Developing Social Responsibility Shopping Platform: Linking Small Local Grocery Shops to Responsible Consumption

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Abstract

Purpose: This study is to identify the linking small local grocery shops for responsible consumption, which the way how the halal grocery shops use the shopping platform.

Design/methodology/approach: This research used a qualitative methodology (interviewed), small local grocery shops. Before conducting the interviews, all participants were briefed on the topic and its contribution in the future. In order to build the relationship with the participant, interview began with background questions. It can help the participants feel comfortable and to gather demographic information. Data were collected through interviews using semi-structured questions with no time limitation in order to give them unlimited response time. Semi-structured interview is where questions are predetermined but the order and wording can be modified and where questions can be omitted or added during the interview (Robson, 2002). This method allowed participants to have more time to talk about the subjects and allowing for more in-depth data to be collected.

Findings: The theme of the questions divide by three, first is technological context, organisational context and the last one is environmental context.

Research limitations/implications: Ethical concerns in research must be accounted for to protect the research participants' rights and the standing in the scientific community. The researcher must comply with moral and professional obligations when conducting the research, even if the research is conducted with participants who are unaware or unconcerned with the ethics of the study (Neuman, 2011).

Practical implications: It is important to note that designing and promoting more flexible, more customized, simpler and more customer-efficient processes that minimize customers' learning time and effort investment and maximize convenience and responsiveness, may be an alternative way to improve customer relationships. The training of the retailers in handling this flexibility both internally (i.e. internal procedures) and towards the customers seems also an effective action

Originality/value: The value of this study which it can give benefit to local grocery to enhance the quality of their business.

Paper type: Research paper

Keywords: Social responsibility, Small grocery, Halal shops

Introduction

We have witnessed many people facing difficult situations during this Movement Control Order that has been announced by the government as part of a social distancing measure to reduce the spread of the virus COVID-19. Indeed, the public at large is very much affected since all educational institutions, businesses and premises will be closed, except those involved in essential services. Hence, we need to prepare ourselves to change to the new normal including the way we deal in business. Certainly, social responsibility shopping

(SRS) is deemed to be establish as an innovative business model that allows small and conventional business to carry out corporate socially responsible marketing just like their bigger competitors are doing. Undeniably, corporate socially responsibility marketing is becoming a crucial strategy to position the brand in the mind of consumers and consequently push sales. Therefore, through the social responsibility shopping digital platform,small retailers especially small grocery shops can sustain a charity nearby, and attract customers that share the same ethical values, further stimulate local fundraising and sustain local consumption, consecutively, permitting local economy to thrive.

The spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) is having a devastating impact on small businesses and hourly workers whose hours, shifts, and operations are coming to a full stop. The COVID-19 crisis will come to an end. But until we get there, we must stay informed and do what we can to protect our local businesses and the incredible employees that sustain them. The novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) has seen to that. Safeguarding and stabilising operations, liquidity, people, supply chains and markets has been the overwhelming priority. Now, companies must start thinking strategically about how they will adapt as the pandemic and markets evolve. As well as affecting countless lives, COVID-19 has unleashed a devastating blow to the global economy, disrupting supply chains while choking off demand. Even for those who feel able to predict the passing of the storm, counting on a quick return to business as usual is not a viable strategy. The shock of the pandemic on previous assumptions and future behaviour could not be ignored even if there is a sharp V-shaped recovery. A slower U-shaped recovery or a longer L-shaped recession will have even more profound implications. Whatever the path forward, the world will be different, and companies need to plan for a new normal.

The business-owners must be creative and innovative to embrace e-commerce, as it indeed the wave of the future, and for the customers, they can enjoy doing shopping of products including groceries and other services from the comfort of their homes. The COVID-19 crisis accelerated an expansion of e-commerce towards new firms, customers and types of products. It has provided customers with access to a significant variety of products from the convenience and safety of their homes, and has enabled firms to continue operation in spite of contact restrictions and other confinement measures. It is has also reported that many businesses which have grown to transform themselves towards having online, are well placed to offset at least some of their lost sales from traditional means, and to respond to significant shifts in consumer behaviour to online sales that the Movement Control Order (MCO) is driving, which is likely to continue well after the MCO is lifted.

More importantly, prudent management, focusing on the changing needs of customers and even greater adoption of technology, rather than good fortune, would be essential to business recovery and ongoing future success, rather than counting on past performance which was no guarantee of future success. Further, it is important to note that many studies have illustrated that businesses with a focus on their customer, technology and strategy are much more likely to be growing strongly than other businesses, through both good and bad times. Hence, business should be looking to how they can meet the fast-changing needs of customers, especially through increasing online sales, rather than focusing on cash flow and financial health within this challenging time (New Straits Times, April 10, 2020). Therefore, this study is conducted to develop a social responsibility shopping platform by linking small local grocery shops for responsible consumption.

Literature Review

Technological Context

Perceived benefits are defined as the gains or improvements resulting from existing ways of operating business transactions using ecommerce applications (Agwu & Murray, 2015). Several previous studies found that the perceived benefits have a positive correlation with the technology adoption (Abou-Shouk, Megicks, & Lim, 2013; Ghobakhloo & Tang, 2013; Alam et al., 2011; Morteza et al., 2011; Tiago & Maria, 2010; Tan et al., 2009; Al-Qirim, 2007). Compatibility refers to what extent e-commerce is compatible with the technology infrastructure, culture, value, and work practices that already exist in the firm (Morteza et al., 2011). Compatibility indicators refer to the level of readiness of users with prior experience, existing technological infrastructure, and desired work practices of the organisation (Alsaad, Mohamad, & Ismail, 2017). It is important for managers to assess whether adopting new technology will meet internal goals and processes of companies.

Organisational Context

Organisational context are descriptive and directly relate to availability and use of internal resources (Wymer & Regan, 2005). According to the TOE framework, organisational adoption of technological innovation can be influenced by the organisational context (Ismail & Ali, 2013). Similarly, the applied usages of organisational context also utilise factors from related frameworks. Factors such as firm size, firm scope, top management support and organisational readiness has been applied to analyse the reviewed organisations. Technology readiness refers to what extent the technology infrastructure, relevant systems and technical skills in business can support e-commerce adoption (Zhu et al., 2006).

The size of organisation is supposed to correlate with its performance and also the capability to implement online business. Large firm also are likely to be more developed than small firms, this allows larger firms to pursue and respond more quickly than smaller firms to the technological usage opportunities (Sarkees, 2011). According to Ripolles, Blea and Roig (2010), the size of an enterprise can influence the decision to adopt or not to adopt E-commerce. Ripolles, Blea and Roig (2010) found that the size of a firm has a significant impact on the type of technologies employed.

Environmental Context

The environmental context is a collection of factors that depict external forces on the adoption process. As a result, the variety of factors is heavily influenced by the nature of the investigated organisation's industry and type. Market uncertainty, competitive pressure, and the regulatory environment have all been used as general factors. When compared to other adoption frameworks, the environmental context is a unique way of looking at these factors, but significance has been found for a number of these general factors, particularly competitive pressure and its effect on e-business adoption (Oliveira & Martins 2010).

The environmental factor refers to external influence, such as pressure from customers, suppliers, competitors, and government that influence an organisation in e-commerce adoption.

External effect like pressure from government assistance and competitive pressure, which affect e-commerce adoption, are the environmental factors. In this study, the pressure from competitors is referred to by the degree of the industry's pressure from competitors (Rita & John, 2015; Zhu & Kraemer, 2005).

When the competitor starts to use e-commerce technology, other firms will be forced to react and to adopt e-commerce technology more widely to obtain competitive advantages. Thus, the higher the level of competition within industry in which company is, the more likely an individual SME will seek to achieve a greater e-commerce use (Zhu & Kraemer, 2005).

Previous studies have supported that competitive pressure has a significant relationship with the intention to adopt e-commerce (Morteza et al., 2011; Tiago & Maria, 2010; AlQirim, 2007; Zhu & Kraemer, 2005; Zhu et al., 2002).

Daniel, and Wilson (2002) found that governments played critical roles in creating a favorable and consistent commercial E-environment. They thus recommend that governments should facilitate and assist in the provision of information for the development and adaptation of E-commerce. As evidenced in previous studies, this factor was found as one of determinant factors in e-business adoption by organisation (Li et al., 2010; Zhu & Kraemer, 2005; Gibbs & Kraemer, 2004; Kuan & Chau, 2001).

The review of the literature above suggested that there are three determinants that are consistently used. Thus, from the literirture above, the following framework are developed:
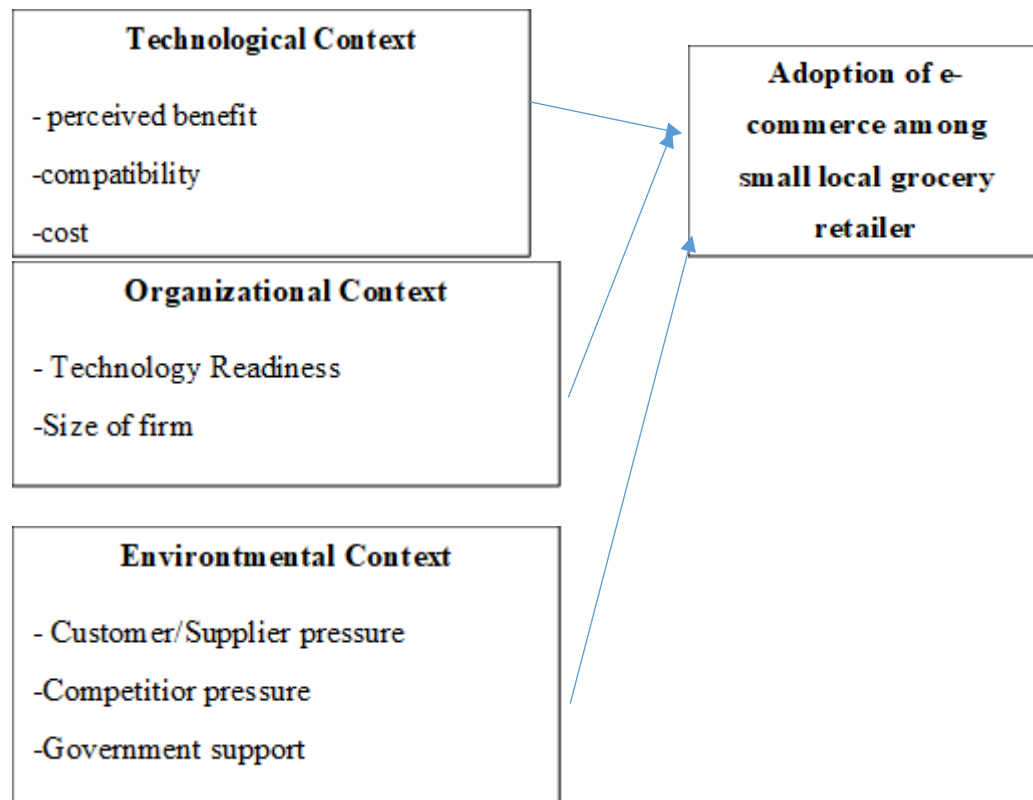

Technological Context

- perceived benefit
- compatibility
- cost

Organizational Context

- Technology Readiness
- Size of firm

Environmental Context

- Customer/Supplier pressure
- Competitior pressure
- Government support

Adoption of e-commerce among small local grocery retailer

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Hypotheses Development

Based on the problem statements discovered above the following research question is proposed:

i. What is the relationship between technological context towards adoption of e commerce among small local grocery retailers?

ii. What is the relationship between organisational context towards adoption of e commerce among small local grocery retailers?

iii. What is the relationship between environmental context towards adoption of e commerce among small local grocery retailers.

Methods

The process of research involves empirical work being carried out with the collection of data which can concur, refute or contest theories which in turn allows for understanding and clarification for different observations (Scheurich, 2014). A study can be qualitative, quantitative or a combination of both (Bell, Bryman, & Harley, 2018). In this study, to achieve the research objectives, this research implemented a qualitative study to collect data.

Participants for this qualitative study were purposely sampled from among small business grocery retailers within Klang Valley. The region is notable for its economic prosperity in recent years in Malaysia, as many of the business activities are concentrated in these areas. In terms of CSR, the Malaysian federal government, as well as the non-governmental agencies have been taken up an explicit agenda of environmentalism in response to public opinion.

Number of interview participants recommended is around 8 to 15 people with fewer participants needed when more than one interview is conducted per participant or when the group is particularly homogenous (Hill et al., 2005). Decisions for interview selection were based primarily on the availability of interview times that correspond between participant and researcher.

Findings

Table 1: Respondents (Small Local Grocery Shops)

Local retailers
Malakat Mall (Raudhah Grocer)
Lesong Mart
Taybah Mart
Sabasun hyperuncit
Kohalal
My kampong Fresh mart
Aisyah mart
Pak haji halal fresh mart
Yakin halal mart
Az zain halal mart
Al Iman Muslim mart
Hijrah halal mart
Assalam mart
Barakah halal mart
Bonda halal mart
Iqram halal house
Ikhwan mart (caw Kota damansara)
Premier raudhah mart

Interview questions:

Technology Context:
1. What kind of technology is used in local retail customers to encourage the use of e -commerce?
2. How technology can help in supporting e-commerce activities
3. If there is a problem, what are the factors that make the use of e retail less effective?
4. Is there any agency information system integrated with e-commerce system?
5. Who is involved in influencing the use of e-commerce?

Organisational:
1. What is the information that is requires for the retailers to implement the social responsibilities?
2. Which information is important to make sure the e-commerce activities is success?
3. How the information is managed regarding the use of e-commerce?
4. How the information effect the decision making?
5. How long does it take to gather information about e-retail users among local retailers?

Environmental
1. What are the determinants for consumers to protect and embrace the social responsibility to buy from local retailers?
2. What are the roles of e commerce users?
3. Any rules involve in this process?
4. How rules can enhance the business of local retailers?
5. If this e-commerce is successful, what contribution can local retailers make in the economic development of the country?
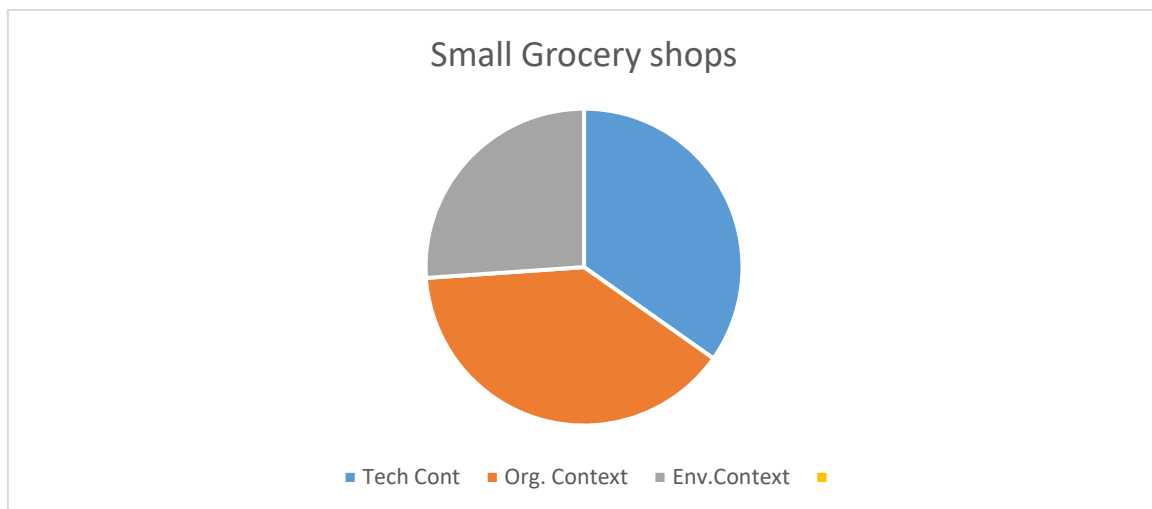

Figure 1: Agreed of Use of e-commerce Platform

This figure show that organisational Context show the highest ranking. Which the respondent from the small grocery shop agree that Organisational context relate with the use of e commerce as a shopping platform

Discussion and Conclusion

For this study semi-structured interviews were selected to carry out this research study. They allowed the participants to elaborate and with that provided more flexibility, range and therefore the capacity to elicit more information from the participant. Semi structured interviews permit scope for individuals to answer questions more on their own terms than the standardised interview permits, yet still provides a good structure for comparability over that of the focused interview (May, 1997).

In this interview section, each participant will be interviewed about 15-20 minutes depending on the question and situation. All interviews were audio-taped and informed consent for the interview and audiotaping was obtained before the commencement of the interview and tape recording. Recording the interview allow researcher to concentrate on participant respond and able interviewer to probe additional questions. The researcher will speaks in Malay and the transcription of the record will be translated into English. As ethic code of participants, the researcher will not mention the real names of participants, but they are pseudonyms.

Theoretical Implications

In comparison with quantitative study, qualitative study more interested in precision, credibility and transferability rather than replicability (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Hoepf, 1997; Winter, 2000). Credibility can be defined as the extent to which the data, data analysis, and conclusions are believable and trustworthy as it is based on a set of standard practices (Lather, 2017).

Practical and Social Implications

This research can give direct impact to owner of small local grocer shop. They can use the result to determine either this type of business are ready for technology change or not.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Limited time to collect data.

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