Using E-Shopping in the Middle East Countries

A Case Study of Egypt and Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the extent to which Egyptian and Saudi consumers comprehend the concept of e-shopping, and how often e-shopping is used in those nations. In addition, the study will explore the reasons for, and obstacles to, participating in the e-shopping process. The study uses the descriptive method, which describes and analyzes the facts, breaks the problem down into points, finds out its possible causes, and recommends solutions. The essential data has been collected using questionnaires filled out by a sample of final consumers in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The sample size is 600 (300 from each country,) at a response rate of 75%.

The most important discovery is that e-shopping is used only very rarely by both Egyptian and Saudi consumers. There are a number of motives, and many obstacles, that factor into Egyptian and Saudi consumers' use of e-shopping. To address these, the study provides a list of recommendations divided into three parts. The first part concerns improving consumers' understanding of different electronic concepts. The second focuses on encouraging consumers to use e-shopping. The third concerns cutting down the obstacles to e-shopping.

Introduction

Today, e-shopping is considered an important activity for trading companies and institutions, and a key to success at both the local and international levels. In a short period, trade in developed countries has changed from its traditional locations of galleries, selling offices, companies, individuals, etc. into an electronic marketplace, with its own glossary of new terms such as e-trade, e-government, etc. E-trading has allowed companies to expand their markets and increase their opportunities. As such, there is a strong chance that the money exchanged in e-trading will continue to expand each year, reaching 11 trillion US dollars by the year 2014. (Archer and Yuan 2000, Almobaireek 2001, Mubarak 2004, alshumaimri et al 2011)

According to the Internet worldstats report, at end of 2011, the Arab States overall had reached an estimated Internet penetration of 29.1%, compared to 34.7% globally. This places the region ahead of Africa (12.8 %) and Asia & Pacific, where Internet penetration in 2011 was estimated at 27.2%. There are major differences within the Arab States, with Internet penetration in 2010 varying from below 5% in Mauritania and Somalia, around 50% in Morocco, to around 80% in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates – a level comparable to many European countries.

ITU (International Telecommunication Union), 2012, estimates that by end 2011, about 31 per cent of households in the Arab region had a computer, and that some 26 per cent of households had Internet access at home. While household ICT connectivity is slightly

higher in the Arab States than in the Asia and the Pacific region, the region lies behind the world average and well behind the CIS and the Americas, where the percentage of households with Internet access is almost 40 and 50 per cent, respectively. In Europe, about three out of four households have a computer and Internet access at home. This stands in stark contrast to Africa, where less than one out of ten households are equipped with a computer and have Internet access.

Theoretical part

E-Shopping is one of the newest methods of marketing in Arab countries, and so consumers tend to find the concept a bit vague. Furthermore, because there are some difficulties and obstacles holding e-shopping back from widespread use and expansion, companies tend to avoid using it as a new marketing method. However, there are many incentives that might encourage consumers in said countries to e-shop. To address consumer comprehension of e-shopping in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and explore the pros and cons of using e-shopping in those countries, this study is divided into five sections. The first covers the general framework of the study, the second includes the theoretical framework and a review of previous studies, the third discusses the methodology applied in the study, and the forth analyzes the study's field results and their implications on the study hypothesis. Finally, the last section discusses the study's implications, and presents a series of recommendations.

There are two popular ways of using e-shopping in the Arabian World. The first is to collect information about products and then buy and pay through the internet. The other way is to collect information from the internet and then make the purchase using traditional methods, i.e. from shops. This latter method is preferred by most Arabian customers (Abu Farah, 2005). The table below presents the usage of the Internet in general in Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Table (1):Internet Usage and Population Growth in Egypt and Saudi Arabia 2000-2011:

Egypt				
Year	**Users**	**Population**	**% Pen.**	**Face book users**
2000	450,000	66,303,000	0.7 %	
2006	5,100,000	71,236,631	7.0 %	
2008	10,532,400	81,713,517	12.9 %	
2009	16,636,000	78,866,635	21.1 %	
2011	21,691,776	82,079,636	26.4%	10,475,940
Saudi Arabia				
2000	200,000	21,624,422	0.9 %	
2003	1,500,000	21,771,609	6.9 %	
2005	2,540,000	23,595,634	10.8 %	
2007	4,700,000	24,069,943	19.5 %	
2009	7,761,800	28,686,633	27.1 %	
2010	9,800,000	25,731,776	38.1 %	
2011	13,000,000	26,131,703	49.7%	5,148,240

Resource: ICT Development and Progress in the Arab Region, 2012

A study conducted by Alshumaimri (2004) about the future challenges and opportunities for e-shopping in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia showed that e-shopping helps consumers meet their needs and desires while choosing between products sold in a variety of disparate locations. One of e-shopping's advantages is its tendency to connect the product with the consumer, giving the consumer an opportunity have direct interaction between

themselves and the product without the need for mediators. Also, the consumer has a chance to more easily compare prices between different retail establishments.

In a survey conducted by King Abdulaziz Technical City (1999) on 260 internet users in Saudi Arabia, it was found that 93% of those customers used the internet for browsing, 72% for email, and 32% for chatting. Those who browse did so for a number of different purposes: 83% for education, 72% looking for news, and only 32% for shopping.

There are a number of studies exploring the motivations and benefits of using the internet. (Paul 1996, Herbig and Hale 1997, Archer and Yuan 2000, Tayel 2004) . There are also a number of studies focused on the challenges of using the internet. (Forch 1996, Mullin 1998, Ahmed 2002, Abbas and Alshawaf 2003) Some of the challenges faced in developing countries include language obstacles, culture, shopping habits, and customers' worries about their private data.

Additionally, there are number of recent studies have been applied in the developing countries (Al-Magrabi et al, 2011, But et al 2012, Alam and Mohd's study 2009, Jusoh and Ling 2012). Al-Magrabi et al (2011), finds that – Perceived usefulness, enjoyment, and social pressure are determinants of online shopping continuance in Saudi Arabia. the site quality and trust are also critical indirect factors that encourage consumers to continue their e-shopping intention.

Another study by But et al (2012), investigates the applicability of the technology acceptance model (TAM) for understanding consumer adoption of e-shopping within a developing country. Online surveys with Pakistani college students (n=340) were conducted. A multiple linear regression reveals that perceived ease of use, trust, perceived usefulness and online shopping experience influence consumer's attitudes towards e-shopping, emphasizing the applicability of TAM.

Alam and Mohd's study (2009) is to identify the key factors influencing customer satisfaction through online shopping. It finds that website design, reliability, product variety and delivery performances are the four key factors which influence consumers' satisfaction of online shopping in Malaysia.

From another perspective for the same country, Fusoh and Ling (2012) explore factors influencing consumers' attitude towards e-commerce purchases through online shopping. The study also investigate how socio-demographic (age, income and occupation), pattern of online buying (types of goods, e-commerce experience and hours use on internet) and purchase perception (product perception, customers' service and consumers' risk) affect consumers' attitude towards online shopping. The findings revealed that there is a significant difference in attitude towards online shopping among income group.

In summary, by looking at previous studies we find that the internet can be used in many different ways, including e-shopping. Additionally, these studies reveal that there are many different motivations for using the internet, and many different obstacles that need to be faced. However, one subject these studies have never discussed is customers' conceptual understanding of e-shopping. They also did not investigate the use of e-shopping by customers as compared to other ways of using the internet. Accordingly, this study will attempt to cover this gap: it will seek to discover to what extent the Egyptian and Saudi consumers comprehend the concept of e-shopping, and how often it is used. In addition, it will explore the incentives of, and obstacles to, using e-shopping in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The study hypotheses are represented in the following:

H1: There is a lack of comprehension of e-shopping as a concept among Egyptian and Saudi consumers.

H2: There is less use of e-shopping among Egyptian and Saudi consumers as compared to other regions that use the internet.

H3: There is less use of e-shopping among Egyptian and Saudi consumers as compared to other methods of shopping.

H4: There are a number of incentives that motivate Egyptian and Saudi consumers to use e-shopping.

H5: The primary reason behind the low usage of e-shopping by Egyptian and Saudi consumers is a set of barriers impeding their use of e-shopping.

Methods:

This study adopts the descriptive methodology. It describes and investigates the reality of e-shopping from the consumers' perspective. The study sample was taken from Cairo and Riyadh. Both cities largely represent their respective nations: they are the national capitals, and are large cities with high populations and increasing overall levels of income and education. In addition, they possess the available facilities to encourage consumers to use e-shopping.

The researchers attempted to make the study sample as diverse as possible, and it has been collected randomly from throughout malls and public markets in both countries. To assess the appropriateness of the sample for the two societies, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy has been used. Kaiser's value was 79% for the Egyptian consumer sample and 76% for the Saudis', which indicates a high appropriateness of the sample for each society.

The essential data needed for the hypotheses study test was collected using a questionnaire prepared precisely for that purpose. According to instructions from a group of management professors, the questionnaire was tested on a small sample and then adjusted accordingly before it was used in the field. The questionnaire’s sections were chosen using the following: a survey search conducted on a part of the population, the point of view of a group of experienced professors, and the results of previous studies. Simplicity and clarity were given top priority while designing the questionnaire, along with obtaining full coverage of the study variables. The questionnaire was then used, along with interviews, to collect data. A 5-grade Likert scale was used, starting from 5 (very important), to 1 (not important at all). 400 questionnaires were distributed in each country. 600 questionnaires have been collected, making for a 75% response rate.

Results and Discussion:

The field study revealed some characteristics of the study sample which are shown in table (2). Basically, there are differences between the two samples regarding age, education, employment, income, marital status, and the number of family members. The largest percentage of individuals in the Egyptian consumer sample (28%) are 50 years old and above, while the largest percentage of individuals in the Saudi consumer sample (26%) were between 40 and 50 years old. Meanwhile, those under 20 years old represent the smallest percentage in the Egyptian consumer sample, while in the Saudi consumer sample the same age group takes second place in size. The researchers believe that this is because Egyptian youth have less access to the internet than young people in Saudi Arabia. A study survey conducted by the website for the research center at Ajeeb (2002) showed that the Arab Republic of Egypt and The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are, globally speaking, on an average level in terms of internet use, although Saudi Arabia has slightly higher rates than Egypt. People holding a bachelor's degree represent the highest percentage of the Egyptian consumer

sample (28%), while the highest percentage of the Saudi sample (25%) was composed of individuals with postgraduate degrees.

Table No. (2): Sample Characteristics

Characteristic	Range	The Egyptian consumer		The Saudi consumer	
		Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)
Age	Less than 20 years old	44	15	63	21
	From 20 to 29 years old	43	14	52	17
	From 30 to 39 years old	52	17	52	17
	From 40 to 49 years old	76	25	77	26
	50 years old and above	85	28	56	19
Total		**300**	**100%**	**300**	**100%**
Education Level	Uneducated	46	15	48	16
	Under intermediate	51	17	60	20
	Intermediate	56	19	60	20
	Undergraduate	84	28	56	19
	Postgraduate	63	21	76	25
Total		**300**	**100%**	**300**	**100%**
Employment	Unemployed	39	13	54	18
	Less than average	56	19	47	16
	Average	57	19	56	19
	High	81	27	67	22
	Very high	67	22	76	25
Total		**300**	**100%**	**300**	**100%**
Income	Very low	48	16	35	12
	Low	68	23	40	13
	Average	58	19	45	15
	High	66	22	100	33
	Very high	60	20	80	27
Total		**300**	**100%**	**300**	**100%**
Marital Status	Single	49	16	39	13
	Newly married	50	17	48	16
	Married and not a provider	52	17	51	17
	Married and a provider	75	25	85	28
	Married with a family	74	25	77	26
Total		**300**	**100%**	**300**	**100%**

Source: Investigation form, 7th question.

Testing the Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

To verify this hypothesis, the questionnaire has included a question featuring several phrases conveying electronic concepts, which were collected from previous studies, and specialized references to determine how close each phrase is to the Egyptian and Saudi conception of e-shopping. The sample question was presented using a five-point Likert scale as shown in table (3). Table (3) shows the ranks of these electronic concepts from the point of view of both the Saudi and Egyptian sample according to the weighted mean.

Table No. (3): Electronic concept ranks according to the weighted mean.

The phrase	**E. Concept**	Egyptian			Saudi			**PVT**
		M*	**S***	R	**M**	**S**	R	
"Executing transactions between enterprises via the internet"	B 2 B	3.06	1.45	4	3.17	1.42	5	0.878
"Executing transactions between enterprises and the government via the internet."	B 2 G	3.06	1.40	5	3.18	1.32	4	0.072
"Executing transactions between the government and other parties via the internet"	E-government	2.88	1.17	6	3.06	1.43	6	0.948
"The manager collects information via the internet to execute administrative tasks such as planning and arranging."	E-management	2.84	1.13	7	2.97	1.32	7	0.957
"Companies using marketing activities like promoting and "distributing products via internet."	E-shopping (B 2 C)	3.38	1.31	3	3.38	1.44	3	0.975
"The consumer collects information from the internet, buys from the internet or somewhere else, then pays cash, by check or by mail."	E-buying	3.43	1.27	2	3.46	1.27	1	0.189
"The final consumer both buys and pays via the internet."	E-shopping	3.52	1.28	1	3.42	1.33	2	0.102

Source: SPSS program results, according to the 2nd answer of the investigation form questions.
***P.V.T** = probability value to test T, **R:** rank , **S**= the sample Standard deviation , **M=**, the sample weighted arithmetic mean*

By looking at table (3), we can conclude that the majority of the Egyptian consumers (71%) realize the proper concept of e-shopping, as it ranked first. The weighted mean of the concept reached 3.52; larger than the general mean (3), the sum of five-point items divided by their number = [(5+4+3+2+1) / 5= 3]. However, a large percentage of the Egyptian

consumers (65%) cannot differentiate between the concepts of e-buying, e-shopping (B2C), transactions between enterprises and government via internet (B2G), and the transactions between enterprises via internet (B2B). Those concepts were ranked at (respectively) first, second, third, fourth, and fifth, and their weighted means were 3.43, 3.38, 3.06, and 3.06 respectively.

The results also indicate that a reasonable percentage of Egyptian consumers (57%) don't differentiate between the concepts of e-shopping, e-government, and e-administration, as the weighted mean of both concepts reached 2.84 and 2.88 respectively, less than the general mean.

The results also show that the largest percentage of Saudi consumers (70%) believe that the concept of e-buying is the same as the concept of e-shopping: the e-buying phrase was ranked as the closest equivalent to e-shopping from the Saudi consumer's point of view. The weighted mean was 3.46, far larger than the general mean.

It is also worth noting that a large percentage of Saudi consumers (68%) do grasp the concept of e-shopping, as it its phrase took second place, and the weighted average reached 3.42. Still, some (64%) do not see the differences between the concepts of e-shopping, e-shopping (B2C), transactions between enterprises and the government via Internet (B2G), transactions between enterprises via Internet (B2B), and e-government, as these concepts took the third, fourth, fifth, and the sixth places with weighted means of 3.38, 3.18, 3.17, and 3.06 respectively. In addition, a reasonable percentage of Saudi consumers (59%) also believe that the concept of e-administration is equivalent to the concept of e-shopping, as the former’s phrase ranked last with a 2.97 weighted mean, less than the general mean.

To investigate the differences between Saudi and Egyptian consumers regarding their perceptions of e-shopping versus other electronic concepts, the same test was used. Since the calculated probability value (P-v= 0.11) was larger than the assumed probability value (a= 0.05), the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted, and it was inferred that there is no difference between Saudi and Egyptian consumers regarding their perceptions of e-shopping concept versus other electronic concepts.

Moreover, T-tests have been used, and from table (3) it's clear that the calculated probability value (P-v to T) for each electronic concept is larger than the assumed probability value (a= 0.05), and thus the null hypothesis (H_0) was again accepted.

Generally, we notice that both Saudi and Egyptian consumers do not fully understand the concept of e-shopping, though Egyptian consumers are slightly more knowledgeable on the concept than the Saudi consumers: 71% of the Egyptian consumer sample recognized the correct description of e-shopping versus 67% of the Saudi sample. While there's a large percentage of both samples that don't fully understand the concept of e-shopping, there *are* similarities between Saudi and Egyptian consumers regarding the ranking of some of the electronic concepts, such as the concepts of e-shopping, e-administration, and e-government. There are also similarities in their ranking of the rest of the concepts. According to the T-test, there's no major disagreement between the aforementioned consumers regarding their perception of e-shopping versus other electronic concepts, which confirms the first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2

According to the mean and the standard deviations shown in table (4), it is clear that Egyptian consumers most commonly used the internet to read newspapers and magazines, followed by reading and replying to email messages, followed by using it for leisure and entertainment, with means of 3.38, 3.36, and 3.35 respectively. As for the Saudi respondents, leisure and entertainment ranked first, followed by reading newspapers and magazines, then reading and replying to email messages, with means of 3.56, 3.54, and 3.48 respectively. The

mean for these usages is larger than the general mean, indicating that the majority of Egyptian and Saudi consumers primarily use the internet for general tasks and not for specialized ones like shopping. This result is in line with previous studies, and is believed by some researchers **(Ernest and Young, 1998)** to be due to the lack of awareness and understanding of the usefulness of the internet for specialized tasks.

We also note that using the internet for shopping ranks last for both Saudi and Egyptian users, with means at 2.92 and 2.70 respectively, indicating only a minority of Saudi and Egyptian consumers use the internet in these fields. This might be due to a combination of factors creating obstacles to consumers' use of e-shopping, which will be discussed later.

We also notice that, for respondents from both nations, financial transactions (searching for new investments, carrying out financial transactions online) rank barely above last. The mean of these fields are less than or equal to the general mean, meaning that only a small number of Egyptian and Saudi consumers use the internet for activities in these fields. This finding coincides with a number of other studies on the subject, **(Mullin, 1998)** which concluded that consumers lack trust in the internet's security for financial transactions, and that there was a glaring absence of legislation to protect the consumers from online pirates and hackers, especially in Arab countries.

The activities lying near the mean for both Saudi and Egyptian internet consumers include education, collecting information, making phone calls, and job searching. That said, the results do indicate a difference between the internet activities participated in by Saudi and Egyptian final consumers, including in the areas of reading newspapers and magazines and using email.

To explore how great the difference is between Egyptian and Saudi consumers regarding their preferences for different internet activities the same procedures mentioned above were applied. Again, the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted, meaning that there is no significant difference between Saudi and Egyptian consumers regarding their usages of the internet for different activities.

For further analysis, a T-test was used, and since the probability value (P-v to T) for each field individually was larger than the assumed probability value (a= 0.05), the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted, meaning that there is no significant difference between Saudi and Egyptian consumers regarding their use of the internet for different activities, with the exception of the "leisure and entertainment" category. It should be noted that the calculated probability value for that particular category could perhaps be a point of contention, as entertainment domains might be more available to the Egyptian consumer than the Saudi consumer.

In summary, for both Egyptian and Saudi consumers e-shopping ranks dead last compared to other types of internet activities, though Saudi consumers use the internet for e-shopping more than the Egyptian consumers do (58% vs. 54%). Furthermore, according to T-test results, there are no significant differences between the way that Egyptian and Saudi consumers use the internet. Therefore, the second hypothesis is verified.

Table No. (4): Frequency of Various Internet Activities.

Activity	Egyption			Saudi			
	M*	S*	O	M	S	O	P.V.T*
Shopping	2.70	1.19	12	2.92	1.20	12	0.076
Reading newspapers and magazines	3.38	1.36	1	3.54	1.28	2	0.091
Phone calls, especially	3.10	1.44	8	3.25	1.39	8	0.688

international ones							
Reading and replying to emails	3.36	1.35	2	3.48	1.31	3	0.371
Searching for investments	3.00	1.36	10	2.93	1.35	11	0.216
Searching for services (travels and tours)	3.11	1.29	7	3.25	1.41	7	0.392
Leisure and entertainment	3.35	1.34	3	3.56	1.26	1	0.020
Job searching	3.08	1.27	9	3.11	1.36	9	0.654
Obtaining general information	3.26	1.34	4	3.46	1.29	4	0.392
Collecting information for scientific research	3.15	1.44	6	3.36	1.38	5	0.101
Education, learning, and awareness in specialized fields	3.22	1.38	5	3.31	1.38	6	0.708
Financial transactions (paying bills, etc.)	2.93	1.46	11	2.99	1.47	10	0.626

Source: *SPSS program results according to the 3rd answer of the investigation form questions*
***P.V.T** = probability value to test T* , ***O:** rank* , ***S**= the sample Standard deviation* , ***M=**, the sample weighted mean.*

Hypothesis 3

To test this hypothesis, shopping was divided into three main types: traditional shopping, direct shopping, and online/electronic shopping. Each type has its own sub-methods that can be used by the consumer. In the 4th question on the questionnaire form, consumers from both countries were asked about how often they use said methods. The results appear below in table (5).

Table No. (5): How often Egyptian and Saudi consumers use different methods of shopping.

Nationality	Shopping Type	Shopping Methods	Frequencies				Results			
			Always	Often	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	M*	R	P.V.T*
Egyptian	Traditional	Grocery stores	81	95	73	51	-	3.69	1	0.065
		Supermarket	35	72	83	54	56	2.92	4	0.031
		Retailer	61	93	68	42	36	3.37	2	0.077
		Wholesaler	36	79	95	46	44	3.06	3	0.308
	Direct	Phone	-	69	86	78	67	2.52	5	0.536
		Mail	-	-	102	93	105	2.29	6	0.651
		Fax	-	17	81	103	99	2.05	7	0.009
		Catalogue	-	-	75	124	101	1.91	8	0.883
	Electronic	Internet	-	-	77	114	109	1.89	9	0.764

Saudi	Traditional	Grocery stores	91	83	84	42	-	3.74	2	0.065
		Supermarket	88	95	71	46	-	3.75	1	0.031
		Retailer	45	83	81	56	35	3.36	3	0.077
		Wholesaler	49	74	73	88	26	3.21	4	0.308
	Direct	Phone	11	27	69	84	109	2.16	6	0.536
		Mail	-	-	108	93	99	2.03	7	0.651
		Fax	-	64	72	93	71	2.43	5	0.009
		Catalogue	-	-	105	87	108	1.99	8	0.883
	Electronic	Internet	-	-	92	106	102	1.97	9	0.764

Source: *SPSS program results according to the 4th answer of the investigation form questions.*
***P.V.T** = probability value to test T* **, *O:** rank* **, *S=** the sample Standard deviation* **, *M=,** the sample weighted mean.*

As shown in table (5), we can see the traditional methods of shopping represented by grocery stores, supermarkets, wholesalers, and retailers rank first. We find that the Egyptian consumer depends mainly on grocery stores for shopping, followed by retailers and wholesalers, and finally supermarkets, all of which have means that are above or quite close to the general mean (3). As for Saudi consumers, they depend mainly on supermarkets, perhaps due to the rapid expansion of supermarket chains into high-income neighborhoods. Trailing slightly behind supermarkets come grocery stores, retailers, and wholesalers, with means of 3.74, 3.36, and 3.21 respectively.

Direct shopping methods rank second among both Egyptian and Saudi consumers, despite the ongoing and steady decline of those methods in general. The researcher believes that this middle position is held down because both Egyptian and Saudi consumers hold onto traditional methods of shopping, and because direct shopping methods require equipment like telephones and faxes, which may not be available to some consumers. This result confirms the conclusions of Alshmemri (2004).

Finally, e-shopping methods rank last by a considerable margin, with weighted means of 1.89 and 1.97. The researcher believes that this is due to a number of factors. First, the idea of using the internet for shopping is a new one for Egyptian and Saudi consumers, making them cautious. Moreover, they generally prefer traditional shopping over electronic shopping, and have a strong preference for going into stores to examine goods and pay for them personally. Previous studies (Ernest and Young, 1998 and Mullin, 1998) support this assessment.

Hypothesis 4

As shown in table (6), a large percentage of the Egyptian and Saudi consumers sampled believe that the abovementioned factors represent the primary motivations to use e-shopping. We also find that the motives of e-shopping for the Egyptian respondents and Saudi respondents differed considerably, although they did record similar results in certain categories. For example, “Is a fun and novel way to shop and spend time on the internet” and "New and varied methods for shopping and payment" ranked in the top two for both nationalities. This indicates that both Egyptian and Saudi consumers use the internet for

entertainment and like to try what's new, particularly when shopping. This coincides with the results of a survey conducted by King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology in 1999. Other categories in which the numbers were similar included "ease and speed of shopping from the house at any hour", "provides new distribution services, such as home delivery", "easy access to markets a wide selection of products", " allows the consumer to shop for many kinds of products, even those that are not available in traditional stores", and "makes it easy for the consumer to communicate and negotiate with the producer / retailer."

On the other hand, there were a few categories in which considerable differences emerged between the two nationalities, including in the categories "products are offered in high qualities and at low prices", "saves the consumer time and effort when compared to traditional shopping", " the consumer can know the total cost of their purchases before buying", "helps all family members participate in the purchase decision", and "reaches consumers in remote areas". The researcher believes that this may be due to the differences in income levels between Saudi Arabia and Egypt, varying traditional habits and culture, and differences in the geographical distribution of population within the two countries.

As per usual, a T-test was applied to quantify differences between the motivations of Egyptian and Saudi e-shoppers. It was found that the calculated probability value (P-v=0.004) was less than the assumed probability value (a= 0.05), meaning that the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted (H_1). In short, it was found that that there is in fact a difference between Saudi and Egyptian consumers in terms of their motives for e-shopping, and the considerable differences in several of table (6)'s fields make this conclusion seem rather obvious. In any case, it is clear that there are a number of different motivations and incentives that inspire people to use e-shopping, and that there are significant differences in said motivations between Egyptians and Saudis. Therefore, the 4th hypothesis is accepted.

Table No. 6: Ranking the e-shopping motives of Egyptian and Saudi consumers

Motive	Egyptian			Saudi			**P.V.T***
	M*	**S***	**R**	**M**	**S**	**R**	
Ease and speed of shopping from the house at any hour	3.35	1.40	5	3.35	1.40	4	0.519
Products are offered in high qualities and at low prices	3.06	1.47	12	3.20	1.34	8	0.000
Saves the consumer time and effort when compared to traditional shopping	3.33	1.27	6	3.09	1.38	11	0.000
The consumer can know the total cost of their purchases before buying	3.37	1.28	3	3.14	1.42	10	0.000
Provides new distribution services, such as home delivery	3.36	1.30	4	3.26	1.36	6	0.004
Easy access to markets a wide selection of products	3.25	1.40	8	3.24	1.40	7	0.031
New and varied methods for shopping and payment	3.42	1.28	2	3.46	1.31	2	0.668
Helps all family members participate in the purchase decision	3.30	1.36	7	3.40	1.29	3	0.000

Allows the consumer to shop for many kinds of products, even those that are not available in traditional stores	3.07	1.37	11	3.00	1.47	12	0.591
Reaches consumers in remote areas	3.21	1.39	9	3.29	3.29	5	0.000
Makes it easy for the consumer to communicate and negotiate with the producer / retailer	3.11	1.36	10	3.16	1.36	9	0.318
Is a fun and novel way to shop and spend time on the internet	3.40	1.29	1	3.50	1.26	1	0.852

Source: *SPSS program results according to the 5th answer of the investigation form questions.*
P.V.T** = probability value to test T* **,** ***O: *rank* **,** ***S=*** *the sample Standard deviation* **,** ***M=,*** *the sample weighted mean.*

Hypothesis 5

To test this hypothesis, the questionnaire included a question that dealt with some of the obstacles facing e-shoppers in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The obstacles in the question were chosen from previous studies and literature specialized in this field, and designed to measure precisely how much the obstacles affected the consumers' e-shopping habits. Table (7) contains the results.

Table No.7: Ranking e-shopping obstacles

E-shopping obstacles	Egyptian Consumers			Saudi Consumers			P.V.T*
	M*	S*	R	M	S	R	
Computer and internet costs	3.38	1.27	2	3.36	1.36	5	0.000
Slow internet connection	3.33	1.30	5	3.33	1.35	6	0.668
Lack of computer skills	3.19	1.33	9	3.20	1.34	9	0.931
The high prices and low quality of online products	3.36	1.33	3	3.36	1.37	4	0.318
Not all of the family's needs are available online, especially basic ones	3.23	1.37	8	3.25	1.38	8	0.847
Lack of internet security	3.40	1.29	1	3.47	1.33	1	0.901
Poor service by online companies	3.07	1.32	10	3.16	1.36	10	0.728

Not enough successful Arab e-shopping websites	3.36	1.29	4	3.37	1.30	3	0.519
Most successful foreign sites are difficult to use due to language barrier	3.31	1.32	6	3.40	1.30	2	0.000
Complex routine procedures	3.06	1.36	11	3.15	1.43	11	0.748
Preference for traditional shopping	3.30	1.36	7	3.29	1.36	7	0.545

Source: *SPSS program results according to the 6th answer of the investigation form questions.*
***P.V.T** = probability value to test T* **,** ***O:** rank* **,** ***S=** the sample Standard deviation* **,** ***M=,** the sample weighted mean.*

In table (7) we see that most of the individuals sampled believed that all of the problems listed represented obstacles holding them back from using e-shopping. Results between the two samples were similar in categories such as "lack of computer skills", "not all of the family's needs are available online, especially basic ones ", "lack of internet security", "poor service by online companies", and "complex routine procedures". This would indicate a lack of direct connection between a consumer's nationality and technical issues, which in turn would confirm the results of many other studies (Ahmad 2002, Abo Fara 2002, and Alshawaf 2003).

The most significant differences between the two samples were in the "computer and internet costs" and the "most successful foreign sites are difficult to use due to language barrier" categories. Internet and computer costs mattered significantly more to Egyptians than to Saudis (2nd-ranked vs. 5th). On the other hand, problems with successful foreign sites troubled Saudis more than Egyptians (2nd-ranked vs. 6th) Overall, however, once a T-test was applied, it was found that the null hypothesis was again supported by the data, except in the case of the "costs" and "foreign sites" categories, where the null hypothesis was rejected.

The significant differences in the anomalous categories can be attributed, respectively, to the income differential between Egyptian and Saudi consumers and a possible desire among Saudi consumers to see, learn, and imitate English websites.

The conclusions to be drawn are that the low usage of e-shopping by Egyptian and Saudi consumers is due to the various obstacles they face, and that, with a few small exceptions, there is no significant difference between Egyptian and Saudi consumers regarding barriers to successful e-shopping. All of the above verify the fifth hypothesis.

Recommendations

In summary the most important findings of the study are: 1, Egyptians' comprehension of e-shopping as a concept is slightly better than that of their Saudi counterparts (71% vs 67%). 2, according to T-testing, there is no serious discrepancy between Egyptian and Saudi consumers regarding their perceptions of e-shopping versus other electronic concepts. 3, Although the Saudi respondents e-shopped more than the Egyptian respondents, the internet is still not very widely used for shopping in either country compared to other methods. 4, Egyptians and Saudis agree on their description of the obstacles that face them when they want to try e-shopping, including insufficient computer skills, lack of ability

to meet basic needs online, the absence of internet security, poor service, and complex procedures.

Finally, the study's results recommend that Egyptian and Saudi establishments should hold conferences and seminars to train employees and introduce them to new electronic and internet concepts, while encouraging them to try e-shopping. In addition, educational institutions in both countries should teach students how to use the internet, and help increase their knowledge of new electronic concepts. The two governments must provide a sound legal environment for shopping online by creating laws that simplify electronic transactions, provide security and safety while e-shopping, and protect the consumer from internet hackers. In final, further studies and research on e-shopping in both the Arab Republic of Egypt and The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia should be conducted, in order to study the opinions and suggestions of all of the consumers, businesses, and specialists in this field.

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