Exploring the Factors Affecting the Intention to Use C2C Auction Websites in Egypt

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ABSTRACT

Online shopping has become the third most popular Internet activity after using e-mails and entertainment. An important type of online shopping is online consumer to consumer auction (C2C) where consumers are able to sell and buy directly online. Although C2C online auctions could be an opportunity to enhance e-commerce in developing countries, many internet users are not willing to use it. This research explores the factors that could lead to more users’ intention to use C2C auction websites in Egypt as an example of the developing countries. A conceptual model is introduced based on the technology acceptance model which was tested via a survey. Findings indicate that the perceived usefulness of using C2C auction websites have a significant impact on users’ intention to use C2C website. This should be supported with appropriate security measures that could lead to more trustable C2C auction websites.

Keywords: Adoption, Auction Website, Consumer to Consumer (C2C), Egypt, Technology Acceptance Mode

1. INTRODUCTION

Many developing countries are lagging behind developed countries in e-commerce (Delafrooz et al., 2009). Statistics show that citizens in developing countries do not prefer to purchase directly from e-commerce websites (Li & Zhang 2008). There are different reasons behind that such as lack of ICT infrastructure and the mistrust of using the technology. Alternative method of e-commerce which could have a good potential in developing countries is the consumer to consumer (C2C) e-commerce where citizens can sell and buy products and services between consumers directly over the internet. Online C2C auction is considered one of the most popular methods of C2C e-commerce. In developing countries, many citizens have been trading between themselves without the internet facilities compared to online C2C auctions. This is because benefits of using such websites are not visible for many citizens due to the lack...
of awareness and the limited number of C2C auction websites.

Although several researchers have identified important factors for successful e-commerce (Degeratu, 2001; Duh et al., 2011; Li et al., 2007), just few who identified what are the factors that affect users’ intention to use online C2C auction websites in developing countries. Most of the studies focused on certain factors such as security and website design (Schaupp and Belanger, 2005) while neglected other important factors such as trust. Not only this, but also the success factors which were identified for certain developed countries differ greatly from developing countries due to the gap in ICT infrastructure and citizens digital illiteracy (Moon et al., 2004). To overcome this gap, this research seeks to answer this question: “What are the factors that affect users’ intention to use C2C auction websites in Egypt?” Egypt has been selected as an example of developing countries.

The paper structure starts by reviewing the literature to identify the factors that increase users’ intention to use online C2C auction websites which lead to the proposed model. This followed by explaining the methodology used for data collection and analysis. The answer to the research question is done in the discussion section.

2. THEORY AND MODEL

Studies of online auction established that the common internet auction formats can be classified into four types: the English auction, the Dutch auction, first price sealed bid and second price sealed-bid auctions (Thomas & Wilson, 2001). Each type of these auctions identifies who will be the winner of the auction and what is the price will be paid. Regardless of the type of the online auction, there are several factors (Rockart, 1979) that could lead to the success or failure of the online auctions. To answer the research question, an extensive literature review is undertaken to identify the factors that improve user’s intention with online auctions (as appears in Table 1) and consequently a conceptual model is introduced (Figure 1) based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).

Different researchers who investigated online consumer behaviors (Carter & Belanger, 2005; Moon and Kim, 2001) relied on TAM model (Davis, 1989; Davis et al., 1989) and integrated other external factors related to e-commerce such as web contents, trust and security (Li et al., 2009). TAM has a history of use in the IS field and is considered robust in e-commerce. TAM is an academic basis to clarify and expect the user’s approval of information technology (Davis, 1989). It consists of two major factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Usefulness shows that the users are benefiting from using the technology in finishing their work (Davis, 1989).

To facilitate the investigation of how to better understand users’ intention to use C2C auction websites in developing countries and address the research question, a conceptual model is proposed (Figure 1) based on TAM. This model employs TAM factors and integrates it with security and trust factors. Several researches investigated the acceptance of technology and e-commerce specifically considered both trust and security as key factors for adoption. For example, Reid (2008) in his study emphasizes on the importance of the trust factor for the adoption of internet banking. Moreover, Gefin, Karahanna and Straub (2003) discussed how trust could be integrated in the TAM in the online shopping. Findings of their study show that customers will repeat shopping online if they feel trust.

2.1. Perceived Ease of Use

Perceived ease of use is defined as the degree of ease associated with the use of the system (Algahtani, 2008). Perceived ease of use has received an attention from different researchers as a success factor of e-commerce websites generally and of auction websites specifically (Rosen & Purinton, 2004). The ease of use of C2C auction websites would lead to users’ satisfactions who will repeat using the same websites again. The ease of using websites depends on several factors such as web related factors
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