The Role of Community Characteristics in determining Target Audiences in Arabic Gulf Countries interested in Online Purchasing through Commercial Smartphone Applications

International Journal of Computer Applications
Foundation of Computer Science (FCS), NY, USA

Volume 168
Number 2

Year of Publication: 2017

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Abstract

Community’s characteristics are important indicators in the study of disseminating electronic systems on a large scale. A community might be influenced positively to accept electronic systems if their basic requirements to use said electronic systems are commonly available. Therefore, determining communities’ characteristics is the first pillar in identifying a population segment interested in online purchasing, followed by determining their requirements to interact with electronic systems successfully.

This study sought to identify common properties within the target audience for commercial smartphone applications in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Many academic studies point to the increasing volume of online trade exchange in GCC, as well as the rise in smartphone users, as compared with the overall population of the GCC. Thus, the success of m-commerce applications depends on two main aspects: identifying the target sector interested in online purchasing in the GCC region and identifying the technical requirements of the users in the target sector, so that m-commerce applications can be created and adopted successfully in the
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GCC region. This study will benefit companies that want to activate electronic sales channels, such as commercial applications, over the Internet. These companies require accurate information about their audiences to help them succeed in activating these commercial applications. This data can be used to expand the target population in the future through many attractive promotions, such as loyalty programs.

The study method was quantitative (questionnaire), using samples from three GCC countries and incorporating four demographic moderators to determine audience characteristics: age, gender, user's previous experience, and educational level. The samples from Saudi Arabia (KSA), Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the overall total of completed responses were 386, 171, and 246, respectively. These results were collected from participants who had previous experience in completing online transactions through commercial applications. Additionally, all participants had lived in the GCC for more than two years.

This study used the Information Systems Success (ISS) model, which has been tested on many electronic systems, but there exists a lack in studies regarding m-commerce approaches. Adding the demographic moderators into the ISS model determined the importance of each moderator to the ISS model and the study samples. The samples' characteristics were identified based on the demographic moderators and the success of commercial smartphone applications.

References


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Information Systems.

Index Terms

Computer Science
Information Sciences

Keywords

Questionnaire Survey, GCC, M-Commerce, Commercial Application