

Driving online shopping: Spending and behavioral differences among women in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

This study proposes a revised technology acceptance model that integrates expectation confirmation theory to measure gender differences with regard to continuance online shopping intentions in Saudi Arabia. The sample consists of 650 female respondents. A structural equation model confirms model fit. Perceived enjoyment, usefulness, and subjective norms are determinants of online shopping continuance in Saudi Arabia. High and low online spenders among women in Saudi Arabia are equivalent. The structural weights are also largely equivalent, but the regression paths from perceived site quality to perceived usefulness is not invariant between high and low e-shoppers in Saudi Arabia. This research moves beyond online shopping intentions and includes factors affecting online shopping continuance. The research model explains 60% of the female respondents' intention to continue shopping online. Online strategies cannot ignore either the direct and indirect spending differences on continuance intentions, and the model can be generalized across Saudi Arabia.

Keywords: internet shopping, e-shopping, technology acceptance, male and female examination, continuance online shopping, Saudi Arabia

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1 STUDY MOTIVATION

Globalization continues to drive the rapid growth of international trade, global corporations, and non-local consumption alternatives (Alden et al. 2006; Holt et al. 2004), and advances of the Internet and e-commerce have diminished trade boundaries. E-commerce and e-shopping create opportunities for businesses to reach to consumers globally and directly, and in turn, business and social science research now focuses specifically on cross-national and cross-cultural Internet marketing (Griffith et al. 2006).

The Internet had changed how businesses and customers customize, distribute, and consume products. Its low cost gives both businesses and consumers a new and powerful channel for information and communication. In 1991, the Internet had less than 3 million users worldwide and no e-commerce applications; by 1999, about 250 million users appeared online, and 63 million of them engaged in online transactions, which produced a total value of \$110 billion (Coppel 2000). Business-to-consumer online sales in the United States grew by 120% between 1998 and 1999 (Shop.org and Boston Consulting Group, 2000). According to a U.K. payment association, the number of consumers who shop online has increased by more than 157%, from 11 million in 2001 to more than 28 million in 2006 (cited in Alsajjan and Dennis, 2009). E-commerce transactions also are growing in the Middle East (19.5 million Internet users) and in the Gulf States. In Saudi Arabia, online transactions have increased by 100%, from \$278 million in 2002 to \$556 million in 2005 (*Al Riyadh* 2006). In 2007, Internet sales increased to more than \$1.2 billion worldwide and are expected to continue to rise (World Internet Users and Population Stats 2007).

An unpublished study by the Centre for Customer Driven Quality also highlights some potential savings: For one retailer, the cost of an in-store customer contact was estimated to be \$10, the cost of a phone contact \$5, and the cost of a Web contact \$0.01 (Feinberg, et al. 2002). In the airline industry, the savings are similar. According to the International Air Transport Association, airlines currently issue approximately 300 million paper tickets per year at a cost of \$10 per ticket to process (*Arab News Newspaper*, 2007). One e-ticket process costs only \$1 (*Arab News Newspaper*, 2007).

Despite the impressive online purchasing growth rates though, compelling evidence indicates that many consumers who search different online retail sites abandon their purchases. This trend and the proliferation of business-to-consumer e-shopping activities require that online businesses understand which factors encourage consumers to complete their purchases. Acquiring new customers also can cost as much as five times more than retaining existing ones (Bhattacharjee 2001b; Crego and Schiffrin 1995; Petrissans 1999). For example, a 5% increase in customer retention in the insurance industry typically translates into an 18% reduction in operating costs (Bhattacharjee, 2001a; Crego et al, 1995).

Online customer retention is particularly difficult. Modern customers demand that their needs be met immediately, perfectly, and for free, and they are empowered with more information to make decisions (Bhattacharjee 2001b; Crego and Schiffrin 1995). They also have various online and offline options from which to choose, and without a compelling reason to choose one retailer over another, they experiment or rotate purchases among multiple firms (Bhattacharjee 2001b; Crego and Schiffrin 1995).

To employ the savings derived from e-businesses, companies might engage in tactics to increase switching costs and thereby retain more customers. E-retailers might recall details about the customer that reduce the customer effort demanded in future transactions; they could also learn more about the customer to tailor those future interactions to the customer's needs (Straub and Watson 2001). Better product quality, lower prices, better services, and increased outcome value should help companies build sustainable relationships with their customers.

Theoretical explanations of online shopping intentions suggest several important factors. For example, Rogers (1995) suggests that consumers reevaluate their acceptance decisions during a final confirmation stage and decide to continue or discontinue. Continuance may be an extension of acceptance behavior that covaries with acceptance (e.g., Bhattacharjee 2001a; Davis et al. 1989; Karahanna et al. 1999). We adopt the extended expectation confirmation theory (ECT; Bhattacharjee 2001b) and the technology acceptance model (TAM; Davis et al. 1989) as a theoretical basis, integrating ECT from consumer behavior literature to propose a model of e-shopping continuance intentions, similar to the way in which the TAM adapts the theory of reasoned action (TRA) from social psychology to postulate a model of technology acceptance.

The TAM, as expanded by Davis and colleagues (1992) and Gefen (2003), and the ECT (Bhattacharjee 2001a; Oliver 1980) have been used widely in research in the industrialized world, but they are less commonly applied to developing countries. Moreover, the TAM stops at intention and does not investigate continuance intentions or behavior.

As another issue in prior research, no widely acceptable definition for e-commerce exists. Coppel (2000) calls it doing business over the Internet, including both business-to-business and business-to-consumer markets. For the purpose of this research, we adopt the following definition: E-shopping, electronic shopping, online shopping, and Internet shopping are the same. All these activities include the activity of searching, buying, and selling products and services through the Internet. In recent years, the Internet has grown to include a wider range of potential commercial activities and information exchanges, such as the transaction and exchange of information between government agencies, governments and businesses, businesses and consumers, and among consumers. We focus mainly on the business-to-consumer (B2C) arena, which has been the source of most online progress and development.

Previous research also finds that gender differences significantly affect new technology decision-making processes (Van Slyke et al. 2002; Venkatesh et al. 2000). Venkatesh and colleagues (2000) report that women tend to accept information technology when others have high opinions of it and are more influenced by ease of use. Men rely more on their evaluations of the usefulness of the technology. However, in many cultures, women represent the primary decision makers in families and households' main shoppers. Greater e-commerce exposure and decision-making power may imply that women can attain greater satisfaction from online shopping (Alreck and Settle 2002).

Finally, no previous research considers Internet shopping in Saudi Arabia or, specifically, continuance intentions for online shopping in Saudi Arabia, nor do studies address gender-based differences in shopping behavior online in Saudi Arabia. This research attempts to provide a validated conceptual model that integrates different factors, including gender, and clarifies the theoretical problems of continuance intentions in the unique context of Saudi Arabia.

The remainder of this article proceeds as follows: We offer a review of existing literature, and then detail our proposed model, hypotheses, and methodology. After describing the structural equation model and analysis, we provide our results. We conclude with some limitations and recommendations for further research.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The TAM (Davis 1989) represents an adaptation of the TRA, tailored to users' acceptance of information systems. It helps explain determinants of computer acceptance and can explicate user behaviors across a broad range of computing technologies and populations; it also is parsimonious and theoretically justified (Davis et al. 1989). The major determinants are perceived usefulness and ease of use. Perceived usefulness significantly influences attitude formation (Agarwal and Prasad 1999; Davis 1989; Dishaw and Strong 1999; Gefen and Keil 1998; Igarria et al. 1996; Moon and Kim 2001; Taylor and Todd 1995; Venkatesh 2000; Venkatesh and Davis 2000), but evidence regarding perceived ease of use remains inconsistent. Many studies simplify the original TAM by dropping attitude and studying just the effect of perceived usefulness and ease of use on intention to use (Gefen and Straub 2000; Leader et al. 2000; Teo et al. 1999).

Updates to the TAM add antecedents of perceived usefulness and ease of use (Venkatesh and Davis 2000), such as subjective norms, experience, trust, and output quality. Ample evidence confirms that both usefulness (i.e., external motivation) and intrinsic enjoyment (i.e., internal motivation) offer direct determinants of user acceptance online (Davis et al. 1992; Leader et al. 2000; Moon and Kim 2001; Teo et al. 1999; Venkatesh 1999).

Expectation confirmation theory (ECT) in turn helps predict consumer behavior before, during, and after a purchase in various contexts, in terms of both product and service repurchases (Anderson and Sullivan 1993; Dabholkar et al., 2000; Oliver, 1980, 1993; Patterson et al. 1997; Spreng et al. 1996; Swan and Trawick 1981; Tse and Wilton 1988). According to ECT, consumers define their repurchase intentions by determining whether the product or service meets their initial expectations. Their comparison of perceived usefulness versus their original expectation of usefulness influences their continuance intentions (Bhattacharjee 2001a; Oliver 1980). Their repurchase intentions depend on their satisfaction with the product or service (Anderson and Sullivan 1993; Oliver 1980).

However, the ECT ignores potential changes in initial expectations following the consumption experience and the effect of these expectation changes on subsequent cognitive processes (Bhattacharjee 2001a). Pre-purchase expectations typically are based on others' opinions or information from mass media, whereas post-purchase expectations derive from first-hand experience, which appears more realistic (Fazio and Zanna 1981). After such first-hand experience, expectations may increase if consumers believe the product or service is useful or contains new benefits and features that were not part their initial expectation.

Venkatesh and colleagues (2003) suggest that usage and intentions to continue usage may depend on cognitive beliefs about perceived usefulness. Gefen (2003) also indicates that perceived usefulness reinforces an online shopper's intention to continue using a Web site, such that when a person accepts a new information system, he or she is more willing to alter practices and expend time and effort to use it (Succi and Walter 1999). However, consumers may continue using an e-commerce service if they consider it useful, even if they are dissatisfied with its prior use (Bhattacharjee 2001a).

Site quality and good interface design enhance the formation of consumer trust (McKnight et al. 2002a), and if a consumer perceives a vendor's Web site to be of high quality, he or she should trust that vendor's competence, integrity, and benevolence (McKnight et al. 2002a). Gefen and colleagues (2003) integrate trust into the TAM in a B2C e-shopping context and find trust positively affects consumers' intention to use a Web site. Building trust with consumers is an essential mission for e-retailers, because purchasing decisions represent trust-related behaviors (Jarvenpaa et al. 2000; McKnight et al. 2002b; Urban et al. 2000).

A person's beliefs about what important others think about the behavior also should directly influence subjective norms. Therefore, if e-shopping is a socially desirable behavior, a person is more likely to e-shop (George 2002).

Childers and colleagues (2001) also find that enjoyment can predict attitude towards e-shopping, just as much as usefulness can. However, usefulness was the better predictor for grocery items, whereas enjoyment offered better results for hedonic purchases. With regard to e-shopping, the hedonic enjoyment constructs in the TAM may reflect the pleasure users obtain from shopping online, which reinforces continuance intentions.

3 PROPOSED MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

3.1 Site Quality

Initial trust forms quickly on the basis of available information (Meyerson et al. 1996). If consumers perceive a Web site as high quality, they trust it and will depend on that vendor (McKnight et al. 2002a). Site information quality and a good interface design enhance consumer trust (Fung and Lee, 1999). Web site quality helps predict behavior (Business Wire 1999; Carl 1995; Meltzer 1999). Perceptions of Web site quality affect trust and perceptions of usefulness. In addition, e-shoppers should perceive a Web site as more trustworthy if it appears more attractive because of its contents, layout, and colors, which represent site quality. On the basis of previous research, we therefore predict:

H1a. Perceived site quality relates positively to perceived usefulness.

H1b. Perceived site quality relates positively to customer trust to use online shopping.

3.2 Trust

Trust refers to an expectation that others will not behave opportunistically (Gefen 2003). Trust therefore implies a belief that the vendor will provide what has been promised (Ganesan 1994). In turn, perceived usefulness should occur only for an e-vendor that can be trusted (Festinger 1975). Thus:

H2. Perceived trust relates positively to perceived usefulness.

3.3 Perceived Usefulness

According to Burke (1997), perceived usefulness is the primary prerequisite for mass market technology acceptance, which depends on consumers' expectations about how technology can improve and simplify their lives (Peterson et al. 1997). A Web site is useful if it delivers services to a customer but not if the customers' delivery expectations are not met (Barnes and Vidgen 2000). The usefulness and accuracy of the site also influence customer attitudes. Users may continue using an e-commerce service if they consider it useful, even if they may be dissatisfied with their prior use (Bhattacharjee 2001a). Consumers likely evaluate and consider product-related information prior to purchase, and perceived usefulness thus may be more important than the hedonic aspect of the shopping experience (Babin et al. 1994). In a robust TAM, perceived usefulness predicts IT use and intention to use (e.g., Adams et al. 1992; Agarwal and Prasad, 1999; Gefen and Keil 1998; Gefen and Straub 1997; Hendrickson et al. 1993; Igarbia et al. 1995; Subramanian 1994), including e-commerce adoption (Gefen and Straub 2000). Therefore:

H3a. Perceived usefulness relates positively to increasing customer subjective norms.

H3b. Perceived usefulness relates positively to increasing customer enjoyment.

H3c. Perceived usefulness relates positively to increasing customer continuance intentions.

3.4 Subjective Norms

According to Venkatesh and colleagues (2003), social influences result from subject norms, which relate to consumers' perceptions of the beliefs of other consumers. Shim and colleagues (2001) consider subjective norms only marginally significant on e-shopping intentions, whereas Foucault and Scheufele (2005) confirm a significant link between talking about e-shopping with friends and intention to e-shop. Enjoyment also is relevant to social norms, because involving Web sites facilitate e-friendship and enforce e-shopping as a subjective norm. Thus,

H4a. Perceived subjective norms relate positively to increasing customer enjoyment.

H4b. Perceived subjective norms relate positively to increasing customer continuance intentions.

3.5 Enjoyment

Enjoyment in using a Web site significantly affects intentions to use (Davis et al. 1992; Igbaria et al. 1995; Teo et al. 1999; Venkatesh et al. 2002). Shopping enjoyment (Koufaris 2002), perceived entertainment value of the Web site (O'Keefe et al. 1998), and perceived visual attractiveness have positive impacts on perceived enjoyment and continuance intentions (van der Heijden 2003). Thus:

H5. Perceived enjoyment relates positively to increasing customer continuance intentions.

4 METHODOLOGY

To validate the conceptual model and the proposed research hypotheses, we developed an online survey, which is suitable for collecting data from large geographical areas. In addition, compared with traditional surveys, online surveys offer lower costs, faster responses, and less data entry effort.

4.1 Measures

The measures of the various constructs come from previous literature, adapted to the context of online shopping if necessary. All online survey items use 1–7 Likert scales, on which 1 indicates strongly disagree and 7 is strongly agree. The site quality and trust items come from McKnight and colleagues (2002a, 2002b). The perceived usefulness items derive from Gefen (2003). Perceived enjoyment is a measure from Childers (2001). Shih and Fang (2004) provide the subjective norm items. The continuance intention items were adapted from Yang (2004).

The pilot study suggested some clarifications to the survey. Both Arabic and English language versions were available. The Arabic questionnaire employed Brislin's (1986) back-translation method to ensure that the questionnaires have the same meaning in both languages.

5 DATA ANALYSIS

Survey respondents were people who were actively engaged in Internet and online shopping in Saudi Arabia, including undergraduate and postgraduate students and professionals. As we show in Table 1, the sample consists of 650 female participants in Saudi Arabia. This somewhat surprising participation level illustrates the high rate of Internet use among women in Saudi Arabia. Most respondents are in their late 30s (2.5% younger than 18 years of age, 26.6% between 18 and 25, 42.8% are 26–35, 22% are 36–45, and 6.2% are older than 46 years). Similarly, 60% of the Saudi population is younger than 30 years of age. The vast majority (92.6%) of participants came from the three main regions in Saudi Arabia: 24.6% from the east, 27.8% from the central region, and 40.2% from the western region. The education levels indicate 1.5% of respondents earned less than a high school degree, 10.9% attended high school, 12.9% had diplomas, 52.9% had bachelor's degrees, and 21.7% were postgraduates. Most respondents thus are well-educated. Moreover, 36% of them work in the public sector (government employee), 35.4% in the private sector, 6.5% were businesspeople, and 22.22% were students.

As we show in Table 2, 52.2% of the respondents visited at least five different online sites to purchase each month, and 66.9% used the Internet for actual shopping. The western region reveals the highest percentages in most categories, such that 31.1% spend £100–£500 per year online, and 51.3% spend more than £501 per year. Furthermore, 49.7% of the respondents used the Internet in the prior six months to make flight booking or purchase airline tickets, 37.5% made hotel reservations, 35.2% purchased clothing, 58.6% bought books, and 37.8% purchased CD-DVDs or video tapes. To indicate

why they used the Internet, as we summarize in Table 3, 82% referred to information search, 56.8% to social communication, 52.5% to banking, 64.8% to entertainment, 51% to work-related tasks, and 69% used it for study-related tasks.

Table 1: Demographic Items

| Question | Count | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| Total Female Participants | 650 | 100 |
| Age | | |
| Less than 18 | 16 | 2.5 |
| Between 18-25 | 173 | 26.6 |
| Between 26-35 | 278 | 42.8 |
| Between 36-45 | 143 | 22.0 |
| Above 46 | 40 | 6.2 |
| Education Level | | |
| Less than high school | 10 | 1.5 |
| High school | 71 | 10.9 |
| Diploma | 84 | 12.9 |
| Bachelor | 344 | 52.9 |
| Post-graduate | 141 | 21.7 |
| Occupation | | |
| Government employee | 234 | 36.0 |
| Private sector | 230 | 35.4 |
| Business people | 42 | 6.5 |
| Student | 144 | 22.22 |
| Income Level | | |
| <SR4,000 (£1,000) | 105 | 16.2 |
| SR4,000-SR6,000 (£1,000-2,000) | 78 | 12.0 |
| SR6,001-SR8,000 (£2,001-4,000) | 89 | 13.7 |
| SR8,001-SR10,000 (£4,001-7,000) | 77 | 11.8 |
| SR10,001-SR15,000 (£7,001-10,000) | 128 | 19.7 |
| >SR15,001 (>£10,000) | 123 | 18.9 |
| Dependent on others | 50 | 7.7 |
| Region | | |
| East region | 160 | 24.6 |
| West region | 261 | 40.2 |
| Central region | 181 | 27.8 |
| North region | 29 | 4.5 |
| South Region | 19 | 2.9 |

Table 2: Items Purchased Online and Reasons

| Items purchased in the last six months | Region in Saudi Arabia | | |
|--|------------------------|-------|--------|
| | East | West | Middle |
| Buying Books | 47 | 71 | 45 |
| | 16.9% | 25.5% | 16.2% |
| Music CD, DVD, Videotape | 34 | 34 | 28 |
| | 12.2% | 15.5% | 10.1% |
| Cloth | 37 | 41 | 20 |
| | 13.3% | 14.7% | 7.2% |
| Sports equip | 22 | 18 | 10 |
| | 7.9% | 6.5% | 3.6% |
| Travel reservation and ticketing | 43 | 64 | 31 |
| | 15.5% | 23.0% | 11.2% |
| Hotel booking | 31 | 50 | 23 |
| | 11.2% | 18.0% | 8.3% |
| Reason for using the Internet | | | |
| Info. Search | 72 | 100 | 56 |
| | 25.9% | 36.0% | 20.1% |
| Entertainment | 60 | 78 | 42 |
| | 21.6% | 28.1% | 15.1% |
| Social Communication | 47 | 76 | 35 |
| | 16.9% | 27.3% | 12.6% |
| Work | 39 | 71 | 32 |
| | 14.0% | 25.5% | 11.5% |
| Study | 44 | 74 | 45 |
| | 15.8% | 26.6% | 16.2% |
| Purchasing | 55 | 90 | 41 |
| | 19.8% | 32.4% | 14.7% |
| Banking | 36 | 72 | 38 |
| | 12.9% | 25.9% | 13.7% |

Table 3: Important Issues when Shopping Online

| Important issues to e-shoppers | Region in Saudi Arabia | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|------|--------|
| | East | West | Middle |
| Security | 74 | 100 | 57 |
| | 27% | 36% | 21% |
| Price | 75 | 104 | 56 |
| | 27% | 37% | 20% |
| Service, Delivery | 75 | 97 | 58 |
| | 27% | 35% | 21% |
| Quality | 75 | 102 | 60 |
| | 27% | 37% | 22% |
| Payment | 73 | 100 | 57 |
| | 26% | 36% | 21% |
| Language Barrier | 62 | 81 | 41 |
| | 22% | 29% | 15% |

6 ANALYSIS

The Cronbach's alphas (Table 4) are all greater than 0.7 (Bagozzi and Yi 1988). The squared multiple correlation cut-off point is 0.7, and the average variance extracted cut off-point is 0.5 or higher (Bagozzi 1994; Byrne 2001; Hair et al. 2006) (Table 5). We thus confirm the convergent reliability and discriminant validity.

Table 4: Scale Properties and Correlations

| Factor Correlations | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------|-----------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Model Constructs | Mean | Std. Dev. | Cronbach's alpha | SQ | PU | Trust | SN | Enj | CIU |
| SQ | 26.92 | 6.38 | 0.927 | 1.000 | | | | | |
| PU | 32.97 | 7.86 | 0.946 | .749 | 1.000 | | | | |
| Trust | 21.74 | 5.03 | 0.947 | .655 | .695 | 1.000 | | | |
| SN | 18.73 | 6.19 | 0.943 | .259 | .275 | .395 | 1.000 | | |
| Enj | 28.39 | 8.61 | 0.931 | .438 | .465 | .668 | .536 | 1.000 | |
| CIU | 31.48 | 7.98 | 0.961 | .397 | .421 | .606 | .533 | .745 | 1.000 |

Table 5: Measurement Model

| Constructs/Indicators | S. Factor Loading | S.E | C.R. | AVE | Squared Multiple Correlation |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-------|--------|-------|------------------------------|
| Site Quality (SQ) | | | | 0.757 | |
| SQ 1 | 0.922 | 0.039 | 26.510 | | 0.85 |
| SQ 2 | 0.844 | 0.038 | 26.414 | | 0.71 |
| SQ 3 | 0.855 | 0.035 | 26.972 | | 0.73 |
| SQ 4 | 0.857 | — | — | | 0.74 |
| Perceived usefulness | | | | 0.813 | |
| PU 3 | 0.911 | 0.039 | 37.788 | | 0.83 |
| PU 4 | 0.909 | 0.027 | 37.135 | | 0.83 |
| PU 5 | 0.914 | — | — | | 0.84 |
| PU 6 | 0.871 | 0.029 | 33.487 | | 0.76 |
| Trust | | | | 0.804 | |
| Trusting Beliefs Integrity 1 | 0.896 | 0.028 | 35.069 | | 0.80 |
| Trusting Beliefs Integrity 2 | 0.886 | 0.023 | 42.297 | | 0.79 |
| Trusting Beliefs Integrity 3 | 0.896 | 0.027 | 35.167 | | 0.80 |
| Trusting Beliefs Integrity 4 | 0.909 | — | — | | 0.83 |
| Subjective Norm | | | | 0.804 | |
| SN 3 | 0.731 | — | — | | 0.53 |
| SN 4 | 0.973 | 0.054 | 25.507 | | 0.95 |
| SN 5 | 0.955 | 0.057 | 24.647 | | 0.91 |
| SN 6 | 0.908 | 0.055 | 23.875 | | 0.82 |
| Enjoyment | | | | 0.744 | |
| Enj 4 | 0.705 | — | — | | 0.50 |
| Enj 5 | 0.94 | 0.055 | 22.934 | | 0.88 |
| Enj 6 | 0.925 | 0.055 | 22.918 | | 0.86 |
| Enj 8 | 0.858 | 0.052 | 20.672 | | 0.74 |
| Continuance Intention | | | | 0.864 | |
| CIU 1 | 0.827 | 0.024 | 35.466 | | 0.69 |
| CIU 2 | 0.928 | 0.017 | 55.752 | | 0.86 |
| CIU 3 | 0.981 | — | — | | 0.96 |
| CIU 4 | 0.974 | 0.012 | 78.936 | | 0.95 |

6.1 Structural Equation Model

As the first step in testing the proposed model, which operationalizes the hypotheses and the factors involved in continuance e-shopping intentions in Saudi Arabia, we estimate the goodness-of-fit indices (Figure 1). Bentler and Bonnett (1980) suggest the Chi-square/Degrees-of-freedom (CMIN/DF) ratio as an appropriate measure of model fit, which should not exceed 5 (Bentler 1989).

A structural equation model (SEM) with AMOS 5.0 software determines additional goodness-of-fit indices, including critical ratio (CR), chi-square (CMIN), degrees of freedom (df), chi-square/degrees of freedom (CMIN/DF), root mean square residual (RMR), root mean square error of approximate (RMSEA), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI), normal fit index (NFI), incremental fit index (NFI), and the relative fit index (RFI). In general, GFI, NFI, RFI, IFI, and CFI values greater than 0.90 indicate good model fit (Bentler 1989). As we illustrate in Table 6, all the hypotheses are statistically significant and supported, with CRs ranging from 20.318 to 4.888, which are greater than 1.96 and thus indicate acceptable results (Hair et al. 2006; Holmes-Smith 2000). As illustrated in Table 7, the goodness-of-fit indices of the proposed model of continuance intentions fit the data reasonably well, as confirmed by the chi-square CMIN = 875.370, df = 236, CMIN/DF = 3.709, RMR = 0.231, GFI = 0.905, CFI = 0.964, RMSEA = 0.065, NFI = 0.952, IFI = 0.965, and RFI = 0.944.

Table 6: Regression Weights

| Hypotheses | Paths | | | Standardized Regression Weights (B) | Standard Error S.E. | Critical Ratio C.R. | P Value | Hypotheses Findings |
|------------|-------|------|-------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------|---------------------|
| | | | | | | | | |
| H1 a | PU | <--- | SQ | .305 | .051 | 6.262 | *** | Supported |
| H1 b | Trust | <--- | SQ | .749 | .036 | 20.318 | *** | Supported |
| H2 | PU | <--- | Trust | .467 | .053 | 9.324 | *** | Supported |
| H3 a | SN | <--- | PU | .395 | .037 | 9.580 | *** | Supported |
| H3 b | Enj | <--- | PU | .541 | .032 | 13.473 | *** | Supported |
| H3 c | CIU | <--- | PU | .183 | .040 | 4.888 | *** | Supported |
| H4 a | Enj | <--- | SN | .322 | .032 | 8.876 | *** | Supported |
| H4 b | CIU | <--- | SN | .178 | .039 | 5.521 | *** | Supported |
| H5 | CIU | <--- | Enj | .527 | .062 | 11.481 | *** | Supported |

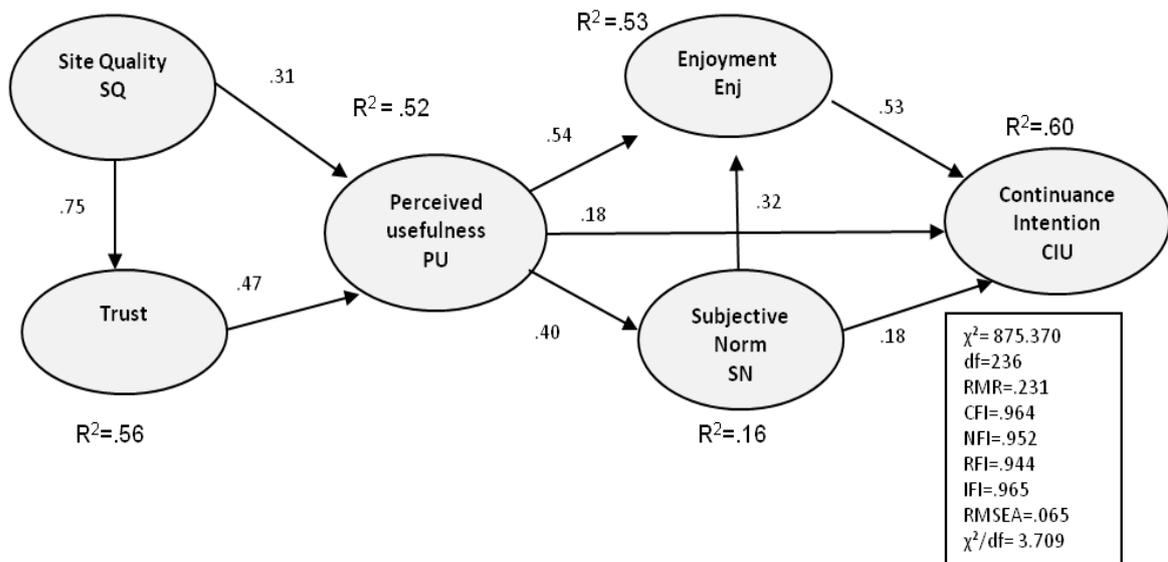
*** $p < 0.001$.

Table 7: Goodness-of-Fit Indices

| Confirmatory Factor Analysis CFA (Goodness-of-fit measure) | Acceptable Values | Value |
|---|--|---------|
| Chi-Square CMIN | NA | 875.370 |
| Degree of freedom | NA | 236 |
| CMIN/DF | Chi square/ df ≤5 (Bentler and Bonnett, 1989) | 3.709 |
| P value | p≤0.05 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.000 |
| Root mean square residual (RMR) | No established thresholds (the smaller the better) (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.231 |
| Goodness-of-fit (GFI) | ≥ 0.90 (the higher the better) (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.905 |
| Comparative fit index (CFI) | ≥ 0.90 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.964 |
| Root mean square error of approximate (RMSEA) | < 0.08 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.065 |
| Normal fit index (NFI) | ≥ 0.90 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.952 |
| Incremental fit index (IFI) | ≥ 0.90 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.965 |
| Relative fit index (RFI) | ≥ 0.90 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.944 |

Next, we examine the regression weights (path significance) of each relationship in our research model and the variance explained (R^2 value) by each path. The AMOS software reports the standardized regression weights, standard error, and CR for each path, which we provide in Table 6. The hypothesized associations are strongly significant at $p = 0.000$. Perceived enjoyment is the strongest predictor of continuance intention ($B = 0.53$), followed by perceived usefulness ($B = 0.18$), and then subjective norms ($B = 0.18$). The model explains 60% of the variance in continuance intentions (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Internet Continuance Intention Shopping Model



6.2 Invariance Analysis

When comparing cultures or groups, research participants may not recognize the same meaning of survey items. To minimize the bias in cross-national and cross-cultural research derived from the data collection, we applied back-translation (Brislin 1986; Yi et al. 2008). In addition, we assessed the measurement invariance across the groups to consider the constructs' factorial invariance (Cheung et al. 1999).

The invariance analysis indicates whether any differences occur between high and low online spenders among women. If we find that the annual online spending effect on the measurement invariance of the construct and the score of the group analysis is significant, the construct measurement differs for the two groups, and they cannot be compared directly.

To compare the annual spending (low and high spending) among female respondents, we use factorial invariance to assess the extent to which measures from both groups have the same meaning (Hair et al. 2006). The CMIN = 1404.966, df = 499, CMIN/DF = 2.816, RMR = 0.249, GFI = 0.855, CFI = 0.951, RMSEA = 0.053, NFI = 0.925, IFI = 0.951, and RFI = 0.918 indicate outstanding goodness-of-fit indices across the groups (Table 8).

Table 8: Goodness-of-Fit Indices

| Confirmatory Factor Analysis CFA (Goodness-of-fit measure) | Acceptable Values | Value |
|---|--|----------|
| Chi-Square CMIN | NA | 1404.966 |
| Degree of freedom | NA | 499 |
| CMIN/DF | Chi square/ df ≤ 5 (Bentler and Bonnett, 1989) | 2.816 |
| P value | $p \leq 0.05$ (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.000 |
| Root mean square residual (RMR) | No established thresholds (the smaller the better) (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.249 |
| Goodness-of-fit (GFI) | ≥ 0.90 (the higher the better) (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.855 |
| Comparative fit index (CFI) | ≥ 0.90 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.951 |
| Root mean square error of approximate (RMSEA) | < 0.08 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.053 |
| Normal fit index (NFI) | ≥ 0.90 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.925 |
| Incremental fit index (IFI) | ≥ 0.90 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.951 |
| Relative fit index (RFI) | ≥ 0.90 (Hair et al., 2006) | 0.918 |

Assuming the unconstrained model is correct, rather than constraining all factorial paths, the result across groups indicates changes in df (Δdf) = 18, chi-square ($\Delta \chi^2$) = 21.721, and $p = 0.245$, which is greater than Byrne's (2001) 0.05 cut-off. Tests of this measurement invariance appear in Table 9, which shows that changes in the chi-square and df are insignificant ($p = 0.245$). Therefore, the goodness-of-fit indices are comparable across low and high online spending groups, which justifies the invariance of the unconstrained and constrained models. Thus, we establish metric equivalence and can proceed in our analysis to regression paths.

Table 9: Invariance Analysis

| Model | Δdf | $\Delta \chi^2$ | p |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|------|
| Measurement weights | 18 | 21.721 | .245 |
| Structural weights | 9 | 20.273 | .016 |

The coefficient (regression paths) invariance analysis determines if high and low spenders among female respondents have the same relationships with same variables in the research model. The findings in Table 9 suggest coefficient non-invariance between low and high online spending among women across the research model with all regression paths constrained ($\Delta \chi^2 = 20.273$, $\Delta df = 9$, $p = 0.016$). To consider the relationships between model constructs for the source of non-invariance differences, we conducted an invariance analysis between low and high online spenders.

The findings in Table 10 indicate that low and high online spenders are non-invariant for certain relational paths. Differences in their behavior in the context of online shopping continuance in Saudi Arabia result from different coefficients of perceived site quality → perceived usefulness (change in chi-square = 5.033, $p = 0.025$). For the high spenders, this influence is greater than that for low spenders.

Table 10: Structural Factorial Analysis: High and Low Online Spending by Women

| Hypotheses | Paths | | | Low Online Spenders | | | High Online Spenders | | | Invariance | | |
|------------|-------|------|-------|---------------------|------|---------|----------------------|------|---------|------------|---------|---------|
| | | | | RW | C.R. | P value | RW | C.R. | P Value | Δ DF | Δ CMI N | P Value |
| H1 a | PU | <--- | SQ | .185 | .070 | 2.641 | .412 | .073 | 5.665 | 1 | 5.033 | .025 |
| H1 b | Trust | <--- | SQ | .790 | .052 | 15.310 | .692 | .050 | 13.815 | 1 | 1.853 | .173 |
| H2 | PU | <--- | Trust | .570 | .073 | 7.849 | .436 | .077 | 5.638 | 1 | 1.604 | .205 |
| H3 a | SN | <--- | PU | .393 | .054 | 7.253 | .321 | .050 | 6.362 | 1 | .953 | .329 |
| H3 b | Enj | <--- | PU | .477 | .050 | 9.515 | .402 | .042 | 9.558 | 1 | 1.310 | .252 |
| H3 c | CIU | <--- | PU | .208 | .063 | 3.292 | .196 | .053 | 3.699 | 1 | .021 | .886 |
| H4 a | Enj | <--- | SN | .228 | .047 | 4.883 | .323 | .045 | 7.253 | 1 | 2.118 | .146 |
| H4 b | CIU | <--- | SN | .239 | .058 | 4.143 | .202 | .053 | 3.807 | 1 | .223 | .637 |
| H5 | CIU | <--- | Enj | .741 | .095 | 7.772 | .689 | .082 | 8.399 | 1 | .166 | .683 |

The results of the latent mean online spending analysis appear in Table 11. The group analysis between the low and high spender samples exhibits latent mean invariance for the research constructs.

Table 11: Means: Annual Spending Sample (Low Spender – High Spender)

| | Latent mean | S.E. | C.R. | P Value |
|-------|-------------|------|--------|---------|
| PU | -.113 | .102 | -1.110 | .267 |
| Trust | -.077 | .104 | -.744 | .457 |
| Enj | .065 | .105 | .618 | .537 |
| CIU | -.093 | .107 | -.868 | .386 |
| SQ | -.040 | .105 | -.380 | .704 |
| SN | -.004 | .088 | -.050 | .960 |

6.3 Direct and Indirect Effect Analysis

The direct and indirect effects in Table 12 reveal that the greatest total influences of direct and indirect (mediated) effects on continuance intentions come from perceived enjoyment for both the low online spenders (0.741) and high online spenders (0.689) samples. The next greatest influences derive from perceived usefulness for low (0.721) and high (0.610) online spenders. Trust has a greater influence on low online spenders' (0.411) than on high online spenders' (0.266) continuance intentions. Thus, site quality, trust, perceived usefulness, and subjective norms all play significant roles for continuance intentions toward online shopping in Saudi Arabia among women with both low and high online spending habits.

Table 12: Direct and Indirect Influences on Continuance Intentions (Low Spender – High Spender)

| Construct | CIU (Low Spender) | | | CIU (High Spender) | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------|--------------------|----------|-------|
| | Direct | Indirect | Total | Direct | Indirect | Total |
| SQ | ----- | .458 | .458 | ----- | .435 | .435 |
| TRUST | ----- | .411 | .411 | ----- | .266 | .266 |
| PU | .208 | .513 | .721 | .196 | .414 | .610 |
| SN | .239 | .169 | .408 | .202 | .223 | .424 |
| ENJ | .741 | ----- | .741 | .689 | ----- | .689 |
| R² = 0.60 | | | | | | |

7 DISCUSSION

This research attempts to provide a validated conceptual model that integrates different factors and clarifies the theoretical problems of continuance e-shopping intentions and behavioral differences among women on online annual spending in Saudi Arabia. The online field survey validates the hypothesized model, and the model findings confirm that perceived enjoyment, perceived usefulness, and subjective norms are the main determinants of continuance intentions in Saudi Arabia, explaining 60% of continuance e-shopping intentions. However, enjoyment is more influential (see Table 6; $srw = 0.527$, $cr = 11.481$), followed by subjective norms ($srw = 0.178$, $cr = 5.521$), and then perceived usefulness ($srw = 0.183$, $cr = 4.888$). These findings are consistent with previous research (e.g., Bhattacharjee 2001a; Childers 2001; Davis et al. 1989; George 2002; Shih and Fang 2004; Taylor and Todd 1995; Teo et al. 1999; Venkatesh et al. 2003). Enjoyment, perceived usefulness, and subjective norms have positive influences (direct and indirect) on consumers' continuance e-shopping intentions.

The measurement weights of low and high online spending among female shoppers, based on metric invariance, are invariant. Testing for factorial regression paths invariance, we find that relationship path between site quality → trust; trust → perceived usefulness; perceived usefulness → subjective norms; perceived usefulness → enjoyment; subjective norms → enjoyment; perceived usefulness → continuance intentions; subjective norms → continuance intentions; and enjoyment → continuance intentions are similar for both low and high online spenders among women in Saudi Arabia. However, the site quality → perceived usefulness relationship path is non-invariant (high spenders $rw = 5.665$; low spenders $rw = 2.641$). That is, higher online spenders tend to accept technology, because these women perceive high quality content, good design, simple navigation, ease in finding necessary information, and ease of communication (utilitarian and hedonic experiences), which in turn increase the level of usefulness they perceive.

The model factorial paths for site quality and trust indicate strong antecedents of perceived usefulness on the regression weights (site quality $srw = 0.361$, $cr = 5.804$; trust $srw = 0.430$, $cr = 6.754$) (see Table 6). Both site quality (east = 0.438; west = 0.413; central = 0.415) and trust (east = 0.266; west = 0.284; central = 0.280) have great indirect effects on continuance intentions (see Tables 17–19). These findings match the collectivist culture of Saudi Arabia, where people tend to trust only those within their in-group (Yamagishi and Yamagishi 1994). They similarly may apply to other collectivist cultures or other nations in the Gulf States that appear similar to Saudi Arabia in various traits.

Trust and site quality do not have direct effects on continuance intentions toward the online retailer. Rather, significant indirect effects from trust and site quality move through perceived usefulness, subjective norms, and enjoyment. This model pertains to post-purchase behavior after a first-hand experience and provides confirmation of the effects of consumer initial trust and usefulness expectations, which lead to greater usefulness and put more pressure on social contacts to use and enjoy the site.

8 CONCLUSION AND CONTRIBUTIONS

From a theoretical standpoint, these results contribute to existing literature in several ways. First, we enhance e-shopping literature by providing insights into the factors that seem to affect online shopping continuance intentions for women with high and low spending habits in Saudi Arabia. We also posit that enjoyment, subjective norms, and perceived usefulness have direct and indirect effects on continuance intention. Furthermore, the greater positive indirect effects of site quality on perceived usefulness, subjective norms, and enjoyment and that of trust on enjoyment and subjective norms suggest that online retailers should increase the positive perceptions of trust and site quality to make their e-shopping environment more useful and enjoyable. To have a significant effect on e-shopping

continuance intentions, any e-shopping environment should encourage a shopping experience that is useful and enjoyable.

Second, the results support previous research that shows perceived usefulness reflects the utilitarian aspects of online shopping, and perceived enjoyment reflects its hedonic aspects. In our study, enjoyment has the strongest effect on e-shopping continuance intentions, which confirms that enjoyment in an online shopping environment is important and has a direct effect for women with either high or low online spending habits in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, this result demonstrates that perceived enjoyment has a stronger direct and indirect effect on e-shopping continuance intentions. Usefulness came next as it is an important criterion for female consumers when they select online stores; it can increase their satisfaction. Consumers may continue using an e-commerce service they consider useful, even if they are dissatisfied with it (Bhattacharjee 2001a).

Third, few prior studies use SEM as their methodological approach, and even fewer apply invariance analysis to verify behavioral online spending differences with a sample obtained from Saudi Arabia. This study addresses this knowledge gap.

9 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Typical of most field surveys, this study suffers some limitations. First, the novelty associated with using an online survey in the Saudi Arabian market indicates the empirical data may be biased by a novelty effect. Second, the online survey was posted with permission on Saudi universities' online forums. The survey may suffer a non-response bias, but there is no systematic way to test for the response rate.

More research should address the online context in Saudi Arabia, including ways to appeal to both hedonic and utilitarian shoppers, especially its youth population. Researchers also could extend and apply this approach in other cultures, whether those similar to Saudi Arabia, to confirm that the findings generalize to other collectivist cultures, or to cultures very unlike the Gulf states, to determine whether women in other nations behave differently when shopping online. This research shows that the well-established TAM can be integrated with ECT, which should prompt additional research related to continuance intentions, such as comparisons of new e-shoppers with continuing users, who have Internet knowledge and experience.

The continuance intention antecedents reveal direct and indirect effects, as well as online spending differences. The impact of additional factors, such as satisfaction, loyalty, and interactivity, and the moderating effect of different demographic factors, such as income, age, gender, regional and e-shopping experience, should be considered in further research.

9.1 Managerial Implications

This study provides managers with useful and important information about planning their Web sites and marketing strategies. Managers and site developers should focus on quality and informative content, which reflect usefulness and enjoyment. Knowing consumer behavioral patterns is critical for improving customer acquisition, retention, and relationship penetration. Managers should work to minimize churn, because customers who never return reduce the firm's customer base and revenues and require substantial expenditures to lure them back from competitors. According to the Pareto principle 80% of revenue from a customer base comes from 20% of the customers. Therefore, managers must identify and focus on higher spenders to retain them and generate more revenue.

To build sustainable, continued e-shopping relationships, managers cannot ignore either direct (perceived usefulness, enjoyment, subjective norms) or indirect (site quality, trust, perceived usefulness, subjective norms) influences on continuance intentions. Moreover, they should build positive word of mouth to enhance the perceptions of friends and family members of current customers about the Web site's usefulness, site quality, interactivity, and enjoyment, which can increase perceptions of the firm's trustworthiness. The return will maximize the value of customer expenditures for mutual company/customer gain.

This study draws attention to the direct and indirect differences among high and low female e-shoppers' spenders in Saudi Arabia, which should influence any Web site development and marketing strategy. Understanding the online spending differences between consumers can help managers identify high spenders and shift consumers from single visits to ongoing, trusted, useful, and enjoyable relationships, which should produce more stable, long-run business for online firms in Saudi Arabia.

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