



## Full length article

# The effect of mobile retailing on consumers' purchasing experiences: A dynamic perspective

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## ABSTRACT

The emerging retail culture is characterized by the extensive use of mobile technologies, high connectivity, ubiquitous computing and contactless technologies, which enable consumers to experience shopping differently. In fact, innovative mobile technologies provide new tools (apps) which are able to separate the moment of purchase from the moment of effective consumption, by allowing consumers to make purchases by mobile phone and collect them at home or at a store (a pick-up boutique or collection point), in addition to the traditional in-store service (purchase in the store and collect/consume in the store). The aim of this paper is to understand the extent to which mobile technologies have an impact on consumer behaviour, with emphasis on the drivers motivating consumers to adopt the consumer experience of mobile shopping. To achieve this goal we used a qualitative approach involving 29 consumers in the Italian market, where mobile shopping is still at an early stage. The findings shed a light on the extent to which consumers are moving from e-channels to mobile channels and take into account the effect of these technological innovations in retail settings from a cognitive standpoint, where studies are limited. The implications for researchers and practitioners are then discussed, with emphasis on retailers need to develop new mobile service competences, and integrate and synthesize physical retail settings with mobile opportunities and functionalities.

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## 1. Introduction

Increasing computing capabilities, improvements in mobile and wireless technologies, as well as the development of flexible software architecture and automatic identification systems have led to ubiquitous access to data for both consumers and firms (Pantano, 2014; Pantano & Viassone, 2015). In fact, these technologies change both the way consumers access and consume information, and the way in which firms and organizations reach clients and deliver their services (Demirkan & Spohrer, 2014; Gao, Rohm, Sultan, & Pagani, 2013). Thus, it is not surprising that there is an increasing awareness in marketing of the need to develop new mobile marketing strategies. Mobile marketing is based on the distribution of interactive and personalized information by

overcoming the paradigm time-space where traditional marketing strategies took place (Calvo-Porrall & Levy-Mangin, 2015; Varnali & Toker, 2010). In fact, it includes new marketing activities conducted through a ubiquitous network that consumers may access anywhere and anytime from their mobile device, based on a high level of connectivity and context-awareness (Gao et al., 2013; Kaplan, 2012; Strom, Vendel, & Bredican, 2014). This is due to the ability of the system to adapt its behaviour to individual usage, in other words to reply to consumers by automatically recognizing some information about them, such as their location. For instance, a tourist might get suggestions about attractions to visit because the system recognizes his/her current geographical position (e.g. through GPS).

In this scenario, a huge number of “contactless technologies”, particularly automatic payment and self-checkout, are emerging as the most promising way of supporting the retail process (Lai & Chuah, 2010). These are based on proximity sensors that allow payment (or transactions in general) without entering any pin when the consumer's and retailer's devices are within a certain

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distance of each other. To reduce queues and waiting times, many retailers are encouraging users to adopt this system. In this framework, ubiquitous retailing is acquiring importance by involving ubiquitous access to information (Pantano, 2013). It is based on ubiquitous computing, a sort of extension of mobile computing based on portable access technologies (i.e. cameras, Location Based Service, Ubiquitous Sensor Network, etc.), always connected to a network, and linked to web-based multimedia content repositories that adapt the content provided to users' characteristics (i.e. location) (Lin, Huang, Wu, & Hong, 2011; Pantano, 2013). Therefore, these innovations are extending (removing) the traditional space and time boundaries of traditional retail settings (Bourlakis, Papagiannidis, & Li, 2009; Demirkan & Spohrer, 2014; Kourouthanassis, Giaglis, & Vrechopoulos, 2007; Pantano, 2014), while pushing retailers to redefine the traditional business model and traditional practices, particularly in terms of the mobile channel (Wang, Malthouse, & Krishnamurthi, 2015).

Hence, retailing is shifting to a new concept of space based on the extensive usage of mobile technologies which are much more integrated into daily life. In fact, while the traditional point of sale is limited to the store location, spatial dimensions and opening hours, the new stores are not related to a specific location but distributed, in terms of access, anytime and anywhere within an area enriched with the above mentioned technologies (Pantano, 2013). Hence, the consumer is always ready to buy and the retailer is always ready to sell.

Over the last decades, some authors have started investigating the possibility of consumers buying the product before effective consumption (Xie & Shugan, 2001), in a sort of *advance purchase*, as predicted by Xie & Shugan, 2001, when this kind of purchase would be supported by gift cards or prepaid cards. The current mobile technologies allow a separation of the moment of purchase from the moment of effective consumption, when consumers buy anywhere (where equipped with an internet connection) and collect at home or at the store (pick-up boutique or collection point).

Hence, consumers' experience might change over time due to the introduction of multiple mobile channels, which modify their shopping behaviour in terms of search, purchase, consumption and after-sales behaviour (Dennis, Alamanos, Papagiannidis, & Bourlakis, 2016; Verhoef et al., 2009). Despite the increasing interest by scholars and practitioners in innovation management for enhancing retailing (Demirkan & Spohrer, 2014; Hristov & Reynolds, 2015; Pantano, 2014), there is still a gap in the literature concerning the new dynamics in consumer behaviour, with emphasis on the consumer experience. For instance, previous studies largely focused on consumers' acceptance of the new systems, in terms of attitude and usage (Blázquez, 2014; Gao et al., 2013; Pantano & Viassone, 2015), or on retailers' management strategies of the technological innovation (Demirkan & Spohrer, 2014; Hristov & Reynolds, 2015; Pantano, 2014), without taking into account the effect of these technological innovations on consumers' experience from a cognitive perspective. By using the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989), they evaluated consumers acceptance as emerging from a few basic constructs (perceived ease of use, usefulness, attitude and behavioural intention).

The purpose of this research study was to investigate consumers' motivation to change their shopping behaviour in the new mobile marketing context and develop understanding of this new consumer experience and how it might create value for mobile consumers. Therefore, we developed the following research questions:

RQ1: To what extent is the new mobile scenario able to change consumers established shopping behaviour?

RQ2: What are the main drivers of new consumers shopping behaviour?

RQ3: How might the new mobile scenario create value for consumers?

Mobile retailing can be defined as a new kind of consumer purchasing experience, where the consumer buys by mobile phone and collects at home or at the store (pick-up boutique or collection point). On the other hand, e-retailing can broadly be defined as the selling of goods and services to consumers (business-to consumer, B2C) over the Internet. Our study focuses on how consumers are responding to the new mobile shopping scenario. Due to the increasing attention from scholars and practitioners on this industry, mobile consumers' behaviour seems to be a promising area. Moreover, the present study investigates how generation Y may be a marketing challenge, since this generation is more consumption-oriented than previous ones (Eastman & Liu, 2012) and this is considered a consistent sample for testing new technologies in retail settings (Harris & Dennis, 2011; Pavlou, 2003).

In order to fulfil the research gap a qualitative research approach was chosen. The main focus of this research was to understand and interpret the fundamental meanings attached to consumer behaviour and to produce insights, rather than measuring them or testing a theory (Mylona & Piporas, 2008; Priporas & Mylona, 2008). The paper is organized as follows. First, it outlines the relevant literature on mobile marketing and consumer behaviour and consumption, and highlights the gap in theoretical knowledge. Second, it describes the research methodology design. Thereafter, it discusses key empirical findings. Finally, the paper concludes with a summary discussion on relevant implications and limitations of our approach and some directions for future research.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1. Mobile marketing and consumer behaviour

Mobile marketing can be seen as the evolution of Internet-based marketing (e-commerce scenario) moved to the mobile channel, in order to respond to the emerging trend of consumers losing interest in traditional marketing channels (Hinz, Skiera, Barrot, & Becker, 2011). Recent studies has started questioning whether the mobile channel would increase retail sales or whether it is just shifting consumers from one channel to another one (from e-shopping to mobile shopping) (Huang, Lu, & Ba, 2016). Although mobile marketing is based on lower media richness when compared with e-marketing (mobile marketing is based on small screens that do not enable consumers to complete more tasks simultaneously), it exploits its ubiquity and portability by increasing consumers' interest and preferences (Maity & Dass, 2014; Pantano, 2013; Wang et al., 2015).

Mobile marketing strategies are based on how consumers access information through their own mobile phone, which firms use as a means of delivering customized messages, services, and offers (Chou, Chuang, & Shao, 2016; Kaplan, 2012). In fact, it can be successfully used to build strong relationships with consumers, engaging them with customized advertising messages and content, mobile commerce and mobile stores, etc. (Watson, McCarthy, & Rowley, 2013). It started from the usage of SMS for advertising purposes (Amir Khanpour, Vrontis, & Thrassou, 2014; Priporas & Mylona, 2008), where text messages are sent to potential consumers about deals, promotions, special offers, etc. This particular strategy can also lead to negative consumer reactions, due to both the intimate nature of mobile devices and the inability of consumers to restrict advertising delivered to their mobile phone (Andrews, Drennan, & Russell-Bennett, 2012; Nasco & Bruner, 2008). Recently, mobile marketing has expanded to the most advanced technologies such as mobile apps for smartphones (which allow consumers to easily find, compare and order products, access news

on products and services, create shopping lists, locate products and stores, etc. through a user-friendly interface), and NCF Near Field Communication (NFC) (technology that provides mobile devices with wireless two-way short-range connectivity up to a maximum of 10 cm) and Quick Response codes (QR) (bi-dimensional barcode including rich information on a product that can be accessed by scanning the code through the mobile camera), which allow consumers to pay in a “contactless way” (substituting the traditional card sweeping or insertion into the reader and the subsequent request of PIN or permission for the payment), etc. (Pantano, 2013; Ramos-de-Luna, Montoro-Rios, & Liebana-Cabanillas, 2015; Shkaridevi, Vennila, & Jayakumar, 2015; Zhao, Smith, & Alanson, 2015), based on the sense of trust in the technology, which might further evolve over time (Lin, Wang, Wang, & Lu, 2014).

Past studies largely investigated consumer acceptance of mobile marketing by extending the traditional Technology Acceptance Model including ease of use, usefulness, attitude and behaviour (Davis, 1989) with new constructs mainly based on innovativeness (Varnali & Toker, 2010; Gao et al., 2013), risk avoidance (Gao et al., 2013; Groß, 2015; Ng, 2016), trust (Gao, Waechter, & Bai, 2015; Groß, 2015; Persaud & Azhar, 2012; Varnali & Toker, 2010; Watson et al., 2013; Zhang & Mao, 2008), hedonic value (Groß, 2015; Varnali & Toker, 2010), personal attachment (Gao et al., 2013; Varnali & Toker, 2010), perceived control (Jayawardhena, Kuckertz, Karjaluoto, & Kautonen, 2009) (Table 1).

In particular, innovativeness represents consumers' personal attitudes towards innovation. Trust is a psychological state involving the positive expectation of the outcome of the behaviour of another person. In the case of mobile marketing, we refer to the trust in the technology, in considering the mobile device as a trustable resource. Using a new system, a new technology or an innovation includes a certain level of risk related to the uncertainty and the possible consequences emerging from its usage. For this reason, consumers' acceptance of mobile marketing might be limited by the risks encountered, and risk avoidance plays a role in consumers' acceptance. Similarly, the hedonic value in terms of pleasure or enjoyment emerging from the usage of certain systems increases consumer's acceptance of the system. Personal attachment represents the degree to which a user considers the mobile device an integral part of their life, and perceive themselves to be in control, which is related to their personal perception of their own ability to perform certain behaviours.

Despite these considerations, prior studies also demonstrated a negative consumer attitude towards an excess of advertising

messages, due to the increasing sense of control by the firm and the subsequent firms inferences in the decision making process (Watson et al., 2013). Literature shows an increase in consumers' usage of mobile devices for shopping (Blázquez, 2014; Ko, Lim, & Lee, 2009; Pantano & Viassone, 2015). In fact, prior authors highlighted that, as a consequence of mobile marketing and the spread of mobile technologies, there is an actual shift in the traditional paradigm of retailing based on consumer access to the retail environment to a new one based on retailers access to the consumers' environment anytime anywhere through mobile devices (Shankar, Venkatesh, Hofacker, & Naik, 2010). We can call this new paradigm mobile retailing and it is strictly linked to consumer mobile purchase behaviour anytime and anywhere.

From the retailers' point of view, mobile retailing is based on the creation and maintenance of an ad hoc mobile website and mobile apps, mobile advertising and couponing, mobile customer service, as well as mobile social network management (Shankar et al., 2010). From the consumers' point of view, the mobile retail scenario allows consumers to create a mobile/virtual shopping list, access a virtual/mobile shopping assistant, search, query, compare, and purchase products and services, and show post purchase behaviours (i.e. sharing information on the recent purchase experience through social networks, etc.).

Due to the monetary transaction involved in mobile retailing, the main drivers of consumers' acceptance relate to risk avoidance, with includes the trust in the transaction, privacy concerns and network security (Groß, 2015; Ng, 2016), in addition to the traditional TAM constructs and hedonic value. Moreover, the main limit of this new ubiquitous shopping environment for consumers is its technological boundaries, which include the ability to use the technology and their previous experience with that. Hence, these above mentioned studies focus on the drivers of success of mobile marketing, while the impact of the mobile scenario on consumers' shopping experience is still underdeveloped.

## 2.2. Consumption experience within the new mobile landscape

Prior studies focused on the value of the consumption experience in current mobile marketing (Andrews et al., 2012; Dennis et al., 2016; Holt, 1995; Verhoef et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2015), by describing the consumer experience as a situation which is able to provide benefits for consumers. In particular, it can be viewed as (i) an experience which includes hedonic, aesthetic, autotelic and subjective dimensions, which implies the embeddedness of

**Table 1**  
Constructs extending TAM for evaluating the acceptance of mobile marketing.

Additional constructs to the TAM	Contribution	References
Innovativeness	The personal attitude towards innovation might support or limit the acceptance of mobile marketing	Varnali & Toker, 2010; Gao et al., 2013
Risk avoidance	Since mobile marketing is based on the usage of mobile devices, this might include for consumers a certain level of risk (i.e. privacy concerns, security of mobile payments, etc.) that limit consumers' acceptance	Gao et al., 2013; Groß, 2015
Trust	Mobile marketing strategies need to be perceived as trustworthy by consumers in order to be successful, i.e. consumers should trust in the advertising delivered through SMS (one of the most common practices of mobile marketing)	Zhang & Mao, 2008; Varnali & Toker, 2010; Persaud & Azhar, 2012; Watson et al., 2013; Groß, 2015
Hedonic value	Hedonic value has a strong influence on building attitudes towards mobile technologies and subsequent mobile marketing strategies, while it positively correlates with convenience and information quality	Varnali & Toker, 2010; Groß, 2015
Personal attachment	Consumers are more willing to accept mobile marketing if they consider the mobile device as an integral part of their life	Varnali & Toker, 2010; Gao et al., 2013
Perceived control	The level of consumers' ability to use mobile devices encourages or discourages their acceptance of mobile marketing	Jayawardhena et al., 2009

Of e-tailing by defining it as the selling of goods and services to consumers (business-to consumer, B2C) over the Internet.

consumption objects; (ii) an integration, where the consumption objects serve to build consumers' identity or self-concept; (iii) a classification, involving the consumption objects as tools for communicating with others, and differentiating oneself from others; and as (iv) a play, where the consumption objects are a sort of tool for interacting with other consumers in an enjoyable (playful) way (Holt, 1995; Andrews et al., 2012).

The new technologies support a new purchasing/consuming scenario, where the consumer buys using a mobile device and collects at home or at the store (a pick-up boutique or collection point). In this scenario, consumers may buy anytime anywhere through the mobile app and have the purchase delivered to their home or collect it at their favored store. They are not (anymore) obliged to be physically within the store to make the purchase, because of the possibility of home delivery. In fact, consumers can access the service through the retailer's website from a desktop computer or by using their mobile phones (equipped with internet connection) to download the free ad-hoc app, which offers the same functionalities as the website. The pick-up store can be chosen from the list of points of sale that this service offers, thus consumers may select the closest or the easiest store to reach. Since the delivery of the goods is based on the traditional supply chain, the cost of delivering to the store is free of charge for consumers, who can benefit from collecting their purchases at a convenient time (within the opening hours). For instance, Nespresso allow consumers to buy products through the mobile app and then collect the purchases at the closest store. On the one hand, the app shows a sort of virtual catalogue of available products, on the other one it recognizes consumers' geographical position and suggests the closest collection point within 10 km, while accepting the payment by credit card (this data can be further memorized by the app for future purchases). A driver of consumer usage of mobile apps is convenience in terms of saving time, which in turn influences the perceived value of mobile channel usage and mobile service consumption (Kang, Mun, & Johnson, 2015).

### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Research design

Taking into consideration the exploratory nature of this study (Creswell, 2009) and the need for more studies, a qualitative approach was chosen (Priporas & Mylona, 2008). This research holds an interpretivist perspective (Gray, 2013) in order to shed light on mobile consumption experience. The inductive reasoning that derives from this approach involved a comprehensive understanding of the research context and flexible structures for the research process (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009) in order to gain an understanding of the nature of the mobile consumer experience. This inductive logic is commonly employed for theory generation (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Saunders et al., 2009). Furthermore, this study focused on the meaning by looking at the situation in its entirety and goes beyond the investigation of causes and effects between variables (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Gummesson, 2005). The interpretivist approach supports the ontological assumption that the nature of reality is socially constructed (Tadajewski, 2006) and focuses on understanding concepts via interpretation and contributes in the process of building theory, rather than attempting to test, explain, and predict assumptions (Harrison & Reilly, 2011; Saunders et al., 2009; Tadajewski, 2006).

#### 3.2. Data collection and analysis

In order to collect primary data we conducted a mix of in depth face-to-face and web-based Skype interviews (Stöttinger & Penz,

2015) with 29 Italian consumers, aged between 25 and 35 years old (older members of Generation Y) with experience of mobile retailing. The interviews took place in February–March 2015 and all the participants resided in Italy. The primary rationale in adopting this age range was the technological competence of Generation Y participants, as well as their purchasing power, since all of them were in employment. Previous studies (i.e. Gao et al., 2013) used young adult members (18–24 year old participants) as a sample. In-depth interviews reduce the “distance” between interviewer and interviewee (Johns & Lee-Ross, 1998). Literature (i.e., Palmerino, 1999; Stokes & Bergin, 2006), suggests that researchers should consider it more often since it provides more qualitative information, more depth, more representation, more efficiency, more statistics, and more value. Moreover, the choice of Italy as a referring market is justified by the fact that in this market the usage of mobile shopping is still at an early stage compared with other markets like the UK, where it is an established procedure. For instance, in the UK market for retailers such as Amazon there are several collection points and the opening hours are related to shopping center hours (usually 10.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.), while in Italy the Amazon pick up points (or Amazon Locker) are included in the national post offices and limited to their opening hours (8.00 a.m.–1.00 p.m.), and limited to some locations.

Participants were recruited using a non-probability sampling method, and specifically by convenience sampling. Data was collected through an open-ended interview guide which was designed based on existing literature (Gao et al., 2013; Groß, 2015; Kang et al., 2015; Lin et al., 2014; Pantnao & Viassone, 2015; Varnali & Toker, 2010) and designed to explore how participants' motivations to change their behaviour was prompted by mobile technologies and how perceptions of this new experiences emerged in the mobile shopping landscape. The interview guide consisted of five questions. The questions were designed to draw more information from personal experiences. The participants also had to respond to eight demographic questions. On average, the qualitative interviews lasted approximately 40 min. During the discussions, a professional tape recorder was used in order to record the discussion, with the authorization of the interviewee. The interviews were recorded to increase the accuracy of data collection since it permits the interviewer to be more attentive to the interviewee (Patton, 1990). It also allowed the authors to transcribe each interview completely so as to facilitate the process of content analysis. The researchers also took handwritten notes during the sessions. After all the interviews were completed, the discussions were transcribed. The data was organized and contented analyzed using MAXQDA software for qualitative data analysis version 10.0. The data generated was systematically structured by a set of variables and categories.

#### 3.3. Sample profile

In total, twenty nine consumers participated in this study, they were 11 females and 18 males aged between 26 and 35, who owned a smartphone. Most of them are highly educated (12 held a M.Sc. and 9 a PhD). Concerning their means of making purchases, for the majority of participants the frequency of offline shopping is higher if compared to online/mobile shopping. The findings about preferred ways of shopping were that 7 respondents physically go to a point of sale to shop at least once per week and 15 at least twice per month, while only 1 respondent shops online once per week and 11 twice per month. Moreover, most interviewees defined their level of competence in the new technologies as good (14 respondents) or excellent (7 respondents). Concerning the products most bought through the mobile service, the majority of respondents indicated clothing, then technology (and related accessories), and finally books (Table 2).

#### 4. Findings and discussion

The analysis of consumers' responses towards the potential of adopting advanced technologies that can change the dynamics of their purchasing yields several important insights about mobile marketing and consumer behaviour literature. In particular, we distinguish between two characteristics of the new occasion of purchase: motivations and consumer perception of the new experience.

##### 4.1. Motivations

Consumer responses towards this alternative to purchase using mobile phones (mobile shopping) were supported by their experience and possession of a smartphone and their familiarity with online/mobile shopping, as hypothesized by previous studies which outlined the extent to which mobile marketing is supported by consumer innovativeness and personal attachment towards mobile technologies (Gao et al., 2013; Varnali & Toker, 2010). This data further confirms the increasing usage of mobile devices for shopping (Blázquez, 2014; Ko et al., 2009; Pantano & Viassone, 2015; Shankar et al., 2010).

While most respondents judged this modality to be convenient, fast and easy, they specified their reasons for preferring this modality (when compared to the traditional way of buying where purchasing and consumption/collection were simultaneous). The first motivation is to save time, which has been largely recognized by both male and female respondents. An explanation might lie in the value the interviewed range of population gives to their time, while acting as the first motivation pushing them to change their shopping behaviour.

A. (male, 34 years old) stated: "I like buying using my mobile phone and then collecting at the collection point of the store because I save time, which means that I avoid the queue. For instance, at Nespresso corner usually there is a long queue, but I can move forward because I go directly to the collection point, they give me my bag and offer me coffee before the others".

L. (male, 28 years old) stated: "I don't like physically going to the stores to find what I need. Buying by mobile phone is faster and I can collect everything at ONE store at my earliest convenience, which means no queues and more time for other activities!"

A second important motivation concerns the utilitarian value emerging from the new mobile shopping landscape, in accordance with previous studies highlighting perceived usefulness as a driver of acceptance (Groß, 2015; Pantano, 2013; Varnali & Toker, 2010), expressed in terms of saving money: according to respondents retailers provide free delivery if buying online and collecting from the store. Actually, many retailers provide free home delivery only if the total amount of purchases exceeds a certain limit, while the delivery is free if collected from the store; for instance many bookstores (such as the Italian Mondadori) provide free delivery for purchases over 19 euros, while Clinique UK provides it with deliveries over 40 pounds and offer free delivery if collecting directly at the store.

V. (female, 34 years old) specified: "A few days ago I was waiting for the bus, and I searched for some products online. I found a new lipstick (there was a promotional price), but I couldn't pay for the delivery, because it could exceed the cost of the lipstick. Luckily, there was the option to collect from the store and I used it. I didn't know if the store usually had it, in that case it did".

Similarly, A. (male, 26 years old) added: "If I buy online and collect from the store, I'm sure I will find what I want".

**Table 2**  
Respondents profile and overview.

Respondent	Age	Gender	Education	Frequency of mobile shopping	Frequency of offline shopping	Interest towards new technology	Favorite goods to purchase
A	34	M	PhD	At least once/month	At least once/month	Excellent	Electronics
A2	26	M	MEng	2–3/year	At least once/month	Sufficient	Clothes
A3	24	M	BSc	At least once/month	At least once/month	Good	Clothes, books, electronics
A4	24	F	MEng	2–3/year	At least once/month	Good	Clothes, accessories, home goods
A5	24	M	Bsc	2–3/year	At least once/month	Excellent	Electronics
A6	33	M	Bsc	2–3/year	At least once/month	Good	Clothes, electronics
C	28	F	MEng	2–3/year	At least once/month	Good	Clothes and accessories
C2	30	M	PhD	At least once/month	At least once/month	Sufficient	clothes
S	36	F	MEng	2–3/year	2–3 per year	Sufficient	Books, clothes and cooking ware
	–45						
D	29	F	MEng	2–3/year	At least once/week	Sufficient	Books
E	33	F	MD	2–3/year	At least once/week	Sufficient	Food, clothes, gifts
E2	32	F	PhD	At least once/month	At least once/month	Excellent	books
F	29	F	PhD	At least once/month	At least once/month	Sufficient	Clothes and tickets
F2	24	F	Bsc	At least once/month	At least once/week	Excellent	clothes
G	38	M	PhD	At least once/month	2–3/year	Good	clothes
G2	24	M	MEng	2–3/year	At least once/week	Excellent	clothes
G3	39	M	High School	At least once/week	At least once/month	Excellent	Electronics, tickets
G4	31	M	PhD	2–3/year	At least once/month	Excellent	Food, tickets, books
G5	30	M	MD	At least once/month	At least once/week	Good	clothes
L	28	M	Bsc	At least once/month	2–3/year	Good	Electronics, clothes
M	27	F	MEng	At least once/month	At least once/week	Good	Clothes, books, electronics
M2	32	M	MD	At least once/month	2–3/year	Excellent	Books, clothes, electronics
M3	29	M	MD	At least once/month	At least once/month	Excellent	Music, electronics, books
N	29	F	MEng	2–3/year	At least once/week	Good	Books
V	34	F	MD	At least once/month	At least once/week	Good	Clothes
V2	35	F	MD	2–3/year	2–3/year	Good	Clothes
V3	42	F	High school	2–3/year	2–3/year	Good	Clothes
V4	41	M	High School	2–3/year	2–3/year	Sufficient	Electronics
S2	39	M	High School	2–3/year	2–3/year	Sufficient	Electronics

Another important motivation concerns respondents' lifestyles (Gao et al., 2013; Jayawardhena et al., 2009; Varnali & Toker, 2010). Most of interviewees live alone and work during the day, thus they do not have the possibility of staying at home when the courier delivers the purchases, which discourages them from buying online/mobile.

E. (female, 32 years old) explained: *"When I buy online, the courier does not specify the time of delivery so I'm obliged to stay at home all day waiting for him, but I cannot because I work. Now, some stores offer me the possibility of collecting directly at the closest point of sale according to my preferences (according to the stores opening hours). When I have time, I go there and take my purchases. It sounds lovely"*.

V. (female, 34 years old): *"I love shopping using my mobile phone, but I have a busy life: I'm always out, so I'm always worried that my purchases will arrive when I'm away! Collecting at the collection point allows me to be sure to get my purchases without constraints."*

A few respondents further added that they consider the modality of buying safer in terms of payment. In the traditional e-commerce scenario (buy online and delivery at home), trust in the payment played an important role (Lin et al., 2014), in this new scenario consumers feel more confident because they will always be able to collect all the purchases or get a (a sort of real time) reimbursement quickly.

M. (male, 29 years old) said: *"When I opened the box they delivered at home I didn't find everything. I complained and they gave me back the money for the product that I never got. I cannot complain, but it took time. Now, if something is missing in my order I can immediately have my money back, and I'm also able to check if they did not damage anything"*.

V. (female, 34 years old) said: *"I prefer buying by mobile phone and collecting at the store because I'm sure they cannot miss anything in my order. It is safer for me"*.

These findings explain the extent to which this modality might reduce the risk involved in mobile monetary transactions, which is one the main factors discouraging the adoption of mobile marketing (Ng, 2016; Gao et al., 2015; Groß, 2015; Lin et al., 2014), while enhancing trust in the transaction, which produces different results when compared to the traditional trust construct in mobile marketing and mobile commerce. Thus, findings further support the work of Lin et al. (2014) who stated that the sense of trust might evolve over time as context where the transaction takes place evolves.

#### 4.2. Consumers' perception of the new consumption experience

Considering consumer experience as a consequence of the interactions between consumer, product and firm (Verhoef et al., 2009), our interviewees evaluated their experiences with the new shopping scenario on the basis of the quality of the interactions they had. In accordance with past studies (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Richelieu & Korai, 2014; San-Martin & López-Catalán, 2013), the new experience emerged as highly satisfying since it met consumers' expectations.

E. (female, 32 years old) stated: *"The first time I tried to buy through a mobile app was like a joke. McDonalds invited clients to download the new app for ordering food and collecting at McDrive and getting a free drink. It was perfect (and the free drink was only an extra). I liked that opportunity so much that I started searching the mobile apps of my favorite brands to see if they had similar opportunities"*.

As supportive statements, other respondents consider the new experience very convenient in terms of time and money. As anticipated by previous studies, convenience in terms of time saving has become one of the drivers of consumers' usage of mobile services,

with emphasis on the retail industry (Kang et al., 2015). Our findings confirmed the extent to which this new purchasing modality allows consumers to save time (avoid the queues in stores) by extending convenience in terms of saving money in terms of the delivery cost. Other consumers noticed that convenience also relies on the possibility of getting personalized offers and special promotions, as well as on the automatic recognition of consumers' location that allows an adaptive response. Hence, these insights describe the concept of convenience in terms of time, money saving and customized services (such as ad hoc promotions).

Moreover, our findings specify the importance of usefulness as a driver of positive consumer attitudes towards the mobile shopping environment (Groß, 2015; Pantano, 2013; Varnali & Toker, 2010).

V. (34, female) added: *"I usually buy by mobile phone because my favorite brands send promotions ad hoc for me, which I can easily use when I buy directly from my iPhone. And sometimes I even have fun looking for a special offer"*.

While, A. (33, male) explained: *"Last time I forgot to buy a present for a graduation, thus I searched through my mobile app for something that I could buy [...] the app even suggested the closest store to me where I could collect the purchase. This allowed me to arrive on time for the ceremony (and with a gift)"*.

E. (female, 33 years old) supported: *"Buying by mobile phone is more convenient than buying online, because with this specific app I can only see what best fits my interests. I have the app of my favorite brands and I like checking to see what's new. Collecting at the point of sale is just an added bonus, because in this way I get both the benefits from buying online and offline at the same time!"*

This statement supports the importance of context-awareness (Gao et al., 2013; Kaplan, 2012; Strom et al., 2014) for consumers. Hence they appreciated the system suggestions made on the basis of their geographical position, without the need to input queries or upload more information. Thus, context-awareness could also be seen as fundamental for a successful mobile app. Moreover, it shows that recommendations based on geographical position are largely accepted, and do not involve any privacy concerns.

Similarly, the ease of use of the mobile app contributes to the perception of a positive consumer experience, in accordance with the previous studies on TAM for mobile marketing which highlighted the importance of ease of use (Groß, 2015; Gao et al., 2013; Persaud & Azhar, 2012; Varnali & Toker, 2010; Watson et al., 2013; Zhang & Mao, 2008).

## 5. Conclusions

Our study extends the literature on attitude and usage of mobile marketing (Blázquez, 2014; Dennis et al., 2016; Gao et al., 2013; Pantano & Viassone, 2015), by exploring what motivates consumers to change their consumer experience and exploring their perception of the subsequent emerging benefits. While prior studies focused on the value of the consumer experience in mobile marketing as a beneficial situation (Andrews et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2015), our research further explains in detail how this consumer experience creates value for consumers, by saving them time, saving them money, supporting their lifestyle, offering security in transactions, and offering quality collection services, which act as drivers of the new consumer behaviours. In fact, our findings show the extent to which consumers are willing to adopt mobile shopping and change their established purchasing behaviour to avoid queues in stores. These elements are able to push consumers to change their consolidated shopping behaviour towards a new consumer experience based on the separation of buying and consumption (collection), both implying a change in consumers' experience over time, supporting Verhoef et al. (2009), and providing insights on the separation between the moment of

purchase and the moment of consumption/collection (Xie & Shugan, 2001). Although the actual usage of mobile is devoted mainly to purchase modality linked to a collection point, which could be done in any web based scenario, the preference of consumers to choose this medium for shopping pushes scholars and practitioners to reflect on consumers' motivation towards this preference. Therefore, the difference is not on the service itself but on the mobile shopping experience which result more convenient for consumers from a cognitive perspective. Thus, the possibility to live this enhanced mobile shopping experience pushes consumers to change their traditional shopping behaviour by shifting from an e-channel to a mobile one. Although the actual use of mobile technology is devoted mainly to purchase modality linked to a collection point, which could be done in any web based scenario, the preference of consumers to choose this medium for shopping pushes scholars and practitioners to reflect on the motivation behind this preference. Therefore, the difference is not in the service itself but in the mobile shopping experience, which is more convenient for consumers from a cognitive perspective. Thus, the possibility to live this enhanced mobile shopping experience pushes consumers to change their traditional shopping behaviour by shifting from an e-channel to a mobile one.

Similarly, the new consumption experience is perceived by consumers as (i) satisfying, (ii) convenient, (iii) easy, and (iv) fast, by extending previous studies on the technology acceptance model for the mobile landscape (Gao et al., 2013; Groß, 2015; Varnali & Toker, 2010). Summarizing, the paper on the one hand highlights the extent to which consumers are moving from e-channels to mobile channels, while analyzing the effect of these technological innovations on retail settings from a cognitive standpoint, by extending previous work on the adoption of mobile tools that create value for consumers (Dennis et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2015). On the other hand, it shows the extent to which this channel might substitute the e-channel, while pushing retailers to integrate physical retail settings with mobile opportunities to successfully compete in the changeable retail scenario.

Therefore, our research is the first work exploring consumer dynamics in the new mobile scenario, by deepening understanding of consumers' point of view through a qualitative approach, and by adding alternative insights to the previous studies which focus on developing quantitative data on mobile marketing practices (Gao et al., 2013; Groß, 2015; Varnali & Toker, 2010).

The continuous developments in technology will further modify the current mobile landscape, particularly in terms of the new functions included in mobile apps which are able to provide more entertaining and satisfying experiences. However, the actual mobile technologies are not sophisticated enough to provide a shopping experience that can substitute for that provided at the physical point of sale. Despite these considerations, managers should take into account the changes in consumer dynamics, their increasing usage of mobile apps, and the ability of mobiles to perfectly satisfy some consumers' needs, which otherwise would be not completely met or which would require much effort by the firm to be satisfied. Because it is possible to collect at the store, online and mobile purchases overcome one of the traditional limits of online shopping (the obligation to collect at home), therefore, marketers should provide "mobile experiences" to their consumers through appealing and updated apps which are able to engage them in mobile purchases. This would include frequent information on new collections, new offers, personalized offers and deals, and a highly interactive interface which offers many functions that could be improved and enhanced according to progress in technology (i.e. 3D graphics, etc.).

Therefore, while the substitution of the traditional point of sale for the mobile scenario is still unrealistic, mobiles in terms of

mobile apps and mobile store might replace traditional online retailing (Chou et al., 2016), by moving from a desktop based shopping experience (e-retailing/online shopping) towards a mobile one. As a consequence, retailers should concentrate their effort on providing a more exciting mobile experience. Due to the limited size of the actual screens, mobile apps need to provide a huge amount of content in a small space, as opposed to desktop applications. Therefore, retailers strongly established online service competences should revise their capabilities to promptly reply to the emerging mobile challenge, by developing mobile service competences, and integrating and synthesizing physical retail settings with mobile opportunities and functionalities.

## 6. Limitations and further research

Although this study contributes to literature and to business practice, it is not free of limitations. This study was qualitative in nature and the focus was explicitly on obtaining depth of understanding rather than generalization. Forthcoming studies could employ quantitative approaches and analyses. Secondly, the sample used in this study was sufficient for the purposes of this study and allowed reasonable conclusions to be drawn, however it cannot be considered representative of all Italian consumers of generation Y. Other potential new studies could include larger and more representative samples within Italy to strengthen the current findings. Finally, the current study was centered on a particular country. Further research should include investigations in other countries which are at a similar mobile retailing stage and encompass cross-national studies which compare consumers' experiences, in order to verify and extend the current findings.

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