

## Value Creation in Shopping Environment: A Comparison between Behavior in Physical and Virtual Retail Environments

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### Abstract

This research analyzes consumer behavior in virtual reality (VR) versus physical retail environments, focusing on purchasing patterns, perceived value, and adaptive behavior. Using three experimental designs, 120 undergraduate students were randomly assigned to begin shopping in either a VR or physical store. Data were collected on basket composition, product types, monetary value, time spent, and post-experience surveys and interviews. Participants came from various academic backgrounds, notably engineering and tech-related fields, which influenced their ability to adapt to VR. Students from digital disciplines demonstrated greater fluency and comfort in VR, leading to more exploratory and hedonic shopping behavior. In VR, shopping baskets included more snack items and showed higher product variability. Physical store shoppers favored perishable goods and displayed more routine-driven habits. Those who started in VR adapted more easily to physical shopping, while those beginning in physical stores engaged more cautiously with VR. Digital fluency correlated positively with perceived ease, satisfaction, and value in VR experiences. A MANOVA identified four consumer archetypes based on adaptability and shopping strategies. The findings offer valuable insights for omnichannel retail, emphasizing the need to tailor user experiences to consumers' technological backgrounds. Both retailers and educational institutions can benefit from understanding digital readiness in hybrid retail spaces.