Chapter 14

The Role of Website Quality and Social Ties EWOM in E-Services Adoption

Himanshu Sharma
University of Delhi, India

Aakash Aakash
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3900-4215
University of Delhi, India

Anu G. Aggarwal
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5448-9540
University of Delhi, India

ABSTRACT

With the service sector gaining momentum over the years, researchers feel that the relationship between service providers and customers must be explored, especially under online framework. This chapter proposes a conceptual model to study the behavioral intention (BI) to adopt e-services. The framework considers the interrelationship among the variables such as website service quality (WSQ), strong-ties electronic word-of-mouth (ST-EWOM), and perceived value (PV). Moreover, the authors attempt to study the moderation effect of weak-ties EWOM (WT-EWOM). To examine the relationship between these variables, they constructed a research model which is tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) approach. The hypothesis testing results show direct associations between the variables. They next verify the mediating role of perceived value between website service quality and intention to adopt as well as strong-ties EWOM and adoption intention. Moreover, the moderating effect of weak-ties EWOM are checked and are further validated graphically with the help of interaction effect approach.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-8015-7.ch014
INTRODUCTION

The exponential growth in the popularity of information and communication technology (ICT) has paved way for the firms to market their products or services online. The digital revolution has brought the retailers and customers closer by providing advantages such as cost effective, 24X7 availability, no geographical limitations, and low entry/exit barriers, to name a few. These developments in internet technologies have resulted in an upsurge in the amount of business done online or e-business. The online marketers are expected to prosper with an increase in year-over-year revenue and reflect a good market share in the e-service sector (McNair, 2018). Most remarkable progress has been observed in the electronic service or e-service sector. E-Service may be defined as the process of providing services through a digital medium. These services may be commercial such as movie ticket booking (Chatterji, 2018; Nilsson-Witell & Fundin, 2005), hotel booking (Confente & Vigolo, 2018; Ladhari, 2009), airline ticket booking (J.-W. Park, Robertson, & Wu, 2004; Saha & Theingi, 2009), or they may come under the non-commercial category such as the service provided by the government (Teicher, Hughes, & Dow, 2002). The worldwide e-service revenue was $165.3 billion in 2017, and is expected to reach $224 billion by 2022 (statista, 2018). Since, it also involves transaction through a digital device using the internet; it may be considered as a superset of electronic commerce or e-commerce. E-Services play a significant role in e-business, especially under business-to-consumer (B2C) sector (Rust & Kannan, 2016). This may be attributed to the active customer-retailer interaction before service and after service, providing customer support, secure and efficient transaction process, and thereby improving the satisfaction of the consumers. Even though, e-services are beneficial and cost effective for the purchasers, few studies in the literature concentrate about its adoption (De Ruyter, Wetzels, & Kleijnen, 2001). Thus, we aim to develop a conceptual framework with adoption intention as the resultant construct.

The intention to adopt a technology mainly expresses the response of the individuals to the various perceptions (or stimuli) generated in the surroundings. The decision making depends on two basic questions: what purpose will be fulfilled with the help of the system, and what functionalities do its operation requires. Several models have been discussed previously to study the adoption pattern of the browsers. These include technology acceptance model (Davis, 1985), theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), decomposed theory of planned behavior (Taylor & Todd, 1995), innovation diffusion theory (Rogers, 1962), and DeLone and McLean (D&M) Model of IS (information system) success (DeLone & McLean, 1992). Previous researches have focused on the adoption of mobile commerce (Pandey & Chawla, 2018), mobile application (Jaz, AlSabah, & Sarfraz, 2018), e-commerce systems (Chao, 2018), and many more; but very few have lined their research with respect to online service sector (Khare & Khare, 2011; Schmidthuber, Maresch, & Ginner, 2018). The service sector shows greater future prospects in comparison to onetime payment process systems i.e. e-commerce. Practitioners argue that e-service is a complex process, as it involves a long term interactive relationship between the customer and the service provider (Clauser, 2001; Levin, Levin, & Heath, 2003). Moreover, ambiguity keeps on developing due to a virtual retailer which is not visible and that the services provided through the portals are also intangible. This chapter consists of three variables for adoption intention, where website service quality (WSQ) and strong-ties EWOM (electronic word-of-mouth) are considered as indirect determinants, whereas perceive value (PV) acts as the direct one.

The amalgamation of information, service, and system quality result into a new construct, namely the website service quality (WSQ). The extension of this concept over the virtual framework has led to the introduction of WSQ. The design of the firm’s website plays a vital role in attracting customers towards
The Telework as an Organizational Innovation in the Entities of the Third Sector

A Digital Rights Management System for Educational Content Distribution
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/digital-rights-management-system-educational/8500?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/digital-rights-management-system-educational/8500?camid=4v1a)

iTalk: Managing the Virtual E-Business
[www.igi-global.com/article/italk-managing-virtual-business/1482?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/italk-managing-virtual-business/1482?camid=4v1a)

Mobile Commerce in South Africa
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/mobile-commerce-south-africa/12628?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/mobile-commerce-south-africa/12628?camid=4v1a)