



A contextual perspective on consumers' perceived usefulness: The case of mobile online shopping



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ABSTRACT

This research aims to study the origins of consumers' usefulness perceptions through the example of mobile online shopping adoption in Europe. The results of an empirical study, which is grounded in technology acceptance theory, reveal the pivotal role of consumers' beliefs about the quality of mobile online stores in the formation of usefulness perceptions prior to adoption. While this study identifies that consumers form their usefulness evaluations depending on the respective shopping tasks, the results of a moderation analysis yield usefulness predictors that differ in relevance across product categories and shopping touchpoints. This contextual perspective has implications for both adoption and (online) channel research. It also helps managers to identify starting points on how to promote (mobile) online shopping adoption.

1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this research

This research aims to study the origins of consumers' usefulness perceptions by examining mobile online shopping adoption processes in Europe. In harmony with technology acceptance theory (e.g., Davis, 1989), extant research illustrates the relevance of usefulness perceptions (i.e., the extent to which one believes that using a technology will enhance his/her job performance) in predicting consumers' adoption behavior of technologies (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000). However, empirical knowledge regarding the antecedents of perceived usefulness is limited and inconsistent (Benbasat and Barki, 2007), especially in the context of mobile online shopping (Groß, 2015). Moreover, the heterogeneity underlying the formation of usefulness perceptions requires in-depth research (Venkatesh et al., 2012). The primary research objective is to develop a model of the antecedents to consumers' usefulness perceptions. These origins are examined in a pre-adoption stage, and usefulness evaluations for different online shopping tasks are distinguished. A secondary research objective is to test the developed model on the antecedents of perceived usefulness across varying contexts.

This research studies these objectives at the example of mobile online shopping in Europe. The justification of this study is possible from current market developments and academic findings. First, consumers' perceived usefulness plays a pivotal role in the formation of consumers' usage intentions towards, and usage of, mobile online shopping (e.g., Groß, 2014). Second, during the second quarter of 2016,

48% of worldwide electronic commerce (e-commerce) transactions have been realized through mobile devices. In some countries (e.g., Japan) the mobile share of e-commerce transactions already exceeds the desktop share (Criteo, 2016). In spite of tremendous growth in the European smartphone-based Internet use (comScore, 2015), the mobile share of e-commerce transactions here remains below the global average (Criteo, 2015)—requiring that the crucial regional antecedents of mobile online shopping adoption be elucidated. Third, current research emphasizes that mobile device-based online purchases could increase consumers' overall online purchases (Huang et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2015); however, little knowledge exists on mobile online shopping in general (Hew, 2017), and more specifically on consumer adoption thereof.

1.2. The contribution of this research

This research yields theoretical and managerial contributions. The theoretical contribution relates to the understanding of consumer adoption determinants and the origins of usefulness perceptions in and beyond the field of mobile online shopping research. Current research increasingly considers extending the core assumptions of the technology acceptance model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) by including external factors explaining behavioral beliefs such as perceived usefulness (Table 1). However, existing knowledge on the determinants of perceived usefulness suffers from several shortcomings. On the one hand, scholars largely neglect to consider the potential heterogeneity underlying the formation of these behavioral beliefs. Consumer characteristics are often integrated to elucidate the origins of usefulness

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Table 1
Current research insights on perceived usefulness (2015–2017).

Context of research	Data collection	Antecedents to perceived usefulness	Nature of usefulness perceptions	Moderators
Hubert et al. (2017) Mobile commerce Post-adoption perspective	United Kingdom, N=410 quota sample with prior experiences	Instant connectivity (+), contextual value (+), hedonic motivation (ns), habit (+), financial risk (ns), performance risk (+), security risk (ns)	Smartphone-based online shopping for different shopping tasks	Mobile shopping application type
Khalilzadeh et al. (2017) Mobile services Pre-adoption perspective	USA, N=412 convenience sample with prior experiences	Social influence (+) Trust in service provider (+) Perceived effort expectancy (+) Perceived risk (-)	Using mobile payment service in restaurants	Gender, age, previous, experience
Natarajan et al. (2017) Mobile commerce Post-adoption perspective	India, N=675 quota sample with prior experiences	Perceived enjoyment (+) Perceived ease of use (+)	Using mobile shopping applications	–
Yu et al. (2017) Mobile technology Post-adoption perspective	Korea, N=450 quota sample with prior experiences	Functionality (+) Content (+) Brand name (+) Price (ns)	Using mobile tablets	–
Arpaci (2016) Mobile services Pre-adoption perspective	N=262 convenience sample	Perceived ease of use (+) Perceived ubiquity (+)	Using mobile cloud storage services	–
J.-J. Hew et al. (2016) Mobile commerce Post-adoption perspective	Malaysia, N=208 convenience sample with prior experiences	Confirmation on expectations (+) Concern for social media information privacy (+)	Using mobile social commerce	–
T.-S. Hew et al. (2016) Mobile services Pre-adoption perspective	Malaysia, N=463 convenience sample with prior experiences	Trust in mobile transactions (+) perceived financial cost (-)	Using mobile entertainment	–
Kim et al. (2016) Mobile commerce Post-adoption perspective	Korea, N=357 convenience sample	Argument quality (+) Source credibility (+)	Using mobile shopping website for purchasing	Involvement
Koç et al. (2016) Mobile technology Post-adoption perspective	Turkey, N=227 convenience sample with prior experiences	Context (+) Perceived ease of use (+)	Using education management information system	–
Matute et al. (2016) Online commerce Post-adoption perspective	Spain, N=252 convenience sample with prior experiences	Quantity of customer reviews (+) Credibility of customer reviews (+) Quality of customer reviews (+)	Using website for information search and for purchasing	–
Wang (2016) Online commerce Post-adoption perspective	Taiwan, N=658 convenience sample with prior experiences	Information quality (+) System quality (+)	Using online shopping website	Utilitarian orientation, gender
Yen and Wu (2016) Mobile services Post-adoption perspective	Taiwan, N=368 convenience sample with prior experiences	Perceived mobility (+) Personal habit (+) Perceived ease of use (+)	Using mobile financial services in performing certain financial activities	Gender
Abbas and Hamdy (2015) Mobile services Post-adoption perspective	Kuwait, N=512 random sample with prior experiences	Interaction quality (nr) Environment quality (nr) Outcome quality (nr)	–	–
Agrebi and Jallais (2015) Mobile commerce Post-adoption perspective	France, N=300 convenience sample	Perceived enjoyment (+)	Using mobile commerce during the purchase of tickets	Mobile commerce experience
Faqih and Jaradat (2015) Mobile commerce Pre-adoption perspective	Jordan, N=425 convenience sample	Subjective norm (ns), image (+) output quality (+) result demonstrability (+)	Using mobile commerce	Experience
Kitchen et al. (2015) Mobile services Pre-adoption perspective	Malaysia, N=530 convenience sample	Personal innovativeness (+)	–	–

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