This research seeks to compare experiential marketing before and during COVID-19 and is among the first work to examine the evolution of experiential marketing during a pandemic. In the context of COVID-19, this research suggests retailers adapt traditional notions of experiential marketing designed to create fun and excitement in the service experience to activations designed to reduce feelings of risk and increase feelings of comfort in the service experience. The purpose of this research is to explore ways in which retailers can use experiential marketing to reduce consumer perceived risk and increase perceived comfort in order to encourage consumers to return to in person shopping. This research analyses how various aspects of experiential marketing can be used amidst COVID-19 and seeks to make three main contributions: (1) Examine the historical use of experiential marketing and concepts as a foundation for the current work; (2) Propose a conceptual model for how elements of experiential marketing can be used to encourage in-person shopping intention; and (3) Provide a research agenda for future studies in this area.

Key words: COVID-19; experiential marketing; perceived comfort; perceived risk; retailing.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Experiential marketing is increasingly popular with consumers in the retail industry due to technology and marketing increasing competition among retailers (Grundey, 2008). Although experiential marketing also regards consumers as rational decision makers, it aims to affect their senses, feelings and other experiential elements during the experience process, giving consumers a unique way to experience the products and brands (Grundey, 2008). Through experiential marketing, marketers are committed to creating an unforgettable experience for consumers (Grundey, 2008).

With the ongoing competition in the retail industry, experiential marketing has become a common strategy used by retailers to attract consumers. For example, retailers find that it is possible to integrate some theatre elements in terms of theatre context and brand culture into the store design and products' display (Baron et al., 2001). At the same time, this theatre creates an exciting environment that showcases the specific aspects of theatrical performance, that is participation and interaction with the audience (the consumer). For example, a theme store is opened at the entrance of a movie theatre. The background and products of the store are the same as the movies released at that time, and consumers can be invited to participate. Retail theatre, a form of experiential marketing, has been used as a way to achieve differentiation in a highly competitive market by attracting new consumer interest in stores and products and bringing novelty and innovation into the retail industry (Baron et al., 2001).

However, in 2020 the Coronavirus disease, a new type of highly contagious virus spread from Wuhan, China. Since the first discovery at the end of 2019, it has been referred to as COVID-19 (Harapan et al., 2020). After investigation, COVID-19 first spread from animals to human beings, but it spread rapidly from person to person. Infection is carried out by droplets produced by the infected person when coughing or sneezing (Harapan et al., 2020). The virus

lasts for approximately 96 hours on the surface of the object, and has an average incubation period of 14 days (Harapan et al., 2020). The pandemic has affected many aspects in the world, such as the economy, environment, health care and politics. In addition, it can be seen that the direct impact of COVID-19 on the retail industry is significant (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). The essential products' stores such as restaurants, groceries, and pharmacies are facing the challenges of shortages of stocks, interruption of supply and distribution chains, and maintenance of safe environment (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). However, clothing, footwear and other non-essential products are facing a sharp decline in sales, and even some shops are on the verge of bankruptcy in this context (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). For retailers, they should not only consider how to survive in a special market environment, but also predict the future after the pandemic, such as how to restore the previous sales and performance, or what innovation is required (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020).

At the same time, governments have announced travel bans and restrictions on freedom of movement to control the spread of the pandemic. These bans and restrictions have changed consumers' lifestyles and free choices of offline shopping (Akhtar et al., 2020). During the pandemic, consumers may feel uncomfortable or fearful when entering a store, so they will choose other ways to buy products, such as online shopping. Consumers have a variety of shopping channels to choose from, which may reduce their loyalty to in-store shopping, also potentially making them hesitant to shop in store even after the pandemic eases. Therefore, retailers need to transform or change stores' facilities and services to safely attract consumers.

The impact of COVID-19 is reflected in many aspects. Based on the characteristics of COVID-19, it is better to adopt no-touch interaction or communication to isolate viruses in retailing service. For example, using face masks and plastic barriers, and keeping social distance are the best ways to impede virus infection (Rosenbaum & Russell-Bennett, 2020). However, this untouched interaction deviates from the original intention of experiential marketing. It may lead to some negative impacts on retail service, such as decreasing consumers' satisfaction and reducing consumers repurchase.

For retailers, it is very important to know the consumers' reaction to stores amid the pandemic. Before the pandemic, many retailers focused consumers experience on creating excitement, entertainment, and participation through experiential activations. While during, and likely ensuing after the pandemic, consumers may instead evaluate their experience in the store according to the cleanliness of the store, no-touch interactions, and whether the environment is spacious enough to facilitate social distancing and ventilated for fresh air (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). For example, consumers may want one-use menus and tableware in restaurants, as well as more space with other consumers and even a barrier between the tables. Retailers should also consider frontline employees, whether retailers have created a safe working environment for employees, including requiring consumers and employees to wear masks, or using more robots to reduce close personal contact (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). For consumers, consideration should be given to whether retailers should attach a QR code in front of the store to track their information, or to conduct temperature measurement before entering the store (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). All of these will influence consumers' choices. It can be seen that it has become very important for retailers to use stores' facilities to attract consumers to return but through encouraging calm rather than excitement as has previously been the goal of experiential marketing. This research will depict the influence and change in retail theatre elements from COVID-19 in the chapters to come.

1.2 Importance and Research Question

Due to the particularity of COVID-19 (a new context since late 2019), few articles have studied the effects on the retail industry in this context and have considered specifically the perceived risks and perceived comfort of consumers in the shopping environment under the influence of COVID-19. Moreover, retailers will need to pay more attention to how to get consumers to return to the store under the special context of COVID-19. Therefore, the research question of this dissertation is as follows:

RQ: How can retailers utilize elements of experiential marketing to minimize perceived risk and increase perceived comfort in the shopping environment to encourage consumers to safely return stores during the COVID-19 pandemic?

1.3 Research Method and Contributions

This research adopts the method of traditional (or narrative) literature review and draws a conclusion by analysing and studying the existing research. This study focuses on the analysis of the reasons and influencing factors of consumers' perceived risk and perceived comfort, and using elements of experiential marketing to influence consumers' psychology. This research summarizes the relevant literature and puts forward a proposed conceptual framework, without involving empirical data. There are three relationships proposed as part of this conceptual model highlighting the connections between and importance of three main concepts: experiential marketing, consumer reactions including perceived risk and perceived comfort, and consumer outcomes including satisfaction and repurchase intention. Contributions, implications, and future research directions are also drawn from this research.

This study contributes to the retailing literature in three main ways. The first is an in-depth review of literature related to experiential marketing, characteristics, traditional uses and potential to adapt to a new context in order to lay a foundation for the current work. The second is to propose a conceptual framework and three propositions, explaining how experiential marketing may be used to (1) assist retailers to reduce consumers perceived risk of in-store shopping during and after the pandemic and (2) improve their perceived comfort, with the end result of (3) encouraging consumer's safe return to the store. The third is to provide a research agenda for future work in this field to stimulate further progress in this important area.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Context of COVID-19

2.1.1 Background of COVID-19

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was first discovered in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China in 2019, and spread rapidly to most cities around the world. This is known as a global pandemic. It has had a tremendous impact on the retail industry, especially the service industry that connects with consumers. The highest risk of spreading COVID-19 is close contact with others, such as sneezing, talking or breathing. Following will be high-contact surfaces, such as door handles, and people who carry the virus will spread it through public surfaces. If people touch these public surfaces, and then touch their eyes, mouth or ears without washing hands, they may become infected with virus (Standish, 2020). Some studies have shown that this virus can be transmitted on cardboard for 24 hours and on plastic or stainless steel for 72 hours (DiCaprio, 2020).

2.1.2 The Influence of COVID-19 in Retail

The impact of COVID-19 is reflected in many aspects, including consumers' shopping behaviour as well as retailing and retailers.

Consumers' shopping behaviour

The shopping behaviour of consumers has long held the attention of marketing scholars. Wong and Yeh (2009) pointed out that when unexpected situations affect consumers' attitudes or behaviours, they will hesitate to purchase. Fear (of COVID-19) is an emotional and physical reaction to danger, which is reflected in people's thoughts and behaviours and affecting others. Especially in 2020, the outbreak of COVID-19 has made online shopping the first and often only choice for consumers. Some groceries not only offer online shopping stores but also provide free delivery services. The outbreak of the pandemic resulted in widespread fear of

infection in particular of shared spaces including retail stores. In addition, some of them may choose to purchase a large number of products in the store at once to make sure that they do not need to enter the store frequently for a long time, which leads to the phenomenon of hoarding products (Carrick, 2020). As a result, this phenomenon not only caused the shortage of products in the store, but also panic buying. The pandemic aroused people's inner fear and triggered panic buying (Lara et al., 2012; Shultz et al., 2016). Faced with the uncertainty of pandemic, this is obviously regarded as a measure of self-protection, but this kind of behaviour will aggravate social anxiety and lead to a shortage of daily necessities (Carrick, 2020; Jaspal et al., 2020). This shows that the emergence of COVID-19 has had a very serious impact on consumers' shopping behaviour.

For retailing and retailers

Retailing, especially experiential marketing has been hit hard during the pandemic. In order to control the spread of the virus and comply with the social distance stipulated by the government, many shops have to limit the flow of people entering the store. Stores do not allow many consumers to enter the store, while controlling a fixed number of consumers to shop at the same time. Moreover, some stores have cancelled the trial of food (such as free desserts and coffee) and cosmetics (such as foundation and lipstick). These phenomena are caused by the pandemic, which brings inconvenience and fear to consumers. Retailers have to change their marketing strategies, because it has become impossible to interact closely with consumers. Retailers of essential products such as food, groceries, and healthcare have had to pivot to providing services to consumers at home, while retailers of non-essential products such as clothing and footwear are facing a sharp decline in sales with the forced closure of shops and restricted operating procedures, necessitating the adoption of new strategies to attract consumers (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020).

2.2 Review of Experiential Marketing

Individual experiences are deeply personal with important emotional meaning attached (Grundey, 2008). With the rapid development of the retail industry, experiential marketing has

been established as an instrument to create personal and emotional experiences in the retail environment. Professor Bernd Schmidt (1999) was the first to put forward the concept of experiential marketing and pointed out that the focus of experiential marketing is consumers (Chui, 2018; Liang et al., 2013). Experiential marketing can be defined as experiences that encourage consumers to interact with retailers through the stimulation of factors that are personally engaging to increase product positioning and satisfaction. The goal of experiential marketing is to fulfil consumers' demands while encouraging them to interact with brands or products through stimulating experiential factors (act, feel, relate, sense, think) (Chui, 2018; Liang et al., 2013; Same & Larimo, 2012; Schmitt, 1999).

Experiential marketing provides consumers with extraordinary experience and improves the value and positioning of products and brands (Chanavat & Bodet, 2014; Karadeniz et al., 2013; Liang et al., 2013; Osterlea et al., 2018; Same & Larimo, 2012), helping to improve consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Abadi et al., 2020). For example, one of the hallmarks of IKEA's success is to make the shopping experience more than just the purchasing of items. What consumers experience is not the furniture components piled up like a warehouse, but the "warm home" built in different areas depicting each part of the house that was important. At IKEA, each area has different styles of furniture arranged as a liveable environment, which consumers can not only see, but also use and experience as well as picture in their own homes. Table 1 summaries the related literature on experiential marketing (see appendices).

Another purpose of experiential marketing is to create a holistic experience for consumers to both service them by meeting their needs while also improving the positioning of the brand or the product in the future (Chanavat & Bodet, 2014; Wu & Tseng, 2015). For example, Origani, a high-end luxury skincare product, from Australia, is built on facilitating personal experiences for consumers in order to connect with the brand and products. Employees not only facilitate the sale of these different products, but also need to provide a holistic experience including offering facial treatments with Manuka honey peel, followed by personalized foundation trials. During the trial process, consumers develop a better

understanding of cosmetics, and the high-end make-up experience will help consumers perceive the luxury positioning of the cosmetics brand.

Storey (2017) pointed out the success of a company depends on the ability to establish and maintain relationships with consumers, creating unique innovative value, and establishing a link between perceived value and consumer's attitudes towards the services or products provided. Overall perceptions of value are made up of functional and emotional value. Functional value refers to the affective reaction of consumers in the shopping experience after purchase, such as, the taste of the food in restaurants or the cleanliness of the items provided by hotels; and emotional value refers to the financial, psychological and utilitarian returns obtained from services or products, for example, the attitude of restaurant service providers and respect for consumers (Yuan & Wu, 2008). There is a positive correlation between satisfaction and consumer perceived value. When the perceived value of consumers reaches the expected value, the consumer's satisfaction with the company or product will increase. On the contrary, if consumers' perceived value does not achieve the expected value, their satisfaction will decline (Anton et al., 2017). The extraordinary experiences created through experiential marketing assists retailers to comprehend consumers' demands and expectations, thus enhancing their overall perceptions of value, satisfaction and loyalty (Abadi et al., 2020; Chui, 2018; Karadeniz et al., 2013; Oktriana, 2019; Osterlea et al., 2018; Same & Larimo, 2012; Skandalis et al., 2019).

In his seminal work, Schmitt (1999) suggests that experiential marketing is based on five unique experience categories, namely "act", "feel", "relate", "sense" and "think". The "act" concentrates on the consumers' physical experience, and retailers can achieve this goal by providing a plentiful experience, such as through the interaction between retailers and consumers in activities (salon activities or trial experience), consumers can deepen their impression of products and brands. The "feel" category implies appealing to the consumer's inner emotions, which are focused on certain stimuli or are generated with stimuli. In a retail environment, the environmental odour and colour used in the setting will make consumers

change their shopping tendency. During the process of experiential marketing, consumers' positive emotions will be shown in their interest in products and brands. The "relate" category describes the perception index of influence on others besides personal emotions, such as the emotions of family, friends and collaborators. Consumers can accept suggestions from friends or family. If a person has a good experience with a product or brand, he or she will let other people know. The "sense" category is based on the essential human senses. It is a comprehensive experience of consumers' subjective and objective, such as sound, view and smell, which companies can attract consumers by altering aspects of the store environment atmosphere. Finally, the "think" category is related to consumers' cognitive, retailers can attempt to use advertising to attract target consumers, such as making videos to advertise products and brands. According to the characteristics of experiential marketing, it can be divided into two aspects. One is store atmospheric and the other is retail theatre. The atmospheric elements mainly embody the "sense" and "feel" of experiential factors, and the retail theatre not only expresses the "act" but also the "relate".

2.2.1 Store Atmospherics

As one of the aspects of experiential marketing, the store atmosphere fully reflects two of experiential factors- "sense" and "feel". Shop atmosphere can not only improve consumers' shopping experience, but also increase the shopping value (Rintamaki et al., 2006). The indoor environmental atmosphere may affect consumers' emotion and purchasing intentions. Retail atmospherics refers to managing physical and non-physical elements of the store to strengthen or restrain the behaviours of consumers and employees (Eroglu & Machleit, 1993). The use of music, sound, lighting, scent and other factors is considered to produce sensory perceptions that affect consumers' brand experience (Turley & Millikan, 2000; Turley & Chebat, 2002). The key point of store design is to create an environment that can trigger consumers' responses or emotions. In using elements of atmospherics, retailers add consumer experience to their product management, that is, stores not only sell products, but also appeal to and retain consumers by manipulating their senses. They use the internal store designs and atmospheric elements to convey information to consumers (Sachdeva & Goel, 2015). For example, Pandora's shop, with

its pink background, not only highlights silver jewellery, but also attracts female customers. In the context of COVID-19, the atmospheric elements most relevant to this research are scent, visuals and sound. These cues are anticipated to have the most potential effect on consumers' perceptions of risk and comfort in the retail setting during COVID-19. Table 2 collects the related literature on store atmospheric (see appendices). The specific senses relevant to this research will now be reviewed.

Scent

There are two types of odour stimuli affecting consumers, one is the odour of specific products, and the other is from the environment (Farias et al., 2014). The smell of specific products mainly comes from their own attributes, such as food, cosmetics, or cleaning products. In most cases, these odours are an important part of guiding consumers to choose (Milotic, 2003). For example, consumers who like jasmine will be attracted by detergents with the same odour. The environmental odour may be from these specific products or from the ambient surroundings. For example, paint or furniture with artificial perfume added for decoration, or some spices or fragrant plants placed indoors (Farias et al., 2014). Morrin and Ratneshwar (2000) suggest that ambient odour can improve consumers' evaluation of unfamiliar or disliked products. If the odour is consistent with any product that the consumer is currently evaluating, the odour is effective and pleasant (Fiore et al., 2000). The pleasant ambient odour (under a limited condition) will positively moderate consumers' perception of the store and the product, and even change consumers' attitude towards the product and their willingness to pay a higher price (Fiore et al., 2000; Michon et al., 2005).

In the context of COVID-19, this research suggests the smell of cleaning products may make consumers feel more sensitive, not only because of their stimulation, but also may remind consumers that they are still in the pandemic context (even though stores have been disinfected). In an environment with stimulating odours, it is difficult for consumers to stay in the store, and they may buy what they need and leave as soon as possible. As one of the elements of experiential marketing, if the environmental odour is more comfortable, consumers may stay

longer. In the context of COVID-19, for example, covering the smell of cleaning products to make them contain disinfectant ingredients but have a nice fragrance (such as jasmine), so that consumers can feel comfortable in the retail environment.

Visuals

In addition to scent, in-store visuals, such as colour also affect the emotion of consumers, with retailers attempting to use colours to encourage consumers to purchase (Farias et al., 2014). Strong colours, such as red, are usually considered to be tense and negative, and attract the attention of consumers more directly. On the contrary, cool colours such as blue offer consumers a sense of calm (Bellizzi & Hite, 1992). Due to the different wavelengths of red and blue, the effects on consumers' physically and psychologically are also distinctive. Parsons and Conroy (2006) pointed out that red can strengthen purchasing behaviour, while blue is mainly used to produce positive influence, which may calm consumers down allowing consumers to think more rationally about their purchases. In the retail space, the red background wall or packaging attracts consumers' attention and increases their purchasing tendency.

In addition to the influence of indoor background colours on consumers, lighting also impacts consumers' emotions. For example, people under bright light usually have higher blood pressure, higher breathing and blinking frequencies than those under soft light (Cheng et al., 2009). Soft lights increase consumers' psychological and physical comfort and may promote them to have shopping behaviours. Some COVID-19-related signs usually use yellow, not using red to make people feel nervous, but yellow means warning or reminder. When consumers notice the COVID-19 signs, they will understand that this store pays more attention to the pandemic and has taken corresponding measures, so they feel relaxed and enter the store. However, it is an important aspect that retailers should consider how they can manipulate to encourage consumers to stay longer after entering. The use of warm or soft colour background walls and lights can make consumers feel the warmth of going home and make them more inclined to stay, this may be important to encourage shoppers to return in-store amid COVID-19.

Sound

The influence of background music on consumers' purchasing tendency is being paid more attention by retailers. Milliman (1982, 1986) proposed that music affects consumer behaviour, because it can change in different dimensions, including timbre, rhythm and tempo. Favourable music may affect consumers' perception of waiting time (Hui et al., 1997). For instance, fast-paced and high-volume music guide people to speed up their pace because people often automatically adjust the pace according to the rhythm of music, such as not staying in the store. While slow-paced and low-volume music encourage people to stay and even increase their willingness to buy impulsively, and finally increase sales (Baker et al., 2002; Berlyne, 1971; Matilla & Wirtz, 2001). However, fast-paced music brings happiness and pleasure to consumers compared with slow-paced music, because fast-paced music can arouse consumers' interest (Bruner, 1990; Sweeney & Wyber, 2002). Pleasure will strengthen consumers' impression of products or services, thereby increasing purchasing behaviour. Retailers should use this understanding of music in order to achieve their goals, such as attracting consumers into the store with upbeat music and encouraging them stay for a long time to ensure sales with slow-paced and low-volume music inside stores to prevent fast shopping.

Along with the influence of the first two elements (scent and visuals), background music can help attract consumers during the pandemic. In addition, stores can add some broadcast notices, including the cleaning times and cleanliness of the store, and remind consumers to keep their distance when shopping, so that they can trust indoor shopping.

2.2.2 Retail Theatre

As another sub-dimension of experiential marketing, retail theatre reflects "act" and "relate" experiential factors. Under the influence of many external factors, consumer experience remains the primary focus of retailers. The retail store has become a stage in which retailers sell products or services at high prices to attract consumers (Kent, 2003). Gallerie Lafayette in Paris better reflects this point. When people enter the store, they are greeted by a gorgeous and high-level shopping mall and are attracted by the fun in the market (Baron et al., 2001). The retail

experience as a theatrical experience has been studied as a theatre concept, making way for the notion of retail theatre. In recent years scholars have defined retail theatre, and modified their conceptualization to illustrate its specific characteristics. Retail theatre can be defined as retailers using a dramatic, artistic, and creative display to design the store, so that the shopping process becomes interesting (Kelly, 2017; Wickstrom, 1999). Baron et al. (2001) defined retail theatre as consumers' perception of merchandise to attract them to purchase. It is not only required to give commodities contextual meaning but encouraged consumers to participate in the scenes. Table 3 reviews related literature on retail theatre (see appendices).

Store Design (flagship stores)

Flagship stores illustrate the principles of the retail theatre to give consumers a higher entertainment and shopping experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). The flagship store takes advantage of the particularity (dramatic, artistic and creative) of the retail theatre to deepen the differentiation of the shopping experience provided to consumers. The most notable characteristic of a flagship store is the scale. Much larger than that of ordinary retail stores, it can provide consumers a luxury feeling, having enough space to display products and facilitating the flow of consumers and provision of engaging experiences (Moore et al., 2008). As the flagship store, ESPN Zone Chicago wholly embodies the advantages of retail theatre development (Kozinets et al., 2002). It is a flagship brand store in theme park design from Disney, covering an area of 35,000 square feet, containing a restaurant, a sports bar and a sports-themed video game console (Kozinets et al., 2002). Unlike other ordinary theme restaurants and sports bars, this is a complex that includes sports, dining and entertainment. A consumer described it not only as a sports bar, but also as an ideal place for a viewing and experiencing (Kozinets et al., 2002). Retailers associate the ESPN brand with a perfect visual experience, which will enhance the attractiveness of the brand (Kozinets et al., 2002). Through the use of luxurious decoration and exquisite packaging, the fascinating buildings evoke the unique experience and personalized emotion of consumers (Kozinets et al., 2002).

Many luxury accessory brands also use flagship stores to not only reveal the high-end essence of the brand, but also give consumers an unusual experience. Faultrier (de) and Towers (2011) conceptualized a fashion store as an image, in which consumers can use specific materials, lighting and accessories to customize the brand's product style and experience (similar to DIY). Consumers not only can experience high quality services in flagship store but also show their individuality. On the one hand, using flagship stores to build the close relationship with consumers and improve their loyalty; on the other hand, it can be used as a marketing instrument to create a positive brand experience for consumers, fashioning a place where brand identity can be spread and brand value can be transmitted (Dolbec & Chebat, 2013; McGrath et al., 2013). Retailers not only added materials different from ordinary shops in the decoration of the flagship shop, but also organized some salon activities for members and consumers to interact with them. For example, Gucci will regularly organize its members to participate in group activities, including consumers customizing the designs or colours of new product (handbags or clothing) in the next season. Through interaction, consumers can have a deeper understanding of products and brands, so as to increase sales in the future (Arrigo, 2018). The enhanced brand display in the flagship store will stimulate the exciting brand experience and turn it into a brand experience promoted by the flagship store (Nierobisch et al., 2017).

Theatrical Elements

In the development of the marketing paradigm, as a part of experiential marketing, retail theatre can be regarded as an interesting experience, involving various products from food to daily tools, and retailers prefer to convey product information to consumers through retail theatre (Baron et al., 2001). One well-known example of retail theatre is commodities sold in association with Disney scenes in the 1990s. All products are no longer simple sales, adding Disney stories to attract consumers is to grant them more associations (Wickstrom, 1999). For example, when consumers find Elsa's doll, or stand in front of a background of Frozen, they will associate the story of Frozen, and may tend to buy all the dolls or all related products of Frozen.

In the service encounter, retail theatre requires the front and back stages, roles and settings derived from the dramatic perspective of human behaviour in daily life (Grandey, 2003). In the theatre, actors performing on the front stage need to fully express the story arranged in the backstage. In other words, in retail theatre, the roles played by employees and consumers must be performed on the frontstage, but the retailer or company prepares the story for performance and sets up the required items backstage (Goffman, 1959). This requires retailers to separate from theatre and daily life and create a unique aesthetic experience in a man-made environment for consumers (Fisk & Grove, 1996; Gagliardi, 2009).

Compared to the traditional marketing, which consumers (audiences) usually do not affect the content and process of the “performance” and they can only see the final performance or outcome and choose whether to accept the product or service, retail theatre breaks this model, inviting consumers to participate in different roles of the experience. This can be compared to the notion of the third place, a public area in which consumers spend time that is not their workplace or home (Rosenbaum & Russell-Bennett, 2020). Consumers are not only regarded as spectators, but also encouraged to participate and interact with products to gain service experience (Williams & Anderson, 2005). Products are introduced to consumers by interacting with employees, such as in a bookstores and coffee club (Rosenbaum & Russell-Bennett, 2020). In these interactions consumers can be the actor (the process of performing services), the director (the process of organizing or creating services) or others. In the third place, employees and other consumers may play different roles engaged in this interaction for the purpose of enjoyment and socialization. In this interaction process, consumers are fully paid attention to and have a different experience in order to increase or change their evaluation of products or brands (Williams & Anderson, 2005). Because different participants have different experiences, and the experience of the same person will be different under different circumstances, the lack of specific physical products in the service field may lead to inconsistency (Wilson, 2001). However, retail theatre expects to “create” products suitable for each consumer through themselves. Therefore, retail theatre may better meet the demands of consumers.

Retail theatre and store atmospherics as elements of experiential marketing go hand in hand. In retail theatre, the importance of retail atmosphere is also reflected in different aspects. In the retail atmosphere, temperature has an important impact on consumers' behaviour, and the best temperature is a factor to get a pleasant shopping experience (Baek et al., 2017). When consumers are in a comfortable temperature, they may have a better evaluation of products and increase their perception of the brand characteristics (Huang et al., 2014; Moller & Herm, 2013; Zwebner et al., 2013). Visual perception is regarded as the most important feeling beyond other senses (Baek et al., 2017). The visual atmosphere of the store (such as colours of walls and lights) will influence the emotional state of consumers and the processing of information (Evans, 2002; Orth & Wirtz, 2014). In retail theatre, employees are required to perform their roles while consumers are involved. When setting the theatre scene, retailers can attract consumers to participate by changing physical aspects of the theatre environment. For example, using warm colours with product information on the theatre background wall, and customized themed lighting to attract consumers, so that consumers feel comfortable in the brand personality theatre environment. For example, in the context of COVID-19, consumers may feel more comfortable if they observe signage regarding cleaning and announcements in the store (atmospherics) and see employees cleaning the store (theatre).

2.2.3 The Impact of COVID-19 on Experiential Marketing

In the process of preventing and controlling this pandemic, the economy of almost every country has been seriously affected by severe lockdowns. As the pandemic continues many countries have resorted to re-opening businesses to allow the economy to recover. However, consumer safety when shopping, as well as newly developed preferences and habits are important issues for retailers to consider. Before the pandemic, retailer's goal for consumers' in-store experience was focused on creating enjoyable experiences, entertainment and participation in the service process (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). In the post-COVID-19 environment, the interaction function has been changed. Face masks and plastic barriers have become the mainstream in the retailing process and impede the development of relationships among retailers, employees and consumers (Rosenbaum & Russell-Bennett, 2020). Moreover,

the third place had to transfer from indoor to outdoor as well as enforcing social distance between employees and consumers and between consumers and other consumers (Rosenbaum & Russell-Bennett, 2020) which limits the inherently social nature of the third place and retail landscape more widely. With the pandemic still ongoing, making consumers fearful of infection as well as changed online shopping habits carrying over from periods of lockdown, many consumers still choose not to enter the store or have higher requirements for the cleanliness of the store (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). For example, contactless facilities and services, regular cleaning, as well as whether the environment is spacious enough to ensure social distance, are the key points in evaluating consumer experience in the store in this context (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). Interestingly, employees were told not to wear masks in stores at Office Depot and Walgreens because it would scare consumers (Corkery & Maheshwari, 2020). Many other large retailers, although they allow employees to use masks, require them to buy themselves (Corkery & Maheshwari, 2020). In fact, in a pandemic environment, whether employees wear masks or not, consumers will have a perceived risk of shopping experience. For example, when they go to a store or supermarket, they can see a reminder of the social distance of two meters and register personal information; when they enter the store, they are asked to use disinfectant; when their fingers touch the products, they may think about these products whether they may carry the virus (Dindarloo et al., 2020; Vredenburg & Phillips, 2020). Although consumers may want to go shopping as usual, the prevention and control measures of shops could have a negative impact on the consumers' shopping experience. Experiential marketing including elements of store atmospherics and retail theatre may need to be re-purposed in such a way that changes the store atmosphere elements (scent, visuals and sound) to help reduce the potential negative perceptions of returning to shops, rather than increasing the positive feelings and experiences as previously argued.

2.3 Review of Perceived Risk

2.3.1 Introduction to Perceived Risk

Risk is an objective and universal social phenomenon, used to explain the harm of a specific system in many fields (Huang et al., 2020). People often encounter or perceive risks, which also affect people's behaviour. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the sources and reasons for risks. Risks can be classified in two ways. One is the "inherent" risk, which is a potential risk to use at the demand level as well as the product held by consumers; the other is the "handling" risk, it is in the process of brand operation about the conflict when consumers choose products or retailers (Manikandan, 2020; Mitchell, 1998). It is a crucial task to better understand and deal with risk because perceived risk impacts on consumers' purchase behaviour in shopping environment (Zhang et al., 2012), and now more than ever amid a global pandemic.

Many scholars attempt to define perceived risk, to better understand how it affects consumer purchasing behaviour. Cox and Ritchie (1964) defined perceived risk as consumers' experience of uncertainty or consequences in specific purchasing decisions. Perceived risk is produced in the process of searching and selecting product-related information before consumers make purchase decisions. Perceived purchase results are closely related to the degree of perceived risk. If the perceived result is definite, the perceived risk associated with purchasing will be lower, and vice versa (Li & Huang, 2009). For example, it is common for consumers to go to the store to buy toilet paper successfully, and there will be no perceived risk. However, if the consumer decides to buy toilet paper, they find that the toilet paper in the store is sold out, and the perceived risk will increase because they do not know when they will be able to access this product. Perceived risk can also be defined as the uncertainty that consumers perceive when they are unable to predict the outcomes of their purchase (Geetha & RanGaRajan, 2015), involving physical risk, psychological risk, financial risk, social risk, and time risk (Pham et al., 2020; Stone & Gronhaug, 1993). Others suggest that the dimensions of perceived risk are financial, performance, physical, psychological and social risks (Jacoby & Kaplan, 1972), and time risk (time loss), physical risk (physical hazard), psychological loss (ego

loss) and financial risk (money loss) (Roselius, 1971). In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the environment faced by consumers in their daily consumption lives is full of different perceived risks, including physical risk, psychological risk, financial risk, time risk, social risk and performance risk. The following section will introduce these perceived risks.

2.3.2 Main Types of Perceived Risk

Consumers will consider various factors when patronising stores and making purchase choices. To some extent, the uncertainty of the outcome of the choice makes consumers realise that they may not be able to achieve their purchase goals, therefore perceiving risk in the purchase decision (Mitchell, 1998; Rosenbloom, 1983). Perceived risk gives retailers of products and stores with the lowest risk a competitive advantage. Different consumers have different tolerances for loss types, so it is necessary to analyse the perceived risk types (Mitchell, 1998).

Physical risk

The physical risk is that the purchased product is harmful to people's health or the appearance of the product cannot fulfil consumer expectations (Lim, 2003). Roselius (1971) claimed that physical risk is also called physical hazard loss, which is people's health and security being endangered by some products. Consumers are concerned that products (mainly unfamiliar products) may harm their health or cause personal injury, such as food poisoning and other diseases related to food (Chen & He, 2003; Mieres et al., 2006; Mitchell, 1998). During the purchase process, consumers may not only consider potential threats to their health and wellbeing post-purchase, but physical demands of the shopping process. For example, during the shopping trip, some labour-saving equipment will assist to reduce consumers' physical risks. For example, retailers try to introduce children's trolleys and parent's special car parking, which reduces the parking risk and enables consumers to feel safe (Mitchell, 1998). In the current context, retailers could consider placing staff or signage at the entrance of the store to remind consumers to wear masks, register and sanitize to enter the store during the pandemic to reduce perceived physical risk of contamination.

Psychological risk

Psychological risk is the mental stress that consumers suffer in the process of purchasing behaviour (Lim, 2003). Disappointment, frustration, and shame caused by the difference between the products purchased and the expected, and also ego loss (Roselius, 1971). Ueltschy et al. (2004) suggest that psychological risk is a state in which consumers are disappointed with inappropriate product or service, and this state is related to consumers' dissatisfaction when they own or use the product. In the retail industry, consumers will experience some emotional and psychological pressure because of the uncertainty of new products. If the psychological risk is minimized, it will increase consumers' willingness to buy the product (Bhukya & Singh, 2015; Kwon et al., 2008). When consumers shop in well-known stores, they will fulfil the requirements of their identity and reputation. The products of a well-known brand can increase the quality and satisfaction of the store and reduce psychological risks (Mitchell, 1998). Moreover, consumers may have a psychological risk of entering the store during the pandemic, because they think that shopping in the store may come into contact with other infected consumers (Standish, 2020).

Financial risk

Financial risk, also known as economic risk, is the risk that the purchase of products or services may not be worth the cost (Boksberger et al., 2007). Economists have defined it according to different aspects. Roselius (1971) suggested that that financial risk is perceived when consumers have lost money spent on replacing or repairing the products, they bought due to malfunctions. Financial risk also manifests in the possible loss of money during the shopping process, including the unsatisfactory delivery of products or the inability to deliver them to the consumer, and also including consumers spending money to repair the defective product (Lim, 2003). In addition, other incidental expenses in the shopping experience, such as travel expenses and food expenses, are also considered part of the financial risk (Mitchell, 1998). Financial risk can also be defined as the possibility of loss of money due to unfamiliarity with the brand leading to improper purchase choices. It also extends to the risk of inconsistent quality and price of products (Mitchell, 1998; Zielke & Dobbstein, 2007). For example, Briscoes in New

Zealand claims that the price is the best among products of same quality, and in order to decrease consumers perceived financial risk, they also promise that if consumers buy the same products cheaper elsewhere, they can refund the difference. However, some items will increase in price because of shortages in the COVID-19 context. For example, due to the shortage of N95 masks (detection by the related health care department can prevent COVID-19), consumers not only need to book one month in advance, but also need to pay many times higher than the original price (Nagarajan, 2020). Therefore, consumers have to take corresponding financial risks to purchase necessities. Since the correlation between product price and quality plays an important role in financial risks, the financial risks perceived by consumers may have a significant negative impact on future purchase intentions (Mieres et al., 2006).

Time risk

Time risk is the time wasted by consumers in shopping behaviour. In addition to the time spent in the shopping process, it also includes the waiting time to receive the product and the time it takes to return the unsatisfactory product (Lim, 2003). The loss of time comes from the failure of product performance, that is, consumers waste time by collecting information about related products or changing products (Roselius, 1971). Stone and Gronhaug (1993) indicated that time-related risks are in an important position. If time risk is included in the measure of perceived risk, the effectiveness of the content will increase. For instance, Kmart provides 24-hour shopping in some shopping malls to facilitate consumer purchases. Many large supermarkets and warehouses introduce self-scanning checkout services, and consumers can operate it by themselves to ease the time consumption of queuing to attract more consumers (Mitchell, 1998). However, many stores have complied with government regulations and adopted online shopping and delivery services during the pandemic. As a result, consumers' purchase time is extended by a week or even longer than in-store shopping. Moreover, due to social distance, the waiting time for consumers to enter the store also increased (Pantano et al., 2020). Therefore, reducing the time risk for consumers cannot be ignored.

Social risk

The social risk refers to consumers' perceptions of other people's shopping behaviour, which their behaviours may not be accepted by other members of society, and also includes the risks brought by the social environment (Lim, 2003). Consumers' negative evaluation of products or retailers can cause family members or peers to feel embarrassed or disapproving when engaging with certain retailers or products. Therefore, consumers are becoming more cautious in purchasing and consuming products because they are more concerned about others evaluation (Mandel, 2003). For example, consumers believe that counterfeit products will damage their social image, so they are aware of social risks when purchasing. However, consumers who have higher requirements for self-uniqueness and desire for personal expression experience less social risk in the process of purchasing (Halepete et al., 2009; Veloutsou & Bian, 2008). Some consumers hoarding a large number of products during the pandemic, which will cause panic to others and bring about higher social risks. For example, in the United Kingdom, consumers panic purchasing toilet paper resulted in a long-term shortage of toilet paper (Carrick, 2020). There is an element of social risk and stigma associated with panic buying (Taylor, 2020).

Performance risk

The performance risk is that the purchased product cannot be used normally or can only be used for a short time due to its attributes (Lim, 2003). Performance risk is equal to quality risk. Consumers are inclined to use heuristics to reduce performance risks when purchasing products. Because there is a gap between the place of origin and other places sold, they will evaluate the product quality by the information provided by the manufacturer (Alden et al., 1993). If a retailer sells products made by others, it is difficult for the retailer to reduce the "risk of a specific product". Performance risk is a substitute of the overall risk in retailing.

In short, the above risks may exist in the actual shopping process of consumers, but they are different between online shopping and in-store shopping. In online shopping, consumers will have psychological risk, financial risk, time risk and performance risk, because products

and services are displayed through words and pictures, which cannot be checked and evaluated reasonably by consumers, and the payment and delivery of products may be restricted (Guru et al., 2020). However, if consumers touch products or have experience services in stores, the perceived performance risks will be smaller, but there are still perceived physical risk, psychological risk and social risk in the process of shopping (Bhukya & Singh, 2015). Perceived risk theory encourages retailers see the world through the eyes of consumers (Mitchell, 1998). Perceived risk is more effective in explaining purchase behaviour, because consumers' purchase motivation is usually to avoid mistakes, not to maximize utility. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the above risks are occurring or may occur at any time, and retailers need to pay attention to them. Retailers should present their products and stores in ways that reduce perceptions of risk as discussed above (Mitchell, 1998). This research is mainly concerned with the perceived risk of consumers when shopping in-store during the pandemic and suggests elements of experiential marketing as a vehicle to reduce consumer perceived risk. The related literature on perceived risk is outline in table 4 (see appendices).

2.3.3 The Impact of COVID-19 on Consumers' Perceived Risk

Consumers' perceived risks during the pandemic

Huang et al. (2018) claimed that people are usually worried about uncertain results in the future, such as anxiety before exams or tests, worries before an interview, nervousness before speeches, and fear prior to shopping. Worry shows a negative and uncontrollable thought chain (Chien et al., 2017). Poba and Uwizeyemungu (2019) believed that the development of uncontrollable and negative thoughts among consumers can have a negative impact on their self-confidence. For example, consumers can obtain information about COVID-19 from social media and various communication channels. When they know the uncontrollability and high mortality of the virus, consumer concern and worry may affect their ability to return to their previous shopping habits. Therefore, when consumers feel safe in the shopping environment, they do not feel perceived psychological and social risks, which are more likely to be generated in this environment. In a pandemic affected market, consumer confidence has been weakened. Although consumers are relatively comfortable with pharmacies, they still feel uncomfortable

going to public places (Standish, 2020). In the post-COVID-19 world, consumers may fear when touching the common areas with service employees or other consumers who have coughing or sneezing, such as door handles, lift switch and so forth (Rosenbaum & Russell-Bennett, 2020). As a result, when consumers touch the products in the grocery store, even if there is no evidence that the virus will spread through food or food packaging, they may be concerned about the risk of infection.

According to Brehm and Brehm (1981), people perceive a risk or threat through some attitudes or behaviours that control or restrict their freedom. Some COVID-19 related measures significantly influence consumers ability to purchase, including the shutdown of stores and malls and restricting people's public behaviour. These shutdowns increase feelings of perceived risk among consumers' (Akhtar et al., 2020). As a result of the threat of COVID-19, consumers' shopping choices have changed, and their freedom of movement has been restricted, which may cause their psychological reactions (Akhtar et al., 2020) due to a lack of consumer control over the situation. For example, when consumers see that many shops are closed in the process of shopping, there will be a psychological risk that they will not be able to achieve their purchase purpose. Once they find the purchasing channel, they may increase their desire to stock up.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, consumers' purchase behaviour has greatly deviated from their normal shopping behaviour (Hamilton et al., 2019). Hand sanitizers and masks were sold out in Italian retail stores and pharmacies within a few days, while toilet paper was out of stock in Britain (Akhtar et al., 2020). Subsequently, the shortage of materials expanded to flour and detergent, which are not related with medical products (Akhtar et al., 2020). Due to the shortage of products and the reduction of grocery stores available to purchase necessities, the autonomy of consumers is limited, thereby increasing their desire for unavailable products (Argouslidis et al., 2018).

On the other hand, retailers offer online services to consumers to maintain their safety during the pandemic period. Most retailers opened online stores almost overnight, while some retailers hired temporary employees to handle online e-commerce services and provide proper

delivery services. Non-contact payment is also used by retailers who deliver products. Door-to-door delivery before the outbreak required signatures, while after the pandemic, packages are placed in front of the door without contact with consumers (Pantano et al., 2020). Under this case, some consumers have a good impression and dependence on online shopping and have become accustomed to using online shopping. Although online shopping alleviates the difficulties of retailers and facilitates consumers to obtain products, it increases consumers' financial and psychological risks. When they shop online, they are worried about their money's safety, and whether they can use the products with confidence after receiving them without the ability to evaluate them prior to purchase (Pantano et al., 2020).

The perceived risk of return to in-store shopping

Although retailers have increased online shopping during the pandemic, it cannot completely replace in-store shopping and society will eventually return to this form of shopping, either in place of or in addition to online shopping. However, many will continue to feel perceived risks in shopping, even in countries or regions where the pandemic has been suppressed. Wharton (2020) point out that in the process of the recovery of the domestic market, the top priority for retailers is to attract consumers into the store, which requires people to feel safe in the store. According to the New Zealand Herald (2020), all businesses must meet the New Zealand government regulations before they can be opened. These regulations include information registration when entering the store, keeping a distance of two meters from other people when browsing or checking out in the store, and regular disinfection and providing hand sanitizer in the store. Before the outbreak, many shops were working towards implementing experiential marketing to create enjoyable and engaging consumer experiences. Retailers interacted with consumers and created a shop environment according to consumers' preferences, such as in-store fragrances, snacks, cosmetic samples and trials, to name a few, designed to make consumers feel comfortable and enjoy the experience.

However, with the pandemic outbreak, even if stores are open for business, it is necessary to enforce mask wearing for consumers entering the store and avoid person-to-person

interactions to avoid the spread of the pandemic. From the previous focus on welcoming fragrance to the present smell of disinfectant in stores, from some unpackaged and bulk bin shopping to pre-packaged food items, from the previous crowded shops to the present social distance of two meters, these have enabled consumers to discover the changes brought about by COVID-19, then increasing their perceived psychological and physical risks (Wharton, 2020). Retailers should consider how to reduce consumers perceived in-store shopping risk and focus on increasing consumers' perceived comfort through using elements of experiential marketing.

2.3.4 Perceived Risk Theory

According to the previous definition, there are two dimensions of perceived risk in consumer purchasing decision experiences, namely, uncertainty and consequences (Cox & Ritchie, 1964), which have effects on different types of consumer behaviours. Some researchers regarded uncertainty as people's probabilistic belief (Peter & Tarpey, 1975), while consequence is defined as importance of loss (Taylor, 1974). Because potential losses are caused by the mismatch between expected and actual purchase experiences, this is at the core of perceived risk theory. Then, the various types of perceived risk are proposed, including physical risk, psychological risk, time risk, financial risk, social risk and performance risk. Perceived risks will occur in different situations. In a famous example where the media amplified the risk of catching salmonella from eggs, consumers' perceived risk increased rapidly which led to a sharp decline in egg consumption (Mitchell, 1992). This shows how perceived risk influences consumer shopping behaviour. Under the pandemic, COVID-19 can spread not only from person to person, but also through products or food, which will bring more serious perceived risks, because of the added uncertainty and consequence when they shop indoor.

Dowling (1986) pointed out that perceived risk is a multiplicate of uncertainty and adverse consequences. Different shopping behaviours of consumers will produce varying degrees of uncertainty or consequences (Dowling, 1986). When uncertainty increases, the risk can be managed through the provision of information, but at times, providing additional information about a potential risk can also exacerbate the perceived risk by drawing attention to

it (Littler & Melanthiou, 2006). Therefore, when uncertainty or adverse consequences increase, the relative perceived risk will also increase. When consumer perceived risk increases, they may also change their initial shopping behaviours. Uncertainty after purchase also aggravates consumers' dissatisfaction with their behaviour, which may eventually lead to the decline of consumer comfort and satisfaction, and change their purchase behaviour, such as returning or repurchasing (Littler & Melanthiou, 2006). Thus, perceived risk theory guides this research to suggest experiential marketing elements to manage risk in the shopping experience, using a combination of information and calming methods to balance uncertainty and consequences.

2.4 Review of Perceived Comfort

2.4.1 The Concept of Comfort

Comfort is the basic pursuit of human beings from birth to death, and people are constantly seeking to increase and protect it (Spake et al., 2003). Comfort can be defined as an emotion, a psychological state of reflection and judgment, lack of anxiety and more specific to this work, relaxation in service interaction (Bagozzi et al., 1999; Lloyd & Luk, 2011). In the consumption context, comfort can be seen as the state of anxiety or relaxation caused by interaction between consumers and retailers, with less anxiety and more relaxation increasing feelings of comfort (Butcher et al., 2001). Comfort is a multidimensional concept, and the assessment of comfort consists of two categories: physical comfort and psychological comfort (Ainsworth & Foster, 2017). Physical comfort concerns the analysis of and relieving of feelings of bodily pain and discomfort, while psychological comfort is a mental state created in a relaxed and stress-free environment (Kinnane et al., 2013; Spake et al., 2003).

Comfort is a key factor for stores to attract consumers. In psychology and marketing research, the relationship between the comfort perceived during the service period and consumer satisfaction is well-established. Improving comfort can improve consumer's satisfaction, reduce perceived risk, improve disclosure, trust, and strengthen relationships (Paswan & Ganesh, 2005; Spake et al., 2003). Consumers put emphasis on the physical and psychological comfort of stores when they go shopping (El-Adly, 2007). Both are essential, but

physical comfort is mainly provided based on service environment, such as furniture, whilst psychological comfort is closely related to service providers or retailers. Spake et al. (2003) claimed that psychological comfort is related to service environment, because it is determined by the interaction between the consumer and the service provider, while the physical comfort depends on the service environment rather than only service provider.

Physical comfort

Physical comfort is directly observable because it can be expressed through consumer behaviour or language (Spake et al., 2003). The influence of physical comfort may be different by brands and products. For instance, consumers are more concerned about the cleanliness of tableware and food in fast-food restaurants. However, if the purpose is to let consumers to stay longer and continue to consume, comfortable seats and indoor temperature are main factors (Shikatani Lacroix Design [SLD], 2018). Store layout is an important factor affecting consumer's physical comfort in the retail industry, which is often overlooked by retailers (Borovsky, 2018). The display shelves and placement of the products determine the movement route and shopping time of consumers in the store. Consumers prefer an open and wide space, if the aisle is narrow, they may feel uncomfortable (such as claustrophobia). At the same time, the height of the shelf has an impact on the physical comfort of consumers. If the shelves are extremely high, consumers will not only struggle to reach the product, but also may feel overwhelmed (Borovsky, 2018).

Psychological comfort

Psychological comfort has become a critical concept for products and services in the retailing industry with comfort often being an initial driver of purchase intention (Matte & Broega, 2017). Psychological comfort can be regarded as a superior status, such as a positive feeling, and some disciplines define it as the opposite of anxiety (Daniels, 2000). Psychological comfort is also regarded as a stable state, but it sometimes changes due to gender, society, people's perception and cognitive ability, because it is a psychological assessment, and everyone feels different about the same thing (Cabanac, 2000; Spake et al., 2003).

Psychological comfort has been proven to alleviate consumers' nervousness and enhance the relationship between retailers and consumers (Ainsworth & Foster, 2017). Psychological comfort is crucial, because services are intangible, which makes it difficult to evaluate objectively, so the results of services can be evaluated through comfort. In the process of service, consumers will evaluate the psychological comfort before and during the service interaction or service encounter by the service provider (Sampet et al., 2019).

Consumers may use the term of comfort to explain their complex purchasing choices, such as the comfort brought by the positive reputation of the brand and the quality service provided by retailers (Spake et al., 2003). In order to maintain the long-term advantages of brands and products, retailers should understand the perception of consumers about them (Elmaghraby et al., 2008). Therefore, this research focuses on comfort and suggests how to increase the comfort of consumers in the retail environment during the COVID-19 pandemic (Fordham, 2000; Spake et al., 2003). All relevant literature collected on perceived comfort are included in Table 5 (see appendices).

2.4.2 The Positive Effects of Comfort

Consumer satisfaction and repurchase

For a long time, satisfaction has been considered as a key factor in relationship marketing, and it has been proven to affect consumers' retention intentions (Dorsch et al., 1998; Oliver & Swan, 1989). Babin and Griffin (1998) defined consumer satisfaction as the positive reaction produced by the evaluation of a positive consumer experience. In the service literature, the influence of consumer comfort on satisfaction has been studied. Consumer satisfaction is the result of service quality, and it is found that consumers comfort reduces their withdrawal from retail services (Dabholkar et al., 2000; Spake et al., 2003). Service quality mainly depends on retailers and service employees. Rosenbaum and Russell-Bennett (2020) pointed out that interaction helps to establish the relationships among retailers, employees and consumers, and at the same time, relationships also connect retailers, employees and consumers in retail services. A good relationship will affect consumers' actions, emotions and behaviours, and induce

consumers' good shopping experience (Rosenbaum & Russell-Bennett, 2020), thus increase consumers satisfaction. In general, when consumers purchase products, the results of the purchase will be within their expectations which leads to perceptions of satisfaction. However, Paswan and Ganesh (2005) pointed out that when retailers improve consumer comfort it can further increase their satisfaction. Spake et al. (2003) also discovered a similar relationship, that is, comfort had a positive effect on satisfaction. Consumers' comfort plays a positive role, which leads to higher satisfaction with purchase. When a person has a pleasant experience, which result a satisfying emotional response and the expected result will occur with a high probability (Bagozzi, 1992). Paswan and Ganesh (2005) also show that consumers who experience higher levels of comfort are more satisfied than those who experience lower comfort. Once retailers acquire consumers, the important goal of development is to retain consumers for a long time and provide high-quality services in all aspects of retail (Eriksson & Vaghult, 2000). A series of studies about consumers and services show that the most important driving force of consumer satisfaction is the perception of service process and service quality, which ultimately improves consumer loyalty (Sampet et al., 2019; Smith, 1998).

Consumers' loyalty and repurchase intention is closely related to their satisfaction (Meyer et al., 2017). Repurchase describes subsequent purchase behaviour in retailing, which is influenced by many factors but most importantly the satisfaction of the prior shopping experiences. Retailers should work to retain consumers through appropriate products and services in order to prepare for future development of the relationship (loyalty and repurchase intentions). Through successful consumer retention efforts, both the profitability of the company, and also consumer repurchase intention can be improved (Bahia et al., 2000). There is a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and repurchase intentions (Oliver et al., 1997; Chitturi et al., 2008). Jeng (2011) found that consumers' emotional attitudes and pleasure affect their repurchase intentions. In addition, Aaker (1999) suggests that consumers prefer brands or products that conform to their personality, because these brands can assist to increase their levels of comfort. Therefore, consumers' comfort is positively correlated with satisfaction and repurchase.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Through a comprehensive literature review, this dissertation analyses and discusses the existing literature on the concepts of experiential marketing, perceived risk and perceived comfort. A comprehensive literature review is a method of exploring, synthesizing and summarizing the existing literature or research in a certain discipline (Rowley & Slack, 2004). Hart (1998) defined a literature review as selecting some viewpoints and language in the literature to judge the particularity of topics and to assist research and develop new concepts and ideas. It also requires that the selected articles have depth and breadth, clarity and are systematic (Hart, 1998). Webster and Watson (2002) indicate that effective literature review is the method and basis for enhancing knowledge, promoting theoretical development and revealing the fields that need to be studied. Therefore, the characteristics of an effective literature review include analysing and synthesizing quality literature, providing a solid foundation for the selection of research topics and methods, and proving that the proposed research is contributing to and promoting the development of the research field (Levy & Ellis, 2006). The purpose of the literature review is to understand the latest research in this field, and to identify future research by reviewing both seminal and more recent work (Rowley & Slack, 2004). Through an in-depth literature review one can determine a well-supported research topic, research questions and hypotheses. Moreover, it also establishes the research background in the selected area of literature, the main theoretical concepts and research methods used, and allows for the interpretation of results and findings (Rowley & Slack, 2004).

3.1 Types of Literature Review

There are various types of literature review, but four types are most commonly used in research, including traditional (or narrative) literature review, systematic literature review, meta-analysis and meta-synthesis. They are described separately below.

3.1.1 Traditional (or narrative) Literature Review

Traditional (or narrative) literature review is the most common in research, and it is useful for research topics with a large amount of literature (Cronin et al., 2008). The literature reviewed is composed of studies and knowledge of related disciplines. It selects and summarizes a large number of articles to draw conclusions related to the topic (Cronin et al., 2008). The purpose of traditional (or narrative) literature review is to provide a comprehensive background knowledge to readers and emphasize the importance of new research (Cronin et al., 2008). Traditional (or narrative) literature review can precede the research (Polit & Beck, 2006). However, Beecroft et al. (2006) suggest that before conducting a traditional literature review, the research question (s) should be paid full attention, because it can clearly identify whether the research question (s) has been studied or whether the research question (s) is valuable. Traditional literature review is not only helpful to refine the research question (s), but also to optimize topics and develop concepts or theoretical frameworks (Coughian et al., 2007).

3.1.2 Systematic Literature Review

Systematic reviews adopt a rigorous and clear method to evaluate the literature in the subject fields, and it answers the focused questions in practice (Cronin et al., 2008). The systematic review should indicate the time span of the selected literature and the method of assessing (the quality of studies) and integrating (the summaries of statistical) the research results (Parahoo, 2006). For systematic reviews, reviewers should pay attention to formulating research questions, setting standards, selecting and adopting literature, assessing the quality of literature, and analysing results (Cronin et al., 2008). Cronin et al. (2008) also pointed out the aim of a systematic literature review is to list all the studies related to the subject area as completely as possible, including published and unpublished literature.

3.1.3 Meta-analysis

Meta-analysis is to obtain the results of quantitative analysis and carry out statistical integration to improve understanding, which is regarded as a form of systematic review (Cronin et al., 2008). In many disciplines, there is a great deal of data to be collected and processed.

Using meta-analysis can effectively solve problems in diverse fields, including education, criminal justice and economics (Fredric, 1986; Schmid, 2020). Meta-analysis contains six components: topic, literature, study testing, data, analysis and report (Schmid, 2020). It uses standard procedure in the discovery of the same topic and improves to draw conclusions and find the patterns and relationships between results (Polit & Beck, 2006). Meta-analysis is used to solve some special problems, such as describing and summarizing some features, compare different items, combine some incomparable items, and build a model of results (Schmid, 2020).

3.1.4 Meta-synthesis

Meta-synthesis is a type of qualitative method, which is used to integrate, assess and explain the various results of qualitative analysis to determine the main factors (Cronin et al., 2008). Meta-synthesis mainly uses in Phenomenology, Grounded Theory or Ethnography, and it is not a comprehensive review of the topic provided (Cronin et al., 2008). The purpose of meta-synthesis is to analyse the research factors, and to transform a single discovery into new concepts and explanations (Polit & Beck, 2006). Meta-synthesis compares and analyses the original findings from gathered studies, but it is not a second analysis of these studies (Lela, 2006).

Traditional (or narrative) literature review is adopted in this study, because it focuses on literature, rather than methods and procedures (Green et al., 2006). Traditional (or narrative) literature review can balance a variety of information and viewpoints by studying the theoretical and contextual perspectives of articles related to the topic (Polit & Beck, 2006). This is consistent with the purpose of this paper, that is, through the analysis and summary of these related studies, utilizing experiential marketing to influence the perceived risk and perceived comfort of consumers in the context of COVID-19.

3.2 The Process of Literature Selection

According to Levy and Ellis (2006), the process of narrative literature review follows the stage of “input-processing-output” (p.182), and the processing stage includes collecting relevant literature, understanding, analysing and evaluating literature. When choosing a research

topic, it is necessary to search the related literature to check whether the research question meets the requirement or whether the research question has been solved. The common method is to input keywords in online databases (Cronin et al., 2008). The key words in this paper are related to experiential marketing, perceived risk, perceived comfort and COVID-19. Since COVID-19 is the specific background and only emerged in late 2019, there are few studies on the retail industry, it is known that this research question is feasible. The literature is searched by search engine mainly AUT library search and Google Scholar, and accessed through specific databases, such as SpringerLink, ScienceDirect, Scopus, JSTOR and Taylor & Francis Online, Business Source Complete, ERIC, IEEE Xplore, and SPORT Discus Webpages and topic-related videos. Key words searched include experiential marketing, atmospherics, themed retailing, flagship stores, retail performance, retail spectacles, retail theatre, perceived risk, perceived comfort and COVID-19 to expand search scope. In the search process, since the three concepts are from different scopes and backgrounds, for example, experiential marketing comes from retailing, perceived risk and perceived comfort are more present in psychology research, the search results ranged from the most cited to the least in each concept. The next step is to collect the information and data for selection, because there are many articles that contain keywords but do not meet the requirements, such as perceived risk in hospitals or thermal comfort in street greening design, which are eliminated in the subsequent document collation stage. In addition, the Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) journal ranking list was followed to assess article quality. This is the journal quality measure used in academic fields in New Zealand and Australia.

Published articles are classified in ABDC according to the grade of the journal, ranging from A* (highest quality) to C (lowest quality). The articles selected for this research are divided by A*, A, B, C four grades and the details in terms of journal title, publisher, ISSN, ISSN online, year inception, field of research and rating are provided. See appendix for these summary tables.

3.3 Synthesising the Findings

Green et al. (2006) suggests that synthesising the findings is an important stage to facilitate the classification and analysis after searching the literature. First, all the articles are divided into three parts. The first part is about experiential marketing, which also covers retail theatre, atmospherics, themed retailing, flagship stores, retail performance, retail spectacles. The second part is related literature on perceived risk (including physical, psychological, financial, time, social, performance risks), and the third part is perceived comfort (including physical comfort and psychological comfort). Second, a table was created for each part, including author, publication year, methodology, concepts, areas or characteristics, purpose and contribution, article title and publication source of journals (All of tables are gathered in appendices). Third, eliminating articles that do not conform to the research requirements through concepts and areas covered, and classifying other articles which are in the same or related areas to better understand the research topic. These eliminated articles mainly reflect that although they contain keywords, the research direction is inconsistent with this article, such as the research background of online shopping, the perceived risk of private brands, and thermal comfort. Finally, synthesising and summarizing literature is undertaken to explore the research gap and to establish a conceptual framework to illustrate the connection between the three parts (experiential marketing, perceived risk and perceived comfort).

Chapter 4: Conceptual Framework

Experiential marketing can take different forms including atmospherics and retail theatre. Comparing pre-and amid COVID-19, the goals and desired impacts of experiential marketing for consumers has changed. Before the outbreak of COVID-19, experiential marketing was a type of marketing strategy, used to attract consumers' attention through experience-driven brand interaction designed to increase product and brand reputation. However, since the outbreak of COVID-19, consumers have adapted their previous contact shopping to non-contact shopping due to government regulations around the pandemic. Therefore, as business begins to return to contact-based interactions, it is important that retailers use elements of experiential marketing to encourage consumers to return to the store through managing their levels of perceived risk and comfort in the shopping experience.

This chapter will detail the relationship between the main concepts of interest through the creation of a conceptual framework, using graphic and textual explanations (see Figure 1). Based on the research question and findings from previous literature, the research will discuss the relationship between experiential marketing, perceived risk and perceived comfort, which impact on consumers returning to the store in the context of COVID-19. The framework of Figure 1 elaborates on several concepts, with arrows indicating relationships. It is suggested that retailers can encourage consumers to return to the store in the context of COVID-19 by using elements of experiential marketing to reduce consumers' perceived risks and improve their perceived comfort. The specific measures are to change the atmospheric elements of the store and using retail theatre, including changing the store's environment scent, the background music and colours, preparing hand sanitizers and visible cleaning by the staff. The result can not only encourage consumers to return to the market, but also build consumers' trust and increase their repurchase intention and satisfaction with products and brands.

As discussed in the literature review perceived risk mainly includes physical risk, psychological risk, social risk, and financial risk (Pham et al., 2020). Comfort consists of physical comfort and psychological comfort (Ainsworth & Foster, 2017). Physical comfort is more straight forward to achieve. For example, consumers can feel physical comfort through purchasing comfortable products or having freedom (Ainsworth & Foster, 2017). However, psychological comfort is more important for consumers during the outbreak of a pandemic. It is necessary to pay more attention to how to increase consumer comfort through experiential marketing atmospheric elements, such as using more relaxed scent and warm colours and lightings. Therefore, comfort is the main factor that causes consumers to hesitate to return to the store (Pantano et al., 2020).

Once consumers return to the store, they may increase their repurchase intention and satisfaction with products and brands (Meyer et al., 2017; Paswan & Ganesh, 2005). Gwinner, Gremler and Bitner (1998) pointed out that when consumers establish relationships with retailers, they usually feel comfortable or safe. Similarly, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2000) claimed that the establishment of psychological benefits reduced anxiety. This relationship has a significant impact on the expected results of retailers, such as increasing consumer satisfaction and repurchase intention, and at the same time becoming a barrier to exit (Bitner 1995; Reynolds & Beatty, 1999). It is necessary to improve consumer perceived comfort. Therefore, the following three research propositions are put forward to explain the conceptual framework.

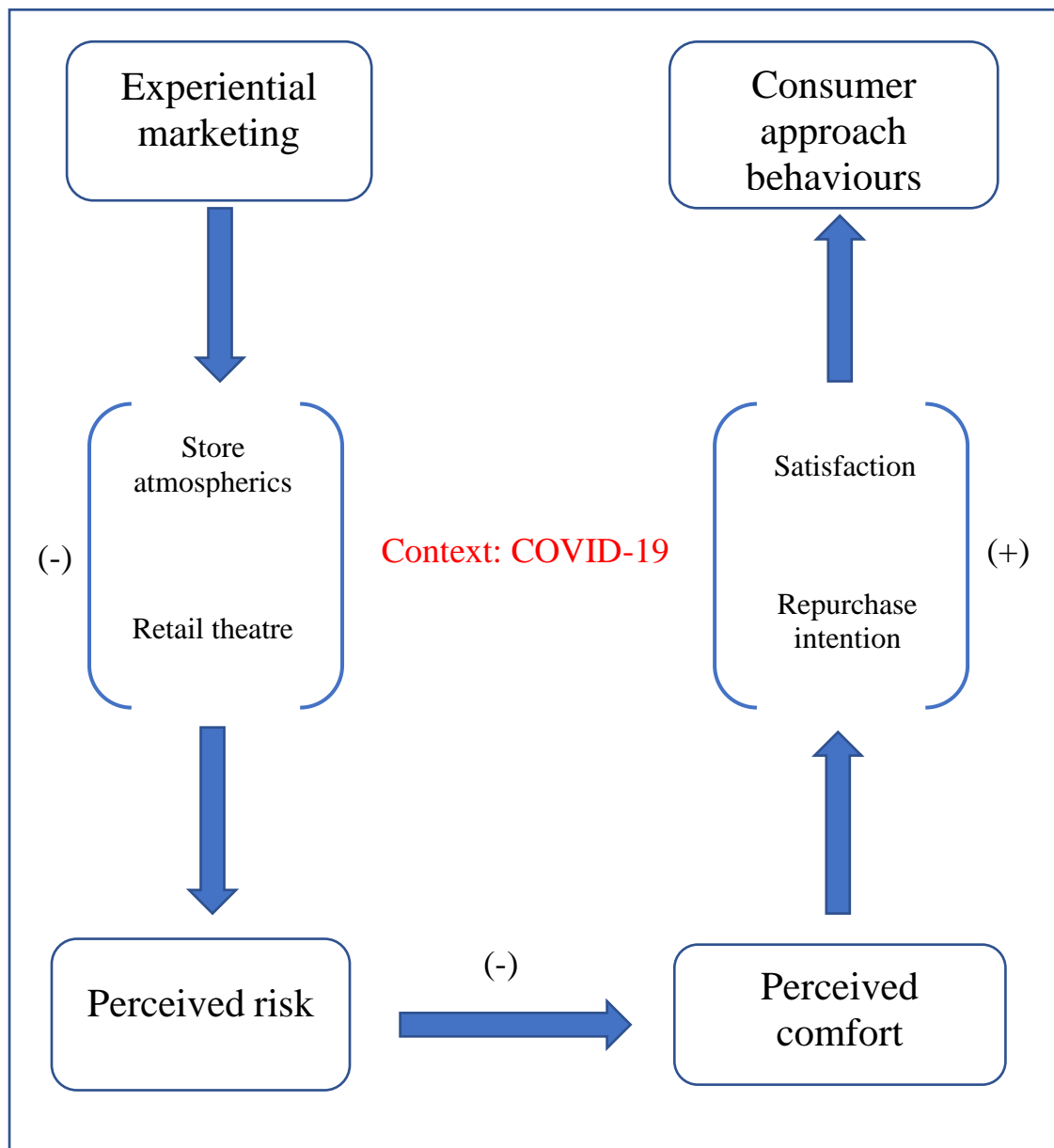


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Consumers' perceived risks have existed and show various types, especially during COVID-19. The literature review explains the different types of perceived risks that consumers have in the shopping process, such as financial risk, performance risk, physical risk, psychological risk, time risk and social risk. More and more consumers choose other channels

to avoid face-to-face transactions in order to protect themselves as well as abide by government legislation. So for those choosing to return to in-store shopping, the role of experiential marketing is very important.

The atmospheric factors in experiential marketing play a role in changing consumers' emotion and behaviour, include lighting, colour, music, odour, indoor temperature and crowdedness. They help consumers to reduce the perceived risk in the context of COVID-19. Consumers prefer choosing or selecting merchandise under soft lights rather than bright lights, because the use of soft lights in stores may bring comfort to consumers to increase sales (Areni & Kim, 1994). The wall colours of stores also affect the emotion of consumers (relieve their nervousness about virus). Generally, warm colours make consumers feel comfortable, thus increasing the time spent in stores and the amount of shopping (Bellizzi & Hite, 1992; Crowley, 1993). Yalch and Spangenberg (1990) suggest that background music can improve the retail environment, increase consumer satisfaction and sales. When retailers use slow-tempo music, consumers will move slowly in the store and tend to buy more products, while loud music urges consumers to leave the store. A pleasant scent will attract consumers and increase their favourability of unfamiliar products (Bone & Ellen, 1999), and reduce the perceived risk when they smell the pungent cleaning products during the pandemic. Retailers can also provide a comfortable environment for consumers by controlling the temperature of store (Jacobs, 1984). Among the many atmospheric factors, it is the easiest to ignore the influence of crowds in stores on consumer behaviour. When consumers have enough space to shop in the store during the pandemic, the perceived risk will be reduced. Spatial crowding and human crowding formed perceived crowding, which may also have different effects on consumer satisfaction. For example, in crowded stores, when consumers feel uncomfortable, they may reduce shopping time (Harrell et al., 1980; Machleit et al., 1994). All in all, store atmospheric elements can be used to help consumers reduce the perceived risk of shopping in-store under the pandemic.

In the COVID-19 environment, besides the previous designs, specific elements of the retail environment should be altered to attract consumers, because perception will affect

consumer's satisfaction and repurchase (Baek et al., 2017; Meyer et al., 2017). For example, retailers should add hand sanitizers in front of stores, products should be packaged separately, and employees should keep indoor social distance and the interior clean. In retailing under the context of COVID-19, due to the environment of stores has been changed, such as almost every employee wears the mask and the store is cleaned many times, which may reduce consumers perceived risk in shopping. Elements of experiential marketing should be constantly changing to adapt to the demands of consumers to reduce their feelings of perceived risk in the retail environment, for example, to increase the physical space of consumers or to clean floors and tables frequently. Therefore, the first proposition is given as follows:

Proposition 1: Experiential marketing is used by retailers to reduce consumers' perceived risk shopping in-store in the context of COVID-19.

In addition, the reduction of consumers' perceived risk of shopping has a great impact on their perceived comfort. Perceived risk and comfort are both consumers' psychological reactions and feelings. In the literature review, it has been mentioned that psychological comfort is people's mental state in a relaxing environment (Kinnane et al., 2013; Spake et al., 2003). The retail atmosphere also occupies an important position in the retail environment, it affects consumer behaviour from a psychological aspect. Retailers can change the emotion of consumers by utilising the store atmosphere in order to affect their purchase behaviour (Ailawadi & Keller, 2004; Eroglu et al., 2003). However, consumers' emotions include positive and negative aspects, which have different influences on consumer behaviours. Comfort is further emotion as a result of decreased tension and peace of mind as a result of the retail environment (Wang et al., 2007).

Through creating positive emotion by manipulating store atmosphere retailers can promotes consumers to purchase. In other words, using the store atmospheric to make consumers feel comfortable through reducing perceived risk, may attract them to the store and increase their shopping tendency. When consumers' perceived risk is reduced, they will relax their vigilance on the surrounding environment and try to trust it. When the trust reaches a

certain level, they will feel relaxed in the environment, thus increasing the perceived comfort (Spake et al., 2003). Therefore, COVID-19 has a serious influence on consumer perceived comfort. Many consumers believe that in the context of COVID-19, contamination risk in public spaces is high. According to New Zealand Herald (2020), since retailers must comply with government regulations that spray disinfectant and provide hand sanitizers in their shops, most stores have pungent odours (such as alcohol) filling the store. Retailers need to consider changing the smell of disinfection for example to reduce feelings of perceived risk of contamination, because when consumers' perceived risks are reduced, their sense of store security will be enhanced making consumers feel more comfortable. It can be seen that consumers' perceived risk and their perceived comfort have a negative relationship, which leads to the second proposition.

Proposition 2: When consumers' perceived risk is reduced, their perceived comfort will be improved when shopping in-store in the context of COVID-19.

Consumers may choose online shopping or other channels rather than in-store shopping, mainly because they have a perceived contamination risk of products in the context of COVID-19 and some stores are not open because of following the government regulation (Akhtar et al., 2020). However, the return of consumers to shops is the main aspect in developing the economy and the primary focus of this research. Perceived comfort represents a state of mind, which consumers feel relaxed and free in the shopping environment (Ainsworth & Foster, 2017). El-Adly (2007) suggests that consumers attach great importance to perceived comfort in the shopping environment, which is one of the important attractive factors for consumers. When the shopping environment (store) provides consumers with a high level of comfort, including the perceived comfort of products and services conveyed in advertising information, consumers will be attracted to shop in the store (El-Adly, 2007). In addition, when the comfort of consumers is increased by changing the experiential marketing factors, their satisfaction also increases (Paswan & Ganesh, 2005). Moreover, in-store shopping is a traditional form of shopping, and many consumers are already familiar with touching and observing products when shopping in

the store. Claypool et al. (2008) studied that consumers will have a positive response to familiar things and environments. Similarly, consumers high in perceived comfort will display stronger purchasing behaviour or repurchase intention (Ainsworth & Foster, 2017). As such, the third proposition is as follows:

Proposition 3: When the consumer's perceived comfort increases, it will affect consumer approach behaviour, including increasing consumer satisfaction and repurchase intention.

To sum up, in the context of COVID-19, in order to encourage consumers to return to the store, retailers can use experiential marketing to reduce consumers' perceived risk, thus increasing their perceived comfort in the store, which will help to increase consumer's approach behaviour including satisfaction and repurchase intention.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, Future Research Agenda and Limitations

The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of experiential marketing on consumer approach behaviour in retailing amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the analysis of academic literature on experiential marketing and consumer feelings of safety (including perceived risk and perceived comfort) in the context of COVID-19, a conceptual framework was developed, and three propositions were introduced. By changing the atmospheric elements of experiential marketing, including changing the smell of cleaner products to make consumers comfortable, adding reminder notices about the pandemic in stores, using broadcasts to remind consumers to protect themselves, and theatre elements including visible cleaning by staff, the perceived risks of indoor shopping should be reduced. At the same time, through the analysis of different types of consumers' perceived risks, it is recommended that retailers interact with consumers in a safer way, reducing contact between service providers and consumers, or requiring them to wear protective clothing and masks to help consumers increase their trust and perceived comfort, and encourage them to return to the store, different from the interaction-based focus of experiential marketing prior to the pandemic. Therefore, it has answered the research question raised in the introduction section of the research: How can retailers utilize elements of experiential marketing to minimize perceived risk and increase perceived comfort to encourage consumers to return to stores amid-COVID-19?

Based on a comprehensive review of the research, the analysis for this research is based on the existing literature without further empirical support. As such, it is determined that carrying out empirical research would be the necessary next step for future research. To this end, a research agenda has been formulated, which includes proposed research areas and research questions.

First of all, the atmospheric elements of experiential marketing can assist retailers to reduce consumers' perceived risks of indoor shopping, but specific elements need to be quantitatively verified, such as:

- (1) What kind of odour cleaning products do consumers prefer? Does it have different effects on people of different sexes and ages?

Individuals have their own special preference for the features of the product. For example, females prefer using fragrance-scented cleaning products, because their clothes and even their bodies may carry fragrance, while males may not prefer it (Milotic, 2003). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate whether the odour of cleaning products may affect people's choice, and to distinguish the difference among age stages.

- (2) What are the impacts of the different colours, shapes and placement of the pandemic reminder signage on consumers?

A large number of signs and patterns about COVID-19 are yellow because yellow means alarm, and yellow is common on traffic lights. However, in the previous chapters, red is considered to be tense, which directly attracted people's attention (Bellizzi & Hite, 1992). Therefore, it is also needed to discuss whether yellow is the best choice on COVID-19 signs. Similarly, square, triangle and circle, as the basis of patterns, reflect various effects. The variations should be also studied.

- (3) Do frequency and period of broadcast reminders have different effects on consumers?

When retailers play broadcast reminders instead of background music, consumers may pay attention to its contents. Research is needed to understand how many times per hour or per day reminding consumers to use hand sanitizer and maintain social distancing can have a better effect.

(4) What other specific atmospheric elements would consumers like to see to encourage approach behaviour?

In addition to the above mentioned, the atmospheric elements also include many aspects of the retail industry. For example, the shape and size of the shelf, the air conditioning temperature, indoor brightness and physical touch. Although these elements are often ignored by researchers, they still play a role in retailing under the pandemic.

Secondly, it is suggested that retailers should interact with consumers in a comfortable way. It is necessary to compare the difference in consumers' perceived risk between consumers interacting with Artificial Intelligent (robots) and that with human beings who wear protective products. What kind of interaction do consumers prefer? Which is better?

Thirdly, when consumers perceive increased comfort and return to the store, what is the degree of their satisfaction and repurchase intention? Are their satisfaction and repurchase intention high or low? And how does this compare to before COVID-19?

Overall, this research has played an important role in suggesting experiential marketing as a means to influence consumer approach behaviour, filling a gap in the literature on consumers' perceived risks and comfort when shopping during the pandemic, and contributing to the related research about consumers' returning to stores in the future, such as the attraction of products and brands on consumers, and the impact of consumers returning to stores on product sales. However, there are still many limitations in this research. First of all, it is necessary to collect a large number of high-quality articles for the study of the traditional (or narrative) literature review. Due to the novelty of COVID-19, there are few articles about the impact of COVID-19 on consumers in the retailing industry. This is a major limitation of this research. Secondly, the conceptual framework put forward in the study is only based on the collected literature, which is limited by the content and scope of these literature. In future research, it is necessary to further prove the three propositions in this research and provide

empirical data support, so that the conceptual framework can better serve researchers to analyse consumer behaviour.

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Appendices

Table 1: Related literature on experiential marketing

Author(s)	Year	Research type (Methodology)	Aim(s) or purpose(s)	Contributions	Title	Source	ABDC journal ranking
Abadi, Nursyamsi & Syamsuddin	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	Better understand customer value and experiential marketing, and then analyse the influence on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.	Customer value influences customer satisfaction and creates customer loyalty. Experiential marketing influences customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.	Effect of Customer Value and Experiential Marketing to Customer Loyalty with Customer Satisfaction as Intervening Variable	The Asian Journal of Technology Management	N/A
Skandalis, Byrom & Banister	2019	Empirical: Qualitative (Ethnographic)	The aim is to explore the nature of extraordinary experiences.	In the Primavera experience, structure dominates. The existence of marketplace tensions leads to the creation of meaningful festival experiences and contrasting consumers' expectations and outcomes.	Experiential marketing and the changing nature of extraordinary experiences in post-postmodern consumer culture	Journal of Business Research	A

Oktriana	2019	Empirical: Quantitative (Linear regression test techniques)	It aims to explore the effect of experiential marketing and psychological pricing on customers repurchase intention	Sense, feel, think and psychological prices simultaneously affect consumers repurchase intention.	The effect of experiential marketing and psychological pricing on repurchase intention of customers in store X	Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences	N/A
Osterlea, Henseler & Kuhn	2018	Empirical: Qualitative (Interview)	To investigate the motives, the nature and how the experience is cocreated of B2B brand world.	Visitors, brand employees, and the physical environment are the core factors to co-created in B2B brand world.	Brand worlds: Introducing experiential marketing to B2B branding	Industrial Marketing Management	A*
Ihtiyar, Barut & Ihtiyar	2018	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	The purpose is to explore the experiential marketing and service quality influence on customer experiential values.	Some experiential modules and service quality have positive impact on experiential values.	Experiential marketing, social judgements, and customer shopping experience in emerging markets	Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing	A

Chui	2018	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	The purpose is to investigate the effectiveness participation of digital marketing and experiential marketing in Hong Kong festival	Enhance the visitor's experience through the appropriate digital marketing media to provide better services	To Explore the Effectiveness of Digital and Experiential Marketing in Attracting Customer Participation in the Hong Kong Wine and Dine Festival	Nang Yan Business Journal	N/A
Shieh & Lai	2017	Empirical: Quantitative (Confirmatory factor analysis)	It aims to explore how to influence brand loyalty and customers by contribution of experiential marketing	Experiential marketing works promote the development of brand loyalty.	The relationships among brand experience, brand resonance and brand loyalty in experiential marketing: Evidence from smart phone in Taiwan	Journal of Economics and Management	A
Nurchahyo	2016	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	It aims to explore the influence of experiential marketing on customer satisfaction and loyalty	Customer satisfaction as a mediator in the relation of experiential and customer loyalty	The Role of Customer Satisfaction in a Relation of Experiential Marketing and Customer Loyalty	Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal	N/A

Chanavat & Bodet	2014	Empirical: Qualitative (Interview)	The aim is to better understand the extraordinary experiences in the sport-spectacle services	Opportunistic behaviour is probably as important as the experiential marketing strategy.	Experiential marketing in sport spectatorship services: a customer perspective	European Sport Management Quarterly	A
Wu & Tseng	2014	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	The differences and relationship among experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.	Experiential marketing has a positive significantly on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, and particularly effective in increasing customer satisfaction.	Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty in an Online Shop: An Experiential Marketing Perspective	International Journal of Business and Management	C
Liang, Chen, Duan & Ni	2013	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire and survey)	It examines the relationships between the five experiential values, purchase intentions, and gender differences.	This study found that sense, feel, think, act, and relate experiences can stimulate purchase intention, while gender did not show a moderating effect on it.	Gender Differences in the Relationship between Experiential Marketing and Purchase Intention	The Journal of International Management Studies	A

Karadeniz, Pekats & Topal	2013	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	It aims to discover the application of shopping centres in experiential marketing	Service quality is the major factor in customer loyalty and satisfaction.	The effects of experiential marketing and service quality on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty at shopping centres	Journal of Naval Science and Engineering	N/A
Qader	2013	Conceptual	The impact of millennials' brand experience in experiential marketing on brand equity	It conceptualizes the concepts of brand experience and brand equity, examine the important of millennials' experiential marketing	The Evolution of Experiential Marketing: Effects of Brand Experience among the Millennial Generation	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences	N/A
Same & Larimo	2012	Conceptual	It aims to define experience marketing and experiential marketing, and how to conceptualize the later.	Experience marketing is strategic marketing of experiences, experiential marketing answers how to do marketing experientially.	Marketing theory: experience marketing and experiential marketing	Business and Management	C

Lanier & Hampton	2009	Conceptual	The purpose is to summarize the strategic logic and to explore memorable customer experiences.	Actively manage the symbolic resources, create an engaging transaction, and enhance customers' internalized value.	Experiential Marketing: Understanding the Logic of Memorable Customer Experiences	Memorable Customer Experiences	N/A
Yang	2009	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	The purpose is to explore sense marketing of experiential marketing, and to find out the links between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention	Sense experience impacts on customer satisfaction and repurchase intention	The study of repurchase intentions in experiential marketing- an empirical study of the franchise restaurant	The International Journal of Organizational Innovation	N/A
Aron	2006	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	The relationship between counter-experiential communications and consumers, assist companies to deal with negative experiences.	Counter-experiential marketing communications have a negative impact on customer satisfaction and repurchase intention.	The effect of counter experiential marketing communication on satisfaction and repurchase intention	Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction & Complaining Behaviour	B

Kim	2001	Conceptual	The purpose is to better understand the new retailing concept.	They combine the experiential retailing into domestic and international retailing strategies.	Experiential retailing: an interdisciplinary approach to success in domestic and international retailing	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	A
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Table 2: Related literature on store atmospheric

Author(s)	Year	Research type (Methodology)	Aim(s) or purpose(s)	Contributions	Title	Source	ABDC journal ranking
Fostern & McLelland	2015	Empirical: Quantitative (an online survey)	The difference of shopping perceptions between themed retailer and non-themed retailer.	Themed retailers can benefit in terms of customer enjoyment, brand attitude, and brand loyalty.	Retail atmospherics: The impact of a brand dictated theme	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	A
Farias, Aguiar & Melo	2014	Conceptual	It aims to propose a conceptual framework for an extraordinary customer experience	It resulted on a conceptual framework connected to store atmosphere and customer experience, and assist manages in organizational management.	Store Atmospherics and Experiential Marketing: A Conceptual Framework and Research Propositions for An Extraordinary Customer Experience	International Business Research	N/A
Sands, Oppewal & Beverland	2009	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	It aims that the impact of theme events on consumer store choices.	Retail atmosphere has a positive impact on consumer store choice, themed events increase attractiveness of stores.	The effects of in-store themed events on consumer store choice decisions	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	A

Noad & Rogers	2008	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	The purpose is to discover the importance of retail atmospherics and B2B environment.	Retail atmospherics is closely related to B2B retailing.	The importance of retail atmospherics in B2B retailing: the case of BOC	International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management	A
Michon, Chebat & Turley	2005	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	It analyses the effect of ambient odours on customer emotion, perception and opinion of product quality in different levels of density.	Consumers densities interfere retail atmospherics and increase the temperature to enhance customer purchasing intention.	Mall atmospherics: the interaction effects of the mall environment on shopping behaviour	Journal of Business Research	A
Sharma & Stafford	2000	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	It aims to explore store atmospherics influence on retailers' persuasion level.	Store atmospherics has a positive impact on customer persuasion and perception.	The Effect of Retail Atmospherics on Customers' Perceptions of Salespeople and Customer Persuasion: An Empirical Investigation	Journal of Business Research	A

Eroglu & Machleit	1993	Conceptual	The aim was to show the research and practice in retail atmospherics and to identify research opportunities.	It identifies opportunities for consumer research in marketing areas.	Atmospheric Factors in the Retail Environment: Sights, Sounds and Smells	Advances in Consumer Research.	B
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Table 3: Related literature on retail theatre

Author(s)	Year	Research type (Methodology)	Aim(s) or purpose(s)	Contributions	Title	Source	ABDC journal ranking
Zuberi & Rajaratnam	2020	Conceptual	It examines the challenges facing the retail industry and propose a conceptual framework.	It proposes a conceptual framework of omni-channel retailing.	Measuring retail performance in an omni-channel world	Journal of Marketing Channels	B
Arrigo	2018	Empirical: Qualitative (Interview)	It aims to explore the role and main features of flagship store in luxury fashion brand to express the sustainability commitment.	It highlights the sustainability retailing in luxury brand and assist managers to development luxury stores.	The flagship stores as sustainability communication channels for luxury fashion retailers	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	A

Nierobisch, Toporowski, Dannewald & Jahn	2017	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	It aims that if the FMCG flagship store provides consumers with a brand experience.	National brand flagship stores positively affect brand experiences and stimulate favourable consumer reactions.	Flagship stores for FMCG national brands: Do they improve brand cognitions and create favourable consumer reactions?	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	A
Calienes, Carmel-Gilfilen & Portillo	2016	Empirical: Quantitative (a photo elicitation method and a four-question survey)	The purpose is to investigate stores' design characteristics that appeal to the millennial shopper.	The millennial consumer expects a holistic shopping experience, stores offer a multifaceted environment.	Inside the Mind of the Millennial Shopper: Designing Retail Spaces for a New Generation	Journal of Interior Design	N/A
Sharma	2013	Conceptual	It explores the role and importance of flagship store in shopping scape.	It defines shopping scape around retail centre and experiential and creates value from users' positive experience.	Flagship stores: the new all-inclusive shopping scape	Architecture & Education Journal	N/A

Marrewijk & Broos	2012	Empirical: Qualitative (Ethnographic)	Retailers construct a brand and spatial arrangements.	It makes a valuable contribution in empirical studies on space and spatial arrangements in retail stores.	Retail stores as brands: performances, theatre, and space	Consumption, Markets & Culture	B
Bourlakis, Papagiannidis & Li	2009	Conceptual	It aims to explore how to use metaverses to influence products and services, especially electronic retailing.	Retailers require to utilize a holistic approach when formulating strategies.	Retail spatial evolution: paving the way from traditional to metaverse retailing	Electronic Commerce Research	A
Haenlein & Kaplan	2009	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	The influence of Virtual hyperrealities on customer brand attitude and purchase intention.	It shows a positive influence on brand attitude and purchase intention, and purchase experience has a moderating effect on them.	Flagship Brand Stores within Virtual Worlds: The Impact of Virtual Store Exposure on Real-Life Attitude toward the Brand and Purchase Intent	Recherche et Applications in Marketing	N/A

Moore, Doherty & Doyle	2008	Empirical: Qualitative (Interview)	It investigates the role and function of flagship stores as a market entry mechanism in luxury fashion retailers.	The flagship store enhances the status of luxury and maintain relationships with customers.	Flagship stores as a market entry method: the perspective of luxury fashion retailing	European Journal of Marketing	A*
Hollenbeck, Peters & Zinkhan (2008)	2008	Empirical: Qualitative (Case study)	Its purpose is to explore brand meaning through retail spectacles via a case-study (Coca-Cola brand museum) method.	It expands the brand museum to improve consumers' brand meaning.	Retail Spectacles and Brand Meaning: Insights from a Brand Museum Case Study	Journal of Retailing	A*
Davis	2006	Empirical: Quantitative (Statistic)	It aims to explain variation in market shares and effect of patterns between stores.	It develops an empirically oriented policy analysis framework for retail markets and achieves the purpose.	Spatial competition in retail markets: movie theatres	Journal of Economics	B

Williams & Anderson	2005	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire) and Qualitative (Interview)	It assesses the importance of service elements by theatre perspective.	Customer roles and engagement significantly increased in retailing service, while service roles decreased.	Engaging customers in service creation: a theatre perspective	Journal of Services Marketing	A
Kozinets, Sherry, DeBerry-Spence, Duhachek, Nuttavuthisit & Storm	2002	Conceptual	It aims to conceptualize and investigate the flagship store.	Theme flagship brand store is a new form of entertainment shopping experience that can satisfy consumers in new millennium.	Themed flagship brand stores in the new millennium: theory, practice, prospects	Journal of Retailing	A*
Baron, Harris & Harris	2001	Conceptual	Theatre translates to retail practice; categorize customers reactions; encourage retailers using a new approach of retail experiences for consumers.	It suggests using a gestalt approach to create the effect, reviewing products' performance, segment by theatrical movements, and enhancing employees' job satisfaction.	Retail Theatre: The "Intended Effect" of the Performance.	Journal of Service Research	A*

Newman & Cullen	2001	Conceptual	It identifies new customer demands for products through analysing four elements.	In supermarkets, managers should consider and analyse the impact of the four main factors of time, location, space and merchandising on the expectations of customers and retailers.	From retail theatre to retail food show: The shrinking face of grocery	British Food Journal	B
Sherry, Kozinet, Storm, Duhachek, Nuttavuthisit & Deberry-Spence	2001	Empirical: Qualitative (Ethnography)	The goal is to capture more experiences of “being in ESPN zone” and to assume a whole outline.	Marketer intention and customer lived experience interact very well by Imagineering. Retail theatre widely shows in performative, co-creative, hybrid and multisensory essence of the phenomenon.	Being in the zone: Staging retail theatre at ESPN Zone Chicago.	Journal of Contemporary Ethnography	N/A
Wickstrom	1999	Empirical: Qualitative (Narrative)	Retailers create a special environment to change audiences’ traditional opinions and become consumers	Consumers are influenced to purchase commodities from audiences to fictional participants.	Commodities, Mimesis, and "The Lion King": Retail Theatre for the 1990s.	Theatre Journal	N/A

Table 4: Related literature on perceived risk

Author(s)	Year	Research type (Methodology)	Areas or characteristics	Aim(s) or purpose(s)	Contributions	Title	Source	ABDC journal ranking
Guru, Nenavani, Patel, Bhatt	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Regression analysis)	Customer behaviour, online shopping	It aims to better analyse and understand perceived risk in online shopping behaviour.	Three types of perceived risks affect online shopping behaviour, including performance risk, financial risk and time loss risk	Ranking of perceived risks in online shopping	Decision	A
Addo, Fang, Kulbo, Li	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	COVID-19	It aims to explore the fluctuation of purchase behaviour under COVID-19 outbreak.	It confirms the fear appeal related to the level of immersion, and customers' perceived risk lead to e-commerce development. It also found a negative social presence affect customer loyalty.	COVID-19: fear appeal favouring purchase behaviour towards personal protective equipment	The Service Industries Journal	B
Akhtar, Akhtar, Usman, Ali, Siddiqi	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	COVID-19, offline shopping, psychological reactance	It aims to analyse customers' psychological reactance under COVID-19.	This study implicates governments and managers to better understand customers' demands and satisfaction via a conceptual framework.	COVID-19 restrictions and consumers' psychological reactance toward offline shopping freedom restoration	The Service Industries Journal	B

Dryhurst, Schneider, Kerr, Freeman, Recchia, Bles, Spiegelhalter, Linden	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	COVID-19, risk perception	It aims to present the effect of risk perception in many dimensions in ten countries around the world and develop a model.	It found that people's risk perception of COVID-19 is higher than others, and it associates closely with experiential and cultural factors among countries.	Risk perceptions of COVID-19 around the world	Journal of Risk Research	C
Taylor, Landry, Paluszek, Fergus, McKay, Asmundson	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	COVID-19 stress syndrome	It investigates the internal structure, features, correlates of COVID stress syndrome and its effect.	It found that the number of people who effected on emotion are more than who effected on infection by COVID-19.	COVID stress syndrome: Concept, structure, and correlates	Depression and Anxiety	N/A
Khosravi	2020	Conceptual	COVID-19, public worry and trust	It aims to explore the influence of public worry and trust under COVID-19 pandemic.	It found that public worry and trust can increase personal perceived risk and improve protection measures.	Perceived Risk of COVID-19 Pandemic: The Role of Public Worry and Trust	Electronic Journal of General Medicine	N/A
Pham, Tang, Nguyen	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Regression analysis)	Consumer behaviour, online shopping, COVID-19, risks perception	It aims to uncover the influence of customers' the risk perception of COVID-19 on online purchasing behaviour.	Due to COVID-19, the risk perception of Vietnamese customers' purchasing behaviour has been changed significantly, while financial risk, time risk, delivery risk, and social risk have not affected by COVID-19.	Risks perception toward online shopping in Vietnam during the COVID-19 outbreak	Journal of Critical Reviews	N/A

Engle, Stromme, Zhou	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Regression analysis)	COVID-19	Its purpose is to analyse the data to find people's perceived risks due to the spread of COVID-19 and changes in travel.	People's perceived risk of the pandemic and government policies that require staying at home will lead to reduced mobility.	Staying at Home: Mobility Effects of COVID-19	Social Science Research Network	N/A
Pakpour, Griffiths	2020	Conceptual	COVID-19	The article assesses the fear caused by COVID-19 to assist develop prevention strategies to overcome its fear.	It helps professionals to identify risk groups for targeted prevention through developed a scale.	The fear of COVID-19 and its role in preventive behaviours	Journal of Concurrent Disorders	N/A
Gao, Shi, Guo, Liu	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	COVID-19, online purchase	It aims to examine the influence of COVID-19 on customers' online purchase behaviour.	It found that due to COVID-19 spread, customers more tend to purchase food online.	To buy or not buy food online: The impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on the adoption of ecommerce in China	PLOS ONE	N/A
Gao	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	Mobile phone market	The purpose of the article is to explore the components of perceived risk	Perceived risks of the mobile phone market is different from the common perceived risks, including product risk, social psychology risk,	Research on components of consumer perceived risk	International Engineering Management Conference	N/A

					buying mistaken risk and body safety risk.			
Bhukya, Singh	2015	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	The dimensions of perceived risk	The purpose is to examine the perceived risk dimension of consumers' willingness to purchase private brands.	The contribution is to conclude that perception functions, financial, physical and psychological risks have a negative impact on consumers' willingness to buy private brands.	The effect of perceived risk dimensions on purchase intention: An empirical evidence from Indian private labels market	American Journal of Business	A
Geetha, RanGaRajan	2015	Conceptual	Online shopping, electronic commerce	It aims through the different kinds of perceived risk by consumers before purchase in order to explore consumer behaviour.	It shows the relationship between eleven dimensions of perceived risk via a conceptual model and discovers the special features of female and youngsters.	A conceptual framework for perceived risk in consumer online shopping	Sona Global Management Review	N/A
Lim	2003	Empirical: Qualitative (interview)	B2C	The purpose is to study the importance and consequences of consumers' perceived risk on B2C electronic commerce.	Consumers believe that the perceived risks in B2C e-commerce come from technologies, suppliers, and products.	Consumers' perceived risk: sources versus consequences	Electronic Commerce Research and Applications	C

Mitchell	1998	Conceptual	Grocery retailing	It aims to analyse how retailers make use of perceived risk to establish a relationship between store attributes and risk dimensions.	Researching consumers' perceived risk is helpful for the development and positioning of stores and increase the value of products.	A role for consumer risk perceptions in grocery retailing	British Food Journal	B
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Table 5: Related literature on perceived comfort

Author(s)	Year	Research type (Methodology)	Areas or characteristics	Aim(s) or purpose(s)	Contributions	Title	Source	ABDC journal ranking
Melumad, Pham	2020	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	Smartphone	This paper studies the influence of the smartphone on consumers from various aspects.	Because of the uniqueness and privacy of smartphones, it has brought consumers a high degree of psychological comfort and assists them to relieve stress.	The Smartphone as a Pacifying Technology	Journal of Consumer Research	A*
Pantano, Pizzi, Scarpi, Dennis	2020	Conceptual	COVID-19	It aims to provide some strategies to retailers under the pandemic.	It found some guidelines for retailers to deal with the pandemic.	Competing during a pandemic? Retailers' ups and downs during the COVID19 outbreak	Journal of Business Research	A
Edirisinghe, Nazarian, Foroudi, Lindridge	2020	Empirical: Qualitative (case study)	Female, clothing purchase	It aims to investigate the purchase intention and repurchase behaviour of female consumers.	It found that female consumer builds a psychological relationship with retailers to increase purchase intention and repurchase.	Establishing psychological relationship between female customers and retailers: A study of the small- to medium-scale clothing retail industry	Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal	B

Sampet, Sarapaiwanich, Patterson	2019	Empirical: Quantitative (Regression analysis)	Audit quality	The purpose is examining consumer involvement and consumer comfort in the audit process.	Psychological comfort has a significant impact on audit quality and audit process.	The role of client participation and psychological comfort in driving perceptions of audit quality: Evidence from an emerging economy	Asian Review of Accounting	B
Sarapaiwanich, Sampet, Patterson	2018	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey) and qualitative (Interview)	Audit services	The purpose of this paper is to analyse the influence of communication between customers and financial auditors on their psychological comfort and trust.	Affiliation communication between clients and auditors will enhance their psychological comfort.	The impact of communication style on psychological comfort and trust in audit services	Accounting Research Journal	B
Ainsworth, Foster	2017	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	Consumer comfort, retail atmosphere, shopping behaviour	It aims to find the influence of shopping atmospheric elements on consumer comfort and how to increase consumer's shopping value.	Increasing consumer's comfort positively impact on shopping value in utilitarian value and hedonic value, while shops' layout positively impacts on consumer's comfort.	Comfort in brick and mortar shopping experiences: Examining antecedents and consequences of comfortable retail experiences	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	A

Meyer, Barnes, Friend	2017	Empirical: Quantitative (Regression analysis)	Satisfaction, interaction	The purpose is to explore the interaction of consumers and salesperson via consumer comfort and salesperson expertise to increase repurchase intention.	In the service, consumers satisfactory will lead to repurchase intentions.	The role of delight in driving repurchase intentions	Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management	A
Steen	2016	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	Retail environment	It studies how two hedonic shopping motives affect customers' perceptions of the retail environment.	It studies the impact of the perception design of the retail environment on consumer pleasure.	How customer shopping motivation influences perceived design of the retail environment	Atlantic Marketing Journal	C
Edwards, Lee, Ferle	2013	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	Psychological distance, trust	It aims to analyse the influence of psychological and physical distance in online shopping environment on consumers.	It proves reducing psychological distance between unfamiliar retailer or brand and consumer to improve brand trust.	Does Place Matter When Shopping Online? Perceptions of Similarity and Familiarity as Indicators of Psychological Distance	Journal of Interactive Advertising	B

Lloyd, Luk	2011	Empirical: Qualitative (interview)	Customer services, customer satisfaction	The purpose is analysing a sense of consumer comfort in service interaction among the influence of the quality and consumer satisfaction.	The attitude and enthusiasm of service employees will affect the psychological comfort of customers, thereby increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty.	Interaction behaviours leading to comfort in the service encounter	Journal of Services Marketing	A
Tai, Fung	2011	Empirical: Quantitative (Questionnaire)	Environmental psychology, buying behaviour	Its purpose is to test the relationship between environmental psychology and customer 'purchasing behaviour in Michael Rabian Russell Model (M-R Model).	The customer buying behaviour is induced in emotion of in-store environment.	Application of an environmental psychology model to in-store buying behaviour	The International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research	B
Vesel, Zabkar	2010	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	Loyalty	It aims to find the relationship quality in retailing and lead to consumer loyalty.	Consumer loyalty is the central of relationship quality in retailing.	Relationship quality evaluation in retailers' relationships with consumers	European Journal of Marketing	A*

El-Adly	2006	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	Shopping mall attractiveness	The purpose is finding the attractiveness factors of shopping malls in the UAE and analysing these factors how to impact on consumers.	The comfort factor that attracts consumers mainly focus on the safety, parking and cleanness of the shopping mall.	Shopping malls attractiveness: a segmentation approach	International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management	B
Spake, Beatty, Brockman, Crutchfield	2003	Empirical: Quantitative (Regression analysis)	Consumer comfort, service relationship	It aims to explore the importance of consumer comfort in service relationship.	Consumer comfort positively impact on satisfaction, trust, commitment and active with service providers.	Consumer Comfort in Service Relationships: Measurement and Importance	Journal of Service Research	A*
Park, Kim	2003	Empirical: Quantitative (Survey)	Consumer behaviour, loyalty	It aims to discover the relationship between feathers of online shopping and consumer purchase behaviour.	Consumer site commitment affected by the quality of user interface, product and service, security and site awareness.	Identifying key factors affecting consumer purchase behaviour in an online shopping context	International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management	B

Fan Ng	2003	Conceptual	Psychological needs	This paper analyses the influence of physical features of the store on consumers' shopping experience and psychological comfort.	As the shopping environment has a great influence on consumers, this paper adopts a conceptual framework to analyse the shopping environment in order to meet the psychological needs of consumers.	Satisfying shoppers' psychological needs: From public market to cyber-mall	Journal of Environmental Psychology	N/A
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