

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE DETERMINANTS OF USER SATISFACTION AND ITS EFFECT ON ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH ON ONLINE GROCERY

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ABSTRACT

The online platforms have provided enough access to the consumers to attain information about a product or services. The transmission of online information regarding experiences and opinions regards as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) have been evolving over the years. Understanding e-WOM is very important to many online grocers to reach nationwide audiences quickly and easily as most business activities now shifted to the digital realm. Nevertheless, the behaviour of consumers has been affected by different system platform and environmental factors such as system quality, service quality, social influence and facilitating conditions, resulting in user satisfaction and overall engagement on e-WOM. The objectives of this paper are to investigate the internal and external influence on user satisfaction and its overall impact on e-WOM on online grocery. The paper is to be conducted using quantitative method, which are the distribution of questionnaires survey. A conceptual framework is proposed for the investigation into the determinants of user satisfaction and its impact on e-WOM on online grocery. The findings of this paper will contribute better understandings on the current issues to grocery business owners and relevant academicians will be able to fully utilise them to enhance further studies on e-grocery sector as a whole.

Keywords:

E-WOM, User Satisfaction, System Quality, Service Quality, Social Influence, Facilitating Conditions

INTRODUCTION

Development of new media cannot be separated from the emergence of the Internet and the World Wide Web due to the globalization of information technology. Social media is a media where users can easily participate in, share and create messages, including blogs, social networks, online wikis or encyclopaedias, virtual forums, including virtual worlds (Nor et al., 2014). According to Nuseir (2019), electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) is a form of marketing communication that contains positive or negative statements made by potential customers, customers or former customers about a product or company, which available to many people or institutions through the medium of the Internet. In the online world there are various ways in which consumers can exchange information.

Internet users can conduct Electronic Word of Mouth through a variety of online channels, including blogs, microblogs, e-mails, consumer review sites, forums, virtual consumer communities and social networking sites (Dahka et al., 2020). In reflecting on the feeling of pleasure and satisfaction from consumers, it will be directly proportional to a positive image view for the product or brand. The Electronic Word of Mouth and the Internet has enabled the emergence of new forms of communication platforms that can better empower providers and consumers, enabling them to share information and opinions from both Business-to-Consumer, and from Consumer-to- Consumer (Muritala, 2021).

Today's e-WOM are becoming more and more technically complex and challenging, which exposes e-commerce operations to even more complex constraints. System values can be regarded to be the basis that forms and influences human behaviour. Obviously, researchers are only focused on internal factors when studying eWOM such as information quality, system quality and service quality

(Fraj and Martinez, 2017; Wu, DiGiacomo and Kingstone, 2016). Unfortunately, limited study is focusing on the influence of external factors (Aakash & Aggarwal, 2019). As such, both internal and external environmental factors should be included in the eWOM study as a whole instead of just as a sum of their parts. External factors are always playing a crucial role in propagating the new technology (Dragnic, 2016). The social influence and facilitating conditions as the external problems are widely touted for constraint analysis, greatly limit researcher's capability in modelling and resolving constraints to achieve consumer's satisfaction.

Existing research methods have long been blamed for their limitations in modelling and communicating constraints, including inability to cope with other-related mediating and moderating precedence constraints and difficulty to evaluate and communicate inter-dependencies at the field of e-grocery level (Yan et al., 2018; Ismagilova et al., 2020). As the level of competition in the Malaysian e-grocery market continues to rise, it is critical for Malaysian e-grocery businesses to gain a better understanding of their customers in order to expand their market share (Martín et al., 2019).

Therefore, assessing e-WOM has been an increasing topic of business owners to create new strategic marketing plan and the influence of many internal and external factors on consumers satisfaction in Malaysia found to be underwhelming nowadays (Choi et al., 2019). In the course of the investigation, the present study endeavours to illuminate this irregularity by building up a single integrated conceptual framework to connect and simultaneously inspect the connections between internal factors, external factors, user satisfaction and e-WOM in online grocery platform.

This study aims to carry out by utilizing classifications of user satisfaction and e-WOM involvement proposed by past studies. This coordinated e-WOM model would provide the foundation for building a consensual model, which may better clarify these relationships. In this regard, the current writing focuses on investigating the relationships between the antecedents and consequences of e-WOM from both, internal and external perspectives.

VARIABLES ANALYSIS

This section presents a review analysis of the variables of previous studies namely, e-WOM, user satisfaction, system quality, service quality, social influence, facilitating conditions and brand image.

E-WOM

Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) is defined as the dynamic and ongoing information exchange process between potential, actual, or former consumers regarding a product, service, brand, or company, which is available to a multitude of individuals and institutions via the Internet (Ismagilova et al., 2020). One of the most comprehensive conceptions of eWOM was proposed by Litvin et al. (2018), who described it as all informal communication via the Internet addressed to consumers and related to the use or characteristics of goods or services or the sellers thereof. Where once consumers trusted WOM from friends and family today, they look to online comments (eWOM) for their information about a product or service (Huete-Alcocer, 2017). Therefore, e-WOM is defined as the influence of friends' words and advice on individuals, acquaintances, and other customers when they buy groceries online.

User Satisfaction

According to Ratnasari (2020), the definition of customer satisfaction has been widely debated as organizations increasingly attempt to measure it. User satisfaction deals with the characteristics of human behaviour (Ravichandran & Suriya, 2016). Some researchers define a satisfied customer within the private sector as one who receives significant added value in brief with a definition that

may apply just as well to public (Hamzah & Shamsudin, 2020). Therefore, user satisfaction describes a customer's reaction or feeling about his or her experience with all aspects of an e-grocery system.

System Quality

Quality of the system defined as perceived website performance by consumers through the uptake and transmission of information (Putri & Pujani, 2019). The quality of system is the perceived level of satisfaction of users to the technical and functional performance of the website (Tandon et al., 2018). Therefore, in the context of this writing, system quality refers to a metric for evaluating an e-grocery system portal that focuses on the end result of the user's interaction with the portal. It has all of the desirable characteristics of an e-grocery system, including intuitiveness, sophistication, adaptability, and response speed, as well as system flexibility, dependability, and ease of learning.

Service Quality

Service quality is a measure of how well the service level delivered matches customer expectations (Faruq & Hartini, 2014). Delivering quality service means conforming to customer expectations on a consistent basis. Service quality is defined as how customers judge and evaluate the service being delivered to them (Sari et al., 2018). Therefore, in this study the service quality refers to the level of support provided to system users by the online customer service department and support staff of e-grocery platform.

Social Influence

Argo and Dahl (2020) defined social influence as the processes whereby people directly or indirectly influence the thoughts, feelings and actions of others. According to Flache (2017), social influence is the effect on an individual based on behaviours of others. Friends, family, peers, co-workers and individuals or group of individuals who are related to a person behavioural intention can alter a person's thought, thinking and action (Garga et al., 2019). Therefore, in the context of this writing, the degree to which one person may influence another person's behaviour, attitude, sentiments, and thoughts to use new e-grocery apps and purchase groceries online is referred to as social influence.

Facilitating Conditions

Facilitating conditions defined as user perception that resources and support are available to use a new technology including availability of time, money and technological resources for technology adoption (Blaise et al., 2018). Facilitating conditions refer to objective conditions that can enhance adoption and the perception of consistency between what is offered by the technology and the user's immediate resources and values (Li et al., 2019). Therefore, facilitating conditions can represent easy access to the resources needed to use e-grocery apps and the subsequent support to purchase grocery online.

Brand Image

Brand image is the perception of the brand in the mind of the customer (Elina & Sany, 2013). It is an aggregate of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a customer holds regarding the brand (Reddy & Ahmad, 2020). Brand image is the key driver of brand equity, which refers to consumer's general perception and feeling about a brand and has an influence on consumer behaviour (Ahmad & Guzmán, 2021). Therefore, the definition of brand image utilized as a part of this study is consumers' overall

perceptions about an e-grocery apps' brand based on their interactions and experience with the brand or their beliefs of what the brand could be.

THEORIES

Theoretical perspectives are defined as theoretical frameworks concerning a few aspects of a social or educational phenomenon that can be used as a conceptual model for explaining the research area (Picciano, 2017). Figure 1 shows in diagrammatic form of the two underpinning theories that may use in further study. Furthermore, the following sub-sections will explain the two theories that could be applied in the future research.

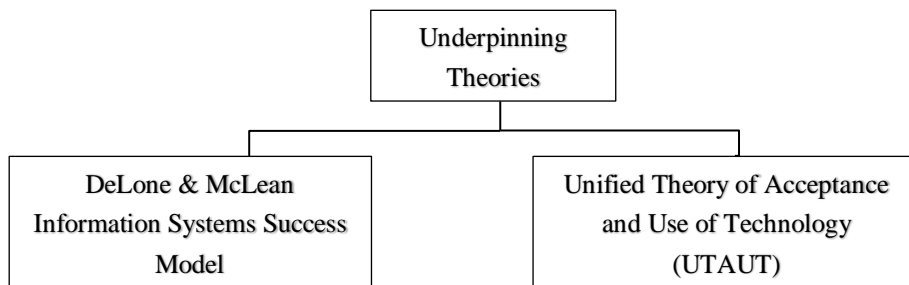


Figure 1: Underpinning Theories

DeLone & McLean Information Systems (IS) Success Model

The information systems success model is an information systems theory which seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of information systems (IS) success by identifying, describing, and explaining the relationships among six of the most critical dimensions of success along which information systems are commonly evaluated (Grover et al., 2018). DeLone & McLean's comprehensive review of different IS success measures concludes with a model of interrelationships between six IS success variable categories (Angelina, Hermawan, & Suroso, 2019). The categories of the taxonomy are System Quality, Information Quality, IS Use, User Satisfaction, Individual Impact and Organization Impact. The model makes two important contributions to the understanding of IS success. First, it provides a scheme for categorizing the multitude of IS success measures that have been used in the literature. Second, it suggests a model of temporal and causal interdependencies between the categories (Mathar, 2020; Brings, Daun, & Brinckmann, 2018). A number of studies have undertaken empirical investigations of the multidimensional relationships among the measures of IS success e.g., (Harder et al., 2018; Cooper & Ritchey, 2019; Qiu & Dooley, 2019; Piehler, 2018; Busser & Shulga, 2018).

As a powerful communication and commerce medium, the Internet is a communication and IS phenomenon that lends itself to a measurement framework i.e., the DeLone & McLean model built on communication theory (Shi et al., 2018). In the e-commerce context, the primary system users are customers or suppliers rather than internal users (Abumalloh, 2020). Customers and suppliers will use the system to make buying or selling decisions and execute business transactions. These electronic decisions and transactions may affect individual users, organizations, industries, and even national economies (Lee et al., 2018).

The DeLone & McLean proposed are evaluate for its usefulness in light of the dramatic changes in IS practice, especially the advent and explosive growth of e-commerce.

Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

In a bid to improve the predictive power of technology adoption models, UTAUT model provides a basic conceptual framework by combining models which forms the basis of this research (Bhatt et al., 2021). As a result of researches that emerged from different disciplines such as information systems, sociology and psychology many theories have been put forward and applied (Al-Saedi et al., 2019; Wrycza et al., 2017). In the research, eight main theoretical models: Personal Computer Usage Model; Innovation Diffusion Theory; Technology Acceptance Model; Theory of Reasoned Action; Combined TAM-PBT; Theory of Planned Behaviour; Social Cognitive Theory and Motivational Model were determined (Musleh et al., 2015).

UTAUT comprises of four main factors. These are; performance expectancy, social influence, effort expectancy and facilitating conditions are factors. In addition, UTAUT includes four intermediate individual variation variables, gender, age, experience and voluntariness of use, which predict the relationship between primary factors and behavioural intention and use behaviour (Musleh et al., 2015). According to UTAUT, there are determining factors that directly affect intention or use in models combined within the UTAUT framework. These determining factors are called performance expectancy (PE), social influence (SI), effort expectancy (EE) and facilitating conditions (FC). These factors play a prominent role as direct determinants of user acceptance and usage behaviour (Taherdoost, 2018).

The UTAUT model has drawn the attention of many scholars and has been applied to a varied number of technological innovations under different settings including internet banking, mobile banking, e-governance and e-learning (Sarfaraz, 2017).

It is a very common problem for end users to resist using such technologies. Users may not be very willing to use technology to perform their daily task. It is important to explain the acceptance and use of new technologies to better understand user-oriented problems and find solutions.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Given the past theoretical models accessible and investigations of conflicting discoveries, this writing proposed a conceptual framework from the literature approach by scholars that well-articulated with the result to system quality, service quality, social influence, facilitating conditions, user satisfaction and electronic word-of-mouth. In assuring this, DeLone & McLean Information Systems Success Model suggested that system quality and service quality can play an important role in the formation of user satisfaction and ultimately affecting the involvement of consumers in e-WOM. Whereas in view of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), external factors ranging from social influence and facilitating conditions determine a consumer's satisfaction on e-grocery application to the spread of e-WOM.

Furthermore, the variables described in previous sub-topics have been used to form a diagrammatic view of the conceptual framework as shown in figure 2. Based on the review of the literature, it was posited that system quality, service quality, social influence and facilitating conditions have both direct and indirect influence on both user's satisfaction and e-WOM. The indirect influence is postulated to act through consumer's satisfaction. In other words, it was proposed that internal and external factors practices influence on e-WOM directly as well as, indirectly through the mediating effects of user satisfaction. In this conceptual framework, the writing attempts to

examine the influence of internal and environmental factor on user satisfaction and leading to e-WOM of the future selected population sample, namely grocery buyers.

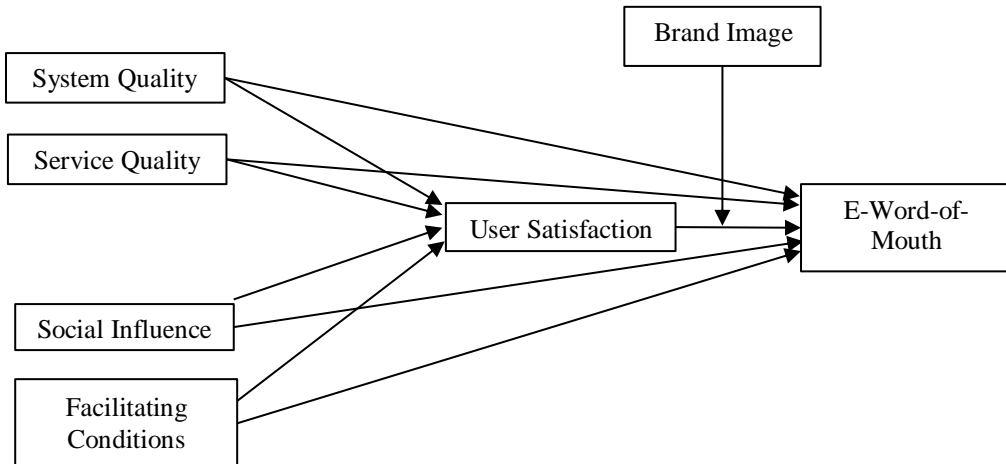


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEGE

This paradigm has also aided consumer participation in e-WOM in the context of online grocery shopping. The main contribution that conceptual framework adds to current theories in e-WOM studies is the studying and analysing the connection between the internal factors (system quality and service quality) and external factors (social influence and facilitating conditions) of online grocery buyers in Malaysia. Furthermore, the integration of the interceding variable - user satisfaction; and moderating variable - brand image offers a further contribution to the research.

Next, the combination of two theories (DeLone & McLean Information Systems Success Model and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology) that formed the theoretical proposal will contribute to the e-WOM influence in the context of online grocery apps literature. Thus, this study provides a conceptual framework for further studies, especially for future research in online grocery industry.

CONCLUSION

The increasing usage of e-WOM by a new generation of grocery shoppers has been influenced by a variety of internal and external factors in grocery communities, all of which have an impact on user experience. This paper analysed related literature in order to present a framework of user satisfaction variables and their impact on e-WOM for Malaysian grocery customers. Furthermore, the relationship between brand image and individual user happiness needs to be further researched in order to understand the actual nature of the relationship and the magnitude of the influence. Ultimately, the purpose of this paper was to provide a clear knowledge of the actual link and determine if there is a good or negative association with customers' e-WOM, which could be verified by empirical research.

As a result, our proposed framework for e-WOM can lead to further research in quantitative research to confirm the model.

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