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A New Marketing Paradigm Shift for Online Shopping Experience

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Abstract: ***Purpose****–People today are living in an era of progress and civilization that deeply affectstheirlife and ways of thinking. The Internet has greatly influenced people's live style and shifted it toward an easier one. This study presents a model that would aid in understanding the research premises regarding online purchaseintention.*
Design/Methodology/Approach*–A survey was conducted on 238 participants in Saudi Arabia.*
Findings *– The findings reveal that online purchase intention is significantly influenced by perceived usefulness, which is the salient predictor, followed by perceived ease of use, perceived enjoyment, and adoption of e-word of mouth comments. Furthermore, the results confirmed that perceived enjoyment and credibility of e-word of mouth had no impact ononline purchase intention.*
Originality *–*
Keywords: *Virtual purchase, Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, Perceived enjoyment, Perceived security, Electronicword of mouth.*

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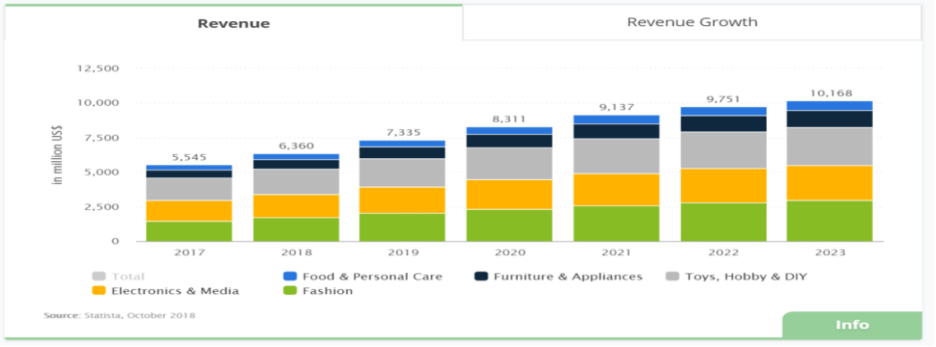
I. Introduction

Online shopping is a part of electronic commerce. Recently, the number of online shoppershas increased, as it allows themto save time, seek convenience,and reduce shopping cost (Guritno and Siringoringo,2013). In 2016, online purchases comprised51% of the total purchases. Social commerce, a subset of electronic commerce, is also gaining popularity as it involves shopping behavior through social media. The selling and buying transactions are conducted through social interactions and user contributions (Zhanget al.,2014) in several social network platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, blogs, and shopping sites.Undoubtedly, social media has remarkably changed people's behavior and played a significant role given the amount of time, an average of 3 hours per day, that people spend on social platforms.

In the global retail market, online retailing has expanded and changed customer shopping experience. Without going to physical stores, customers would be able to browse and compare the price and features of products through online shopping, which is advantageous for them. According to Nielsen (2018), the most popular products purchased on the Internet were fashion products, travel essentials, and books, which accounted for 61%, 59%, and 49% of the total purchases, respectively.

According to CITC E-commerce Research (2017), the number of Internet users and different payment methods are increasing in Saudi Arabia. Consequently, this evolution leads to an increase in online shopping among the population with an annual average spending rate of 4,000 SR per person. Toys and products for hobbies are the most purchased goods online in Saudi Arabia. TheSaudi Vision 2030 supports thedevelopment of the e-commerce sector, which is promising because of the expected increase in revenue to US$7,335,000 and number of usersto 22.4 million in 2019. Figure 1 shows the expected revenue in the e-commerce industry in the Saudi market.

Figure 1 : Average revenue in thee-commerce industry of Saudi Arabia



Some studies have examinedthe factors influencing online shopping (Cha, 2011; Gillenson and Sherrell, 2002; Dittmaret al.,2004), and others investigatedthe driving force for the continuous growth of onlinepurchase,especially in Saudi Arabia (Al-Maghrabiet al.,2011; Al-Maghrabi and Dennis,2009). The present study combinestheory of reasoned action (TRA) and technology acceptance model (TAM) with an integration of other online shopping perceptions, namelyperceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived enjoyment, and perceived security, and electronic word of mouth to as assess online purchase intention.

II. Literature review

Several scholars have attempted to linkconsumer attitudes and their behavioral intentions in using technologyTaylor and Todd, 1995; Venkatesh and Davis, 1996; Davis, 1989). TAM explains how an information system can be adopted, whereasTRA describes the intention and consumer behavior (Davis, 1989; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1980; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).It supposes thatperceived usefulness,perceived ease of use, and perceived enjoymentareallpredictors of technology adoption; the two main factors are perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use(Davis, 1989).

Perceived usefulness

Perceived usefulness (PU)refers to "the extent to which a person believes that using a particular technology will enhance her/his job performance" (Davis, 1989). PU reflects the utilitarian aspects of online shopping (Al-Maghrabi et al., 2011; Hess et al., 2014). Most of the studies indicate that PUhas a strong positive impact on virtual purchase intention (Hirst and Omar, 2007), whereas some studies found that PU hasno significant effecton purchase intention (Ramayah and Ignatius, 2005).

Perceived ease of use

Perceived ease of use (PEU)is "the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system would be free of real and mental efforts" (Davis, 1989). Some researchers point out that PEUhas a positive relationship with continuance intention in the context of virtual purchase (Chiu and Wang, 2008; Cha, 2011),whereas others found that PEU has an indirect impact on attitudes toward online shopping (Hirst and Omar,2007). In addition, the more the system exhibits ease of use, the more it will be successful(Rodrigueset al., 2016). Thus, customers would buy online if they find the website to be user-friendly (Ramayah and Ignatius, 2005).However, the perceived ease of use is dependent on the reason customers use technology, which can be utilitarian or hedonic (Hess et al.,2014).

Perceived enjoyment

Perceived enjoyment (PE) represents "the extent to which the activity of using the system is to be perceived enjoyable in its own right, apart from any performance consequences that may be anticipated" (Davis et al., 1992, p. 1113). Researchers found thatPEhas a significant effecton a website's entertainment purposes,which positively affects customer attitudes toward online shopping (Atkinson andKydd,1997; Ha and Stoel, 2009).Moreover, PEis found to represent the hedonic value of online shopping (Al-Maghrabi and Dennis,2011; Hess et al.,2014)

Perceived security

Perceived security (PS)is considered a barrier for customers inadoptingelectronic commerce(Cha, 2011). PS is "the extent to which one believes that the World Wide Web is secure for transmitting sensitive information" (Pearson and Miler,2001). Hence, doubts on the security of electronic transaction and the inability of customers to evaluate the products prior to purchasing areconsidered majordrawbacks inusing online shopping (Browne et al., 2004). It is found that thehigher the customer perceived the security of a website to be, the higher their intention to purchase (Salisburyet al., 2001).

Electronic word of mouth

With the advancement of technology, a new phenomenonin marketing field known as the electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) emerges.This paradigm depicts the interaction among customers in the virtual world from different countries and cultures. E-WOMis defined as "any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet" (Thurau and Gremler, 2003). Moreover, Hoffman and Novak (1966) stated that many-to-many mediated communications differ from the traditional "one-to-many mediated communication" such thatthe customers can interact with each other and the firms, as well as provide content in the virtual world.Thus, when consumers use the product information from E-WOMto orient their purchase decision, they add credibility to the online recommendations. Customers have been found to use E-WOM because of diverse reasons such as social benefits, economic incentives, concern for others, and self-enhancement (Thurau and Gremler, 2003).

Online purchase intention

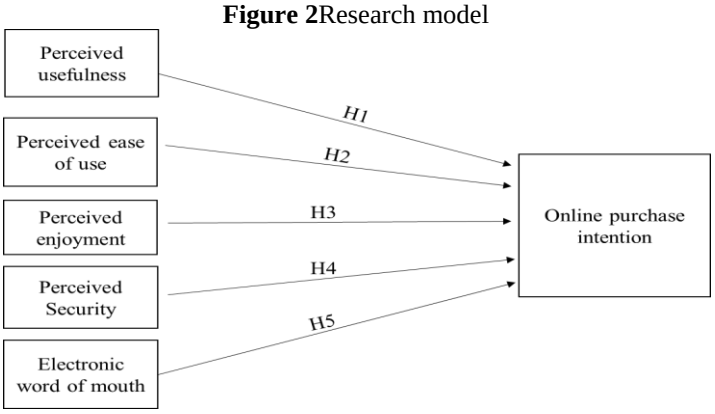
Purchase intention can be defined as people's action toward buying a brand (BagozziandBurnkrant, 1979). Some scholars claimed that attitude differs from intention. Attitudemeans evaluation of products, whereas intention is the person's motivation to perform behaviors(Rezvaniet al.,2012). Individual's attitude toward behavior is found to affectthe intention to use an information system (Davis, 1989). The online transaction is called online purchase intention (Ling et al., 2010). When people complete transactions using the Internet, it reflects the existence oftheir positive intention, which isshaped by a positive attitude towardInternet usage (Zarrad and Debabi, 2012). Moreover, when a consumer wants to shop using the electronic platforms, it expresses the existence of a positive attitude and a favorable purchase intention to the products on the virtual word (Salisbury et al., 2001).TRA proposes that behavioral intentions and behaviors can be predicted by attitudes (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1980).Moreover, manyfactors affect, positively or negatively, online purchase intention such as perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceivedenjoyment, perceived security, privacy concerns, gender, and experiencewith Internetuse (Cha, 2011; Zarrad and Debabi,2012).

In the present paper, PUrefers to the perception of technology that enhances the virtual purchasing performance. PEU represents the facility in which individuals perceive the virtual shopping use. If a system is relatively easy to use, then people will be more interested in knowing its advantages and will be expected to continue using it. PE is the extent by which aconsumer expresses enjoyment in virtual purchase experience. PS represents the safety of using personal information in virtual purchases. Finally, E-WOM represents the credibility of online comments andthe way these comments influence purchase intention. Following the previous studies, this present study derives hypotheses that examine the impact of PU, PEU, PE, PS, and E-WOM on intention to purchase online.

Research model

Figure 2 presents the framework of this study.

Figure 2 Research model



Research hypotheses

From the earlier discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1. Perceived usefulness has a positive significant impact on intention to online purchase.

H2. Perceived ease of use has a positive significant impact on intention to online purchase.

H3. Perceived enjoyment has a positive significant impact on intention to online purchase.

H4. Perceived security has a positive significant impact on intention toonline purchase.

H5a.Credibility of electronic word of mouth has a positive significant impact on intention to online purchase.

H5b.Adoption of electronic word of mouth has a positive significant impact on intention to online purchase.

III. Research methodology

In this study, a quantitative approach was applied. The survey data were obtained through a questionnaire. To test the hypotheses, a linear regression was performed usingSPSS. The questionnaire includes 22 items adopted from the literature(Cha,2011; Cheung et al, 2014), and socio-demographic informationsuch as age, gender, level of education, and regionwas obtained. A5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1(strongly agree) to5 (strongly disagree), was used to rate each item and to explore behaviors related toPU, PEU, PE, PS, and E-WOM.The research instrument wasfirst translated into Arabic language by a bilingual expert. Then, the survey was back-translated to verifythe validity of the translation and check for possible translation errors. The questionnaire developed was tested through a small pilot study to assess its comprehensibility and usability. A total of 238 responses were collected from a sample of consumers over the age of 15 years from all Saudi Arabia regions. Table Ishows that most of the respondents were 26–35 years old andholda bachelor's degree. Moreover, 82% of them were women.

Table I. Demographic profile

Respondent profile		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	41	17.2
	Female	197	82.8
Age (years)	15–25	57	23.9
	26–35	89	37.4
	36–45	54	22.7
	46–55	25	10.5
	56 and above	13	5.5
Education	High School	37	15.5
	Bachelor	161	67.6
	Masters	18	7.6
	Ph.D.	16	6.7
	Others	6	2.5
Area	Central	197	82.8
	Eastern	9	3.8
	Western Region	25	10.5
	Northern Region	4	1.7
	Southern Region	3	1.3

Results

Reliability and validity of measures

The reliability and validity of the measurement were confirmed using the factor analysis and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The relationship variables were evaluated using regression models. Tables II and IIIpresent the overall reliability of the items, loading,andthe reliability of each construct. For the 22 items, the overallCronbach'salpha coefficientwas .929, which indicates an acceptable reliability level (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).The Cronbach's alphavalues related to constructs ranged from .785 to .919;hence, allthe constructs are reliable (Hair et al. 1998;Taber, 2016). As shown in Table III, each item loadingwashigher than 0.5; therefore, each item is considered satisfactory (Evrard et al., 2003). For the Pearson correlation, the result indicates that the variables are linearly related. The inter-item correlation matrix values of all the constructs indicatea positive relationship.Thus, the variables in the conceptual framework are positively correlated (Table IV).

Table II. Reliability test

Cronbach's alpha	No. of Items
.929	22

Table III. Item loadings and reliability of constructs

		Factor loading	Cronbach's α
	Intention to purchase (IP)		
IP1	I intend to purchase items online.	0.605	
IP2	It is likely that I will purchase items online.	0.707	0.919
IP3	I expect to purchase items online.	0.698	
	Perceived usefulness (PU)		
PU1	Shopping online is (would be) useful for me.	0.593	
PU2	Shopping online makes (would make) me more efficient.	0.674	0.832
PU3	Shopping online makes (would make) my life easier	0.563	
	Perceived ease of use (PEU)		
PEU1	Learning to shop online is (would be) easy for me.	0.800	
PEU2	It is (would be) easy to get online shopping services to do what I want to do.	0.653	0.785
PEU3	Online shopping is (would be) easy to use	0.725	
	Perceived enjoyment (PE)		
PE1	I (would) find online shopping to be enjoyable.	0.842	
PE2	The actual process of online shopping is (would be) pleasant.	0.894	0.917
PE3	I (would) have fun shopping online.	0.869	
PE4	I (would) find shopping online to be interesting.	0.715	
	Perceived security (PS)		
PS1	Using credit cards to make purchases online is (would be) safe. (would be) safe.	0.872	0.913
PS2	Making payments online is (would be) secure.	0.868	
	Credibility of E-WOM comment (CE-WOM)		
PWOM1	I think comments are factual.	0.793	0.982
PWOM2	I think comments are accurate.	0.739	

PWOM3	I think comments are credible	0.812	
	E-WOM comments adoption (E-WOM)		
EWOM1	Information from comments contributed to my knowledge of discussed product/service.	0.771	
EWOM2	Comments made it easier for me to decide whether to purchase.	0.876	0.932
EWOM3	Comments have enhanced my effectiveness in making purchase decisions.	0.882	
EWOM4	Comments motivate me to make purchase action.	0.855	

Table IV. Inter items correlation matrix correlations

		IP	PU	PEU	PE	PS	CE-WOM	E-WOM
IP	Pearson correlation	1						
	Sig. (two-tailed)							
	N	238						
PU	Pearson correlation	.729**	1					
	Sig. (two-tailed)	.000						
	N	238	238					
PEU	Pearson correlation	.636**	.561**	1				
	Sig. (two-tailed)	.000	.000					
	N	238	238	238				
PE	Pearson correlation	.635**	.703**	.495**	1			
	Sig. (two-tailed)	.000	.000	.000				
	N	238	238	238	238			
PS	Pearson correlation	.398**	.373**	.360**	.331**	1		
	Sig. (two-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000			
	N	238	238	238	238	238		
CE-WOM	Pearson correlation	.214**	.198**	.237**	.209**	.342**	1	
	Sig. (two-tailed)	.001	.002	.000	.001	.000		
	N	238	238	238	238	238	238	
E-WOM	Pearson Correlation	.335**	.264**	.307**	.314**	.302**	.684**	1
	Sig. (two-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	238	238	238	238	238	238	238

Note: IP, intention to purchase; PU, perceived usefulness; PEU, perceived ease of use; PE, perceived enjoyment; PS, perceived security; CE-WOM, credibility of E-WOM comment; EWOM, E-WOM comments adoption. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results of the regression analysis

To examine the factors that affect virtual online shopping, a multiple regressions analysis was performed (Table V). The result of the analysis indicates the following. Among the three components of TAM, PUis the most salient factor that affects online purchase intention (β = .416, t = 0.000). Hence, Hypothesis 1 issupported. PEU(β = .278, t= 0.000)and PE (β = .156. t = 0.000) have significant and positive influenceon online purchase intention. Therefore, Hypotheses 2 and 3 are supported. PS has no effect on online purchase intention (β=.081,t = 0.076); therefore, Hypothesis 4 is rejected. The credibility of E-WOM has no impact on online purchase intention (β= −0.074, t =0.184), which does not support Hypothesis 5a. By contrast, the adoption of E-WOMhas a significant and positive influence on online purchase intention (β = 0.117, t= 0.04), which supports Hypothesis 5b.

Table V. Regression analysis

Model	Standardized coefficients beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)		2.636	.009
PU	.416	6.916	.000
PEU	.278	5.554	.000
PE	.156	2.712	.007
PS	.081	1.785	.076
CEWOM	−.074	−1.333	.184
EWOM	.117	2.066	.040

Note: IP, intention to purchase (dependent variable); PU, perceived usefulness; PEU, perceived ease of use; PE, perceived enjoyment; PS, perceived security; CE-WOM, credibility of E-WOM comment; EWOM, E-WOM comments adoption.

IV. Discussion

This study explains the paradigm shift from retail to online shopping in the Saudi culture. To examine this shift, a model that integrates TAM, the perceivedsecurity, and thee-word of mouth in online purchase intention was developed. Behaviors regarding perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, perceived enjoyment, perceived security,ande-word of mouth in online shopping are considered without differencesin age, gender, or education.

The findings of this present study are consistent with previous studies (Cha, 2011; Seyal and Rahman,2003; Guritno and Siringoringo, 2013), suggesting thatonline purchase intention is significantly influenced by perceived usefulness, followed by perceived ease of use, and perceived enjoyment. Companies should improve their website design to satisfy their customers' needs and provide more useful and valuable information about their products. Their products and services should be presented on the website ina way that facilitates the convenient shopping experience and transaction procedures to encourage online shopping.

Moreover, firms must focus on the importance of perceived enjoyment to promote and maximize their sales. In the Saudi culture, people consider online shopping experience as an entertainment activity; therefore, perceived enjoyment is the main determinant of online shopping, which converges with prior results (Al-Maghrabi et al., 2011)

Contrary to expectations, perceived security hasno impact on online purchase intention, which is contrary to the results of previous studies (Shareefet al.,2018; Salisbury et al.,2001; Naradinet al.,2018). In the Saudi context, consumers are still concerned about the online security of credit card use, in particular, keeping their personal information private. Hence, the service providers should take measures in ensuring customer security by, for example, offeringdifferent methods of payment(Al-Ghaith et.al, 2010).

With regard to e-word of mouth, the results showed that the respondents are not able to make deductions onsourcecredibility,because of the lack of verbal andpreverbal cues. The credibility of e-word of mouth has noimpacton online purchase intention, whereasthe adoption of e-word of mouth has a positive influence. People with high motivation adopt e-word of mouth for an easier decision-making on online purchase(Filieri,2015; Balakrishnanet al.,2014; Cheung et al.,2009)

V. Managerial and theoreticalimplications

The study highlighted an interesting result concerning the existence of some essential factors in conceiving online apps and websites. Companies should make the shopping experience more fun and enjoyable for their customers to increase sales. Moreover, firms should recognize the continuous growth of the Saudi market; hence, they should give Saudi customers more payment options, such as cash on delivery, to overcome the resistance toward online payment. Generally, customers find it convenient to receive online solutions, because theyare fast and can make life easier. Companies should launch a simplest process to encourage individuals buying online. This process must consider theE-WOMinfluence in increasing the online purchase. At the theoretical level, the present research model adds value to the literature by combining the TAM model with perceived security and E-WOM.

VI. Conclusion

Without a doubt, technology affects life directly. The Internet creates a small virtual village, where people can save time in shopping. Thisstudy explored the effectiveness of adopting the TAM model, and whether perceived security andE-WOMaffect online purchase intention. Consistent with previous research, the present study's findings demonstrate that the TAM constructs, namely PU, PEU, andPE, positively influence online purchase intention. In contrast to some earlier studies, PSdoes nothave any action on the virtual purchase intention. With regard to E-WOM, the credibility of E-WOM was found to have no influence on online purchase intention, whereas the adoption of E-WOM affects it from the customer perspectives.

Limitation and future studies

Most of the respondents in this study were female and came from the central region of Saudi Arabia; hence, generalizability is limited. Moreover, the time to conduct the survey was limited. For future studies, in order to collect more accurate responses, perceived privacy should be distinguished from perceived security, as well as virtual shopping from real-world shopping. In addition, future researchers can investigate how the Saudi Arabia 2030 vision will affect online purchase intention. They can consider adding more variables in the model such as the lifestyle inSaudi Arabia and its influence on e-shopping. Finally, celebrities' endorsement on advertisement will be an interesting variable to consider in investigating the individual's online purchase intention.

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