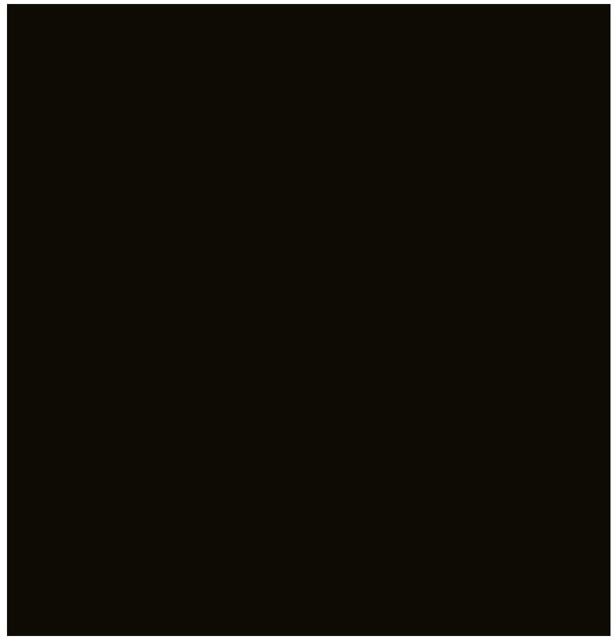


MSc Business Administration Research Digest

2020

Table of Contents

Research Digest

The Employability Skills Gap between Saudi Female Business Graduates' Perceptions and Employers' Expectations

Abeer Suliman Alfaim | Caroline McGroary | 2019-2020

Abstract

The main purpose of this research was to examine whether there is an employability skills gap between Saudi female business graduates' perceptions and employers' expectations. Nowadays, more work opportunities are becoming available for Saudi female graduates thanks to the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030.

Hence, understanding female business graduates' perceptions of their employability skills against Saudi employers' views and expectations is vital to the development of an efficient female labour force, since both are key players in the current labour market. In doing so, this research aims to provide a platform to help resolve any potential employability skills gap, which in turn can contribute towards economic prosperity in Saudi Arabia.

This research adopted a mixed methodology, which integrates the use of quantitative and qualitative research strategies, with the quantitative phase being the dominant approach. For quantitative data collection, the Employability Skills Framework was adopted as a questionnaire and self-administered online. Upon analysing the results of the quantitative data, a series of interviews were carried out to provide additional insights.

The results indicate that there is no skills gap between what Saudi employers expect and what female graduates perceive to be important. However, a number of important insights were gained from the interview data and have important implications as outlined below. Employers are encouraged to increase cooperative education programs with universities, as this leads to the development of important skills, which are very beneficial to graduates when entering the workforce. Similarly, academics are recommended to develop business undergraduate curricula through incorporating generic and intrapersonal skills into every aspect of students' education. For business students, they are recommended to accommodate more extracurricular activities in their schedules, to develop their employability skills.

Keywords: Employability skills, skills gap, employers' expectations, graduates' perception.

Literature review

The majority of literature emerging from the west highlights the existence of a skills gap between employers and graduates, and is mainly concentrated on the inadequacy of graduates' soft skills (Archer and Davison, 2008; Humburg et al., 2015). Likewise, most of literature in Saudi Arabia indicate that there is a skills gap (Al-Dosary et al., 2005; Albahussain, 2006), with a clear deficiency bring highlighted in technical skills (Khan, 2018).

With the exception of a small number of studies, there is a dearth of literature on female employability skills in the Arab World, but established literature suggest that female graduates tend to realise the importance of, and perform well in, soft skills more than male graduates, but in turn tend to underestimate the importance of technical skills (Nabi and Bagley, 1998; Alexander et al., 2014; O'Leary, 2016).

Objective

The main purpose of this research was to examine the existence of an employability skills gap between Saudi female business graduates’ perceptions and employers’ expectations.

Methodology

This research adopted a mixed methodology, which integrates the use of quantitative and qualitative research strategies, with the quantitative phase being the dominant approach. This research followed the ethical considerations as per the DCU guidelines. The participants in this research were Saudi female business graduates and employers from both the public and private sector, to ensure there was representation from both sectors included.

For quantitative data collection, the Employability Skills Framework was adopted as a questionnaire and self-administered online. The quantitative data was analysed using an independent samples test on the participants’ demographics, employability skills expectations and perceptions. Upon analysing the results of the quantitative data, a series of interviews were carried out to provide additional insights.

Analysis and findings

The results indicate that there is no skills gap between what Saudi employers expect and what female business graduates perceive to be important. Moreover, findings outlined that graduates considered themselves to have average proficiency in the employability skills employers deem important. This research indicated that communication, teamwork, and self-management were the most important skills employers in Saudi Arabia expect of business graduates.

Likewise, research findings indicate that employers and female business graduates do not consider technical skills, specifically problem-solving, critical for recent business graduates. Nevertheless, Saudi female business graduates possess average proficiency in technical skills, and they possess the skills required in the Saudi labour market.

Conclusions

Research findings indicate that there is no skills gap between what Saudi employers expect and what female graduates perceive to be important. However, results suggest that generic and intrapersonal skills are considered highly important by Saudi employers. This finding has implications on the process of hiring business graduates in labour market and the development of their skills in higher education.

Nevertheless, further research is needed to explore the effects of intrapersonal skills and self-efficacy in particular on graduates' employability in the Saudi Arabian context. Another area that could be explored is that of a wider spectrum of stakeholders', for example academics expectations and role in shaping graduates' employability skills.

References (Sample)

- Al-Dosary, A. S., Rahman, S. M. and Shahid, M. (2005). An integrated approach to combat unemployment in the Saudi labor market. *Journal of Societal & Social Policy*, 4(2), pp. 1-18.
- Albahussain, S. (2006). Employability Skills Required by Private Saudi Employers and the Role of Higher Education System in Delivering Them: A Field Study. *Journal of Economic and Administrative Sciences*, 22(1), pp. 1-24.
- Alexander, N. Guta, H. and Poole, G. (2014). Gender Differences of Perceived Leadership Skills Among Saudi Students. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, 34, pp. 11-18.
- Archer, W. and Davison, J. (2008). *Graduate employability: what do employers think and want?* London: The Council for Higher Education and Industry.
- Humburg, M., de Grip, A., and Van der Velden, R. (2015). Which skills protect graduates against a slack labour market? *International Labour Review*, 156(1), pp. 25–43.
- Khan, S. (2018). Demystifying the impact of university graduate's core competencies on work performance: A Saudi industrial perspective. *International Journal of Engineering Business Management*, 10, pp. 1-10.
- Nabi, G. and Bagley, D. (1998). Graduates' perceptions of transferable personal skills and future career preparation in the UK. *Career Development International*, 3(1), pp.31-39.
- O'Leary, S. (2016). Graduates' experiences of, and attitudes towards, the inclusion of employability-related support in undergraduate degree programmes; trends and variations by subject discipline and gender. *Journal of Education and Work*, DOI: 10.1080/13639080.2015.1122181

Research Digest

An Exploration of the Impact of Physical Activity on Employee Work Engagement Amongst Females in Saudi Arabian Universities.

Abeer Ramdan | Caroline McGroary| 2020

Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine whether physical activity has a positive effect on employee work engagement amongst females in Saudi Arabian universities.

In the last four years Saudi Arabia has been undergoing significant change as a result of the introduction of Vision 2030, the Saudi governments' strategic plan to diversify the country away from oil. Vision 2030 has three main themes, a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitions nation. While there are many goals and objectives within these main themes, two that have been receiving increasing attention recently and which have inspired this research are:

1) The physical activity levels of Saudi women
2) The education and employment of women

As a highly engaged workforce is critical to achieving Vision2030, this research seeks to explore some of the factors that may help increase work engagement, namely physical activity.

Using Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory from the work psychology literature to frame this research, this research explores whether physical activity (resource) impacts on the motivational process leading to work engagement.

This study adopted a primarily quantitative methodology, which was supplemented by qualitative data, in the form of interviews, to help explore the quantitative results. The quantitative stage was carried out using a survey which was designed based on two surveys the Kaiser Physical Activity Survey (KPAS) survey, which was used to measure physical activity, and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9), which was used to measure work engagement.

The results revealed that there was no significant relationship between physical activity and work engagement. That said, the interview data did reveal some of the potential reasons for this and other factors that have an impact on work engagement levels in Saudi universities.

There are many factors which impact on work engagement in Saudi organizations. While there was no significant relationship found between physical activity and work engagement in this study, the concept of physical activity is still in its infancy in Saudi Arabia and as more people start to engage in this in the future, its impact on promoting wellbeing and hence higher work engagement may be more prevalent.

Key terms: Work engagement, Physical activity, JD-R theory, Saudi Arabia, Vision 2030

Literature Review

Work engagement is defined as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption” (Schaufeli et al. ,2002 p.74).
The concept has been extensively researched in the literature and JD-R theory has emerged as the theory of choice to explore how both resources and demands impact on the motivational process leading to engagement (Demerouti et al., 2001). Physical activity is defined as “a multidimensional behavior, which is suggested to consist of four dimensions: frequency, intensity, time and type (WHO, 2006).

While physical activity has also been researched extensively in the sport and health literature, there is no evidence to date of it being explored as a factor within JD-R theory which could potentially impact on work engagement. Therefore, this research seeks to address an important gap in the literature.

Objective

The objective of this study is to explore whether engagement in physical activity at work leads to higher work engagement, with a specific focus on women working in the higher education sector.

Methodology

This research is set in the university education sector in Saudi Arabia with a particular focus on staff working at Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University (PNU), the largest women's only university in the world. This study adopted a primarily quantitative methodology, which was supplemented by qualitative data, in the form of interviews, to help explore the quantitative results.

The quantitative stage was carried out using a survey which was designed based on two surveys the Kaiser Physical Activity Survey (KPAS) survey, which was used to measure physical activity, and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9), which was used to measure work engagement.

Analysis and findings

The results revealed that there was no significant relationship between physical activity and work engagement. There was also no significant difference in work engagement level for those who engage in physical activity more than once per week. The majority of participants in this study do not engage in physical activity more than once per week.

That said, the interview data did reveal some of the potential reasons (e.g. physical activity is a new concept in Saudi Arabia) for this and other factors (e.g. peer support) that have an impact on work engagement levels in Saudi universities.

Conclusions

There are many factors which impact on work engagement in Saudi organizations. While there was no significant relationship found between physical activity and work engagement in this study, the concept of physical activity is still in its infancy in Saudi Arabia and as more people start to engage in this in the future, its impact on promoting wellbeing and hence higher work engagement may be more prevalent.

Research Digest
The Influence of Online Reviews on Consumer Behaviour in Online Shopping

Halah Alshammari | Sarah Fraser | 2020

Abstract

Purpose Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) increasingly becoming an important communication tool in the online environment. Considering the rapid growth of online shoppers and their interests in shopping online. Limited studies have been conducted in the Middle East to identify what makes certain online reviews more influential than others.

Accordingly, the main aim of this study is to identify the relationship between online reviews elements (valence, recency, quantity, content, webcare and credibility) and purchasing intention in online shopping with special reference to Saudi Arabia.

The chosen methodology to conduct this research was through a quantitative approach. Therefore the results were carried out through an internet-based-survey.

For the purpose of answering the research question in regard to what influences purchasing intentions, descriptive statistics of all variables in the study were presented and explained to classify the influence significance of the study variables in a descriptive manner.

The data were analysed via a deductive approach from the acquired 487 respondents from Riyadh city. The data analysis results conclusively conclude that online reviews elements (valence, recency, quantity, content, webcare, credibility) significantly influence purchasing intention.

In-line with previous research, the results of this study has confirmed that there is a positive relationship between online reviews and purchasing intentions in online shopping in Saudi Arabia. This study has emphasized the importance of online reviews on influencing consumer behaviour in online shopping in Saudi Arabia.

Keywords: Consumer behaviour, online shopping, electronic word-of-mouth, purchasing intention.

Literature Review

Purchasing intention can be described as the readiness and impulse of consumers to buy a particular product in a particular purchasing environment (Mirabi et al., 2015). Also, it has been rendered as the procedure that consists of a choice-making showing the motive behind customers purchasing a particular service or product(Shah et al., 2012). Whereby it can be influenced.

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has been perceived as a major influential source of information for consumers, influencing purchasing intentions (Lee and Youn, 2009). eWOM holds a big role in the decision- making process of potential consumers (Ismagilova et al., 2019). As it describes consumers earlier experience, opinions and evaluation serving the role of an informant or a recommender (Lee and Park, 2008).

The influence of consumers' eWOM on online purchasing decisions is extensively acknowledged. As it has been discussed in many works of literature the impact eWOM holds on purchasing intentions (Ismagilova, et al., 2019); identifying many elements integrated into eWOM which influence purchasing intentions including valence, quantity, recency, webcare, and credibility.

Objective

In order to fulfil the main aim of this research project; examine if there is a relationship between online reviews elements (valence, recency, quantity, content, webcare and credibility) and purchasing intention in online shopping in Saudi Arabia, one objective has been classified: Identify whether or not online reviews influence consumer purchasing intention.

Methodology

The chosen methodology to conduct this research project was through a quantitative approach. Therefore the results will be carried out through an internet-based-survey in a deductive approach.

- The survey was used to generate statistical analysis from the specified questions to investigate the key criteria mentioned in the literature review.
- The research data were analysed through descriptive statistics where all variables in the study were presented and explained to classify the influence significance of the study variables in a descriptive manner.
- Prior to the distribution of the survey, the research ethics committee (REC) form was submitted and approved.

Analysis and Findings

Four hundred and eighty-seven respondents have participated in this research project. The population of this research consisted of individuals from diverse backgrounds.

This research project findings indicated that the different elements of online reviews including valence, recency, quantity, content webcare and credibility, all have an influence on purchasing intention, the level of each effect differs across consumers. This research has also enlightened intriguing additional findings to the influence of online reviews.

The findings showed an inconstant pattern between the posted and read online reviews. Also, it showed that consumers are motivated to post online reviews for the purpose of sharing their positive experience with others. Further, the findings indicated that online reviews were more important in service-based businesses including hotels, entertainment and restaurant.

Conclusions

The findings of this research project concluded that online reviews have an influence on consumer's shopping decisions and intentions from different elements. This would support the argument that businesses that embrace consumer feedback will benefit from listening to their consumers participating in the reviews.

The key findings substantiated that online reviews are influential, further it supplements literature with additional evidence on the impact of online reviews on purchasing intentions in online shopping in Saudi Arabia. To this end, the research found that online reviews are considered an influential medium on consumer’s online buying behaviour.

References

- Ismagilova, E., Slade, E. L., Rana, N. P., & Dwivedi, Y. K. (2019). The Effect of Electronic Word of Mouth Communications on Intention to Buy: A Meta-Analysis. Information Systems Frontiers. doi:10.1007/s10796- 019-09924-y
- Lee, J., Park, D.H. and Han, I. (2008). The effect of negative online consumer reviews on product attitude: An information processing view. Electronic commerce research and applications, 7(3), pp.341-352. doi:10.1016/j.elerap.2007.05.004
- Lee, M., & Youn, S. (2009). Electronic word of mouth (eWOM). International Journal of Advertising, 28(3), 473–499. doi:10.2501/s0265048709200709
- Mirabi, V., Akbariyeh, H. and Tahmasebifard, H. (2015). A study of factors affecting on customers purchase intention. Journal of Multidisciplinary Engineering Science and Technology, 2(1).
- Shah, S.S.H., Aziz, J., Jaffari, A.R., Waris, S., Ejaz, W., Fatima, M. and Sherazi, S.K. (2012). The impact of brands on consumer purchase intentions. Asian Journal of Business Management, 4(2), pp.105-110.

Research Digest

Measuring the Usability of the Graphical User Interface (GUI) of the Saudi Arabian Government Services Website “Absher” A Study on the English User Interface Users.

Alanoud M. Alawaji | Advisor Dr. Sarah Fraser | 2020

Abstract

This qualitative study was conducted to examine the Graphical User Interface (GUI) usability of the Saudi Arabian government services website “Absher” for the English website interface users. To find relationship between the culture, age, education, language and the Graphical User Interface (GUI). This research mostly is of interest to web designers, website engineers, user experience designers and website usability specialists. The literature review addresses the historical trends in marketing branding, user Interface (UI), graphical user Interface (GUI) and E-Government in the context of Saudi Arabia.

The research is quantitative and uses a survey to collect data to analysis the website's usability in relation to different variables related to the user which is nationality, the native language, age, exposure to the Saudi Arabian culture, prior experience with an e-service, and the level of education of the participants. -The questionnaire is divided into general questions, system usability and visual aesthetics of the website. Further, the questionnaire covers research tools such as, The System Usability Scale (SUS), and the short version of Visual Aesthetics of Websites Inventory (VisAWI-S). Moreover, the score is measured using the Likert scale from 1 to 5.

The primary finding of this study showed that the system learning curve is normal/easy to use. In addition, the Graphical User Interface (GUI) complements the usability of the system. Even though, most of the people were satisfied with the site and the brand e-services.

The website GUI and usability can be improved more to insure more website and brand satisfaction.

This means that the complexity of the system should be reduced, where people with no experience can use it and navigate through the website easily. Additionally, an improvement in the system's design should be directed towards systems ease of use.
The site should also improve towards accommodating less educated people due to the findings of this research that there was a negative relationship between the site usability and the level of education. Recommendations for action include further research on the resident's demographic sample will be supportive helpful. Further, the approach to usability in this dissertation can be implemented in any organization regardless of the organization size.

Keywords: Marketing, Branding, Brand Experience, User Experience UX, Graphical User Interface GUI, Usability.

Literature review

The second chapter is the literature review. It is structured to discuss the website marketing and nation branding of e-government in the Saudi context and Dimensions of National culture, graphical user interface (GUI) and the implementation of usability in the organization strategy.

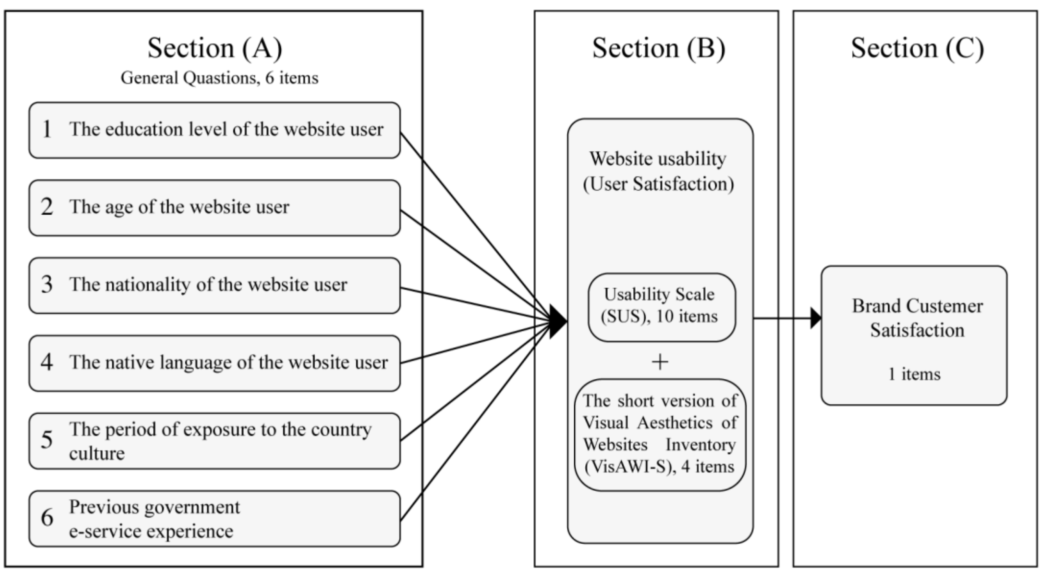
Objective

The main research objective aims to measure the usability of the E-Government services platform "Absher" website for non-Saudi nationals' English speakers' users. The data was collected in the year 2020 between 26 and 10 of April during "COVID- 19" lockdown.

Methodology

The research design used in this study is descriptive. This involves a survey which is conducted on people from different countries who have used the site. The questionnaire is divided into general questions (section A), system usability and visual aesthetics of the website (section B). Lastly the satisfaction (section C).

The general questions in section A aim is to collect variables related to the user which is nationality, the native language, age, exposure to the Saudi Arabian culture, prior experience with an e-service, and the level of education of the participants. Further, the tools used are based on previous research mentioned in the literature review chapter.



Analysis and findings

The primary finding of this study showed that the system learning curve is normal/easy to use. In addition, the Graphical User Interface (GUI) complements the usability of the system. The website GUI and usability can be improved more to insure more website and brand satisfaction.

Improving the usability level will make sure the website is useful to the user through the attempt to fit the user cognitive consistency. As a result, the website traffic rate will increase and time period of the traffic will shrink to provide the service to maximum number of users to achieve the goal of user satisfaction.

Conclusions

The implications of the findings mainly highlight that the complexity of the system should be reduced, where people with no experience can use it and navigate through the website easily. Additionally, an improvement in the system's design should be directed towards systems ease of use. The site should also improve towards accommodating less educated people due to the negative relationship between the site usability and the level of education.

Also, culture exposure showed a positive correlation between the usability of the website and the exposure to the Saudi culture and the previous e-service experience. which depicts that the more the exposure to the culture, the more a person finds it easy to navigate through the website GUI. The website developers must focus on adopting more cross cultures friendly website practices.

Recommendations for action include a further research on different applications of user interface UI to the residents demographic in Saudi sample will be supportive to the literature. Further, the approach to usability in this dissertation can be implemented in any organization regardless of the organization size.

Research Digest

The Intended Culture of Internal Marketing for the Administrative Staff from Leaders Perspective at Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Amani Alhussain | Prof. Sarah Fraser | 2020

Abstract

Internal marketing is an important organizational process that influences the effectiveness of operations. In public educational institutions, internal marketing concentrates on introducing faculty and non-faculty staff to the ideals of educational management to increase the attainment of positive outcomes. One of the most important considerations is the management process that forms one of the pillars of educational entities.

The internal marketing offers a guide on how to educate staff on the expectations of the organization. Many studies have covered the role and ideal type of internal marketing for educational institutions, but it seems that there has been a lack of research on the internal marketing from a leader's perspective in higher educational institutions and internal marketing for the administrative staff in those institutions. There is a need for comprehensive research to internal marketing towards administrative staff from a leader's perspective.

The study attempts to investigate the required internal marketing for administrative employees from a leader's perspective to inform the necessary actions and measures for creating it. Qualitative method has been used to gather primary data for this study via semi structured -in depth- interviews with open-ended questions.

The findings of this study indicated the perception of leaders regarding the most ideal or intended internal marketing for Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University. The participants agreed on many aspects of the fundamentals of internal marketing by considering the role of motivation, reward, communication, and integrating employees into the tasks of the institutions. However, the leaders differed regarding the best approach towards internal marketing in the university. Whereas their concept of internal marketing remains the same, the processes of implementing internal marketing differed from one participant to the other.

The following recommendations can help deliver the IM concept in the university:

- Leaders should listen to the employees' needs before setting their IM strategy.
- The university should hire experts in marketing or specific training for leaders
- The university should develop a unified IM strategy by creating an internal marketing unit that examines other units and best practices in other institutions.

Keywords: Internal Marketing, Employee motivation, Internal Communication, Leadership, strategy implementation.

Literature review

Internal marketing is a function of many organizational practices that collaborate to facilitate the attainment of organizational goals. There is no unified definition of internal marketing, considering that it is a broad field used to achieve numerous goals within organizations.

Among the Common and most often included components of internal marketing include employee satisfaction and motivation, strategy implementation, internal communication, and the leadership role in IM. Efforts of creating a unified meaning of internal marketing often involve perusing through the many concepts with the aim of arriving at one integrated definition.

Objective

- To clarify the PNU leader's understanding of Internal Marketing concept.
- To assess the level of consistency among the leaders understanding of internal marketing.
- To explore the elements that leaders choose for internal marketing to the staff.
- To layout the different ways that leaders use to communicate to their employees.
- To explore how internal marketing been delivered to the employees.
- To recommend the effective way to deliver the internal marketing concept in the university.

Methodology

To collect the data for this research, Qualitative method has been used to gather primary data for this study via semi structured -in depth- interviews with open-ended questions developed from previous research. This method was chosen to gain more understanding for the research aims and objectives.

Furthermore, the targeted sample are leaders in the university, thus, the semi structured interviews is the convenient approach to gain their interaction by letting them express their thoughts and opinions and capture perceptions.

Analysis and findings

The findings of this study indicated the perception of leaders regarding the most ideal or intended internal market for Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University. The participants agreed on many aspects of the fundamentals of definition of internal marketing by considering the role of motivation, reward, communication, and integrating employees into the tasks of the institutions.

However, the leaders differed regarding the best approach to implement internal marketing in the university. Whereas their concept of internal marketing remains the same, the processes of implementing internal marketing differed from one participant to the other.

Conclusions

This study focuses on the intended internal marketing from a leader's perspective at PNU. This process might help leaders think about internal marketing and start to develop a framework for consistent implantation of internal marketing for employees to apply their success toward achieving organization's goals.

The following recommendation can help deliver the IM concept in the university:

- Leaders should listen to the employees' needs before setting their IM strategy.
- The university would benefit from hiring experts in internal marketing to develop custom strategies for each facility or offer specific training for leaders.
- The university should develop a unified IM strategy by creating an internal marketing unit that examines other units and best practices in other institutions.

Research Digest

The Effect of Internal Marketing on the Perception of the Educational Service Quality Provided in Public Universities

Afnan AlSalamah | Dr. Sarah Fraser | 2020

Abstract

High competitions and changes in the higher education institutions highlighted the importance of implementing some management practices in public universities. Internal marketing was first proposed in the service industry as a solution to the problem of delivering high service quality.

The study aims to demonstrate the importance of internal marketing in public universities, explore its implementation, and its effect on educational service quality. Faculty members are the core service providers in the universities, thus, regarded as frontline employees and considered as the internal customers, whereas the students are external customers. Consequently, a crucial element for the satisfaction of external customers relies on internal customer's satisfaction.

The research adopts the quantitative method by employing a questionnaire targeting faculty members in three public universities in Saudi Arabia and the sample collected is 310. The findings reveal the level of internal marketing implemented in the universities as it resulted in a total mean score (4.75 of 7), which represents the category "somewhat agree" in the seven-point Likert scale. Besides, the findings clearly show that there are significant positive relationships between each internal marketing practice: empowerment, internal communication and training and development, with service quality.

Also, the results demonstrate a statistically significant level of differences in the implementation of internal marketing between respondents from different universities and academic positions. Whereas no statistically significant level of differences found within gender and age.

Further, no statistically significant level of differences found in the educational service quality between respondents of different universities, gender, age, and academic positions. In conclusion, the study indicates that internal marketing implemented in the universities needs to be developed. Consequently, results could guide universities' management to enhance the implementation of internal marketing and further investigations on its practices which leads to improve the service quality provided to students.

Keywords: Saudi Arabia, Higher Education Institutions, Public Universities, Faculty Members, Internal Marketing, Educational Service Quality.

Literature Review

Citizens have started to expect the public sector to shift from agency-driven to customer-driven quality management (Ha and Lee, 2010). Therefore, increasing the educational service quality provided to students has been a focus of public universities to a achieve competitive advantage. A crucial element for the satisfaction of external customer relies on core internal customer satisfaction, who is the employee (Sahibzada et al., 2019).

Internal marketing was first proposed by Berry, Hensel and Burke (1976) in the service industry, as a solution to the problem of delivering high service quality. Internal marketing believes that the employees are the organization’s first market; accordingly, its function is to acquire motivated and customer-conscious (Ewing and Caruana,1999).

Objective

- To demonstrate the importance of IM in public universities.
- To explore the implementation of IM practices in public universities.
- To evaluate the effect of IM practices on the educational service quality.
- To develop the ESQ provided in the public universities.

Methodology

Quantitative research method was conducted in this study by utilizing internet-based questionnaire. The distribution of the questionnaire has been done after receiving the approval from the three targeted public universities in Saudi Arabia. The study sample consists of 310 faculty members who were included in the study with their different demographics as age, gender, job status, years of experience, academic position. The collected data was analyzed by statistical methods using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Analysis and Findings

The findings show that the level of internal marketing implemented in the universities resulted in a total mean score (4.75 of 7) - 67.86% which represents the category “somewhat agree” in the seven-point Likert scale. Besides, the results clearly show that there are significant positive relationships between each internal marketing practice: empowerment, internal communication and training and development, with service quality.

Also, the results demonstrate a statistically significant level of differences in the implementation of internal marketing between respondents from different universities and academic positions. Whereas no statistically significant level of differences found within gender and age.

Additionally, no statistically significant level of differences is found in the educational service quality provided between respondents of different universities, gender, age and academic positions.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the results of the study provide evidence of the significance of . The investigation of the implementation level of in the universities reveals the need for a development plan to and highlights its significant as a factor that affects the educational service quality provided to the students. Consequently, universities' management are recommended to set strategy with measurable objectives to increase the implementation of its practices which leads to improving the educational service quality. To conclude, is a great chance for universities to achieve the competitive advantage needed in today's competitive market conditions.

References

- Berry, LL, Hensel, JS and Burke, MC. (1976) 'Improving Retailer Capability for Effective Consumerism Response', Journal of Retailing, vol. 52, no. 3, pp. 3–14.
- Ewing, M.T. and Caruana, A. (1999) 'An internal marketing approach to public sector management: the marketing and human resources interface', International Journal of Public Sector Management, 12(1), pp.17-29.
- Sahibzada, U.F., Jianfeng, C., Latif, F. and Shafait, Z. (2019) 'Development and validation of a multidimensional instrument for measuring internal marketing in Chinese higher education', Journal of Enterprise Information Management, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 413-435.

Research Digest

Change Management in Saudi Universities: An Exploration of the Effect of Role Conflict, Role Ambiguity and Role Overload on Work Engagement.

Razan Mun. Almutairi| Caroline McGroary| 2020

Abstract

In response to the Saudi Vision 2030, the Saudi government continues to make changes in all sectors, foremost, the educational system to diversify the country away from oil to a knowledge economy. Consequently, Saudi universities have witnessed fundamental changes in their administrative and management structures to cope with these new local and global pressures and become more influential and competitive.

However, these important change management systems have led to many challenges for staff, with many reporting difficulties around role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload, which in turn impact on their ability to effectively engage in their jobs. Therefore, it is critical to understand more about the factors that could impede the success of these systems and to understand more about the factors that impact on employee work engagement.

This study adopted a mixed method approach, with a primarily quantitative focus. The quantitative approach used a survey supplemented with semi-structured interviews data. The survey was designed using validated scales to measure role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload, with the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) being used to measure work engagement. A series of demographic variables were also captured.

The quantitative results indicated that there was a significant negative relationship between role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload and work engagement. Furthermore, the quantitative data revealed some of the reasons for these results. In summary, the findings of this research have major consequences for the future success of Saudi universities as they are dependent on a productive workforce to help achieve Vision 2030.

Keywords: Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory; role conflict; role ambiguity; role overload; work engagement; Saudi universities.

Literature Review

The concept of change management, job demands and its impact of work engagement has been explored extensively in the academic literature, however, to date there are no studies which explore these concepts and the relationship between them in a Saudi Arabian context.

The JD-R theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014) is a well-developed theoretical model, which has gained substantive support in the academic literature as a way to understand the relationship between demands and work engagement (e.g. Schaufeli, 2017). Therefore, it was used in this study to help explore the relationship between job demands (role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload) on work engagement.

Objective

The main aim of the current study is to determine the impact of role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload on work engagement in Saudi Arabian universities. These research objectives are specifically outlined as follows and were supported by a number of related research hypothesis.

- To examine the relationship between role conflict and work engagement in Saudi Universities.
- To examine the relationship between role ambiguity and work engagement in Saudi Universities.
- To examine the relationship between role overload and work engagement in Saudi Universities.

Methodology

This study adopted a primarily quantitative approach, through the use of a survey, the results of which were then supplemented with interview data. Therefore, this research is embedded in the pragmatist research philosophy which supports the use of a mixed methodology to answer the research questions.

The survey was designed using validated scales to measure role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload, with the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) being used to measure work engagement. A series of demographic variables were also captured. Upon analysis of the quantitative data, a small number of interviews were carried out using semi-structured interviews.

Analysis and Findings

The study findings revealed that the implementation of change management systems in Saudi universities, as a result of Vision 2030, have led to many challenges for academic and administrative staff, with many reporting difficulties around role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload.

In turn, it has been found that these job demands negatively impact on their work engagement and their ability to effectively carry out their jobs. The new job demands are often caused by the lack of clarity of the employee's role, multiple administrative tasks, and the lack of a clear job description.

Overall, the notable decrease in work engagement is problematic for Saudi universities, as they require a highly engaged workforce in order to develop the Saudi Arabian third level education system, in line with Vision 2030.

Conclusions

The results indicated that there is a significant negative relationship between role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload and work engagement. These results have major consequences for the future success of Saudi universities as they are dependent on a productive workforce to help achieve Vision2030.

However, now that there is more insight into the factors that are contributing towards lower work engagement, corrective action can be taken. Therefore, this research provides the platform for new research in the area of work engagement in different organizations across Saudi Arabia.

Research Digest
Gender Equality in the Workplace:
The Experience of Recent Management Graduates in Saudi Arabia

Reem Abdullah Alomar | Caroline McGroary| Year 2019-2020

Abstract

Aim: This research aims to examine gender inequality in Saudi organizations by analyzing the experiences of women employed in both the public and private sector in Saudi Arabia. Background: In Saudi Arabia, there have been significant social and economic changes which have brought the issue of gender equality to the forefront of policy decisions. Vision 2030, the Saudi government strategic plan to diversity the economy away from oil, highlights the role, participation, and influence of Saudi women to the country's economic growth.

Thus, exploring whether equality exists between men and women in Saudi organisations is extremely important. Furthermore, where there are gender quality issues, more needs to be done to enhance the role of women by empowering them in the workplace to ensure they can contribute to the development of the country's economy.

Methods: This study adopted a qualitative methodology. For data collection, semi-structured individual interviews were utilized. Furthermore, a deductive approach is used with a probability sampling technique. The phenomenological research philosophy is used where it is the theoretical basis of the qualitative study.

Results: The results showed that gender inequality did affect some of the women interviewed and in some cases it was evident when promotion decisions were being made where there was evidence of women being excluded. Furthermore, participants' responses indicated the

important role of government support in ensuring equality and diversity in the workplace, with many highlighting a clear difference in employment and equality opportunities for women pre and post Vision 2030.

Conclusions: In general, the results of the study confirmed that there is evidence of gender inequality in Saudi organizations due to some factors such as the cultural stereotypes that affect the work assigned to women in the workplace. However, despite this, as a result of Vision 2030 women will have more opportunities to occupy leadership positions in the future in Saudi Arabia.

Keywords: Gender diversity- Gender role theory- cultural stereotypes- Female leadership - Saudi vision 2030

Literature review

The literature revealed that Saudi Arabia has one of the lowest female labour participation rates (20%) as opposed to other GCC countries, which had a 32% female participation rate (Pritchett and Alkhudair 2017). Furthermore, Saudi Arabia is ranked one of the lower ranked countries for gender equality globally (The Global Gender Gap Report, 2018).
While the concept of gender quality in the workplace has been something which has been explored extensively globally, it has not received as much attention in Saudi Arabia.

In order to address this gap, gender role theory was used as the theoretical framework to frame this research study (e.g. Belansky and Boggiano 1994; Eagly and Crowley 1986; Eagly 1987; Erdle et al. 1992).

Objective

The purpose of this research was to analyze the experience of employed women toward gender inequality in their workplaces in Saudi Organizations. It also aimed at identifying the organizational factors that could lead to gender inequality in the workplace and identify the factors that could explain individuals' perceptions of gender inequality in the workplace.

Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative methodology that sought to explore the concept of gender equality between men and women in the workplace. To achieve the research the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 12 female and 2 male business graduates who work at different Saudi organizations. The selection of this research method was aligned with the researchers' preferences on the best way to answer the research question. In doing so, this study adopted a deductive research.

A deductive research method is based on testing theories and relationships among discrete phenomena, or testing concepts based on the application of discrete phenomena. As this research sought to explain the relationship between variables, using Gender Role Theory, it was considered the most appropriate methodology.

Analysis and findings

The results showed that gender inequality did affect some of the women interviewed and in some cases it was evident when promotion decisions were being made where there was evidence of women being excluded.

Furthermore, participants’ responses indicated the important role of government support in ensuring equality and diversity in the workplace, with many highlighting a clear difference in employment and equality opportunities for women pre and post Vision 2030.

Conclusions

In general, the results of the study confirmed that there is evidence of gender inequality in Saudi Organizations due to some factors such as the cultural stereotypes that affect the work assigned to women in the workplace. However, despite this, as a result of Vision 2030 women will have more opportunities to occupy leadership positions in the future in Saudi Arabia.

References (sample)

- Archer, J. 1996, "Sex Differences in Social Behavior: Are the Social Role and Evolutionary Explanations Compatible?", American Psychologist, vol. 51, no. 9, pp. 909-917.
- Eagly, A. H., & Crowley, M. (1986). Gender and helping behavior: A meta-analytic review of the social psychological literature. Psychological Bulletin, 100, 283–308.
- Mei-Ling Wang and Yi-Hua Hsieh (2016) 'Do gender differences matter to workplace bullying?', Work, 53(3), pp. 631–638. doi: 10.3233/WOR-152239.
- World Economic Forum. 2018. The Global Gender Gap Report, 2018. Available at: https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-report-2018(Accessed 10 February 2020).

Research Digest

What are the Perceived Benefits of the Marketing Department from the Perception of the Customer Service Employee? (Study in Riyadh Municipality)

Shaza Saud AlShatwi | Dr. Sarah Faser | 2020

Abstract

The purpose of this study the perceived benefits of the marketing department from the perception of the customer's service employee? Study in Riyadh Municipality. The research used the descriptive method. The researcher relied on collecting data through the questionnaire that was designed for this study. The study sample consisted of (313) employees in the Riyadh municipality.

The SPSS statistical program was also used to analyze sample responses and reach results. Accordingly, this study reached these results, namely, that the customer service staff in the Riyadh municipality understand and are aware of the importance and advantages of marketing. Furthermore, marketing provides definite advantages for everyone, whether employees or clients.

Besides, employees do not have an understanding of the definite advantages of internal marketing. Finally, the services provided by the Riyadh Municipality to employees need improvement in quality. Governmental organizations must understand that public relations differ from marketing. Public relations are based on communications, while marketing is much more profound.

Customer service staff in the Riyadh municipality believe that the Marketing Department offers positive benefits to end-users. That indicates to us that the employees are supportive and welcome to the idea of establishing a marketing department in the Riyadh municipality, which means that the organization will not face any resistance or rejection by the staff. Also, the employees in the Riyadh municipality find that the quality of services can improve by improving the quality of the marketing services provided to them.

The recommendation for this study is to establish a department for marketing services in the Riyadh municipality and to set marketing plans for all departments affiliated to it. Moreover, raising the quality of services provided to employees and making the work environment in the Riyadh Municipality a model and a stimulating work environment.

Keywords: Marketing, Service Marketing, Customer Service Employee, Service Quality, Public Sector.

Literature Review

Philip Kotler defined marketing as "meeting needs and desires through an exchange process" (Kotler, Roberto, and Hugo, 1991). After a decade, he defines it as a "social and administrative process by which individuals and groups get what they want and need by creating, providing and exchanging products of value with others" (Kotler, 2012).

Public sector marketing can be used as an integrated set of ideas. That does not necessarily mean that the civil service's traditional strengths of fairness, accountability, impartiality, and a broad review of the public good will be abandoned. Of course, the public sector had long had elements of marketing, but it was usually a marginal provision of essential public goods and services.

Critics have argued that marketing approaches only involve using specific tools, not developing and adopting a marketing approach (Serrat, 2017).

Objective

Determine the importance and challenges of marketing services in the service government sector, specifically the Riyadh Municipality.
The importance of understanding and informing the client of the services provided, regulations, and developments in the organization before reaching the customer service staff.
Assess the perception of the impact of service marketing on the performance and productivity of customer service employees.

Methodology

In this research, a descriptive and quantitative approach has been used, which is one of the essential approaches used in scientific studies. The researcher used the questionnaire (survey) as a tool to collect data, due to its suitability of the study's goals, curriculum, and society, and to answer its questions. The survey contains two main sections. In the first section, the primary data of the study sample individuals. The second section consists of (31) phrases, distributed on two primary axes.

Analysis and Findings

Five hypotheses were developed for this study, and the results were analyzed based on these hypotheses. The first hypothesis, which is an understanding of the benefits of the marketing department by the customer service staff, has been proven and approved by a large number of employees.

The second proven hypothesis was that customer service employees could determine the benefits of the marketing department. Furthermore, the third hypothesis was that customer service employees believe that the Marketing Department provides positive benefits to end-users, which are also proven right.

However, the fourth premise that customer service employees believe that the Internal Marketing Department provides positive benefits to employees was rejected by the sample.

Furthermore, the last hypothesis agreed upon by the sample was that customer service employees believe that the quality of the service for the employees in Riyadh's municipality can improve. In the last hypothesis, a SERVQUAL scale was adopted to measure the dimensions of the quality of service that the Riyadh Municipality provides to its employees.

Accordingly, this study reached these results, namely, that the customer service staff in the Riyadh municipality understand and are aware of the importance and advantages of marketing. Furthermore, marketing provides definite advantages for everyone, whether employees or clients. Besides, employees do not have an understanding of the definite advantages of internal marketing. Finally, the services provided by the Riyadh Municipality to employees need improvement in quality.

Conclusions

Governmental organizations must understand that public relations differ from marketing. Public relations are based on communications, while marketing is much more profound. Customer service staff in the Riyadh municipality believe that the Marketing Department offers positive benefits to end-users.

That indicates to us that the employees are supportive and welcome to the idea of establishing a marketing department in the Riyadh municipality, which means that the organization will not face any resistance or rejection by the staff. Also, the employees in the Riyadh municipality find that the quality of services can improve by improving the quality of the marketing services provided to them.

The recommendation for this study is to establish a department for marketing services in the Riyadh municipality and to set marketing plans for all departments affiliated to it. Moreover, raising the quality of services provided to employees and making the work environment in the Riyadh Municipality a model and a stimulating work environment.

Research Digest

Exploring the Factors that Influence the Effective Implementation of Saudization Policy in the Retail Sector

Alanoud Saad Aldawsari | Dr Rhea Elizabeth George | 2020

Abstract

The idea of increasing the number of Saudi nationals in the workforce in Saudi Arabia started in the 1990s. However, there are very few studies done on the effective implementation of Saudization and particularly within different sectors in the economy. In this study, we explore the retail sector in Saudi Arabia and how Saudization is effectively implemented in this sector.
This study presents recommendations and analyses factors that can benefit human resource management and companies that want to know the factors to implement the policy effectively in their respective companies. Interviews are utilized to address the question of the study. In addition, a qualitative approach is utilized. A qualitative study was carried out and data was collected using semi-structured interviews, and thematic analysis was used to analyze interview data.

We find that the following themes have a positive impact on the effective implementation of Saudization: government policy and support, training and development for the employees, favorable policies for female employees, and incentives for the employees. Finally, we suggest future research must explore a larger number of sectors for a better exploration and to find more factors that impact the successful implementation of Saudization policy.

Keywords: Saudization, policy, localization, government policy, training and development, favorable policies, incentives.

Literature review

The Saudi government takes strong decisions to reduce the negative effect on Saudi citizens who seek employment who already have a shortage of job opportunities and increase of foreign workers. This awareness led to a new policy, known as 'Saudization'. The Saudization policy prepares Saudi nationals to be qualified enough to occupy the available jobs instead of foreigners.

This concept was first coined by the Saudi government during the 1970s but only brought into action in 1994. In addition, the results are consistent with many of the literature and studies such as (Ramady,2012; Marsh, 2016; Azhar, 2018) that focused on government support, training the employee, favorable policies for female employees and incentives. Through some studies and also the discoveries that we made in this study; we were able to identify the key factors that influence the effective implementation of Saudization policy in the retail sector.

Objective

The objectives are to explore the company's success in applying Saudization and generalizing the inferred concepts and to identify managers' perceptions of the factors that led to the effective implementation of Saudization. After that, the steps are circulated to all the private sector who want a successful implementation of the Saudization policy.

Methodology

The tool used for this study is the semi-structured interview. Such a tool in the study leads to a deep and elaborate investigation of the participant's individual experience and indicating the participant's understanding of the policy. On the other hand, we can generalize the results and findings to a broader population (Veal, 2005). We used semi-structured interviews because it is the most common method of qualitative research as it could be applied collectively or individually. Interviews will lead to more in-depth insights about participants' thoughts and attitudes.

Analysis and findings

This study discovered the factors that led to the successful implementation of the Saudization policy. The policies that are practiced in the retail sector in 2020. This enabled us to list these factors in order to set them as an example for all companies who wish to implement the policy successfully.

The participants agreed to the following themes: Government Policy and Support, Training and development for of the Employees, favorable policies for female employees and Incentives for the Employees. And they agree the results of the study confirmed that there is a positive relationship between the four themes and the influence of the effective implementation of Saudization in the retail sector.

Conclusions

The findings are vital since it captured managers' and HR managers' perceptions of the factors that affect the success of the implementation of the Saudization policy. This enabled us to list these factors in order to set them as an example for all companies who wish to implement the policy successfully.

The main findings are government policy and support, training and development, favorable policies for female employees and Incentives.

Further research is needed to explore effective implementation that can develop many sectors for better retention of human resources and successfully implement Saudization policy in Saudi Arabia. In addition, a longitudinal study that examines employees' perceptions and behaviors towards the Saudization policy can also be conducted.

References

- Azhar, A., Duncan, P. and Edgar, D., 2018. The implementation of Saudization in the hotel industry. Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism, 17(2), pp.222-246.
- Koyame-Marsh, R.O., 2016. Saudization and the Nitaqat programs: overview and performance. Journal of Accounting, 6(2), pp.36-48.
- Ramady, M., 2012. Gulf Unemployment And Government Policies: Prospects For The Saudi Labour Quota Or Nitaqat System. [online] Ncys.ksu.edu.sa. Available at: <https://ncys.ksu.edu.sa/sites/ncys.ksu.edu.sa/files/emp20_5.PDF> [Accessed 7 March 2020].
- Veal, A., 2005. Business Research Methods. Frenchs Forest, NSW: Longman.

جامعة الأميرة نورة بنت عبدالرحمن
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University

DCU

Research Digest

The Impact of the Internal Market on Customer Loyalists in the Telecommunication Sector in Saudi Arabia

Aljoharah Hamad Alrashed| Maheen Khan| 2020

Abstract

The aim of the proposed study is to explore the impact of the internal market on customer loyalists in the telecommunication sector in Saudi Arabia with a focus on STC and Zain branches in Riyadh. Based on the nature of the study, and the objectives sought to be achieved, and the data to be obtained to study and based on the questions that study sought to answer them, the study used descriptive analytical approach, which is based on the study of the phenomenon, as it is in reality, and contribute to describe it accurately as it illustrates its characteristics through information gathering, analysis, and interpretation and then apply the results in the light.

A questionnaire was developed and distributed amongst the research sample. The results of study showed that there is a positive connection between work satisfaction of employees and customer loyalty and job satisfaction plays a mediating role in the relationship between customers' loyalty and internal marketing.

Keyword: Internal Marketing, Customer Loyalty, Telecommunication Sector, STC, Mobily, Zain, Saudi Arabia.

Literature review

There are five main dimensions of internal marketing: training, empowerment, internal communication, rewards and incentives, and managerial support. Internal marketing includes a range of processes and strategies Researchers have explored the linkage between the activities of internal marketing (Directed at employee training, recruitment, communication, motivation, and retention) and the more conventional activities of external marketing.

Internal marketing was defined as making internal jobs or products available to fulfill the internal market (employees) needs in order to satisfy the organizational goals (Berry, et.al., 1976). Internal marketing has a critical part in the services triangle of marketing. The management has to train their employees and provide them with the essential tools to achieve their tasks at the highest level to provide customer loyalty (Kotler and Keller, 2011).

Objective

The aim of the proposed study is to explore the impact of internal market on the customer loyalist at the telecommunication sector in Saudi Arabia with focus on STC and Zain branches in Riyadh. More specifically, the study intends to achieve the following objectives:

- To explore the concept of internal marketing and its significance in the telecommunication sector.
- To explore the relationship between internal marketing and loyalty through effective indices e.g. product and services strategy, price strategy, promotion strategy and place strategy.
- To explore the relationship between internal marketing and customer satisfaction.
- To explore the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.
- To determine the mediating roles of job satisfaction, affective commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in the relationship between internal marketing and customer loyalty.

Methodology

The study's population is the employees, customers, and management therefore, constitute the organization’s customers and representatives as the external representatives.
For obvious constraint of resources, I could not administer or interview the questionnaires to the whole population of the three companies' in order to fulfill the study's objectives. In this direction, I sampled a portion of the whole population.

The methods used for data collection in the survey; where questionnaire created for administration to seek responses from the companies; employees and customers.
A descriptive (Narrative) form we used for presenting the collected data from the field. The frequency tables of the data percentage we also used for the quantitative items.

Analysis and findings

IBM SPSS version 21 was used to perform the statistical analysis towards analyzing the research variables. The findings showed that the delighted CSOs were extremely happy with their work when a telecom company made an investment in the internal marketing. High employee satisfaction increases their work efficiency and services are provided more efficiently and effectively.

The impact of internal marketing differs towards customer loyalty growth due to differences in the level of job satisfaction of employees. CSOs who are extremely pleased with their work have become affectively committed to the company and demonstrate citizenship actions in the company. Internal marketing often leads to an affective contribution of the employee and to the actions of organizational citizenship.

Conclusions

Internal marketing is a very useful and efficient solution to the behavioral results related to the client. The managers should devote particular attention and energy to implementing internal marketing in customer care centers as those workers who are extremely pleased with their work, affectively dedicated to company and demonstrate corporate citizenship conduct provide services in a way that pleases customers.

I recommended to pay additional attention to training of employees and ensure that they are feeling comfortable.

References

- Berry, L. 1983. Relationship marketing: Emerging perspectives on services marketing. American Marketing Association.
- Kotler, P., and Keller, K. 2006. Marketing Management. Twelfth edition, Prentice-Hall.

Research Digest

The Impact of E-banking Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction in Saudi Arabia

Ghadeer Saleh Albazie | Prof. Maheen Khan | May 2020

Abstract

This study aimed to identify the quality of banking services and their impact on achieving customer satisfaction in Saudi Arabia from the viewpoint of customers. E-banking has become one of the core banking services that, if implemented correctly, can increase customer satisfaction and give banks a competitive advantage. Being aware of the importance of the dimensions of banking quality can help focus on customer satisfaction.

Data were gathered using a survey instrument, which was distributed among bank customers in the Saudi Arabia banking sector. The data were statistically analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version (23) application. The findings show that tangible, efficiency, communication, security, privacy, web site aesthetic, and convenience all have a significant impact on customer satisfaction. While tangible being the dimension with the strongest impact. Implications are discussed and recommendations are offered for improving e-banking services.

Keywords: E-banking, service quality, Saudi Arabia, customer satisfaction

Literature review

This study was conducted to examine the impact of e-banking services on customer satisfaction in Saudi Arabia. E-banks in the broad sense is not only a branch of an existing bank that provides financial services only, but it's also a comprehensive commercial, administrative, and financial site.

According to (Lustsik, 2004) client's requirements and expectations regarding online service are increasing, as technology grows. This requires banks an important and distinctive understanding of customer perceptions of quality of services. To improve the quality of its banking services, which achieves the goals of stability and continuity. Also in the study, the researcher discussed all the dimensions of e-banking services security, privacy, efficiency, accessibility, convenience, communication, website aesthetic, understanding customers, and tangibles.

Objective

E-banking is a significant tool for all banks to compete in the Saudi Banking Industry.
The main objective of this study are as follows.

- To determine the dimensions that constitute the level of e-banking services quality provided by banks and the relative importance of their customers.
- Knowing the difference between the expectations of customers and the dimensions of the quality of banking services
- To measure the level of customer satisfaction of e-banking services in Saudi Arabia.

Methodology

The methodology used is a descriptive study/quantitative research. In the current research, the probability sampling method was used. The data was collected using a survey and were selected randomly. Customers of banks in Saudi Arabia are the study community. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). In addition, the reason for selecting the analytical method is to determine the relationship between the independent variable (E-banking Services) and the dependent variable (Customer Satisfaction). Therefore, the researcher uses the Pearson correlation to indicate the correlation between the research variables.

Analysis and findings

This chapter addresses the results of the descriptive statistical analysis represented in the description of the study sample, as well as the results of inferential statistical analysis. Participants' responses regarding the e-banking quality and all its Dimensions.

A significant positive correlation between the following: efficiency, security, privacy tangible, and convenience on customer satisfaction. Also, this research confirmed that there are relations between e-banking quality and customer satisfaction.

Conclusions

This study aimed to determine the impact of E-Banking service quality of customer satisfaction in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia banking sector. Similar researches has been conducted for other countries, as explained in the literature review; however, there are few in the Saudi banking sector.

The study developed a quantitative approach. Where a questionnaire was distributed among customers of any bank in Saudi Arabia. The data were analyzed using SPSS software. The results indicate that the six hypotheses in this study were supported by data.

Research Digest

Entrepreneurial Orientation of Family Businesses in Saudi Arabia: A case study.

Haifa Fahad Alhukair |Dr. Rhea Elizabeth George, Dr. Noreha Halid | 2020/2021

Abstract

This study identifies the level of entrepreneurial orientation in Saudi family businesses. The study shows the main dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation, such as autonomy, creativity, risk appetite, proactiveness, and competition. This study attempts to understand these dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation from the perspective of the businesses' employees.

The results of the study show that entrepreneurial orientation of family businesses in Saudi Arabia was identified and its relationship to some of the variables are presented in the five dimensions (Innovativeness, Proactiveness, Risk Taking, Competitive Aggressiveness, Autonomy), through a case study, and providing a set of ideas and conclusions to support the variables that solidify entrepreneurial orientation of family businesses in Saudi Arabia. The family businesses in Saudi Arabia have a conducive environment with respect to the entrepreneurial orientation dimensions.

Our study emphasizes the managerial and communication skills and their important roles for members of family businesses as these two skills aid in better management and coordination of activities inside and outside the firm. In light of the previous results, the study recommends family businesses to receive additional training to improve their innovative ideas, risk-taking capabilities, managerial competitiveness, and communication skills among others.

Finally, members of family businesses need to develop a successful business: as it is required to identify opportunities as well as threats appropriately.

Key words: Entrepreneurial Orientation, family businesses, Saudi Arabia, A case study, thematic analysis, program MAXQDA.

Literature review

The studies that have been relied upon in the entrepreneurial orientation of family businesses are as follows:

- Lumpkin, Brigham& Moss (2010) presented a conceptual paper labelled" Long-term orientation: Implications for the entrepreneurial orientation and performance of family businesses ".
- Wang, Wang& Chen (2017) conducted a study labelled" Unlocking the influence of family business exposure on entrepreneurial intentions".
- Aloulou (2018) conducted a study. The purpose of his study was to contribute to family firm and entrepreneurship literature by providing an examination of how family involvement in management (FIM) moderates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation (EO)'s dimensions and family firm performance (FFP).
- Hernández-Perlines, Moreno-García & Yáñez-Araque (2019) conducted a study labeled "The influence of socioemotional wealth in the entrepreneurial orientation of family businesses ".

Objective

The study aims to determine the level of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) of Saudi family firms. To identify the level of entrepreneurial orientation dimensions (Innovativeness, Pro-activeness, Risk taking, Competitive aggressiveness & autonomy) in Saudi family businesses from the point views of their employees.

Methodology

The focus is on the discussion of a selection of the research methods, sampling, and selection of primary data collection instruments. In this study, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews to achieve the goals of the study. By discussing, the data collected during the interviews to figure out the results and present the obtained conclusions as well.

The semi-structured interviews were held with (10) participants from two Saudi family businesses: (6) executive managers, an accountant, and (3) subordinates. Each interview took around (30) minutes. A thematic analysis was conducted to highlight the major theme and statements provided by the interviewees.

Analysis and findings

The level of entrepreneurial orientation (EO) for Saudi family businesses has been determined by defining the level of dimensions of the entrepreneurial orientation (innovation, activity, risk-taking, competitive aggressiveness, and independence). The results indicated the existence of these dimensions in varying proportions.

In addition to learning about the perspective of family business employees in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the availability of the five dimensions of the entrepreneurial orientation in the companies they work in and their observations about them. The main topics were highlighted in the answers of the interviewees, through qualitative analysis.

Conclusions

There is evidence of entrepreneurial orientation in family businesses in Saudi Arabia. Innovation was growing significantly in these companies. In terms of initiative, most business companies are reluctant to invest in research and development, and as for risk, internal risks must be supported through workplace culture and human resource strategies. As for aggressive competition, competition depends on costs. For the autonomy dimension, the new employees must be closely directed. Family business members need additional training to improve their innovative ideas, risk abilities, managerial competitiveness, and communication skills.

Research Digest

Gauging the Corporate Entrepreneurship Climate in SMEs in the Technology Sector in Saudi Arabia

May Abdullah Almohaimeed | Dr. Rhea Elizabeth George | 2020

Abstract

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs substantially contribute to global economies around the world, particularly in developing countries. In efforts to survive enduring obstacles, SMEs in the technology sector must adopt building capabilities and cultivating internal environment for its employees to foster innovation. Building and sustaining corporate entrepreneurial environment ensures the growth and survival of today's SMEs. For these firms to grow, corporate entrepreneurial activities and innovation are essentials for reaching thriving phases.

This study aims to gauge the corporate entrepreneurship climate in SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia. There is a dearth of literature in the SMEs in the technology sector in the Saudi context. This study was carried out by distributing self-administered questionnaires and followed by analyzing 93 responses from SMEs' owners, managers and employees in the technology sector.

Our findings summarize the current climate of corporate entrepreneurship in SMEs in the technology sector. In addition, it showcases the positive presence of support for the six dimensions of corporate entrepreneurship which are Management Support, Time Availability, Autonomy/Work Discretion, Rewards/Reinforcements, Organizational Boundaries and Specific Climate Variables.

The study can benefit owners and managers of SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia, and related sectors, in connection with assessing the internal corporate entrepreneurship climate.

Keywords: Corporate Entrepreneurship, Small and Medium Enterprises in the Technology Sector, Intrapreneurship

Literature review

According to Mustafa and Hughes (2017), Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE) globally has found its relevance in SMEs. CE implementation into SMEs will allow abundance of exploited opportunities and competitive advantages. Similarly, SMEs in the technology sector encounter challenges as other sectors' SMEs.

Based on findings of Antoncic and Prodan (2008), technological corporate entrepreneurship is critical to the growth of SMEs as it is associated with a wide range of benefits including an increased level of employee engagements and promoting a culture of innovation within an organization. Although most SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia recognize the importance of CE, few of them have inculcated the culture of CE (Sulphey, and Alkahtani, 2017)

Objective

The aim of this study is to gauge the levels of corporate entrepreneurship in SMEs particularly in the technology sector. This study contributes to the literature by presenting assessment of levels of CE climate in SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia.

Methodology

In an effort to gauge the corporate entrepreneurial climate in SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia, this study has followed a quantitative research design. A major strategy that has been employed is the use of preexisting questionnaire of the Corporate Entrepreneurship Climate Instrument (CECI). Likert-scale measures the respondents' degree of agreement with statements to the internal environment for entrepreneurial climate around the six dimensions which are; Management Support, Autonomy/Work Discretion, Reward / Reinforcement, Time Availability, Organizational Boundaries and Specific Climate Variables.

The instrument is divided into two sections; a section that lays out the demographics and the second includes the 24 statements of the six constructs of assessing the entrepreneurial climate.

Analysis and findings

Reward/ Reinforcements was the highest agreed upon dimension that is found to be present in the technology sector. Other dimensions such as Management Support and Time Availability have shown its occurrence in the study context.

Moreover, the Specific Climate Variables such as perceiving the concepts of risk-taking and innovation by owners, managers and employees in the internal environment of SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia were evident too in the context of SMEs in Saudi Arabia. However, two dimensions have recorded the lowest among the corporate entrepreneurship dimensions which they are Autonomy/ Work Discretion and Organizational Boundaries in our study.

Conclusions

Findings showed moderate to high level of support to the corporate entrepreneurial climate. In conclusion, our study has answered the research aim to assess the corporate entrepreneurship climate in the Small and Medium Enterprises in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia.

Our findings are in line with the existing literature as we also agree that there should be higher investment in the corporate entrepreneurship strategy.

Bibliography

- Hornsby, J. S., D. F. Kuratko, and S. Zahra (2002). " Middle Managers' Perception of the Internal Environment for Corporate Entrepreneurship: Assessing a Measurement Scale," *Journal of Business Venturing* 17(3), 253– 273.
- Sulphey, M.M. and Alkahtani, N., 2017. Economic security and sustainability through social entrepreneurship: the current Saudi scenario. *Journal of security and sustainability issues*, *6*(3).

Research Digest

The Impact of the Public Procurement Law on the Financial Stability of SMEs in Saudi Arabia

Afra Alsammahi | Dr. Jaizah Othman, Dr. Noreha Halid | 2020

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of public procurement law on SMEs' financial stability when participating in the public procurement law in Saudi Arabia. It sought to capture the nature of laws and terms in the procurement law that affect SMEs financial stability and highlight the challenges they face when dealing with the procurement law. This will raise the awareness of the financial challenges that are related to the public procurement, highlight the gaps in the procurement law, and give room for improvements to create a SMEs friendly law. All of which eventually benefit Saudi procurement law and SMEs, and increase innovation growth and job creation.

The population of this study was the SMEs in the Marketing Communication sector in Saudi Arabia who participate in the public procurement by interviewing ten owners/managers. The study revealed that most SMEs face liquidity issues while participating in the public procurement law because of the delay in receiving payments. Other factors include: preliminary guarantee, renewing the governmental documents, the unclear scope of work in the Request for Proposal (RFP), and flexibility during the crisis are also affecting the financial stability of SMEs when participating in the procurement Law. Surprisingly, it was revealed that the challenge is not just in the requirements, as much as it is in managing the bid after awarding.

Therefore, it is recommended that the government allow giving advanced payment for small enterprises or create an initiative to be a fund that provides SMEs with operational loans, set intensive courses for procurement employees, and simplify the procurement procedures to help in splitting the large contract into small contracts to encourage SMEs to participate in the bids.

In conclusion, SMEs need to be more careful in entering bids and always set precautionary financial plans and strengthen their financial management knowledge in order to manage the company's liquidity well.

Literature review

All the theoretical and empirical evidence in the study revealed the impact of the public procurement Law on the stability of SMEs. Although the results of previous studies on SMEs, by researchers, such as Nkonge (2013) and Morand (2003), agreed that SMEs unexpectedly face some shortage in the financial resources in some situations while working in the procurement law.

However, the impact of the public procurement law on SMEs' financial stability in Saudi Arabia is not certain yet, which makes it demand further exploration. The theoretical and empirical review also provided great help for the researcher in preparing interview questions. Besides, the literature review was helpful in discussing the findings of the study.

Finally, it provided the researcher with more information about some approaches in helping SMEs with the public procurement.

Objective

The overall objective of this study is to find out the impact of the public procurement law on the participation of SMEs in Saudi Arabia. The specific objectives are to find out the laws in the Saudi procurements law that primarily affect the financial stability of the SMEs and to determine the financial challenges that Saudi SMEs encounter when dealing with the Saudi procurement law.

Methodology

The methodological framework that was used to achieve the stated objectives of the study in finding out the impact of the public procurement law in the participation of SMEs in Saudi Arabia. One instrument was used for data collection. It is a semi-structured interview with five questions. Ten owners-managers from several Small and medium companies in Saudi Arabia were interviewed.

The population of this study was all the SMEs in the Marketing Communication sector in Saudi Arabia who participate in the public procurement. The researcher qualitatively analyzed the owners-managers' interviews by stating their answers.

Analysis and findings

The study revealed that most SMEs face liquidity issues while participating in the public procurement law because of the delay in payment. Therefore, it is recommended that the government allow giving advanced payment for small enterprises, and to create an initiative to be a fund that provides SMEs with operational loans to solve the gap after starting the project and before receiving the delayed payment from the authority.

Moreover, it was revealed that some contracts became larger in scope and value, and some contracts RFP comes with an unclear scope of work thus results in an unfair assessment among participants.

Conclusions

In conclusion, it is found that 40% of owners-managers who did not face any liquidity issues are because of their strong background in financial management. Therefore, it is recommended for the SMEs managers to strengthen their financial management knowledge in order to manage the company's liquidity well.

Suggestions for further research:

1. Studying the procurement employees' perspective about the Saudi Procurement Law.
2. Involving participants from other sectors.

جامعة الأميرة نورة بنت عبدالرحمن
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University

DCU

Research Digest

Factors that Motivate Saudi Female Students Engagement in Sports at Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University.

Fatimah Ali Al-Qahtani | Dr. Jaizah Othman | 2020

Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the motivational factors motivating Saudi female students' engagement in sport at Princess Nourah University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
This thesis emphasizes the importance of female engagement in sport, in particular the factors that motivate Saudi female students' engagement in sport in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) at Princess Nourah University (PNU).

This study is based on qualitative research methodology, including data analysis of the questionnaire distributed among PNU students engaged in sport. The study was conducted in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia amongst University students from February to March 2020 with a population of all Saudi female students at Princess Nourah University (PNU), with a sample size of 200 participants.

The study showed that about half of the participants in the respondents exercised less than three times a week. Although regular physical activity has numerous benefits, the available data showed that physical activity reduces with age. Also, there was a significant increase in sedentary behavior and decline in participation of physical activity during late adolescence (15 - 18 years old) and adulthood (20 -25 years old) are ages where sedentary lifestyle behaviors are fixed

The findings of this study show the importance of the university coordinating the time of the lectures so that students can practice sports. Or, the university instructs students to use mechanisms to organize their time to find enough time to exercise.

This study shows the benefits of increasing the awareness of university students for the importance of exercising and its effects on their future lives, their mental and physical health, and their academic achievement. University administration should also encourage students to do sports through incentives such as giving prizes or certificates of appreciation, besides, strive to coordinate lecture time so that students can have enough time to exercise, as well as modernize the university's gyms.

Key words: Physical Activity, Princess Norah University (PNU), female students, engagement in sports, motivational factors.

Literature Review

This thesis focuses on females who regularly participate in sport and seeks to document their motivational factors for participation. It has been shown that changes in lifestyle and socioeconomic status in the region also significantly affected physical activity.

Al-Hazzaa (2004) stated that Saudi women have limited access to sport, while rapid economic growth has brought significant wealth and a simpler way of living in terms of transport and availability of low-cost foreign labor, accompanied by new technologies promoting unhealthy lifestyles. Engaging in sports and being active is important to the emotional, mental, psychological, social, and physical development of individuals (Laar et al., 2019).

Objective

The objective of this study is to determine the factors motivating Saudi female students to engage in sport activities at Princess Nourah University (PNU) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as well as emphasizing the importance of female students' engagement in sports.

Methodology

The present thesis takes an exploratory as well as an informative approach and focuses on the case analysis of Saudi women's participation in sports at PNU in KSA. It based primarily on qualitative research methodology, including data analysis of the questionnaire distributed among female students engaged in sports at PNU.

Data collection was performed using both qualitative and quantitative research method framework, using literature-based search, self-administered questionnaire, and statistical analysis program (SPSS V. 22) as a primary platform for data entry and analysis with the sample size of 200 participants based on the population size of 60.000 female college students at PNU.

Analysis and Findings

Our results showed that about half of the participants in this study exercised less than three times a week. This may be because of the preoccupation with college and private life responsibilities. The motivations of female students to practice sports varied were obtaining a good appearance, and a graceful body was the most common reason for exercising, followed by a desire to feel relaxed, then maintaining good health.

Regarding Princess Noura University's interest in sports, the university and sports administrators encourage them to be engaged in sports. But, there was a lack of interest among the Sports Administration in the university regarding students' reconciling between sports and study.

Conclusions

The researcher recommends increasing the awareness of university students regarding the importance of exercising and its effects on their future lives, their mental and physical health, and their academic achievement.

This can be achieved through awareness campaigns or seminars at the university about the importance of exercising. The university administration also should encourage female students to do sports through incentives such as giving prizes or certificates of appreciation, besides, strive to coordinate lecture time.

Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University

Research Digest
The Perception of Customers in the Effectiveness of Twitter Used by MOH in Saudi Arabia

Sahar Abdullah Algosi | May 2020 | Dr. Maheen Khan

Abstract

The growing use of social media platforms, Twitter in particular, has created a challenge for organizations to measure its effectiveness in marketing, communications, healthcare promotions, and various fields. Marketers need to understand the use and impact of Twitter to achieve their outcomes and gain more advantages.

In the context of healthcare, the analysis of Twitter is an opportunity to enhance its effectiveness in increasing public health awareness and disseminating general health information. The present study set out to examine the effectiveness of Twitter employed by the Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia from a customer’s perspective. It mainly focuses on gaining a better understanding of the needs and expectations of Twitter users in Saudi Arabia.

The study adopted the quantitative method with a descriptive-analytical design. The researcher used a survey questionnaire to 153 participants of Twitter users to provide primary data on the potential effect of Twitter in healthcare among Saudi people. The outcomes of the study supported the literature by confirming the significant role of Twitter as an effective marketing tool in healthcare. Ministry of Health Twitter account has proved its role in increasing public health awareness and creating a positive impact on their attitudes and behaviours.

The results also indicated that there is no difference between the public's perceptions according to gender or level of education. Finally, the researcher has developed some insights and recommendations for the Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia and for future research.

Keywords: marketing, social media, Twitter, Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Health, effectiveness, customer perception.

Literature review

The theoretical background of this study focuses on the main topics of the study. It is divided into five main sections. The first one concerns the Ministry of Health use of Twitter. The second part includes a brief overview of Twitter. The third section investigates prior studies evaluation of Twitter use in the healthcare context. The fourth one discusses Twitter's effectiveness as a main marketing tool. Finally, the fifth section indicates the customer's perception analysis in literature.

Prior studies have confirmed Twitter as an effective communication and interaction tool, specifically in healthcare, such as Ferguson (2013) and Kuehn (2015). Yet, there is a lack of research on Twitter utilization by health organizations particularly in the Middle East, which stresses the need for this study to evaluate the public perceptions regarding the Ministry of Health use of Twitter in Saudi Arabia.

Objective

This research aims to examine the effectiveness of Twitter employed by the Ministry of Health from a customer's perspective. It measures the differences in customers' perceptions regarding Twitter use according to gender and level of education.

It mainly focuses on gaining a better understanding of the needs and expectations of Twitter users in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, this study attempts to provide the Ministry of Health with the analysis conclusions and recommendations.

Methodology

The researcher used the quantitative method with a descriptive-analytical design to collect primary statistical data on the potential effect of Twitter in healthcare. A survey questionnaire using Qualtrics was designed by reviewing previous literature to 153 participants of Twitter users. Most of the respondents are Saudis (98.7 Per cent), 66 per cent are females, and 56.2 percent of them are in the middle age.

The questionnaire included 24 questions in a two-part form. The first part involved ten questions in a multiple-choice format for demographic information and respondents' use of Twitter. The second part consisted of 14 statements in a five-point Likert scale using Twitter in Health Care Scale (THCS) that was developed by the researcher. Ethical approval was accepted by Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee.

The statistical analysis has been conducted using SPSS software and R package with descriptive and inferential statistics. The researcher has also applied some tests to detect the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

Analysis and findings

The findings of this study have revealed that Twitter can be used for various purposes as a main marketing tool for communication and interaction. Respondents have shown that Twitter is used frequently by both genders regardless of educational level background and mainly for seeking health information.

The results have confirmed the significant positive influence of Twitter in increasing public health awareness showing an agreement with previous studies in the literature. This study has also presented the effectiveness of the Ministry of Health Twitter account in creating a positive change in public health attitudes and behaviours.

These results have supported the main hypotheses of the research that reflect the positive effect of Twitter on the public perceptions in Saudi Arabia.

Conclusions

The study has experienced some limitations, such as the small sample size and the limited time. Lack of research in the Middle East was also another limitation. Thus, future research may include larger sample size and qualitative methods to provide a deeper insight. However, the findings of this research have presented Twitter platform as a major service in marketing.

The study has concluded with the confirmation of Twitter as a value-creation tool that can create a positive influence if employed effectively and efficiently, as literature has shown before (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

References

- Antheunis, M.L., Tates, K. & Nieboer, T.E. 2013, "Patients' and health professionals' use of social media in health care: Motives, barriers and expectations", *Patient Education and Counseling,* vol. 92, no. 3, pp. 426-431.
- Pershad, Y., Hangge, P.T., Albadawi, H. & Oklu, R. 2018, "Social Medicine: Twitter in Healthcare", *Journal of clinical medicine,* vol. 7, no. 6, pp. 121.
- Aladwani, A.M. 2015, "Facilitators, characteristics, and impacts of Twitter use: Theoretical analysis and empirical illustration", *International Journal of Information Management,* vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 15-25.

Research Digest

An Exploratory Investigation of the Role of Incubator Mentorship Programs in New Venture Development.

Sarah Alsharif | Prof. Maura McAdam | 2020

Abstract

This dissertation explores the role of technology business incubator mentorship programs from the entrepreneur's perspective in the country-specific context of Saudi Arabia. The rationale being to explore the expectation gap between that of the entrepreneur and the incubator with regards to mentoring provision.

Accordingly, the research adopts an exploratory qualitative approach, drawing upon seven in-depth semi-structured interviews with Saudi entrepreneurs resident in a technology business incubator and who are currently availing of its mentorship program. In so doing, the research outlines empirical evidence detailing the lived experiences of entrepreneurs currently residing in a technology business incubator in Saudi Arabia.

The research findings reveal that there are two sources of mentoring within the incubator, namely the incubator mentorship program and problem-based mentoring. The research advances current understanding of incubator value-adding mentoring provision in Saudi Arabia by defining value-added mentoring and non-value-added mentoring within the incubator mentorship program.

The dissertation also presents an opportunity to inform the design and tailoring of incubator mentoring programs by segmenting the mentoring service level based on the venture development stage, adopting specified criteria that match the mentor and mentee and focusing both on organizational and individual levels.

Keywords: Technology Business Incubators (TBIs), Business Incubation, Business Incubators (BIs), Entrepreneurial Mentoring (EM), Mentorship, Saudi Arabia.

Literature Review

TBIs have emerged with the specific desire of technology commercialization and in so doing contribute to the national economy. However, extant research reveals a lack of understanding with regards to TBIs in Saudi Arabia (Khorsheed et al., 2014). Moreover, the extant research highlights that the value-adding business incubation experience is in the form of its intangible support services and business assistance.

Entrepreneurial mentoring (EM) emerged since the formulation of business incubation phenomena in the early 1990s as one of the intangible services provided by TBIs (Mian et al., 2016; St-Jean and Audet, 2013), however, there is a gap in the mentoring literature where most studies fail to explore the developmental nature of the relationship.

Objective

The research aims to explore the role of TBIs mentorship programs from the entrepreneur's perspective and in so doing contribute to bridging the expectation gap between that of the entrepreneurs and the incubator with regards to mentoring provision.

In order to achieve this, the following research objectives are proposed:

1. To critically review the literature pertaining to business incubation and mentoring,
2. To gather empirical evidence from the lived experiences of entrepreneurs currently residing in an incubator in Saudi Arabia,
3. To review the Saudi Arabian context and in so doing advance current understanding of incubator value-adding mentoring provision,
4. To inform the design and tailoring of incubator mentoring programs.

Methodology

The research adopts an exploratory qualitative approach that was deemed appropriate for the exploratory nature of this research and the mentoring relationship in particular. Data collection drew upon seven in-depth semi- structured interviews with Saudi entrepreneurs residents in a technology business incubator.

Thematic analysis was employed as the data analysis approach of interview transcriptions. Generating first-order codes was made manually and the categorization was data-driven and informed by the literature, using axial to relate the codes into categories. An iterative process of refinement for each theme and sub-theme to reach a satisfactory thematic map was then applied, which was then used to structure the presentation of the findings.

Analysis and Findings

The research focuses on mentoring and in so doing captures two sources of mentoring which are the incubator mentorship program and problem-based mentoring. The novelty of the findings underlines the distinction of expectations in the mentoring relationship between the incubator mentoring program and problem-based mentoring.

Furthermore, distinctions are made between value-added mentoring and non-value-added mentoring within the incubator mentorship program. Interestingly, entrepreneurs criticize some practices and processes as non-value-added, however, the occurrence of the same factors in problem-based mentoring approach was not criticized as non-value-added mentoring. Moreover, the findings explored the characteristics of the mentor from the entrepreneur's perspective.

Conclusions

The research advances current understanding of incubator value-adding mentoring provision in Saudi Arabia by defining value-added mentoring and non-value-added mentoring within the incubator mentorship program. The dissertation also presents an opportunity to inform the design and tailoring of incubator mentoring programs by segmenting the mentoring service level based on the venture development stage, adopting specified criteria that match the mentor and mentee and focusing both on organizational and individual levels.

References

- Khorsheed, M.S., Al-Fawzan, M.A. and Al-Hargan, A., 2014. Promoting techno-entrepreneurship through incubation: An overview at BADIR program for technology incubators. Innovation, 16(2), pp.238-249.
- Mian, S., Lamine, W. and Fayolle, A., 2016. Technology Business Incubation: An overview of the state of knowledge. Technovation, 50, pp.1-12.
- St-Jean, E. and Audet, J., 2013. The effect of mentor intervention style in novice entrepreneur mentoring relationships. Mentoring & tutoring: partnership in learning, 21(1), pp.96-119.

جامعة الأميرة نورة بنت عبدالرحمن
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University

Research Digest

Digital Literacy of Entrepreneurs and Business People in Saudi Arabia

Eman F. Alwalan | Dr.Atremisa Jaramillo, Dr.Wafa Ghardallou | 2020

Abstract

This paper presents the findings of research investigated the digital attitudes of entrepreneurs and people of business and their needed skills to be digital literate. To facilitate their digital transformation to their business.

A quantitative method was employed, Participants have been asked to fill out a survey based on the European Union DIGCOMP framework in addition to EntreComp the results showed entrepreneurs and business people do not need a high level of digital competences in order to be digitally literate, only average level is considered to be enough from the perception of entrepreneurs and business people. The most important digital competence is evaluation of digital content and information. In addition to that, entrepreneurial competencies can be supported by several digital competences such as the ability to browse, search and filter digital contents.

Keywords: Digital Literacy, Digital Transformation, Entrepreneurship, Business people, DigComp, EntreComp.

Literature Review

UNESCO developed a global framework for digital literacy. They first conducted a global study on several countries to find out the percentage of youth and adults who have achieved at least a minimum level of proficiency in digital literacy skills.

The framework itself defines the meaning of digital literacy, “Digital Competence is the set of knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, strategies, and awareness that are required when using ICT and digital media to perform tasks; solve problems; communicate; manage information; collaborate; create and share content; and build knowledge effectively, efficiently, appropriately, critically, creatively, autonomously, flexibly, ethically, reflectively for work, leisure, participation, learning, and socialising” (Ferarri,2012)

Objective

To explore the level needed for digital transformation of entrepreneurs and business people, from their perception

Methodology

Based on “DigComp” framework and “EntreComp”. Embodying a quantitative methodology, a population size of 60 respondents were asked to accomplish online survey forms for data collection. Each of the 60 respondents had to adhere to the requisites which were pre-determined by the researchers to ensure the collection of valid data.

The respondents can either be male or female entrepreneurs and business people with a business based in Saudi Arabia, aged 18-65+ with age brackets categorizing the population size in 5 segments such as 18-24, 25-34, 35-55, 55-64, and 64 years old and above. No predetermined digital and entrepreneurial competency will be required. Respondents are asked to spontaneously fill-up the online questionnaires upon digital receipt, through a link sent via electronic messaging applications.

Analysis and Findings

Digital competences results were ranked by its importance in six ranks from entrepreneurs and business people point of view to be digitally literate which is as follows;
The first competence which took the first place was “Evaluation of Data, Information, and Digital Content” The second place of competences resulted in three competences, the ability to “Browse, filter and search digital content, Information, and data”, “Interacting Through Digital Technologies”, “Manage digital identities” competence.

The third place of digital were “Protecting Devices”, “Netiquette” , “Engaging in Citizenship via Digital Tools”. The fourth place is “organizing and processing of data in a structured environment”, “Collaboration Via Digital Technologies”, “Integration & Re-Elaboration of Digital Material”.

The fifth place is “Sharing Via Digital Tools”, “Protection of Individual Data and Privacy”.
The final place of digital competences is “Creating Digital Content”.
There was no difference between entrepreneurs and business people opinion, the two categories had equal evaluation regarding all the digital competences need.

Conclusions

The results have indicated that there is a strong need for digital knowledge for entrepreneurs and businesspeople. However, the needed level to be digitally literate is not high. Entrepreneurs and people of business do not need a professional level in digital competencies to digitize their businesses. For recommendation.

More work will be carried out to examine technical capabilities of entrepreneurs and business people qualitatively in order to find more answers to the problems that obstruct and discourage entrepreneurs and business people from incorporating business technologies.

References:

- Ferrari, A., (2012). Digital competence in practice: An analysis of frameworks

Research Digest

How a Variety of Products Provided by Ministry of Housing Can Affect Consumers' Behavior on Decision-Making During the Purchasing of a Property in Saudi Arabia.

Norah Al-Bazie | Dr. Artemisa Jaramillo & Dr. Hela Borgi | 2020

Abstract

This research studies how a variety of products provided by Ministry of Housing can affect consumers' behavior on decision-making during the purchasing of a property in Saudi Arabia. Also, this study examines consumers' behavior and adaptation toward the products such as, off-plan, ready units, and land & loan. Variety-seeking behavior generally occurs in low-risk product classes that are frequently purchased; in which consumers are familiar with the options offered and have large consideration sets (Van Trijp 1995).

However, buying a home is a high-risk decision which entails a more sophisticated decision making, including examining a variety of products and projects. The study looks at the influence of the social media network, Twitter, and the social media application, telegram, to understand the impact of such platforms on deciding what type of property to buy in Saudi Arabia and recommend some practical advice for Government initiatives.

Finally, the research was based on questionnaire on the Ministry of Housing products, and the factors that influence the consumers' decision-making when purchasing a property. In this study 20.6% of consumer started the purchase process, while the rest 79.4% did not find a property yet.

Literature Review

Extant literature suggests that customers prefer a variety of choices when purchasing for low risk products (Gázquez-Abad, J.C. and Martínez-López, F.J., 2015.) The presence of a large variety of products to choose from is believed to be an advantage that retailers offer to consumers. Retailers satisfy the variety-seeking needs of customers (Inman, Jeffrey J. 2001).

Other researchers believe that smaller varieties to choose from have better strategic advantages over the larger varieties (Greifeneder et. al, 2010; Iyengar & Lepper, 2000). Studies suggest that a lot of choices do not always lead to a choice, or not to the optimum choice a customer desires to make (Dhar R., 1997).

Objective

The research focuses on the factors that influence the consumers' decision-making when deciding to purchase a property from the Ministry of Housing of Saudi Arabia, specifically when deciding among a variety of products such as off-plan, land &loan, ready unit from MoH, and ready unit from the market.

Methodology

The descriptive analytical method is used to research the phenomenon and describe its nature and the relationship among its variables, methods, and ways (Hirizi and Gharbi, 2013, p26). The study targets Saudis utilizing the services of the Ministry of Housing beneficiaries, where (97) respondents on a random survey sample. The questioner was a total of 35 questions.

The scales that are utilized to prepare the survey are the Change Seeker Scale, CMB Raju (1980) Scale, Uniqueness seeking scale, Cognitive orientation scale, and Social character Kassarjian (1962) Scale. Also, to verify the accuracy and reliability of the research performance Survey (SPSS) was used for quantitative data input and analysis.

Analysis and Findings

There are no statistical significance differences in the responses of the process of buying a property among Saudi consumer of Ministry of Housing according to age, education level, occupation, monthly income, family size. The response of Saudi consumers for the Social Preference Scale of Kassarjian (1962) dimension goes to positive approval.

The CMB Raju (1980) Scale dimension indicates a high degree of approval, and the Change Seeker Scale Dimension result indicates a medium degree of approval. In regards the most influence channels 28.9% of consumer Ministry of Housing website is the biggest influence on their decision making when looking for an off-plan, ready units, or land, 19.6% Twitter, also 19.6% Ministry of Housing Applications, while 2.1% Telegram and 29.9% other information channel.

Conclusions

There are no significant differences in attitudes among the respondent regarding the concept of the consumers behavior towards the Ministry of Housing. There is similar type of answers given by volunteers, in regards of the variety of products that are provided by Ministry of Housing 32% who visited 2 projects and 18.6% have visited more than 5. However, 35% of the volunteers chose land and Loan as the most significant among Ministry of Housing products.

This research focused on variety seeking on all products and projects provided by the Ministry of Housing. Further research, should explore other the factors influencing other purchases in products such as off-plan, or ready units.

Research Digest
Assessing the Readiness of Ministry of Health Workforce for Digitization: An Applied Study on the Leadership Digital Skills of Healthcare Managers and Directors

Mashael Melhim Alsuabaie | April 2020 | Dr.Artemisa Jaramillo

Abstract

Digital technology has made drastic improvements to organizations. Much as mobile printing accelerated the transformation of our culture, digitalization is transforming organizations, the work environment and processes, generating new challenges that leaders will face. Digitization in the health sector provides cost-effective and safe use of ICTs and related cultural changes to allow people to manage their health and well-being and transform the nature of healthcare provision. The use of technology in human resources or procedures increases digitization's efficiency.

A cross-sectional study was done to Support and embrace innovation of the changing technologies through providing a framework for interaction and engagement, better preparation for health workforce and improve the ability to plan and forecast health sector by providing state-of-the-art information about Leadership digital skills, targeting leaders (identified as healthcare managers and directors) in public and private hospitals in Saudi Arabia.

A quasi-experimental method will be selected to provide answers to the research questions. A total of 132 healthcare managers and directors in these 2 institutional settings will be randomly selected.
The results indicated high levels of satisfaction. Moreover, it confirmed that the e-health system promotes the exchange of information inside the hospital or department and with hospitals or

other departments. The results also indicated that most workers are good at using digital communication tools (email, chat, SMS, instant messaging, blogs, microblogging, and social networks) to communicate Via the Internet.

Key words: Digitization- leadership - digital skills - healthcare managers/directors

Introduction

Digitization in the health sector provides cost-effective and safe use of ICTs and related cultural changes to allow people to manage their health and well-being and transform the nature of healthcare provision. The use of technology in human resources or procedures increases digitization's efficiency (Maksimović, M. and Vujović, V., 2017).

Digital health literacy refers to the 'value of knowledge on health powered by emerging technologies, web resources, smartphone, Wiki, MOOCS, etc. Growing reliance on ITC for health information offers opportunities and challenges.

Opportunities that are related to simple real-time access to information, while Challenges as the low health literacy patients are less likely to use digital health services than people with high health literacy; addressing digital literacy in health that includes creating digital awareness and information about health and services, designing health IT tools which are navigable for patients with less health education, ease of use versus usefulness: more health-educated consumers are able to use digital health devices while also being able to appreciate usability (Garrido, M., et al., 2016).

The digitization impact of health care services was profound and will be even deeper in future. As with other services, the impact of such digital health services is important to assess. Decisions concerning the adoption, use or reimbursement of new digital health services are based ideally on evidence regarding their performance against the health system targets at different levels.

A broad perspective should be taken in order to assess this. Goals to determine new digital health services are the achievement of specific health system goals, including safety, transparency, productivity and equity.

Literature Review

Scholars agree on the high technological effect on leadership actions and recognize IT technologies to drive disruptive changes in organizations and leadership positions across various organizational functions (Bartol and Liu, 2002; Geoffrion, 2002; Weiner et al., 2015; Sousa and Rocha, 2018).

These changes are so dramatic that scholars started to adopt a new terminology to characterize the e-world, e-business and e-organizations (Horner-Long and Schoenberg, 2002). The notion of digital ubiquity was discussed recently and the prevalent technological growth was identified (Roman et al., 2018).

This term refers to a setting where technical equipment prevails and communicates with people constantly (Gerth and Peppard, 2016; Schwarzmüller et al., 2018). Heinz et al. (2006) follow a contingency approach, emphasizing the need to take into account the context and consider situational aspects that can influence leadership and cooperation practices. Most studies assume that the change in context due to technological advancement may influence leadership.

Bolden and O'Regan (2016, p. 439) report that "there is no one approach to leadership," since leadership is context specific and must to be adapted to the needs of the day. Similarly, Lu et al. (2014) maintain that effective leadership behaviors are determined by the situation in which leadership is developed.

Objective

The main objective is to Support and embrace innovation of the changing technologies through providing a framework for interaction and engagement, better preparation for health workforce and improve the ability to plan and forecast health sector by providing state-of-the-art information about Leadership digital skills.

Methodology

A cross-sectional study will consist of a quota sample, targeting leaders (identified as healthcare managers and directors) in public and private hospitals in Saudi Arabia.

A quasi-experimental method will be selected to provide answers to the research questions. A total of 132 healthcare managers and directors in these 2 institutional settings will be randomly selected. Permission will be obtained to draw upon computerized records of the names and titles of healthcare managers and directors in each institution.

All surveys will be assigned a code number to indicate whether the respondent is a manager or a director and whether the respondent is affiliated with a private or a public hospital. (SPSS) will be used to generate basic descriptive and inferential statistics.

Data will be analyzed using standard descriptive statistics as well as inferential statistics, including t-tests and regression analysis.

Findings

The results shows that the percentage of males is 73 per cent, while females are 26.5 per cent, and this percentage is due to the nature of Saudi society in general and it reflects the societal nature that exists in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for cultural and historical reasons related to Arab countries in general.

88% of the sample works in the government sector, and this phenomenon is due to the advantages of government work from stability and job safety and the difficulties facing workers in the private sector.

There is a variation in the functional degree of the sample in question, and this is a positive indication that gives the study a greater variety and stability. The results of the second part of the survey indicated high levels of satisfaction in this part and they were summarized as follows:

- The e-health system promotes the exchange of information inside the hospital or department
- The e-health system promotes the exchange of information with hospitals or other departments
- The policies and regulations of the Ministry of Health or hospitals do not affect the use of the e-health system
- The results also indicated that most workers are good at using communication tools (email, chat, SMS, instant messaging, blogs, microblogging, and social networks) to communicate Via the Internet.

Conclusions & Recommendations

Technology progresses so quickly, it is wise to test it well before you commit and to review the rental and maintenance costs. Thinking more than a simple project is a good idea. You can buy cheaper with a strategic approach.

•Crucial leadership

•Leadership level

•Leadership and governance

•Requirements and change support

•Patient safety leadership

Research Digest
The Role of Market Orientation in Enhancing Customer Loyalty: Case Study on Caribou and Starbucks Coffee in Saudi Arabia.

Hessa Abdulkareem ALomary | Artemisa Jaramillo | 2020

Abstract

Since the nineties of the last century, loyalty has emerged as one of the most important goals of the organization's stability and a guarantee of its future. The organizations have endeavored to achieve loyalty by keeping pace with the changes in the competitive environment, which have increased in size and intensity. Customers have become more aware and demanding. Their decision is based on the value they get: the higher, the better.

These conditions require adopting a marketing concept that places customer's value at the center and considers the impact of the environmental components, both internal and external, and the organization as a whole. Market orientation emerged as a concept that helps in raising the customer's value continuously and contributes to building a more stable loyalty while avoiding the negative aspects of the previous directions (Chowdhury, 2018).

This study aimed to highlight the role that market orientation plays on customer's loyalty by focusing on the components that make up this concept and the extent of its impact on the value of the customer and then his loyalty. A total of (230) surveys were distributed to clients who have previously visited Caribou and Starbucks coffee. The study followed a random stratified sample method.

The results revealed that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between market orientation and customer loyalty to the coffee shop in Saudi Arabia. There were slight differences in market orientation according to the café brand, where Starbucks café customers were more loyal than Caribou's customers. There were some differences according to education level, diploma and doctorate holders tended to have higher mean values of market orientation than others. Slight differences in customers' loyalty according to gender for each café.

The researcher also suggests future researched about the effect of the market approach with its behavioral and cultural dimensions on the behavior of the Saudi consumer, the foundations upon which the Saudi consumer builds his loyalty in a competitive market and the impact of the market orientation on the competitiveness of small and medium-sized companies in Saudi Arabia.

Keywords: Market orientation, customer loyalty, Starbucks&Caribou Coffee.

Literature Review

Many studies have proven the following:
The theoretical background of this study focuses on the main topics of the study, It is divided into three main sections. The intellectual basis for market orientation and the concept of market orientation. The second part includes the Main characteristics of market orientation. The third about concept & types of Customer loyalty, the importance of customer loyalty, and Types of customer loyalty.

The interest of academics and practitioners has increased in recent times in studying the concept of market orientation the Theory suggests that the entry of foreign companies to work in the local markets directly affects the current competition in the market This, in turn, leads to the need to change the way local companies provide goods and services to the customer.(Hult, 2011) The section also contains several previous studies that explain the loyal customer of the institution is considered one of the sources that can be referred to when carrying out new activities. (Kasemsap, 2017) also, customer loyalty means strong reference groups for organizations and their services. (Kandampully et al., 2015)

Objective

The research aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Detect the impact of market orientation on customer value
- Highlight the impact of the elements of market orientation combined and individually on customer loyalty
- Propose solutions in light of the findings of the benefit of the company in question to restore the confidence of customers and enhance their loyalty

Methodology

The research study is quantitative. The descriptive-analytical method was used to achieve the study objectives. The data were collected using E-Questionnaire, which is prepared by the researcher, and data were analyzed using the SPSS program. The study population consists of all clients who have previously visited the coffee shop at the time of research Caribou and Starbucks coffee with was (230) randomized samples. The choice of questionnaire questions relied on previous studies, the survey includes three important information which is first of all personal information secondly related to marketing orientation finally the customer loyalty and in the end, it was reviewed by the research supervisor.

Analysis and Findings

The study concluded that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between market orientation and customer loyalty to the coffee shop in Saudi society, where Starbucks café customers were more loyal than Caribou's customers, regression analysis for Caribou café found that market orientation positively associated with an increased probability of loyalty ($B=0.538$, $p \le 0.05$),($B=0.513$, $p \le 0.05$)for Starbucks.

There were some differences according to education level, diploma and doctorate holders tended to have higher mean values of market orientation than others with slight differences in customers' loyalty according to gender and there was a statistically significant effect of café brand on customers loyalty, $F(1, 226 = 4.952, p = .027$.

Conclusions

The study found a positive relationship of statistical significance between the market orientation and customer loyalty to the Café in Saudi society, the study recommends that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia focus on more market orientation towards achieving customer loyalty to Cafés in Saudi society, attention to customer loyalty by focusing on satisfaction, paying attention to the customer's total gains and attention to reducing the total costs of the customer.

References

•Chowdhury, L., 2018. Strategic Client Management of Linde Bangladesh Limited.

•Kandampully, J., Zhang, T. C., & Bilgihan, A. (2015). Customer loyalty: a review and future directions with a special focus on the hospitality industry. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management.

•Hult, G. T. M. (2011). Market-focused sustainability: market orientation, plus!.

Research Digest

The Impact of Applying Campus Sustainability in Saudi Universities on the Students' Environmental Awareness (PNU as a Case Study)

Alhanouf A. Kadasah | Prof. Ann Largey & Prof. Jihan Bousrih | 2020

Abstract

In terms of Saudi Arabia's orientations towards achieving the sustainable development goals, by including it within the vision 2030; educational institutions are tasked with adopting and promoting the principle of sustainability. This study examines the impact of the application of sustainable campus standards on the environmental behavior, knowledge, and attitudes of female students.

It explains the relationship between environmental awareness of students and factors such as GPA, level (semester), and the college to which the student belongs with the extent of application of sustainability on a personal level. The research uses the mixed approach in methodology. A questionnaire was used as a data collection tool, and open questions were included in the questionnaire. The researcher obtained 268 responses, from 15 colleges at PNU. The study found that environmental knowledge and attitudes are linked to pro-environmental behavior. The results also showed that there is no correlation between the cumulative GPA or the academic stage of the student, with environmental knowledge, environmental trends, or behavior towards the environment. The results showed a misunderstanding of the sustainability effort that the university seeks. Findings showed a lack of inclusion of female students in the applications and initiatives of the sustainable campus at the university.

Keywords: Sustainability; Sustainable Campus; Environmental Awareness; Sustainable Consciousness; Student Perspective.

Literature Review

The thesis considers the most recent published research about educational initiatives and extra-curricular activities, to evaluate the university's attempts to increase the understanding and commitment of students toward the environment, and the positive effect of the university's efforts on student understanding.

This work is focused on several studies that have verified the effect of environmental education (Chuvieco et al., 2018; Zsoka et al., 2013), activities and initiatives for universities on environmental consciousness of students (Ralph and Stubbs, 2014; Ghaus et al., 2017). The research was based on the concept of ecological awareness introduced by Gericke et al. (2019), which involves three dimensions: behavior, attitude and knowledge.

Objective

- Examine the environmental awareness of students at PNU, by comparing the degree of awareness with the practices of the university (University plans and applications towards sustainable development).
- Analyze the differences in student awareness about what is included within the green campus.
- Examine the extent to which the university's application of environmental requirements is evident in policies such as infrastructure, rationalization of energy and water consumption, and waste recycling at PNU, influence students' environmental awareness, and practice.

Methodology

The research depends on its design on mixed methods, where the researcher collects data from a quantitative tool (survey) and qualitative tools (case study: through documents and statistics about the university "study community"). According to Hanson et al., (2005), the sequential exploratory methods is one of the primary mixed methods used in social research.

The researcher obtained 268 responses from PNU's students, including 15 colleges out of 17. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test tested the reliability of the questionnaire questions. SPSS was used to analyze the data. Correlation between rank variables was tested by significance of the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient.

Analysis and Findings

Spearman's correlation between rank variables tested the correlation coefficient.
The results did not show any correlation coefficient between the behavior towards the environment and the GPA or semester.
The researcher did not find any correlation coefficient between the environmental attitudes and the GPA or the semester. There is a significant correlation between environmental knowledge and environmental behavior. Likewise, there is a strong correlation between ecological knowledge and attitudes.

Conclusions

The results showed a good awareness among the students regarding knowledge, behaviours, and environmental directives. However, this awareness comes from self-learning for 29.2%, while the percentage of female students whose knowledge of sustainability expanded through the school curricula constituted only 14.3% of the total sample.

The researcher recommends more study and research regarding activating the role of female students and their participation in initiatives that support environmental sustainability at the university. Sustainability needs to be incorporated into educational curricula more, in a manner that promotes the goals of the university and feeds into the wider aims of the Kingdom as set out in Vision 2030.

References

- Chuvieco, E. et al. (2018) ‘Factors affecting environmental sustainability habits of university students: Intercomparing analysis in three countries (Spain, Brazil and UAE)’, Journal of cleaner production, 198, pp. 1372–1380.
- Gericke, N. et al. (2019) ‘The Sustainability Consciousness Questionnaire: The theoretical development and empirical validation of an evaluation instrument for stakeholders working with sustainable development’, Sustainable Development, 27(1), pp. 35–49.
- Ghaus, R. M. et al. (2017) ‘Are Green Universities Producing Greener Future Leaders?’, Planning Malaysia, 15(4), pp. 1–12.
- Hanson, W. E. et al. (2005) ‘Mixed methods research designs in counseling psychology.’, Journal of counseling psychology. American Psychological Association, 52(2), p. 224.
- Ralph, M. and Stubbs, W. (2014) ‘Integrating environmental sustainability into universities’, Higher Education, 67(1), pp. 71–90.
- Zsóka, Á. et al. (2013) ‘Greening due to environmental education? Environmental knowledge, attitudes, consumer behavior and everyday pro-environmental activities of Hungarian high school and university students’, Journal of Cleaner Production. Elsevier, 48, pp. 126–138.

جامعة الأميرة نورة بنت عبدالرحمن
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University

Research Digest

Customer Satisfaction with Digital Banking in Saudi Arabia.

Shahad Abdullah Aldakhil | Dr. Ann Largey and Dr. Fatma Mabrouk | 2020

Abstract

The role of digital services in banking has increased in importance, in line with the general trend towards digitization in the economy. Given the increased use of digital services such as internet banking, telephone, mobile and machine use, banks need to compete effectively in these domains and are therefore concerned with levels and determinants of their customers' satisfaction with these services. However, little research on customers' satisfaction with the digital banking in Saudi Arabia and this research goes some way to close that gap focusing on evaluation of the level of customers' satisfaction with digital banking in Saudi Arabia and key drivers of overall satisfaction.

A deductive approach was followed in this research using quantitative research method to provide reliable and valid result that could be statistical generalized. A questionnaire was used to collect the data then used correlation analysis and regression analysis to analyze the data and evaluate the customer's perspective on the digital banking services provided by Saudi banks. The research developed a conceptual framework that was found in previous literature to help set up the questionnaire and interpret the results. The conceptual framework includes four main independent variables, which are accessibility, efficiency, reliability & performance and security & privacy, that impact on one dependent variable, which is customers' satisfaction.

The overall result that this study found is that most customers are satisfied with the digital banking services that are provided by the Saudi banks, since 94 per cent report being either extremely satisfied or somewhat satisfied. Also, the regression analysis found that the four main

independent variables, which are accessibility, efficiency, reliability & performance and security & privacy, significantly contribute to increase the level of customer satisfaction toward service provided.

This study could help Saudi banks to see the level of customer satisfaction with the digital banking services provided by them, identify the areas that customers believe that they are weak using the items that were used in the study and enhancing these weak items based on the customer's opinions.

Keywords: Digital banking, banking services, Saudi banks, Saudi Arabia, Digital banking services.

Literature Review

Studies showed that banks need to invest more in digitalization to attract new customers and keep their current customers and gain their satisfaction. It had been noted that promoting the concept of digital banking and adopting new technology would improve the quality of the banking services provided.

Based on previous literature review there are certain variables that would indicate the level of customer satisfaction regarding the services provided which is in this case digital banking services. These independent variables that would measure services provided are accessibility, efficiency, reliability & performance and security & privacy (AlHaliq and AlMuhirat, 2016; AlMohaimmeed, 2012; Eid, 2011; Kemunto, 2015; Muluka,2015)

Objective

The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the level of customer satisfaction after digitizing banking services in Saudi Arabia using the following set of objectives:

- To identify the level of customer satisfaction with the digital banking.
- To evaluate the digital banking services quality from the customer perspective.
- To analyze the behavior of customers toward digital banking.

Methodology

The approach that was followed in this research is a deductive approach using a quantitative research method to provide reliable data. An online questionnaire was set to collect the data. The questionnaire was aimed for the Saudi banks customers who were Saudis, aged from 20 years old and above, who have been using the digital banking services. The needed sample size was 385, since the desired marginal error was 5% and the confidence level was 95%, this is the usual level of confidence that is used in similar studies.

Analysis and Findings

A correlation analysis was used in this study to evaluate the relationship between all the variables that are included in this study and measure whether the relationship is strong or not, Taking the mean of each independent variable to study the relationship between them and the overall satisfaction implies that there was a strong positive correlation between the Reliability & Performance and the overall satisfaction, followed by Accessibility, Efficiency then Security & Privacy.

Also, the regression analysis found that the four main independent variables, which are accessibility, efficiency, reliability & performance and security & privacy, significantly contribute to increase the level of customer satisfaction toward service provided.

Conclusions

This study shows that Saudi banks should enhance the procedures used to ensure the security & privacy of their services, since customers are concerned that their information could be jeopardized by third party, this could be enhanced by using multi solutions and mechanisms that would add a protective layer. Also, Saudi banks should work on the efficiency of the digital services. Transaction steps should be clear and simple, completing a transaction should be quick and customer's information should up to date in all channels and should match with the details on the branch system.

References:

- AlHaliq, H.A. and AlMuhirat, A.A., (2016). Customer satisfaction with electronic banking services in the Saudi banking sector. Asian Social Science, 12(5), p.139.
- AlMohaimmeed, B.M., (2012). Customer behaviour towards Internet banking: A study of the dormant users of Saudi Arabia (Doctoral dissertation, University of Birmingham).
- Eid, M.I., (2011). Determinants of e-commerce customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty in Saudi Arabia. Journal of electronic commerce research, 12(1), p.78.
- Kemunto, M.P., (2015). Online Banking Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction a Case Study of Barclays Bank Kenya Limited.
- Muluka, K.O.H., (2015). Influence of Digital Banking On Customer Satisfaction: A Case of National Bank of Kenya Bungoma County. Nairobi: University of Nairobi (Dissertation–Masters).

Research Digest

Business Incubators and their Impact on Entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia

Fatemah Mohammed Albawardi | Dr. Ann largey and Dr. Jihan Sal Bousrih | May, 2020

Abstract

This study aimed to explore the role of business incubators in developing entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia. The researcher used the descriptive analytical approach where a questionnaire was designed and distributed among the research sample. A total of 93 questionnaires were filled and collected from the research sample.

The results showed that business incubators have a positive impact on entrepreneurs' innovation, business and managerial skills. Besides, the results revealed that business incubators have a positive impact on entrepreneurs' self-independence and focus as well as self- confidence and communication skills.

In the light of study results, the policy makers are recommended to further fund and support the entrepreneurs through supporting the incubators. Besides, to ensure success of the incubated projects, business accelerators should be established and funded to ensure that incubated projects have sufficient time to continue and grow.

Keyword: Business, Business Incubators, Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurship, Saudi Arabia.

Literature Review

The private sector in the Kingdom accounts for over 85% of total employment in Saudi Arabia, with small-medium enterprises accounting 93% of the total enterprises in Saudi Arabia.

Literature indicates that new entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia tend to face several challenges when starting their new businesses, such as lack of experience in enterprise development and difficulty in access to the market.

Business incubators in Saudi Arabia are still in the early stages. Therefore entrepreneurs are advised to seek assistance from multiple service providers. They tend to lack an understanding of technology-based enterprises among most service providers. Certain steps have been taken to tackle this such as the program launched to encourage, facilitate and support the development and establishment of technology incubators in Saudi Arabia.

Objective

The aim of the proposed research is to investigate the role of business incubators in developing entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia. Besides, it aimed to examine the role of business incubators in developing entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia, examine whether the characteristics and self - motivation of entrepreneurs are the sole reason for their success, identify whether the financial support from business incubators is the reason for success and identify how entrepreneurs could benefit from business incubators.

Methodology

To collect this type of data, the researcher developed a questionnaire based on some of the available questionnaires and scales (i.e. Choto, 2015; Meru and Struwig, 2011; Lose, 2016; Lose, Maziriri and Madinga, 2016). The choice of using the questionnaire in data collection of sociodemographic characteristics and data related to research variables is given a greater priority because of its advantages over the other methods and its efficiency or ability to capture more information from the source. The questionnaire was distributed among the research sample. A total of 93 questionnaires were filled and collected from the research sample.

Analysis and Findings

The data was analyzed using SPSS where some statistical analyses applied e.g. frequencies, relative weight and correlation coefficient. The results showed that business incubators have a positive impact on entrepreneurs' innovation, business and managerial skills. Besides, the results revealed that business incubators have a positive impact on entrepreneurs' self-independence and focus as well as self-confidence and communication skills.

Conclusions

The study describes business incubator programs as initiatives aimed to encourage new entrepreneurs and fostering emerging medium and small-sized enterprises to ensure that employment opportunities are generated which, in effect, result in income generation and value creation.

Following the results analysis and literature review, it was found that the problem of the marketing and technology transfer lay at the heart of business incubator initiatives. There is also a need to include the required conditions for entrepreneurs to start a successful business, such as funding, training and empowering minority groups. The paper also analyzes different forms of enterprise incubator programs.

Bibliography

- Choto, P. (2015). The impact of business incubators on survivalist entrepreneurs in the Cape Metropolitan area (Doctoral dissertation, Cape Peninsula University of Technology).
- Lose, T. (2016). The role of business incubators in facilitating the entrepreneurial skills requirements of small and medium size enterprises in the Cape metropolitan area, South Africa (Doctoral dissertation, Cape Peninsula University of Technology).
- Lose, T., Maziriri, E. T., & Madinga, W. (2016). Assessing the impact of incubation programme to small and medium enterprises development in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. International Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Research, 4(4), 16-29.
- Mehralizadeh, Y., & Sajady, S. H. 2006. A study of factors related to successful and failure of entrepreneurs of small industrial business with emphasis on their level of education and training. Available at SSRN 902045.

Research Digest

The Perceived Effectiveness of Digitizing the Shadowing Function of Succession Planning: A Case of Selected IT Organizations in Saudi Arabia

Amira Hassan Al Zahrani | Dr. Raja Clouse, Dr. Hiyam Al Rahim| 2020

Abstract

This research aims to examine the effectiveness of the digitization of the shadowing activity of succession planning by way of exploring the impact of digitizing shadowing in a number of IT organizations in Saudi Arabia.

A descriptive approach was used to explain the demographic sample information and a number of relevant statistical tests were employed to analyze the perceptions of the respondents on the impact of digitizing the succession planning function. This study used a survey tool to collect quantitative data. The participants consisted of a sample of seventy (70) respondents who are employees of different companies in the IT sector in Saudi Arabia.

Our review of the literature discovered that digital transformation has brought about a transition from human and papers into systems and analytics in which standardization and automation are enabled while supporting strategic growth. Through our research study, we uncovered that, for the scope of our limited sample, the perceptions of employees on digitizing shadowing is that of a positive impact on succession planning.

Furthermore, the study resulted in a statistically significant level of agreement on the perceptions of the respondents on the impact of digitized shadowing in succession planning. The

study also found that the Saudi Arabian IT sector is familiar with digitized succession planning namely shadowing, where the digitized shadowing made the process of communication easier in the sharing of knowledge. In the Saudi Arabian IT sector, digitized shadowing contributes to managing staff in uncertain and tough times. In addition, it enhances job satisfaction as well as encourages an open dialogue between the employees and their leaders.

The results of the study showed that there is a positive relationship between the study constructs "Digitizing Human Resources Development (HRD)" and "Succession Planning" in the Saudi Arabian context. The study recommends the adoption of digitized succession planning , in particular the shadowing task, in companies in the IT sectors.

Keywords: Human Resource Development, Succession Planning, Digitization, Digitized Shadowing.

Literature Review

As the technology revolution continues, digitization has now accessed all business and technology operational areas, trying to convert most business transactions into digital transactions, to drive productivity and scalability. Recently, HR organizations have embraced digitization subsequent to the first influences of digitization observed in the areas of Finance, Marketing, Security, IT, etc (Beyer, 2017).

Digitization positively impact how the business is conducted inside organizations. The overarching purpose of digitization is the facilitation to information access and the improvement of information protection and preservation (Fitz-Enz, 2010).

Digital transformation has brought about a transition from human and papers into systems and analytics in which standardization and automation are enabled while supporting strategic growth. This transformation has also influenced how HR organizations work and support employees (Beyer & Cahn, 2012).

The linking between digitization and HR can be found in the attempt of the HR to optimize processes, gains in efficiency and speed, and ultimately implement a modernized HR function. Currently, companies are in the face of different challenges in the way they approach employee recruitment, retention and engagement. Given that the HR function aim to provide the highest quality and qualified employees, this is sometimes achieved through succession planning which is an organized process in which institutions recruit employees to develop their skills, abilities, and knowledge in preparation for advancement in the institutions and in particular in ensuring that highly qualified business managers will be sustainable during planned and unplanned departures (Cowdrey, 2010).

Succession planning involves the identification of important business management positions from project managers and supervisors to the highest position in any organization. It also involves management positions, which ensure flexibility in parallel moves in an organization. Flexibility in management positions ensures individuals broaden management skills and focused on the organization objectives instead of the individual needs (Rothwell, 2010). One of the succession planning tasks is shadowing. McDonald (2005) distinguished shadowing in the social sciences, with the possibility of it meaning the understanding of roles, recording performance, and practical learning as the main concept in McDonald, (2005) focuses on the understanding roles form of shadowing.

Job shadowing can be done for an hour or more in the organization to know how the role is being run by a particular employee. Consequently, it would give the feeling as if the apprentice is in that employee's job position and tries all the tasks to see exactly how it is being done every day in the workplace. It is like that the employee is actually working under that position. And thus, might be an effective way to know if that job suitable for him/her or not. In order to decide whether they have the right skills and motivation to take that position (Gill, 2011).

Previous studies related to digitizing succession planning (DSP) and its perceived effectiveness was discussed. Three main sections related to the overall purpose of the study which are:

- Digital Transformation
- Succession planning
- Shadowing

The transformation of digital businesses affects all areas and levels of the company and requires strategic planning to achieve better results. The digitization of business has created a new challenge for the development of succession plans for business management. Succession planning is process by which new leaders are prepared to pass on the leadership role for replacement of old leaders when they leave or retire to ensure the efficient and continuous operation of a business (Gothard & Austin, 2013).

It is a strategic planning scheme to ensure the availability of qualified individuals to replace existing ones when they are not available to continue their work for any reason. The HR function is not only concern with the succession planning in general but in all its tasks, however, in the era of digitization, as the role of human resources have become more technical and focused on skills and innovation. One of the tasks of succession planning that can get effected by the digital transformation and digitizing is shadowing.

Shadowing can be done for an hour or more in the organization to know how the role is being run by a particular employee. Consequently, it would give the feeling as if the apprentice is in that employee's job position and tries all the tasks to see exactly how it is being done every day in the workplace. It is like that the employee is actually working under that position. And thus, might be an effective way to know if that job suitable for him/her or not. In order to decide whether they have the right skills and motivation to take that position (Gill, 2011).

In this study the motivation that led to look for the effectiveness is to identify the impact of digitizing the shadowing activity of succession planning by way exploring the impact of digitizing shadowing, to know how it is affecting the succession planning tasks and the employee's perceptions on it.

Objective

This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of the digitization of the shadowing activity of succession planning by way exploring the impact of digitizing shadowing in a selected number of IT organizations in Saudi Arabia. As such, the main objectives from the study emerge as follows:

- To examine the varying levels in the perception of the employees on digitizing shadowing as a succession planning function.
- To examine the effect of digitizing shadowing on the overall task of succession planning as perceived by the participants of the study.
- To identify perceived tasks from a pool of alternatives to the shadowing task as a function of succession planning to assess the scope of possibilities to digitizing succession planning.

Methodology

This research falls under the descriptive exploratory study mainly because it aimed at fact-finding to examine the effectiveness of digitization on the shadowing activity of succession planning. The method adopted to collect data is the survey method which was extracted from another study and then redesigned to suit the objectives of the current study (Simon, 2013).

Exploratory research generally aims to look at basic information and knowledge within the problem and is considered suitable when a problem is challenging to establish and when the theory is uncertain. It is conducted; where the research aims to provide some initial ideas regarding that phenomenon (Bhattacherjee, 2012). A descriptive exploratory analytical approach was used in this research (Saunders, et al., 2010).

The study used the level of agreement of the participants to interpret the effectiveness of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning. As such, the level of agreement is identified as an indicative index for the effectiveness level of digitizing the shadowing task. Data was collected to measure the following constructs: (i) the impact, (ii) the perception, and (iii) the replacement of the digitized shadowing task of succession planning. The fifth Likert Scale was used to obtain the responses of the study sample.

The selection criteria of the study sample are full-time employees, from both genders, working at different IT companies. The study population consists of all employees in different companies from the IT sector, relying on the selection of a simple random approach of the study population. The study instrument is represented in the form of a questionnaire prepared and redesigned from another study by the researcher (Simon, 2013).

It is formed of two main sections; the first section represents the personal information, or the demographic data and specified by (Gender, age, years of work, and job position). While the second section represents three constructs of the study, which aimed to examine the perceived effectiveness of digitizing the shadowing succession planning activity.
The number of individuals cooperating and responding to the research application were 70 employees; 64.3% are males and 35.7% are females. The sample size is adequate to give accurate results on the subject under study. This size is acceptable in line with (Lessard- Clouston, 2008; Lawson and Hogben, 1996; Chen, I-Ju. and Hsiao, Hui-Jing, 2009).

Descriptive analysis conducted of the study sample and the distribution by gender, where 64.3% were male, while 35.7% were female, and the age, 30% are between the ages of 40 to 50 years, 25.7% are between the ages of 30 to 40 years, 22.9% were aged more than 50 years old, while 21.4% were aged less than 30 years, for the years of work, where we note that 38.6% have 10 to 20 years of work, 24.3% have less than 5 years of work, 22.9% have 5 to 10 years of work, and 14.3% have more than 20 years of work, for the job position, where we note that 38.6% of their job position is "Mid-level Management", 24.3% of their job position is "Senior Management", 24.3% of their job position is "Professional", 12.9% of their job position is "Executive".

Furthermore, the internal consistency test was conducted and it means to test the consistency of each survey item with the construct that belongs to that specific survey item. Therefore, correlation coefficients were calculated between the degree of each survey item and the total score of the constructs to verify the questionnaire internal consistency and the values were significant at 0.05 level. The face validity way was used to ensure the questionnaire validity and its suitability to the research goals. Also, the Cronbach's Alpha method has been was used to calculate the reliability in the data collected through the study tool (questionnaire).

Based on the nature of the study and its objectives, the data to be obtained, and the questions that the study is seeking to answer them; one main question and three overarching research questions guide this study; where are as follow:

Study main question

What is the perceived effectiveness level of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning in a selected number of IT organizations in Saudi Arabia?

Sub Questions

1. What is level of agreement on the perception of IT organizations of the digitized shadowing task of succession planning?
2. What is the level of agreement on the perceived impact of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning?
3. What is the level of agreement on the perceived future replacements of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning?

In light of the study questions, hypothesizes were formulated about the effectiveness level of agreement on the impact of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning and derived from the stated research questions and objectives of the study.

Analysis and Findings

The statistical analysis program (SPSS v.20) has been used in the study in data entry and analysis, with the use of necessary statistical methods to achieve the objectives of the study. The analysis was organized into many tests, a descriptive analysis of data, the researcher calculated the mean, standard deviation, and the order for each survey item (according to the mean) of the three constructs of the survey and the results indicated that the mean of the participants' responses to all items of the first construct "The perception on digitizing shadowing" is 4.35, an exploratory correlation analysis phase to show the relationship between all the constructs: (i) the impact, (ii) the perception, and (iii) the replacement of the digitized shadowing task of succession planning and the overall tool developed to measure the effectiveness of digitized shadowing task of succession planning. Then exploratory Correlation Analysis was conducted to test the relationship between each construct and the effectiveness tool construct which refer to the overall survey and showed that there is positive a relationship between the impact construct and the effectiveness tool.

Moreover, Statistical analysis conducted to resolve research questions and hypothesis. First question is about the level of agreement on the perception of IT organizations of the digitized shadowing task of succession planning to resolve this question we conducted a One sample independent T-test with the value of four about the perception construct and the results of the test showed that there is no significance difference between the level of agreements from the respondents on the perception of digitizing shadowing task of succession planning.

Second question is about the level of agreement on the perceived impact of digitizing the Shadowing task of succession planning, to resolve this question and the hypothesis for it which is null hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the perceived level of agreement on the impact of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning and alternative hypothesis: There is a significant difference in the perceived level of agreement on the impact of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning. One sample independent T-test with the value of four conducted on the impact construct and it's also resolves the hypothesis, the results of the test showed that there is a significance difference between the level of agreements from the respondents on the impact of digitizing shadowing task of succession planning.

Third question What is the level of agreement on the perceived future replacements of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning we conducted one sample independent T-test with the value four on the replacements construct, the results of the test that there is no significance difference between the level of agreements from the respondents on the replacements of digitizing shadowing task of succession planning because that is a futuristic perception.

Main research question about the perceived effectiveness level of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning in a selected number of IT organizations in Saudi Arabia, to resolve this question we conducted a paired T-test on the impact construct and the overall effectiveness tool construct, it's also resolves the null hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the level of agreement between the perceived impact of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning and the overall effectiveness of digitizing shadowing , and the alternative hypothesis: There is a significant difference in the level of agreement between the impact of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning and the overall effectiveness of digitizing shadowing.

The results of the test showed that there is no significance difference between the impact construct and the overall effectiveness tool construct. For the last null hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the perceived level of agreement about the overall effectiveness of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning, and the alternative hypothesis: There is a significant difference in the perceived level of agreement about the overall effectiveness of digitizing the shadowing task of succession planning.

To resolve this hypothesis we conducted One sample independent T-test on the overall effectiveness tool construct the results showed that there is no significance difference between the level of agreements from the respondents on the overall effectiveness tool of digitizing shadowing task of succession planning.

Conclusions

This study attempted to examine the effectiveness of the digitization of the shadowing activity of succession planning by way exploring the impact of digitizing shadowing in a selected number of IT organizations in Saudi Arabia. To conclude the outcome of this study, the levels in the perception of the employees on digitizing shadowing as a succession planning function and effectiveness are varying, there is a positive level of agreement on the effect of digitizing shadowing on the overall task of succession planning as perceived by the participants of the study, and there is a weak effect that is perceived about the alternative tasks of succession planning instead of the shadowing task as a function of succession planning. Moreover, this study concludes a group of recommendations, which are discussed as the following:

All HR functions should be aligned to ensure the organization's digitization strategy is achieved, it is recommended for HR professionals that technology and human capital in organizations are seen to work together in a synergistic effect, HR professionals should promote for a sustainable competitive advantage and this comes in align with Kumar Study (2016) summarizes that the digital revolution has a positive impact on human resource factors and is bound to play an influential role in the workplace, and HR managers and practitioners must understand and implement good systems to ensure effective management of data transformation in business. According to the literature review, it is recommended that there must be effective coordination between the implementation and use of digital technologies.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to the survey sample that was given to the selected companies that was not designed specifically for every one of them to collect data in more precise way to get useful insight about the phenomena. Also, the study was just for the IT sector in Saudi Arabia.

Future Research

In light of the results of the study, the following future researchers are suggested:

Consider other factors to measure the perceived effectiveness of digitizing the shadowing function on succession planning. Consider the application of the current study on other sectors than IT organizations.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aggor, S. (2013). Impact of career and succession planning management on organisational performance in Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) (Doctoral dissertation, University of Cape Coast).
- Bhattacherjee, Anol. (2012. Social Science Research: principles, methods, and practices. 2nd ed. Open Access Textbooks.
- Beyer, G. W., & Cahn, N. (2012). When you pass on, don't leave the passwords behind: Planning for digital assets. Prob. c
- Beyer, G. W. (2017). The Texas Revised Uniform Fiduciary Access to Digital Assets Act: A Primer for Estate Planners. Available at SSRN 3038052.
- Cowdrey, S. E. (Ed.). (2010). Handbook of human resources management in government (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Fitz-Enz, J. (2010). THE NEW HR ANALYTIC Predicting the Economic Value of Your Company's Human Capital Investments.
- Gill, R. (2011). The shadow in organizational ethnography: moving beyond shadowing to spect-acting.
- Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management. Vol. 6 No. 2, pp. 115-133.
- Gothard, S., & Austin, M. J. (2013). Leadership succession planning: Implications for nonprofit human service organizations. Administration in Social Work, 37(3), 272-285.

- Kumar, B. N. (2016). Digital Revolution In The Mauritian Public Service: A Human Resource Development Perspective In Two Unrelated Companies. International Journal of Novel Research in Interdisciplinary Studies, 3(5), 1-10
- Lessard-Clouston, M. (2008). Strategies and Success in Technical Vocabulary Learning: Students' Approaches in One Academic Context. Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics, Vol. 34, No. 1-2, pp 31-63.
- McDonald, S. (2005). Studying actions in context: a qualitative shadowing method for organizational research. Qualitative Research, Vol. 5 No. 4, pp. 455-473.
- Rothwell, W. J. (2010). The future of succession planning. Training and Development. 64(9), 50-54. Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A. (2012). Research Methods for Business Students. Edinburgh
- Gate, Harlow, England: Pearson Edu

Research Digest

Exploring the Perception of Employees on the Usage of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): A Case Focus on Selected Semi-Public Entities in Saudi Arabia

Najd Al Issa | Dr. Rajáa Clouse & Dr. Noha Al Essa | 2020

Abstract

In recent years, public sector organizations are increasingly under pressure to implement measures of their performance. Key performance indicators, “KPIs,” is a performance measurement tool that has been widely used by government organizations. The adoption of performance measurement systems assumes that organizations will use performance information to enhance their performance. This study explores the perceived practical usage of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the public sector by using survey data from employees of a few public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia.

The data from the responses were analyzed and interpreted in relation to the study’s main topic, research questions, and hypotheses. Descriptive statistics of the constructs, exploratory analysis, and statistical tests were all used to answer the study questions and to test the hypotheses.

Our study results showed that the public entities from which we collected our data, perceive a KPI usage to meet external accountability demands more than a perceived usage to meet internal improvement measures and management processes. Furthermore, the breadth of characteristics of the KPI system that is adopted by these organizations appeared to have an impact on the usage level of the KPIs within the organizations.

It can be said that when public entities are made aware of the full breadth of the KPIs' characteristics, they exhibit a tendency towards using the KPIs for decision making. This study recommends and highlights the need for an effective system of performance measurement for public entities to achieve their goals in a way that is transparent and accountable. Also, performance management requires wise utilization of performance information to achieve accountability and performance improvement objectives.

Keywords: KPIs, performance measurement, public sector, decision making, KPI External accountability, KPI internal accountability.

Literature Review

In recent years, officials, administrators, and the public have been concerned about efficiency and productivity in the public sector. Therefore, performance measurement and evaluation have been key mechanisms of government reforms in many countries. (Caiden, 2004).

Historically, public managers have used performance measurement for many objectives. Behn (2003) summarizes those objectives of measuring performance and states that public managers use performance measurement mostly to "evaluate control, budget, motivate, promote, celebrate, learn, and improve" (p. 588).

One of the performance measurement tools that have been used by a wide range of government organizations is Key performance indicators (KPIs). Smith (2011) highlighted the importance of KPIs by asserting that "KPI tells you where performance has been in the past, where it is now, and perhaps more useful, where performance is likely to be in the future" (Smith, 2001).

Even with the continuous development of performance management systems, there is strong evidence that performance measurement has not reached the desired level of impact on decision making and organizational improvement as anticipated (Bouckaert and Peters, 2002). For this purpose, advancing the understanding of performance information usage seems to be a critical problem (Cepiku et al., 2017). There are some issues that arise about the implementation of performance measurement systems and the usability of performance information in the public sector.

In Taylor's (2007) study on the views of KPIs by public reporting authorities in East Asian countries, he concluded that KPIs did not contribute much to the decision-making process of the participating reporting authorities. This is due to the lack of useful KPIs, or more accurately, a lack of KPIs that meets their performance information needs. The findings show that KPIs that are unable to meet the performance information needs of reporting authorities will not be used by them (Taylor 2007).

Van Dooren et al. (2010) highlighted that investment in the adoption of performance information systems is significant to generate high-quality performance data. Sometimes organizations have an interest in showing a positive image of themselves. Some performance information may be very unsatisfying, where some performance targets are especially important in public relations terms, organizations may be tempted to cheat in their performance reporting if it affects their image. Therefore, the risk of data exploitation is higher when organizations see performance measurement as imposed by external parties. (Bovaird and Loeffler, 2003)

As explained by Bovaird and Loeffler (2003), performance measurement becomes beneficial only when it is followed by management action, and it is justified only if it is used. Performance information may be used for different purposes, in the decision making, for accountability purposes, or in financial management.

In Saudi Arabia, many efforts have been made to measure the results of government activities (Al-Qahtani, 2015). The kingdom recognized the essential role of performance measurement in improving the public sector and therefore established (Adaa) the National Center for Performance Measurement. The center is tasked with performance measurement and enablement of government entities by using Key performance indicators (KPIs) as the primary performance measurement tool. The adoption of KPIs systems in Saudi Arabia assumes that government entities will use performance information to achieve internal improvements.

Objective

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceived practical usage of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from the point of view of internal users, in this case, employees of selected public sector organizations.

Methodology

In accordance with the objective of the current study, a quantitative research design was used. This study adopted a descriptive research design because it helped the researchers generalize and apply the findings beyond the situation in which the study was originally conducted. Also, the use of descriptive research design helped the researchers in generating testable hypotheses. In line with the suggestions by Bryman and Bell (2015), the use of descriptive research design helped the researchers in expanding more output for the study.

The questionnaire used was adapted from a previous study by Dr. Jeannette Taylor (2007) from the University of Western Australia. Taylor's study was on a small group of public agencies and public accountability authorities in Australia.

The data from the responses of the questionnaire were analyzed and interpreted in relation to the study's main topic, research questions, and hypotheses. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics 25) software was used for data analysis.
The sample of participants of the research consisted of all the employees, both males, and females, working in three semi-government entities in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The sampling process was non-randomized, implying therefore that a convenient sampling procedure was used to achieve the objective of this study.

Three government entities were invited via email and social media (e.g., WhatsApp, LinkedIn), to voluntarily participate in the questionnaire. This is after receiving the ethical approval to conduct the research from these entities. The request resulted in receiving a total of 30 fully completed surveys.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

Two research questions guided this study: (1) What is the comparative usage of KPIs in public entities for the two intended functions (i) to ensure accountability and (ii) to be employed in performance improvements? (2) what are the main factors that impact the usage of KPIs, in particular, for performance improvement?

To explore the two research questions above, four hypotheses are proposed for resolution:

First hypothesis

H0: There is no statistical difference in the usage of KPIs for external reporting and the usage of KPIs for internal goals.

H1: There usage of KPIs for external reporting is statistically higher than their usage for internal goals.

The first hypothesis helps to answer the first research question.

Second hypothesis

H0: The usage of KPIs for internal improvement is not positively affected by the characteristics of the KPIs to meet the information needs of the user.

H1: The usage of KPIs for internal improvement is positively affected by the characteristics of the KPIs to meet the information needs of the user.

The second hypothesis helps to answer the second research question.

Analysis and Findings

The data from the responses of the questionnaire were analyzed and interpreted in relation to the study's research questions, and hypotheses. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics 25) software was used for data analysis. Statistical tools and methods were used whenever appropriate for analyzing the relationship between the variables in the current research design.

First, descriptive statistics of the constructs was conducted followed by an exploratory analysis to uncover the association between constructs. Lastly, statistical tests were used to answer the study questions and to test the hypotheses.

Table 1 shows the four hypotheses proposed in this study and that were tested by the researcher with their results:

Table 1: Hypotheses Testing and Results

Hypotheses	Tests	Result
H0: There is no statistical difference in the usage of KPIs for external reporting and the usage of KPIs for internal goals	Paired sample t-test	Rejected
H1: There usage of KPIs for external reporting is statistically higher than their usage for internal goals.		Accepted
H0: The usage of KPIs for internal improvement is not positively affected by the characteristics of the KPIs to meet the information needs of the user.	Simple linear regression analysis, ANOVA test and Coefficients test	Rejected
H2: The usage of KPIs for internal improvement is positively affected by the characteristics of the KPIs to meet the information needs of the user.		Accepted

Conclusions

The findings of this study show that the public entities use KPIs more for meeting external accountability demands than for internal improvements and management. Therefore, it is significant to encourage organizations to use KPIs for internal decision making and management to improve their performance. It is also found that the characteristics of the KPI appeared to have an impact on the usage of KPIs within the organizations. The more the public entities believe that the KPIs contain certain characteristics, it is expected that they are going to use the KPIs for making decisions.

This study suggests that performance measurement information is available but is not utilized for internal improvement. The purpose of performance measurement is to produce information that can be used to change behaviors and thus improve performance (Lemieux-Charles et al., 2003).

However, despite the best intentions of governments to improve the quality of services through performance measurement and accountability, there are still challenges that need to be addressed to make the most of these measurements.

References:

- Behn, R., 2003. Why Measure Performance? Different Purposes Require Different Measures. Public Administration Review, 63(5), pp.586-606. [online] Available at: <http://www.sciepub.com/reference/58165> [Accessed 21 March 2020].
- Bouckaert, G., and B. G. Peters. 2002. “Measurement Performance: The Achilles’ Heel in Administrative Modernization.” Public Performance and Management Review 25 (4): 359–362.
- Bovaird, A., and Loeffler, E., 2003. Public Management and Governance. 3rd ed. London: Routledge.
- Caiden, G. and Caiden, N., 2004. Measuring performance in public sector programs. Public Administration and Public Policy, [online] ll. Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0972150915569923> [Accessed 24 April 2020].
- Cepiku, D., A. Hinna, D. Scarozza, and A. B. Savignon. 2017. “Performance Information Use in Public Administration: An Exploratory Study of Determinants and Effects.” Journal of Management and Governance 21 (4): 963–991.doi:10.1007/s10997-016-9371-3.

- Ingraham, P., 2005. Performance: promises to keep and miles to go. Public Administration Review 65(4): 390-395.
- Smith, J., 2001. THE K.P.I. Book, Insight Training and Development. England: Insight Training&Development.
- Taylor, J., 2007. The usefulness of key performance indicators to public accountability authorities in East Asia. Public Administration and Development, [online] 27(4), pp.341-352. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229916395_The_usefulness_of_key_performance_indicators_to_public_accountability_authorities_in_East_Asia> [Accessed 5 March 2020].
- Van Dooren, W., Bouckaert, G., and Halligan, J., 2010. Performance Management in The Public Sector. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Research Digest

Organizational Culture Explains the Innovation Type in a Telecommunication Company in Saudi Arabia

Abeer Saleh Almubrad | Dr. Rajaa Clouse, Dr. Fadhila Hamza | 2020

Abstract

Organizational culture is recognized to have a significant influence on the propensity of a company to innovate. It is also presumed that it has the potential to impede the innovation process from thriving within a company. Inquiring questions around the role organizational culture plays in enabling or inhibiting innovation merit exploration to determine the appropriate culture that can help organizations succeed in achieving their innovative goals.

This study aims to investigate how a type of innovation can thrive within a certain organizational culture and aims to find a possible match between the organizational cultures and innovation types. A mixed methods research design was used in this study. We adopted the sequential explanatory research design. Accordingly, members of a national telecom company in Saudi Arabia have firstly participated in an Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI). This allowed us to classify the type of organizational culture the organization has. A convenience sample selected from respondents occupying the role of directors in the company were then interviewed. The role of directors was particularly targeted because this level oversees the innovation process in the company.

Among the organizational culture types, our study finds that the Market culture type has a tendency to adopt radical innovation to disrupt the market and to preserve its market position. In contrast, we find that the Adhocracy culture type, has a tendency to adopt the incremental

innovation type and found that this tends to be more convenient towards employees because this type of innovation has low levels of uncertainty. We conclude that the choice to adopt a radical innovation or an incremental innovation type is influenced by the organization's goals which showcase themselves in the organizational culture.

In this study, we explained the relationship between certain organizational cultures and how they empower or impede certain innovation types. Our explanation, however, is limited in its generalization to the organization we sampled from. This organization limited our focus to explain the innovation types within the Adhocracy and Market culture types only. Future research direction will sample from other types of organizational culture.

Key Words: Incremental Innovation, Radical Innovation, Culture types, Market Culture, Adhocracy Culture, OACI tool in Saudi Arabia

Literature Review

Previous studies highlighted innovation as a foundation for competitive advantage and a driver of organizational success. (Adams, Bessant and Phelps, 2006) Innovation can be executed in various manners; a radical and an incremental innovation are among the many ways of the conceptualization of innovation. (Adams, Bessant and Phelps, 2006) Previous studies highlighted that competitive success depends on the company being able to manage innovation processes and on factors that promote innovation within organizations. (Adams, Bessant and Phelps, 2006) Among these factors, the organizational culture showcases as an important factor and has been perceived the same importance as of structure, strategy, and control. (Akram et al., 2011)

Organization’s culture has a substantial role in innovation adoption in the extant literature. (Ke and Wei, 2008) Furthermore, a great number of studies examined the situational and psychological factors that promote innovation within firms. Moreover, “it has been widely demonstrated that the perceived work environment (comprising both structural and cultural elements) does make a difference to the level of innovation in organizations.” (Adams, Bessant and Phelps, 2006) Recently, it is not uncommon to claim that culture is a key to innovation success. Accordingly, there is a need to fill a gap in the literature review and to broaden the topic related to the impact of organizational culture and innovation activities. In this study we try to contribute to the knowledge of the role of organizational culture and the innovation types is Saudi Arabia since there is a literature scarce on this topic and especially in Saudi Arabia.

Objective

The present study aims for explanatory knowledge for innovation as we aim to explain the relationship between the culture types that can stimulate incremental innovation and radical innovation. We seek to understand how innovation can thrive in the organizational culture and explore what is the working match between the cultural traits and the innovation types.

Methodology

In this sequential explanatory study, a mixed method approach was adopted where a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase was conducted. In the quantitative phase, we used the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) for the purpose of assessing and classifying the culture type so that we study how type of culture impacted the innovation type.

In the qualitative phase, we conducted semi-structured interviews for the purpose of answering the research questions and exploring the relationship between the two constructs we are studying: organizational culture and innovation. Interview questions were formed using cultural key themes as classified by the OCAI survey in an attempt to uncover how the cultural themes explain the innovation type adopted in the organization. The sample of respondents for the quantitative phase of this study consisted of employees of a national telecom company in Saudi Arabia.

The qualitative phase had a convenience sample taken from a list of directors in the said company and were asked for their consent to interview. This study received the DCU Business School ethics approval, and the research questions we seek to examine in this study are:

- What are the perceived different types of organizational culture that thrive in the different units of the organization we are examining in this study?
- What are the perceived types of innovation that are thriving in the different units of the organization we are examining in this study?
- How do the organizational cultural traits explain the fostering of incremental innovation in the different units of the organization we are examining in this study?
- How do the organizational cultural traits explain the fostering of radical innovation in the different units of the organization we are examining in this study?

Analysis and Findings

In the quantitative phase, the data were analyzed by calculating the average rating to classify the dominant organizational culture type as per the OCAI cultural assessment scoring. Accordingly, the dominant culture type of teleco X company was found to be the Market culture. This is a result-based environment which will always have emphasis on targets and on winning.

Furthermore, our sample included many respondents from the HR department. Upon focusing on the HR department, we found that it has a different culture type, it was Adhocracy culture. Dynamic, entrepreneurial, and creativeness all represent the characteristics of the adhocracy environment. Once we assessed the cultural types, the qualitative phase analysis of the interviews was conducted using the thematic analysis approach to identify patterns and to produce codes from the dataset.

The data showed that Adhocracy culture has cultural values of internal focus such as flexibility, tolerance for risk and organizational learning and those cultural values are found to be largely supporting innovation. Furthermore, the Market culture which has cultural values of external focus such as efficiency and agility are somewhat related to innovation since they only grant the organization the skills and expertise needed to innovate. Of equal importance, cultural values of stability and control which also found in the Market culture such as rules and regulations are negatively related to innovation.

In conclusion, Market culture has a tendency to adopt radical innovation since this type of innovation support the company's goals in being a pioneer in new markets and remain competitive among competitors. Moreover, radical innovation requires new skills and education which can be achieved by external cultural values that found in the Market culture. Meanwhile, Adhocracy culture has a preference to adopt the incremental innovation since dealing with low levels of uncertainty are found more convenient for the employees.

Incremental innovation characterized by continuous improvements to existing resources. Similarly, Adhocracy culture is an environment for continuous learning and it matches the characteristics of incremental innovation and is perceived as a successful strategy to implement innovation within the HR department.

Conclusions

Our research showed that organizational culture facilitates the adoption of innovation within the organization. The decision to adopt a radical innovation or an incremental innovation is related to the organization's goals. A more detailed analysis for future research on the Market culture in SMEs can support the claim of the positive relationship of Market culture and Radical innovation since large firms can be more capable in managing radical innovation than the new entrants.

Schumpeter (1950) claimed that large, established firms that to a certain extent possess monopoly power are the strongest players of technical progress since they are superior to access to capital and skilled labor, and they are also more capable to execute innovations from the smaller start-ups. In addition, although there is evidence of the importance of radical innovation to long-term firm success, there is still uncertainty about how to accomplish radical innovation in large firms. Just as important, future research shall approach other different departments other than the HR department in the company to investigate our findings that Adhocracy culture is aligned with incremental innovation.

References

- Adams, R., Bessant, J. and Phelps, R., 2006. Innovation management measurement: A review. International Journal of Management Reviews, 8(1), pp.21-47.
- Akram, K., Siddiqui, S., Nawaz, M., Ghauri, T. and Cheema, A., 2011. Role of Knowledge Management to Bring Innovation: An Integrated Approach. EuroJournals,.
- Joseph A. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy. New York: Harper & Row, 1942, 381 pp.; Third edition, 1950, 431 pp.
- Ke, W. and Wei, K., 2008. Organizational culture and leadership in ERP implementation. Decision Support Systems, 45(2), pp.208-218.

Research Digest
Tourism Impact in Saudi Arabia through the Eyes of its Citizens

Norah Bader Almudayfir | Dr. Jaizah Othman | 2020

Abstract

This study focuses on exploring the Saudis' perception of tourism. In particular, it draws attention to the literature gap that exists regarding revealing the local communities' views on the prospects for the development of the tourism industry. In this regard, the current study is of significant importance. The paper reviews an extensive literary base, which provides the theoretical justifications for the development of the tourism industry. The primary research tool is a survey of Saudi citizens in which they state their own positions regarding tourism, its strengths and weaknesses, and spheres of its influence.

The obtained results indicate that the majority of Saudis positively perceive tourism in general and consider its development a justified step. Nevertheless, in order to increase the effectiveness of its integration and improve its perception among the population, the government should improve the existing policies regarding the employment market, tourism education, and the citizens' awareness.

Keywords: Tourism, Tourism perception, Saudi Arabia.

Literature Review

It had been noted that over the past decade, Saudi Arabia has gradually opened up to the world. Over the past year, changes to the rules for obtaining visas to enter the country have been made as Saudi Arabia aims to rid the country's dependency on oil, choosing tourism as a lever for diversifying the national economy.

Tourism for Saudi Arabia is not a goal, but an instrument for expanding the national economy, which is aimed at diversifying the sectoral economic structure, increasing incomes, creating new jobs, enriching culture, and enhancing the interaction of citizens and society.

Objective

The primary aim of the study is to evaluate and analyze the citizen's opinions and perceptions towards tourism and propose recommendations. The research objectives are specifically outlined as follows:

- To explore the individual's opinion on the government granting tourism visas.
- To define the areas the individuals believe will be affected positively.
- To define the areas the individuals believe will be affected negatively.
- To explore the awareness of the country's efforts in supporting the tourism industry.

Methodology

This study uses a quantitative research method, namely, a survey that uses questionnaires, which allows more fully studying the opinion of the residents of Saudi Arabia regarding the development of tourism in the country. The used sampling frame was a random (probabilistic) selection. It is a sample in which each element of the population has a specific, predetermined probability of being selected (Alvi 2016).

The process of sending out questionnaires and invitations to participate used such communication tools as e-mail, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp. These communication platforms enabled the distribution of questionnaires to a wide range of participants and the results were analyzed by using frequency analysis.

Analysis and Findings

Based on the results obtained, participants are confident in the effectiveness of the actions of the government since most people believe that the adaptation processes will be fast enough. Almost half of the respondents believe that tourism can harm the customs and traditions in the future.

Participants believe that tourism can bring significant benefits in economics, business opportunities, and employment. In addition, participants agree that tourism contributes to creating new jobs and business opportunities. In this direction, the opinion of the citizens of Saudi Arabia agrees with the opinion of the government of the country.

Conclusions

The study has shown that participants perceive tourism positively and consider it an important industry that will improve the country's economic and social life. The main problems that have been identified regard the concern regarding the violation of the cultural background, the lack of tourist education, and inequality in the labor market.

Therefore, it is recommended to improve the quality and effectiveness of tourism education and labor market transformation by integrating local residents into the tourism industry. Finally, raising awareness on laws and regulations that are adopted regarding tourism.

Research Digest

Corporate Entrepreneurial Climate in Small and Medium Enterprises in the Technology Sector in Saudi Arabia

May Abdullah Almohaimeed | Dr. Rhea Elizabeth George | 2020

Abstract

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs substantially contribute to global economies around the world, particularly in developing countries. In efforts to survive enduring obstacles, SMEs in the technology sector must adopt building capabilities and cultivating internal environment for its employees to foster innovation. Building and sustaining corporate entrepreneurial environment ensures the growth and survival of today's SMEs. For these firms to grow, corporate entrepreneurial activities and innovation are essentials for reaching thriving phases. This study aims to gauge the corporate entrepreneurship climate in SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia. There is a dearth of literature in the SMEs in the technology sector in the Saudi context. This study was carried out by distributing self-administered questionnaires and followed by analyzing 93 responses from SMEs' owners, managers and employees in the technology sector.

Our findings summarize the current climate of corporate entrepreneurship in SMEs in the technology sector. In addition, it showcases the positive presence of support for the six dimensions of corporate entrepreneurship which are Management Support, Time Availability, Autonomy/Work Discretion, Rewards/Reinforcements, Organizational Boundaries and Specific Climate Variables. The study can benefit owners and managers of SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia, and related sectors, in connection with assessing the internal corporate entrepreneurship climate.

Keywords: Corporate Entrepreneurship, Small & Medium Enterprises, Technology Sector, Intrapreneurship

Literature Review

According to Mustafa and Hughes (2017), Corporate Entrepreneurship (CE) globally has found its relevance in SMEs. CE implementation into SMEs will allow abundance of exploited opportunities and competitive advantages. Similarly, SMEs in the technology sector encounter challenges as other sectors' SMEs. Based on findings of Antoncic and Prodan (2008), technological corporate entrepreneurship is critical to the growth of SMEs as it is associated with a wide range of benefits including an increased level of employee engagements and promoting a culture of innovation within an organization. Although most SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia recognize the importance of CE, few of them have inculcated the culture of CE (Sulphey, and Alkahtani, 2017)

Objective

The aim of this study is to gauge the levels of corporate entrepreneurship in SMEs particularly in the technology sector. This study contributes to the literature by presenting assessment of levels of CE climate in SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia.

Methodology

In an effort to gauge the corporate entrepreneurial climate in SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia, this study has followed a quantitative research design. A major strategy that has been employed is the use of preexisting questionnaire of the Corporate Entrepreneurship Climate Instrument (CECI).

Likert-scale measures the respondents' degree of agreement with statements to the internal environment for entrepreneurial climate around the six dimensions which are; Management Support, Autonomy/Work Discretion, Reward / Reinforcement, Time Availability, Organizational

Boundaries and Specific Climate Variables. The instrument is divided into two sections; a section that lays out the demographics and the second includes the 24 statements of the six constructs of assessing the entrepreneurial climate.

Analysis and Findings

Reward/ Reinforcements was the highest agreed upon dimension that is found to be present in the technology sector. Other dimensions such as Management Support and Time Availability have shown its occurrence in the study context.

Moreover, the Specific Climate Variables such as perceiving the concepts of risk-taking and innovation by owners, managers and employees in the internal environment of SMEs in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia were evident too in the context of SMEs in Saudi Arabia. However, two dimensions have recorded the lowest among the corporate entrepreneurship dimensions which they are Autonomy/ Work Discretion and Organizational Boundaries in our study.

Conclusions

Findings showed moderate to high level of support to the corporate entrepreneurial climate. In conclusion, our study has answered the research aim to assess the corporate entrepreneurship climate in the Small and Medium Enterprises in the technology sector in Saudi Arabia.

Our findings are in line with the existing literature as we also agree that there should be higher investment in the corporate entrepreneurship strategy.

References

- Hornsby, J. S., D. F. Kuratko, and S. Zahra (2002). " Middle Managers' Perception of the Internal Environment for Corporate Entrepreneurship: Assessing a Measurement Scale," Journal of Business Venturing 17(3), 253– 273.

- Sulphey, M.M. and Alkahtani, N., 2017. Economic security and sustainability through social entrepreneurship: the current Saudi scenario. Journal of security and sustainability issues, 6(3).

جامعة الأميرة نورة بنت عبدالرحمن
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University

DCU

Research Digest
The Impact of Fintech on Mobile Payment in Saudi Arabia

Alhanouf Khalid Alshalwah | Dr. Jaizah Othman | Dr. Noreha Halid | 2020

Abstract

The main purpose of the research is to investigate the Fintech sector of Saudi Arabia. The research focuses on the adoption of mobile payment as a critical aspect of Fintech development. The research aim is to examine the development and transformations in the Fintech sector of Saudi Arabia, the development and implementation of mobile payment technology. The research investigated the main prospects and barriers in the development of mobile payment technology and the development of the Fintech sector of Saudi Arabia.

In Saudi Arabia, Fintech can help solve critical tasks of expanding access to financial services, comprehensive growth, and economic diversification through innovations that help financial services reach a large part of the population that does not have bank accounts, as well as help to find alternative sources of financing for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Fintech and mobile payment solutions may be more effective, transparent, and cost-effective cross-border payment mechanisms than traditional banks or money transfer system operators that rely on correspondent banking relationships.

The research found that mobile payment provides convenience (like pre-saved account details), better user experience, and multiple payment methods. The research revealed that mobile payment makes life easier, and mobile payment can boost business productivity. It was demonstrated that mobile payment is a valuable service, and respondents intend to plan and process financial transactions using mobile payment.

Thus, the development of payment systems and mobile payment is one of the most promising areas of Fintech. It is planned that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be able to become the most promising financial technology center in the region by providing an opportunity to include emerging technology starts up in the financial technology sector. This includes financial support and facilities for all the difficulties faced in this sector.

Keywords: Mobile Payment, Financial Technologies

Literature Review

The adoption of Fintech in Saudi Arabia will make it easier for the country to achieve its social and economic goals in the long-term. The literature review has highlighted significant perspectives that are relevant in Saudi Arabia's adoption of Fintech and specific issues different companies may face in the future. Considerably, Fintech adoption in the country makes more citizens have positive perceptions of the role of various technologies in transforming their lives in the long-term.

On the other hand, an increase in mobile service payments will make it easier for consumers to purchase multiple products and services conveniently. By assessing specific factors driving consumers' acceptance of different services they offer, Fintech firms in Saudi Arabia need to be more proactive to achieve their long-term objectives.

Therefore, they need to assess consumer values, needs, and experiences to determine specific innovations they can create that will transform the lives of many consumers in the country.

Objective

The primary aim of this study is to evaluate and analyze the usage and acceptance of the mobile payment solution in Saudi Arabia, which will provide clarity on the behavior toward Fintech in general and propose recommendations.

More specifically, the study will investigate the feasibility of implementing the Mobile Payment, based on specific demographic data that supports its viability. The following particular objectives define the parameters of the research:

- To examine the explosion of mobile technology and the reception of citizens towards mobile payment as an alternative payment method;
- To examine the people's motives to use mobile-payment and their readiness to use its;
- To analyze the demographic differences that determine the usage of mobile payment methods;
- To measure the weaknesses that deter the development of mobile payment systems.

Methodology

The methodology provides an overview of the research methodology and research design. The research implements the positivist approach and quantitative methods. Also, it states the research method and data collection. This research performs an online survey and an equal probability of systematic sampling. In addition, it explains the research sample. The research population involves 521 Saudi citizens aged from 19 to 50. Finally, it provides an overview of the data analysis method.

Analysis and Findings

Based on the results obtained, the majority of the respondents use mobile payment. The majority of them prefer Mada Pay mobile payment, Apple Pay, and respondent's bank applications. They use mobile payment due to convenience, better user experience and multiple payment methods. Respondents agree that mobile payment makes their life easier, and mobile payment can boost business productivity. Respondents neither agree nor disagree that financial information may be misused and that service provider makes the respondent insecure. On the contrary, the service provider would be trustworthy in handling personal information.

It was demonstrated that mobile payment is a valuable service, and respondents intend to plan and process financial transactions using mobile payment.

Conclusions

The study's findings support the idea that mobile payment systems could be used to benefit different stakeholders in Saudi Arabia's Fintech sector. Data obtained from the respondents indicated that the majority of Saudi nationals are willing to use mobile payment systems.

Therefore, it is recommended that the Saudi government adopts a more comprehensive legal framework that would help to regulate the use of mobile payment technologies. Also, it recommended that different stakeholders in Saudi Arabia's Fintech sector work collaboratively to pursue initiatives that would foster the effective implementation of mobile payment systems.

Research Digest

Using of Twitter for Higher Educational Students in PNU University

Bothaina Mahmoud Zughaibi | Dr. Maheen Khan | 2020

Abstract

Higher education institutions and universities are increasingly using social media as a platform of Communication with students, faculty, other institutions and the public, the tremendous growth of the Internet and various applications have rendered the sharing and exchanging of information easily and swift. This comprehensive study investigates and evaluates the use of Twitter by students of higher education to disseminate and exchange scholarly information in PNU University. The case study includes (65) students who are studying at the University of PNU. The study focuses on the effectiveness and efficiency of Twitter in terms of finding and disseminating information. The study also evaluates the authenticity and ease that various features offer making the dispersal and exploration of scientific and scholarly information easier, such as videos sharing, hashtags, re-tweeting, and reposting.

The study also investigates whether the 140-character rule hampers information distribution. The data were gathered via online survey, as data collection. The results showed that Twitter was used by the majority of the students at PNU University, for the dispersal of scholarly information. Most of the students found Twitter to be a practical way to share information with peers and academics. They also considered it to be an authentic method to finding research-related articles and asking for guidance from others who are experts in the field. The 140-character rule was not found to hamper information sharing. Therefore, Twitter was found to be a reliable tool with which to disperse and find scholarly information.

Keywords: Twitter, Higher Education, Student (s), Prince Nourah University (PNU).

Literature Review

Higher education institutions and universities are increasingly using social media as a platform of communication with students, parents, faculty, other institutions and the public.
There have been many researches and studies published in the last 15 years about social networking sites and their relation to improving education.

Although many countries have put a significant effort into adapting educational institutions to technological innovations, some countries still likely undervalue the significance of these innovations (OECD, 2010).

Twitter is considered an information network that connects users with topics and discussions that are important and meaningful to them. Each user can post informational "tweets". Twitter plays a vital role in the dissemination and exchange of information. Students, especially in higher education, can benefit from Twitter use because they can find wide variety of information about their studies.

Objective

The study objectives is to determine the effectiveness of using of Twitter" in the diffusion, accumulation and spread of scholarly information by students in PNU University. And to assessing and evaluate the using of twitter the authenticity and ease that various features offer making the dispersal and exploration of scientific and scholarly information easier.

Methodology

Quantitative research was adopted in order to arrive at answers to the research questions of this study which attempts to describe Using Twitter for Higher Educational Students in PNU University and based on 65 participants from the university and it focuses on the process and results of having used Twitter among students.

The tool of the study for collecting data is questionnaires which designed and distributed to the students of the university and conducted as a representative population's sample the questionnaires had two parts: an informed consent section, basic information section, 10 questions and 12 items eliciting Twitter usage information. Eight survey items involved selecting options from to checking boxes where appropriate.

Data were analyzed using SPSS Version 21. Descriptive statistics provided data critical to comprehending general trends among respondents and analysis of frequency, percent an accumulative percent were used to investigate relationships between the characteristics of students and how they used Twitter.

Analysis and Findings

In order to verify and answering the questions of the research, the researcher uses online questionnaires distributed to students of PNU University. The sample consisted of 65 students. The investigation and the data analysis showed that Twitter increases the flexibility within learning and instruction.

Twitter is a good tool to keep posted about educational topics. Twitter can affect the productivity within learning and instruction. Twitter can be interesting to learn how to formulate your own opinion. The majority of the postgraduate students find Twitter to be an effective tool with which to disseminate scientific information and explore authentic scientific information and scholarly articles.

Conclusions

The majority of the students find Twitter to be an effective tool with which to disseminate scientific information and explore authentic scientific information and scholarly articles. The results also show that the use of hashtags, re-tweeting, and reposting is thought to make the dispersal and exploration of scientific and scholarly information easier. ,the respondents were about evenly split, leading to a conclusion that majority of students find Twitter a useful tool to explore scholarly information.

Based on the findings of this study, the following can be recommended;

- Instructor should encourage the use of social networking sites in teaching and learning. Instructor should change the methods and strategies of teaching from traditional one to communicative strategies that are based on the students' real involvement in the teaching-learning process.
- Students should use technology and social networking sites in learning
- Students can communicate easily and efficiently with each other and with their instructor about course content, assignments

Research Digest

The Relationship between Oil Prices and Saudi Arabian Stock Market Return: An Empirical Study

Wafa Almuaythir | Dr Rhea Elizabeth George & Dr Fatma Hassan | 2020

Abstract

The impact of oil price movement on stock markets has been well-studied in the economic literature. However, less emphasis is placed on the relationship between oil prices and stock markets in emerging and oil-exporting countries such as Saudi Arabia. This research aims to investigate the relationship between Saudi stock market returns and oil price movements.

The relationship is examined using the monthly data of West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil futures and Saudi Arabian Stock Market (TASI). The time period investigated runs from January 1st, 2004 to January 1st, 2020. The methods utilized for the investigation include Johansen cointegration test, Granger Causality test and regression analysis using Ordinary Least Squares method.

The results from Granger causality test suggests that the causality runs from oil futures to Saudi stock market returns. The variables studied exhibit cointegration where a strong long-term relationship is also found. The regression analysis indicates that the oil price influences stock market return prices positively, but this influence is low in magnitude. The empirical findings thus indicate the existence of other variables or oil benchmark that could have a much more significant influence on the stock market than the oil price.

Keywords: oil price; stock return; correlation; causality; cointegration; Saudi Arabia.

Objective

A considerable body of literature was investigating and testing the relationship between oil price movement in financial markets in several developed countries using alternative data set and estimation models. Comparatively, less attention has been given to the relationship between oil prices and stock markets in oil-exporting countries, especially countries that enjoy elevated oil exports with smaller emerging markets such as Saudi Arabia. The research, therefore, aims to shed further light on the sensitivity levels of Saudi Arabian stock markets to oil prices' movement by examining more updated data spanning over a more extended period (January 2004 to January 2020) for both West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil futures and Tadawul All Share Index (TASI) rate of return.

Methodology

It is essential to understand the behavior of time series data to achieve a robust framework of method selection, such as assessing their interactions and integrations over time. Therefore, to provide statistical evidence on data series stationarity, we run unit root tests, both, Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test and Phillips Perron (PP) test.

The data series were found to be nonstationary and containing a unit root, so there is a possibility that it might lead to spurious results by indicating a relationship between two variables where one does not exist. Therefore, we take the first difference of the data to be stationary. Then the Granger causality test was employed to test the pairwise relationship between our variables.

Next, Johansen cointegration test was done to check for the common stochastic trend and to clarify the long-run relationship among variables. With cointegrated data, spurious regression no longer arises, thereby allowing us to construct regression analysis using OLS method to investigate the nature and degree of relationship between the two variables, as unbiased estimation can be provided.

Analysis and Findings

The findings are in line with several previous studies down in this area (Alqattan and Alhayky, 2016; Cheikh et al., 2018). The positive link between the crude oil prices and Saudi Arabian stock market return is not strong. The empirical findings thus indicate the existence of other variables or oil benchmark that could have a higher significance on the stock market than the oil price. The causality tests indicate a strong causality running from the crude oil prices to the Saudi Arabia stock market. The variables studied exhibit cointegration. Strong long-term equilibrium is also found.

Conclusions

Our finding indicates that WTI crude has a weak impact on the Saudi stock market. Saudi Arabia has its own crude oil basket, which could be more relevant and describe the Saudi stock market better than WTI crude oil. WTI crude oil is produced in the USA, and it is a USA oil benchmark, this could be a reason why is not as significant in the Saudi Arabian context. Nevertheless, depending on the kind of shocks affecting the Saudi economy, a change in the WTI crude oil could also impact the global economy and therefore affects the Saudi stock market.

In addition, this study opens the door for future research that could explore the application of other dynamic models such as Autoregressive Conditional Heteroskedasticity method (ARCH) or Generalized Autoregressive Conditional Heteroskedasticity (GRACH) which could be more feasible in describing the relationship between the variables.

Several economic and institutional differences between the Saudi stock market and other markets in oil-exporting countries could justify this result. The Saudi stock market is dominated mainly by the financial industry, that is highly linked to American and European financial markets.

This lack of diversification creates sensitivity to western financial markets that affected negatively with an increase in oil prices, which equivalized the positive impact of high oil prices. Besides, Saudi Arabia economy is overly dependent on oil-importing countries and suffers from imported inflation and economic pressures more than other oil-exporting countries such as GCC countries.

Bibliography

- Alqattan, A. and Alhayky, A., 2016. Impact of Oil Prices on Stock Markets: Evidence from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Financial Markets. Amity Journal of Finance, 1(1), pp.1-8.
- Cheikh, N., Naceur, S., Kanaan, O. and Rault, C., 2018. Oil Prices and GCC Stock Markets: New Evidence from Smooth Transition Models. [ebook] Available at: <https://www.imf.org/~/media/Files/Publications/WP/2018/wp1898.ashx> [Accessed 6 April 2020].

Research Digest

The Perceived Readiness of Implementing Artificial Intelligence in Performance Management: Case of an Information Technology & Services Company in Saudi Arabia

Maha Alhamad | Dr. Rajaa Clouse | Dr. Abaad AlZuman | 2020

Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate the readiness level for implementing artificial intelligence (AI) in performance management (PM) at different levels in one of the information technology and services organizations in Saudi Arabia. The pre-existing PM was found to fall short in fulfilling employees' needs and satisfaction; hence, new options for PM need to be explored.

To explore this emerging topic, a quantitative methodology using survey data was employed. The survey instrument, used in this study, was developed based on findings that were identified in a previously published study by Brock and Wangenheim (2019) revolving around digital transformation and AI. They presented specific guidance and identified the factors that influence the effectiveness of an AI implementation.

In our study, these factors were measured using a Likert scale survey and we were able to collect responses from 78 participants. A quantitative analysis of the data was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics, in particular the use of correlational analysis and independent one sample T-test was useful to answer the research questions. The findings indicated that the case organization is not ready to implement AI in the area of PM.

For the purpose of our study, we interpret the concept of being ready by the level of agreement of the respondents. In other words, the respondents' agreement on average is used a proxy for the assessment of the readiness level. This study revealed that the case organization is found to lack readiness in these following areas;

1) Human Intelligence
2) Organizational Digital Strategy
3) Employee Engagement and a Supportive Culture
4) Integrated Data Management
5) Security
6) Starting small

The findings also indicated that organizations should start developing its human intelligence along with the organizational digital strategy and should treat these two features as top priority to prepare to manage performance in a way that embraces and fully utilizes AI.

Keywords: Digitalization, Artificial Intelligence, Performance Management, Digital, Readiness.

Literature Review

According to Noe (2006), 43% of organizations believe that AI will significantly change the human resource (HR) function and is considered one of the most important trends. Performance Management (PM) is an integral line in HR and as such can potentially adopt an AI system. This can be showcased in performance appraisal and also in intelligent decision support systems (DSS). Organizations can yield better results using systems that crowdsource and collect data regarding the performance of employees (Ewenstein, Hancock, & Komm, 2016).

PM could adopt an AI system in which the performance appraisal model could be run through a system that tracks employees' information about work performance. Intelligent decision support systems can complement such a process. Moreover, a DSS can evaluate employee's performance using added business objectives of each department. This would include future performance objectives that can be employed to predict the future trend (Ewenstein, Hancock, & Komm, 2016).

A study conducted between early 2016 and late 2017 reported that AI applications were widely spread to integrate AI plans, and the organizations without any AI plans were equal to 15%, compared to 20% for those who already had AI applications implemented (Brock & Von Wangenheim, 2019).

Conversely, another study showed that 41% of CEOs reported that they are not prepared to adopt new data analytic tools, while 4% expressed their enthusiasm (Cappelli, Tambe, & Yakubovich, 2019). However, when it comes to adopting analytic tools for human resources (HR), 22% of organizations have already adopted analytic tools, but the complications regarding the analytics are not clear (Noe et al, 2006). Therefore, it is important to conduct more research on assessing the readiness of AI.

Objective

The objective of this study is to understand the plausibility of an alternative to traditional PM approaches, this research gauges the perceived readiness level of the current adopted PM approaches to the adoption of an alternate AI approach.

Methodology

In this study, a quantitative methodology using survey data was employed. As survey provides a researcher with more standardized data and reduces the possible effect of the researcher's presence on answers given by the participants (Blaikie, 2000; Bryman, 2008). The survey instrument was adopted from Brock and Wangenheim (2019) and was subdivided into 11 constructs. Moreover, the survey was sent to a professional translator to translate it into Arabic in order to ensure the clarity of the items. Then, the researcher received Dublin City University (DCU) research ethics approval before distributing the survey.

A Likert scale was used to collect responses from 78 participants. The instrument's internal consistency analysis was conducted using the Cronbach's Alpha parameter and was found to be statistically significant, with an overall alpha value of 0.922, representing a good degree of reliability. There was not able to find a benchmark that one could rely on to evaluate the survey scores related to measuring the level of readiness.

For this reason, in this research, we are interpreting the respondents' agreement, on average, with the statements in the survey as a proxy for readiness. Excel & SPSS statistical analysis software were used to analyze the survey data for a descriptive and an inferential analysis (Correlation analysis and one sample independent T-test) to examine and answer the following research questions.

Research Question 1: What is the perceived overall readiness of an information technology and services organization to implement artificial intelligence in its performance management?

Research Question 2: What is the differential level of readiness among the various areas that explain the overall readiness of an information technology and services organization to implement artificial intelligence in its performance management? With the support of the literature, the researcher drafted the following hypotheses and seeks to resolve them:

Hypothesis #1:

(H0): There is no difference between the mean of overall readiness tool and the value of the level of agreement among the employees.

(H1): There is a difference between the mean of overall readiness tool and the value of the level of agreement among the employees.

Hypothesis #2:

(H0): There is no difference between the mean of data construct and the value of the level of agreement among the employees.

(H1): There is a difference between the mean of data construct and the value of the level of agreement among the employees.

Hypothesis #3:

(H0): There is no difference between the mean of integrated data management construct and the value of the level of agreement among the employees.

(H1): There is a difference between the mean of integrated data management construct and the value of the level of agreement among the employees

Analysis and Findings

The findings of our study show that the targeted information technology and services organization is not perceived as having an agreed upon readiness level to implement artificial intelligence (AI) in its performance management (PM).

Descriptive analysis of the participants' responses were examined using a survey scoring mechanism that involved identifying the mean scores for every construct. A correlation analysis, along with the significance levels, was conducted between the scores of the different constructs in an exploratory analysis of the scored responses. Among all the constructs, the overall survey score was only negatively correlated with two constructs (i) developing human intelligence (ii) digital strategy.

The researcher carried out a series of one sample T-tests to investigate the readiness level by way of their level of agreement when compared to the agreed scale. It was found that the case organization assumed readiness levels in the following factors(constructs):

1) Data
2) Technology alignment
3) Teaming with technology partners
4) Agility
5) Leadership support.

However, the following factors were found to be insufficiently ready for the implementation of AI; The development of human intelligence, employee engagement and a supportive workplace culture, integrated data management, security, strategy, and starting small. For these constructs that were found unready and have a strong correlation with a ready construct, it is recommended to improve the ready construct even more.

Conclusions

The case organization was found to be insufficiently ready for the adoption of Ai in its PM function based on participants' survey responses. It is recommended that the organization start to develop its human intelligence capabilities and start to adopt a digital strategy as these two constructs were found to be perceived as not having a sufficient readiness level. They are also found not to be correlated with any other constructs that was perceived as having a sufficient readiness level in the current case study.

For the remaining constructs that were found unready and to avoid resistance to change while keeping cost effectiveness in mind, the organization needs to improve all constructs that show a sufficient readiness level. Doing so, will inherently improve all other factors that are correlated to the latter. It is recommended for future research to develop a scoring benchmark to assess the level of readiness.

References

- Blaikie, N. (2000) Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation 2nd edt, Cambridge: Polity press.
- Brock, J. and Von Wangenheim, F. (2019) 'Demystifying AI: What Digital Transformation Leaders Can Teach You about Realistic Artificial Intelligence', California Management Review, 61(4), 110-134.
- Bryman, A. (2008) Social Research Methods, Oxford University Press.
- Cappelli, P., Tambe, P. and Yakubovich, V. (2019) 'Artificial intelligence in human resources management: challenges and a path forward'. Available at SSRN 3263878.
- Ewenstein, B., Hancock, B. and Komm, A. (2016) 'Ahead of the curve: The future of performance management', McKinsey Quarterly, 2, 64-73.
- Noe, R., Hollenbeck, J., Gerhart, B. and Wright, P. (2006) 'Human Resources Management: Gaining a Competitive Advantage', McGraw-Hill Education, Tenth Global Edition. New York.

Research Digest

An Exploration of the Perceived Enablers and Barriers to Building Successful Collaborations in Organizations in the Public Sector: A Case Focus on the Center for Government Communication (CGC) in Saudi Arabia

Darina Althinayyan | Dr. Rajáa Clouse | Dr. Khadeija Mahgoub | 2020

Abstract

The primary aim of this study is to identify the challenges that undermine achieving successful collaboration strategies and to explore the opportunities that enable efficient collaborations between public sector organizations. Enhancing collaboration between public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia is considered a strategic factor to achieve the ambitious objectives of Saudi Vision 2030 in improving internal government communication. The Center for Government Communication plays a fundamental role in influencing collaboration between public sector organizations to achieve excellence in government communication.

Considering the aims and objectives of this study, the research approach employed a quantitative methodology. The research instrument that was used to collect primary data from the participants was a questionnaire. A convenient sampling technique was used in the recruitment of the seventy-three respondents who successfully completed the survey.

The collected data was used to analyze (a) the perceived difference between the collaborative actions and the current practices of mitigating barriers to partnership in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia, (b) the perceived difference between the current practices of mitigating barriers to partnership and the current practices of partnership efficiency in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia, and (c) the perceived difference between the impact of

current practices of collaborative actions and the current practices of partnership efficiency in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia.

The questionnaire measured five key constructs, which are related to the CGC's effectiveness in fulfilling its mandates. Those five constructs are as follows;

1) Determination of the need for partnership
2) The choice of partners
3) The efficiency of the partnership
4) Collaborative action
5) Mitigating barriers to the partnership.

A reliability analysis was conducted based on the scale-based questions through interpreting Cronbach's Alpha. This was performed on all scale-type questions of all the five main constructs. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the overall survey tool is 0.927, which represents the reliability of the participants' answers to the scale-based questions.

The findings of the study demonstrate that the efficiency of the partnership construct has a significant correlation with the collaborative action construct and the mitigating barriers to partnership construct. Furthermore, findings show that the collaborative action construct has a significant correlation with the mitigating barriers to partnership construct. It is recommended that the CGC notes that mitigating barriers to partnerships could improve collaborative actions and efficient partnerships. Because the study showed high correlations between these factors, efforts to mitigating barriers may include (1) formal structures for sharing of information and resolution of disputes, (2) strategies to improve communication, (3) frameworks for better expression of views, and (4) clarity of roles and responsibilities.

Literature Review

A comprehensive literature has developed on the importance of successful collaborations and effective communication in the public sector organizations. Primarily, collaboration is concerned with the process of working as a team towards the achievement of certain goals (Emerson, Nabatchi, and Balogh, 2012). Collaboration is a well-structured process, which allows one or more individuals to work together in pursuit of specific objectives (Tellioglu, 2008).

According to Mashudu, and Useh (2016), communication is a crucial pillar of collaboration that leads to improved performance, efficiency as well as cohesion among the various parties. Government communication is concerned with the organizations of the public sector that exist in diverse forms. Canel and Sanders (2012) define government communication as the practice of passing information by executive decision-makers and officials of public institutions that reflect public matters.

Researchers have noted that if the government communication strategy is well-executed, it will have a significant contribution to the effectiveness of policy implementation (Cornish, Lindley-French, and Yorke, 2011). Government commutation strategies can be presented under various themes, which are evaluated on the basis of their suitability to the aspect of communication that particular research is investigating. The theme of collaborative relationship focuses on the way the communication strategies are executed to support cooperation between the government organizations (Cornish et al., 2011).

Collaborative governance is another important aspect in the analysis of the strategies used in government communications (Mu, Li, and Fu, 2018). Many studies aimed to identifying various challenges related to the approaches used in government communications. Mu et al. (2018)

indicated that restrictive organizational structures, the inaccuracy in perception of the partners, and the confusions regarding the objectives of each partner are considered some of the critical barriers to collaborative actions in the implementation of the successful government communication strategies. Nevertheless, these challenges can be addressed by the existing opportunities, which mainly initiate the enhancements needed for successful future collaborations.

According to Ansell and Gash (2008), one of the opportunities that can be leveraged to improve the effectiveness of government communications is to increase the awareness concerning the challenges that can be addressed through the enhanced collaboration between public sector organizations.

Objective

The primary aim of this study is to identify the challenges faced by the Center for Government Communication that undermine their adopted strategic communication plan and to explore the opportunities that enable successful collaborations with other public sector organizations.

The study aims to explore the perceived difference between the collaborative actions and the current practices of mitigating barriers to partnership in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia, and the perceived difference between the current practices of mitigating barriers to partnership and the current practices of partnership efficiency in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia, and the perceived difference between the impact of current practices of collaborative actions and the current practices of partnership efficiency in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia.

The study also aims to explore the significance of collaborative actions in mitigating communication conflicts and achieving efficient partnerships, and explore the significances of mitigating barriers in achieving efficient partnerships.

Methodology

To identify critical components for successful collaborations, and to further explore the research questions, we attempt to resolve the following three research hypotheses, (a) there is a significant positive correlation between the collaborative action construct and the efficiency of the partnership construct, (b) there is a significant positive correlation between the mitigating barriers to partnership construct and the efficiency of the partnership construct, and (c) there is a significant positive correlation between the collaborative action construct and the mitigating barriers to partnership construct.

Considering the aims and objectives of this research in identifying the challenges faced by the CGC in fulfilling its mandates, the study employs a quantitative research approach. The research instrument that was used to collect primary data from the participants was a questionnaire. The research instrument was uploaded on Qualtrics. Qualtrics is a web-based tool that allows researchers to conduct surveys remotely.

A convenient sampling technique was used in the recruitment of the seventy-three respondents who successfully completed the survey. The questionnaire measured five key constructs, which are related to the CGC's effectiveness in fulfilling its mandates.
These five constructs are as follows;

1) Determination of the need for partnership,
2) The choice of partners,
3) The efficiency of the partnership,
4) Collaborative action
5) Mitigating barriers to the partnership.

Those five constructs were adopted from VicHealth available partnership analysis tool. The analysis tool in the article is an important resource to identify strengths of the partnership, and reflection to understand the critical variables to achieve the partnership’s purpose (Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, 2016).

A reliability analysis was conducted based on the scale-based questions through interpreting Cronbach’s Alpha. This was performed on all scale-type questions of all the five main constructs that were selected. The Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of the overall survey tool is 0.927, which represents the reliability of the participants’ answers to the scale-based questions.

Analysis and Findings

Normality test was used in the study to evaluate whether an empirical distribution of a variable in a sample provided is drawn from a population, which is normally distributed. One of the suitable tests for small sample sizes is Shapiro-Wilk test (Ghasemi and Zahediasl, 2012). A series of Shapiro-Wilk tests were conducted using SPSS Statistics software to measure whether the constructs for the determination of the need for partnership, the choice of partners, the efficiency of the partnership, collaborative action, and mitigating barriers to partnership are approximately normally distributed.

The study findings indicate that the distribution of all constructs did not significantly differ from a normal distribution, because the p-values of all tests were greater than the level of significance of 0.05.

To resolve the three research questions presented, (a) the perceived difference between the collaborative actions and the current practices of mitigating barriers to partnership in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia, (b) the perceived difference between the current practices of mitigating barriers to partnership and the current practices of partnership efficiency in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia, and (c) the perceived difference between the impact of current practices of collaborative actions and the current practices of partnership efficiency in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia, we attempt to explore the perceived differences between constructs.

The study findings indicate that there is a perceived difference between the responses to mitigating barriers to partnership and the current practices of partnership efficiency in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia. Also, the findings show that there is a perceived difference between the impact of current practices of collaborative actions and the current practices of partnership efficiency in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia. However, there is no perceived difference between the collaborative actions and the current practices of mitigating barriers to partnership in public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia.

To resolve the three research hypotheses, (a) there is a significant positive correlation between the collaborative action construct and the efficiency of the partnership construct, and (b) there is a significant positive correlation between the mitigating barriers to partnership construct and the efficiency of the partnership construct, and (c) there is a significant positive correlation between the collaborative action construct and the mitigating barriers to partnership construct, we attempt to explore the correlational analysis of constructs. The study findings indicate that there is a statistically moderate positive linear association between the collaborative action construct and the efficiency of the partnership construct, and a statistically moderate positive linear association between the mitigating barriers to partnership construct and the efficiency of the partnership construct. However, there is a statistically significant strong positive linear association between the collaborative action construct and the mitigating barriers to partnership construct.

For further analysis that guided the study's recommendations, a series of one-sample t-tests were performed to explore the respondents' agreement within the five constructs. The results of the independent sample t-tests showed that the population average of all constructs is significantly different and indicated that the respondents are more neutral than agree with all constructs.

Conclusions

The primary aim of this study is to identify the challenges that undermine achieving successful collaboration strategies and to explore the opportunities that enable efficient collaborations between public sector organizations. Enhancing collaboration between public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia is considered a strategic factor to achieve the ambitious objectives of Saudi Vision 2030 in improving internal government communication. Public sector organizations need to build effective communication strategies to achieve excellence in government communication.

However, there are barriers to establish collaborative working among public sector organizations that can be resolved like lack of governance. In this regard, the Center for Government

Communication in Saudi Arabia has one of the key responsibilities in facilitating a government communication excellence model in the Kingdom to ensure that this improved communication will empower and enhance collaboration between different government organizations. It is crucial for the CGC to enhance the efficiency of collaboration with the government organizations.

When communication between public sector organizations is inefficient, it creates a cascading effect that produces further challenges for other organizations, and to the general public as well (Christine Shan, L. et al., 2015). To enhance collaboration between the organizations, it is essential that an ideal communication structure is established between public sector organizations (Canel and Luoma-aho, 2019).

The study findings demonstrate that the efficiency of the partnerships has a significant correlation with the collaborative actions. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the efficiency of partnership construct has a significant correlation with the mitigating barriers to partnership construct. Moreover, the study proves that collaborative action construct has a significant correlation with the mitigating barriers to partnership construct. When interpreting the study findings, some limitations need to be noted, for example, (1) the sample population of this study does not cover all public sector organizations in Saudi Arabia, i.e. Ministry of Tourism. (2) the quantitative study sample did not address all public sectors in Saudi Arabia, i.e. tourism sector.

Therefore, the findings from the sample may not have provided a full reflection of views regarding the CGC's partners involved in internal government communication. These two limitations could restrict the generalization of this study findings to larger contexts. In the future, the limitations could be addressed by expanding the research, especially quantitative research, to a large number of government organizations. (3) The research study did not include qualitative research to address the CGC employees or focus groups. However, it is considered a strength factor as it helped in avoiding bias by reducing self-reported findings.

It is recommended that the CGC notes that mitigating barriers to partnerships could improve collaborative actions and efficient partnerships. Because the study showed high correlations between these factors, efforts to mitigating barriers may include (1) formal structures for sharing of information and resolution of disputes, (2) strategies to improve communication, (3) frameworks for better expression of views, and (4) clarity of roles and responsibilities.

References

- Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2008). Collaborative governance in theory and practice. Journal of public administration research and theory, 18(4), 543-571.
- Canel, M and Luoma-aho, V. (2019). Public sector communication: Closing gaps between citizens and public organizations. Wiley & Sons.
- Creswell, J., Hanson, W., Plano, V. & Morales, A., 2007. Qualitative research designs: Selection and implementation. The Counseling Psychologist and Evidence.
- Emerson, K., Nabatchi, T., & Balogh, S. (2012). An integrative framework for collaborative governance. Journal of public administration research and theory, 22(1), 1-29.
- Ghasemi, A. and Zahediasl, S., 2012. Normality Tests for Statistical Analysis: A Guide for Non- Statisticians. International Journal of Endocrinology and Metabolism, pp.486-489.
- Mu, R., Li, Y., & Fu, Y. (2018). Can Government Communication Facilitate Policy Understanding Toward Energy Conservation? Evidence from an Old Industrial Base in China. Sustainability, 10(9), 3222.
- Tellioglu, H. (2008). Collaboration life cycle. In 2008 International Symposium on Collaborative Technologies and Systems (pp. 357-366).

جامعة الأميرة نورة بنت عبدالرحمن
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University

DCU

Research Digest

Factors that Influence Entrepreneurial Attitudes and the Decision to Become an Entrepreneur in the Context of Saudi Arabia

Nura Ghazzai AlHarbi | Dr Ann Largey | 2020

Abstract

Entrepreneurship can be defined as both a process and a mindset that ensures the establishment and development of economic activity. Entrepreneurship is a vital driver of economic growth, according to existing scholarly studies. This research project examines the factors that influence entrepreneurial attitudes and the decision to become an entrepreneur in the context of Saudi Arabia. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), "Entrepreneurial Intention" (EI) is a strong predictor of behaviors associated with entrepreneurship.

In the context of Saudi Arabia, which is on the path towards business diversification – the facilitation of business start-ups and the development of entrepreneurial tendencies have been a leading priority for citizens and non-citizens living within the country. This study will attempt to measure the impact of Entrepreneurial Intention by making use of an Entrepreneurial Intention model, borne out of the Theory of Planned Behavior. As well as exploring Entrepreneurial Intention this study will also investigate the effects of personality traits as well as government intervention on entrepreneurship within Saudi Arabia,

In addition to this, a comparison of gender-based entrepreneurial activities will also be examined – exploring how women have lower Entrepreneurial Intention when compared with their male counterparts. The study also aims to examine the role played by institutions of higher education in Saudi Arabia in promoting entrepreneurship within the Kingdom especially on young people

and other groups who venture into entrepreneurial activities. In addition to this, this study also aims to determine the impact of role models in encouraging entrepreneurship and in encouraging business start-ups. Lastly this study explores the impact of demographic factors within the Kingdom's population and the role this factor plays in determining entrepreneurial trends.

Literature Review

This literature review explores key factors influencing Entrepreneurial Intention as defined within existing literature on the subject, focusing on the relationship with Saudi Arabia. The literature review itself began by considering the difference between Necessity and Opportunity Entrepreneurship as it is defined in the literature – and then proceeded to define several different categories of Determinants of Entrepreneurship, among them education, start-up capital, fear of failure, networks and role models, before moving on to consider separately the role of entrepreneurial skills (including self-efficiency, need for achievement, risk attitude, goals and aspirations) in determining entrepreneurial success.

Objective

- Grasp an overall understanding of Entrepreneurship specially in Saudi Arabia
- To help boost the market and create job opportunities for Saudi individuals
- To support the vision of 2030 non-reliance on oil and create an economic engine.
- To determine the factors affecting entrepreneurial intentions within Saudi Arabia

Methodology

The research approach to addressing the questions above has been based on the conduct of primary research via an online survey on SurveyMonkey. This has been distributed via social media. The preference for taking this approach of using primary source data had the benefit of gaining a direct insight into the views of participants without having to rely on conclusions drawn from secondary research. There was not a target sample size at the outset, with that in mind, the final sample size consisted of 91.

The survey consisted of 10 multiple choice questions for which responses were either affirmative or negative to address 12 Hypothesis. The data for the responses were collected and analyzed within Microsoft Excel in the form of bar charts in order to visually observe the distribution of different responses collected

Analysis and Findings

The results provide an interesting insight into the average demography of Saudi Arabia in 2020 and how government policies could be positioned in the future in order to encourage entrepreneurial ambitions. In theory, they have limited experience in entrepreneurship but have a connection to individuals operating in the commercial start-ups.

This underlines the potential of female entrepreneurship within Saudi which could benefit from greater engagement at an early stage The importance of education, connections to others entrepreneurs who may act as advisers and role models and supportive government policies also emerged as key themes to support future policy could be developed.

Conclusions

- Education is the first primary area of influence for entrepreneurship particularly in the transition towards a knowledge-based economy and therefore policies that can encourage further education
- Government has a critical role in encouraging local level enterprises and the government has many powerful tools and policies at its disposal to achieve an entrepreneurial mindset and action among the young population.

Research Digest

Identifying the Key Drivers for Passenger Satisfaction at Terminal 5 in King Khalid Airport, Saudi Arabia

Sarah Alabdani, Hend AlGhanem, Fahdah Alqahtani, Halla Almazroo | Dr. Audrey Nicholls | 2020

Abstract

The main aim of this research is to show the level of passenger satisfaction with services and facilities during the departure and arrival experience at Terminal 5 (T5) in King Khalid International Airport (KKIA). Starting from parking, check-in, security search, departure gates to the arrival and baggage collection, as well as facilities and services such as washrooms/toilets, prayer rooms, food, easy of finding a way, and assistance for mobility, and Wi-Fi. This includes a quantitative study based on primary data.

The DAA International which operates T5 seeks to be the best in the region, therefore an accurate survey was used to measure the details of each service and access facility. The departure and arrival survey were comprised of a close-ended questionnaire based on Dublin Airport's Customer Service Monitor (CSM), 2017, adapted to be consistent with T5 facilities and services. Surveys were taken at T5 with passengers, face to face. The estimated duration of collecting the primary data was two weeks. The study sample size was 108 departure passengers and 45 arrival passengers.

Overall, it was found that the satisfaction level of passengers for the services and facilities at T5 was high. There were no statistical differences in the responses for both gender and age group. One area of discrepancy is in the use of Wi-Fi for passengers during their departure journey, it could be argued that this is due to different age groups, technical abilities, and needs when using Wi-Fi. The researchers made some recommendations by looking at the differences in satisfaction

levels between the details of each service and through their experience of being at the airport and hearing passengers' comments about their desires.

Keywords: Customer satisfaction, passengers, King Khalid International Airport (KKIA)

Literature Review

There exists a wide range of studies concerning passenger satisfaction at the airport. For this research, literature is gathered from different case studies and articles/books on passenger satisfaction including passengers' behaviors, airport service quality opportunities for improving service delivery in airports, and airport comparison. Understanding passenger behavior is the study of how the passenger thinks, feels, what they like and dislike, and their choices and preferences (Wittmer et al., 2013).

According to Cronin (1992), service quality can be measured depending on the relationship between service quality, consumer satisfaction, and purchase intentions. Chao, et al. (2013) outline that airport services make it a priority to meet the needs of their consumers and ensure high levels of quality.

Objective

- Develop a quantitative survey that will allow tracking of passengers during arrival and departure in Terminal 5 and provide accurate data.
- Select an appropriate sample size that reflects the flight schedules and flow of passengers in and out of Terminal 5. The sample size should be a cross section of the population and capture passenger trends at various times and situations.

- Interrogate quantitative results into meaningful, relevant, actionable, and understandable interpretation.
- Identify the key drivers for passenger satisfaction and determine how well T5 performs in relation to these drivers.
- Provide recommendations to improve the experiences of passengers

Methodology

The research methodologies used for this industry inquiry examined the level of satisfaction of passengers' experience for both departure and arrival passengers at KKIA T 5. A quantitative survey (close-ended questions) was developed for the purposes of face-to face interviews, which were conducted on passengers at T5 over a period of a week. The intention had been to reach a greater number of passengers, however, due to the Coronavirus pandemic this was not possible.

The SPSS v25 was used to analyze data frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. In addition, T-testing was used for independent samples and analysis of variance, ANOVA was used to test for the presence of statistically significant differences.

Analysis and Findings

From the test (t-test and one-way ANOVA differences) it can be argued that passenger experiences and satisfaction at KKIA T5 is constant between passengers. It also argued that male and female passengers have the same passenger experience journey. As well as for age groups, they all rated the facilities and services provided at T5 similarly, one exception was the use of Wi-Fi for passengers during their departure journey, these may be due to different age groups and different needs when using Wi-Fi. Therefore, findings suggest that KKIA T5 is providing facilities and services that suit the majority of passengers.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the research team has conducted a research project that examined in depth, several aspects in relation to passenger experience and satisfaction level at T5. Data collection and analysis suggested that overall, there is a high degree of satisfaction with the current level of facilities and services. Some areas that were recommended for improvement included the car parking facilities and general levels of staff courtesy.

جامعة الأميرة نورة بنت عبدالرحمن
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University

Research Digest

An Examination of the Saudi Handicraft Industry Involving the Role of Turquoise Mountain and a Comparative Study of the Handicraft Industry in Saudi Arabia and India

Sarah Alshaibani & Haya Alghanem | Dr. Audrey Nicholls | 2020

Abstract

This research project focuses on the development of the handicraft industry in Saudi Arabia. Vision 2030 is a strategic framework to reduce Saudi Arabia's reliance on oil and it has a particular focus on the promotion of tourism. As such, authentic handicrafts produced by Saudis using traditional techniques, designs and materials are currently the focus of support and encouragement from several government and non-governmental organizations. The handicraft industry in Saudi Arabia has suffered significant decline due to lack of investment, and competition from imported products that are cheaper to manufacture. As a result, traditional skills and heritage are at risk of disappearing.

The aim of this project was to identify the main obstacles facing handicraft workers in Saudi and the steps that are being taken to address this issue and the current level of success or lack thereof in relation to government policy. Moreover, a comparative analysis has been conducted comparing the handicraft industry in India with that of Saudi Arabia.

In addition to government bodies, such as the Saudi Tourism Authority, a number of non-governmental organizations have offered support to Saudi craftspeople with a view to ensuring the survival and revival of indigenous crafts and traditions. Among the most important of these, has been the Turquoise Mountain Foundation (TMF). Taking TMF as a case study this research examines the impact of support and development on Saudi artisans. To this end qualitative

analysis has been undertaken based on in depth interviews with renowned female artisan, Um Ahmad, who is currently benefitting from the support of TMF.

Findings reveal several obstacles for artisans in Saudi, including, lack of literacy including financial literacy, lack of funding, lack of business skills including retail/marketing awareness, and design trends. Although there are several government initiatives, there appears to be a mismatch between some of these initiatives and the practical requirements of artisans. Recommendations include further exploration of the types of financial and developmental strategies employed by the government of India to examine if some of these approaches could successfully transfer to the Saudi context.

Literature Review

The literature review includes a number of government reports that outline the current and future policy in relation to the support of the heritage industry in Saudi Arabia. It also includes articles that relate to the situation in India for example, Shah, Amisha & Asst & Patel, Rajiv & Head, 2019. In addition, it includes information provided by TMF such as, an article by Siwar Bandar, 'Supporting Saudi Craft and Artisans' 2018.

Objective

The objective of this project was to identify the main obstacles facing handicraft workers in Saudi and the steps that are being taken to address this issue and the current level of success or lack thereof in relation to government policy. Moreover, a comparative analysis has been conducted comparing the handicraft industry in India with that of Saudi Arabia. In addition, to suggest areas of improvement in relation to government support for Saudi artisans.

Methodology

A qualitative research method was used for the purposes of this research. Four in depth interviews were conducted with Saudi female artisan, Um Ahmad, as she has successfully transitioned from local to international artisan with the support of TMF.

Analysis and Findings

The study has shown that there are several reasons for Saudi Arabia's lack of progress in the handicraft industry. Many artisans suffer from illiteracy including financial literacy and have difficulty communicating with government and non-government organizations and as a result are unable to benefit from their services. In addition, traditional Saudi handicraft techniques and designs are at risk of becoming irretrievably lost due to low financial return, as a result, younger generations are not in a position to continue in the industry. In order for the industry to flourish, it will be necessary to train future craftspeople how to use new technology to improve productivity, and how to modernize their designs to appeal to the tastes of both local and international buyers.

Conclusions

The handicraft industry in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is part of an important historical heritage, as such, it has an essential role to play in the creation of jobs and contribution to GDP. Vision 2030 places significant emphasis on tourism and its future role in the transition from a dependence on oil-based industry to non-oil dependent industry. In order to fully support craftspeople, it is recommended that continuing attention is paid by government entities to their requirements, including the provision of training and finance. Further research into the effectiveness of the current strategy, the number of beneficiaries, and the success rate would provide greater insight into this important sector.

جامعة الأميرة نورة بنت عبدالرحمن
Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University

Research Digest

Consumer Perception of STC Rebranding in Saudi Arabia

Aseel Alsugair, Ghaida Alkhalifah, Noora Alqasoumi, Shaima Sheli | Audrey Nicholls | 2020

Abstract

Corporate rebranding is a standard tactic used by businesses to improve their reputation and credibility in the marketplace. It can be a means of reinventing, rejuvenating, and influencing customer expectations and can negatively or positively influence customer loyalty. This research project examines the purpose behind, and the effectiveness of, the rebranding strategy launched in December 2019 by STC. STC, previously known as Saudi Telecom Company, is the leading provider of telecommunications in Saudi Arabia and is leading the digital revolution in the MENA region.

The focus of this research is to gain an indication of the success of the launch of the STC rebrand in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, particularly in relation to customer loyalty and willingness to recommend the brand. Primary research is based on the responses of 367 STC customers in the 18-39 age group who participated in an online survey that focused on consumer awareness of the new brand, products, and services.

Quantitative and qualitative findings revealed that STC customers have remained loyal to the brand, however, dissatisfaction was expressed in relation to value for money, slow internet speed, a lack of offers and discounts, and poor customer service. These factors disinclined even loyal customers from recommending the brand to relatives, friends, and peers.

Recommendations based on these findings suggest further examination of STC's pricing strategy, improving customer service and relations, increasing internet speed. In addition, the adoption of

a consumer-centric or people-oriented approach involving all stakeholders offers the potential to further enhance consumer satisfaction and perception of STC.

Keywords: Marketing, Strategic Planning, Rebranding, Consumer Perception, Loyalty, Attitude

Literature Review

This literature review includes a number of articles that refer to areas of interest and pertinence to our research. The main areas under review include branding, rebranding, digitalization, consumer, behavior, and attitudes. For the purposes of this review, we consulted a number of authors, including Kapferer (2008) and Yang and Wang (2010) whose definitions of branding were examined; the research of Stern (2006) and (Muzellec et al., 2003) provided valuable information in relation to the use of rebranding as a business strategy.

Objective

The main objective of this research project was to ascertain the impact of STC's rebranding strategy (Dec. 2019) on STC customers in Riyadh, KSA. The focus was on the age group 18-39 as STC was particularly interested in this segment of their customer base. Several areas were explored in relation to customer loyalty, awareness of the new brand, products, services and perception.

Methodology

Primarily, a quantitative method was used to conduct this research. An online survey was conducted which received 437 respondents. Of these respondents, 367 fell into the age group 18-39, the demographic group of greatest interest to STC, for this reason, data analysis, findings, and recommendations in this research project relate to this group. Data analysis tools include Qualtrics and Excel and metric testing includes regression, correlation, ANOVA, and SEM.

Analysis and Findings

Data analysis revealed that overall, STC's rebranding strategy has been successful in Riyadh in terms of creating consumer awareness of changes to the logo, products and services. It also reveals a degree of dissatisfaction in relation to value for money, slow internet speed, a lack of offers and discounts, and poor customer service. These factors disinclined even loyal customers from recommending the brand to relatives, friends and peers.

Recommendations based on these findings suggest further examination of STC's pricing strategy, improving customer service and relations, and increasing internet speed. In addition, the adoption of a consumer-centric approach involving all stakeholders offers the potential to further enhance consumer satisfaction and perception of STC.

Conclusions

According to STC, they have a vision to become a world-class leader in the provision of innovative services and platforms to their customers and to enable the digitization of the MENA region. A major step in this transformation involved the rebranding of their branches in Kuwait and Bahrain to STC where they were previously trading under the name of VIVA Kuwait and VIVA Bahrain. The feedback provided in this report provides some indication and insight into the effectiveness of their rebranding strategy thus far. STC would benefit from further analysis, covering a longer duration and expanding to include the MENA region.

Research Digest

Saber E-Platform: Research Report of Customer Usage and Attitude

Alanoud Almansour, Eman Alhamdan, Eman Alsadoon, Hissah Bin Zuayer, Norah Alkhowaiter
Dr Audrey Nicholls | 2020

Abstract

This research project focused on the e-platform, SABER, how all stakeholders could best optimize the platform and how it is perceived by users. SABER is a digital platform that was developed by THIQAH to streamline port operations and processes in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is in line with government strategy as expressed in Vision 2030, including digitalization goals.

In conducting this research, we used both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to assess the effectiveness of SABER, its strengths and limitations compared to a pre-existing non-digital system, and the experience and perceptions of users. To this end, data was sourced from both primary and secondary sources. The primary source entailed interviewing the stakeholders of SABER, while the secondary sources entailed a review of data sources such as the internet, articles, journals, and government reports.

SABER is uniquely tailored for KSA, which limited the value of benchmarking SABER with other custom goods systems. For this reason, we focused our literature review on the utilisation of SABER platform and the concepts of automation, digitisation and change management. Our findings revealed that SABER is grappling with several significant issues that limit its maximum use. Firstly, most traders have complained about extra charges when obtaining certificates, secondly, most users are self-taught because of the lack of awareness on how to use the system. The process is not streamlined, which creates avenues for corruption.

These challenges have resulted in frustrations that require solutions. Based on the findings of the report we recommend that THIQAH should implement proposed changes that will address these issues and put SABER on track to revolutionizing KSA goods clearance process. Thus, this report will be instrumental in enabling all stakeholders to understand the importance of SABER, its challenges, and possible solutions.

Keywords: Saber, e-platform, imports, digitalization, customs, Vision 2030

Literature Review

The literature review presents research evidence relating to our project proposal on the digitization of goods clearance operations in Saudi Arabia using the SABER platform. The study covers materials from a range of sources, including, websites, academic papers, books, government-generated reports, and transcripts based on stakeholder interaction with the SABER platform. Areas covered include, government services, automation, digitalization, change management, custom clearance, and consumer usage and attitude.

Objective

- Understand the behavior of SABER users and market behavior.
- Grasp an overall understanding of the category dynamics and existing habits why, who, what, when, where, whom, how often it is used?
- Measure the image and perception of SABER vs. the previous method.
- Understand key strengths and weaknesses as well as unique selling points for SABER.
- Benchmarking the previous method of importing goods compared to SABER on all metrics; price, efficiency, ease of use, time spent, and any other attribute discovered along the way.

- Build a comprehensive user journey for all segments of SABER, with key quantitative data corresponding to each stage.

Methodology

The qualitative methodology used In-Depth Interviews involving 18 stakeholders that included both consumer bodies and business traders. During this stage, the extracted data was sorted and classified based on the process steps of SABER platform.

Based on the qualitative results the quantitative methodology questionnaire was developed and involved the use of the computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) survey technique. A sample of 201 users were selected randomly and the raw data was analysed. The research outcomes were reported objectively following a sequence designed to uncover meaningful insights that support our research objectives.

Analysis and Findings

The study showed that most traders understood SABER processes. However, there is a need to improve its turnaround time, customer support processes, and integrate it with other government entities.

Other issues that were revealed included the lack of information about SASO rules and regulations, the treatment of all products and sectors the same way, the lack of simplicity speed, difficulties in obtaining documents that are required to process certificates, and increased cost of certificates that made some of the users prefer the old system. Nonetheless, SABER is considered user friendly, time efficient, and had enhanced the issuance of certificates.

Conclusions

Overall, SABER has improved quality assurance and improved stakeholders' confidence regarding the quality of reliability of its documentation process. Moreover, traders consider the one-year validity of the PCoC a cost and time saving factor. Also, goods with the SABER label receive preferential treatment because the process is trusted.

However, SABER has experienced challenges regarding lack of awareness, customization, and communication, with stakeholders. Addressing these issues and standardizing costs will ensure THIQAH achieves its goals with SABER which in turn will ensure that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an attractive and efficient country to conduct trade with.