



Factors affecting camera mobile phone adoption before e-shopping in the Arab world

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ABSTRACT

With the seamless inclusion of a camera-mobile phone (CMP) as a regular part of people's everyday life, businesses have tried to explore their potential as an e-commerce tool. Even without the Internet, CMP is a new technology that is in widespread use in the State of Kuwait. This study reports on the findings of a study exploring the intention to use and acceptance use of CMP prior to retail purchases using the second technology acceptance model (TAM 2) in a collectivism culture where social group affects individual decisions. Based on a sample of 151 users in Kuwait, the study reveals that TAM 2 provides limited results. The intention to use CMP is only determined by subjective norms, ease of use and camera usefulness. Surprisingly, the study results revealed that the contribution of social norms on intention to use is weak and less than that of usefulness. Among external variables (image, job relevancy, output quality, and result demonstrability), only job relevancy exerts an indirect effect on the intention to use via the "usefulness" component of this model.

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1. Introduction

The number of mobile phones in use throughout the world is now more than 4.6 billion (CBS News, 2010) and the International Telecommunication Union is expecting that mobile application downloads will reach 48 billion in 2015 (ITU, 2011). With the widespread use of these technologies, studies focusing on mobile device adoption at the individual and organizational level have notably increased. A number of past studies have focused on different services that mobile devices offer including: short message services [15,59], games [6,49], the digital camera [57,60], m-internet [27], mobile commerce [6,20,46,62], mobile payment [6,58], and m-government [22].

In addition, the number of studies dedicated to mobile devices and mobile commerce (m-commerce) increased

and at the same time focused on different issues (e.g. see literature review done by Ngai and Gunasekaran [46]. Venkatesh, and Ramesh [72] studied the profiles of mobile users and the patterns for their use of different mobile services). Hung et al. [23] studied the effect of subjective norms on consumer intentions for using mobile phones. Lu et al. [39] studied the effects of facilitating conditions on the intentions of using wireless mobile internet service devices. Cheong and Park [9] developed a modified Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) for mobile internet acceptance in Korea. Nysveen et al. [49] investigated the intentions to use mobile services (text messaging, contacts list, payment, and games). Meso et al. [44] studied factors affecting mobile phone use in Africa. Yi et al. [76] studied factors affecting PDA adoption. Lin and Wang [35] examined determinants of customer loyalty in m-commerce. Abdul Karim et al. [1] examined mobile phone applications in Malaysia. Au and Kauffman (2007) examined and analyzed the different relevant stakeholders that have an impact on mobile payment. Rouibah and Abbas [60]

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proposed a model for camera mobile phone adoption in Kuwait. Rouibah and Abbas [57] studied the effect of personal innovativeness, attachment motivation and social norms on the acceptance of camera mobile phones, while Rouibah [58] investigated the antecedents of mobile payment in Kuwait.

Among mobile phone services, the camera mobile phone (CMP) receives rare attention even though it is widely used. News agencies rely on CMP because of its availability at event sites almost anywhere and at any time. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) recently distributed CMP devices to its reporters and producers to capture sudden events, such as the occasion of the deadly bus accident in Wales when a CMP holder arrived at the scene ahead of traditional cameras [74].

1.1. Research question and significance

Among mobile services, this paper focuses solely on the intention to use the camera feature of mobile phones (hereafter CMP) before shopping. Several models were studied for appropriateness as a framework, including the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and TAM 2. We first noted that TAM 2 has not been critically analyzed as much as the original TAM. Furthermore, TAM 2 was more applicable to the cultural nuances that might play a role in the use and adoption of this unique feature of the mobile phone. The research question is the following: Does the TAM2 model account for technology acceptance or is there a need for more specification?

This study aims to assess the applicability and validation of a universal model (TAM 2) in a new cultural context. Furthermore this study explores the applicability of this model to the Arab setting for e-commerce purposes. This context has been little explored in terms of technology acceptance and use, yet mobile technology adoption has significant socio-economic and political implications. Furthermore, in this paper we hope to shed light on three unique changes in Kuwait that are influenced by and influence this technology use and adoption. *First*, the opportunities of m-commerce, which are flourishing without relying on Internet technology (mobile phones can transmit pictures via SMS). *Second*, with the increase used of ICT, family members in Arab societies are spending little time socializing and even less time shopping together. With the increase of multi-services in mobile phones, it is possible that one member of the family shops alone and may request the opinion of a friend or other important person for effective shopping using the functionalities of CMP. *Third*, this study aims also to shed light on the effect of culture on the intention to use a technology in a conservative Arab and Islamic society. By using TAM 2 as a theoretical framework for analysis, this paper will explore the cultural motivational factors for the intention to use CMP before shopping.

Green et al. [16] stated (p. 146) that "... until recently there has been little social science research on the consumption and use of mobile technologies and it is only recently that industry has begun to broaden its views of the mobile consumer to include deeper understanding of users' behavior". Along the same context, Urbaczewski et al. [70]

and Pedersen et al. [53] both pointed out that the main drivers for adopting m-commerce services remains unclear.

The significance of this study, thus, is twofold: academic/theoretical and economic/business. Practitioners and scholars gain valuable insights on the driving forces of m-commerce adoption and acceptance. Secondly, the mass developments of the Internet and related technologies led companies and consumers to various new opportunities for transaction, providing firms with new ways to conduct business and exchange/communication information through the development and broadening use of the Internet (e-commerce and m-commerce) and mobile communications systems.

It is important to point out that e-commerce behavior in the Arab region has been a component of past studies. However, the focus of this study is directed toward the social factors that affect shoppers' behaviors and tendencies while shopping. In order to select the best theoretical considerations, this study will focus on two primary considerations. First, we will review some theories and research pertaining to the characteristics of shopping behaviors and tendencies in the Arab region. And second the TAM 2 model will focus mainly on social factors which are driven by unique characteristics of the Arab culture.

1.2. Literature review: the social factors describing consumer behavior in Arab countries

Through their research in the State of Qatar, Jamal et al. [26] found that there is a variety of motivational factors that drive shopping in Qatar's malls and department stores. The proposed research model they built found that the most important factors that drive consumers to shop in Arab countries are, social shopping, gratification seeking high quality seeking, value seeking, brand loyal, utilitarian shopping, and hedonic shopping. Their findings confirmed results of a previous study [66] that found Arabian women go out and do social shopping because of their specific cultural context: Their lengthy free time during mornings and when their husband are working.

Based upon [42] human motivation theory, the social shopping of consumers encompasses a consumer's tendency to be altruistic, cohesive, and seeking acceptance and affection in interpersonal relationships [5,43,66,73]. Despite their professional daily workload, Arab individuals continue to take care of their household and family members. McAdams [41] claimed that Arab shoppers appear to be highly sociable, seeking friendships, solidarity with groups, and in some occasions seeking the opportunity for engaging and establishing relationships.

From the above mentioned studies, one can observe the importance of social factors in the Arab culture. A social factor can be any variable that is socially driven and is critical among the studied group of people in the society. In this paper, we incorporated social factors as the two following constructs: social norms and image. Unlike previous studies that investigated different factors that drive individuals to use new technology, this study will put more focus on the role played by these two variables that affect individuals' relationships and their decision to use CMP.

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