Factors Affecting Consumers' Online Purchase Intention through Social Media Platforms in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper aims to understand the factors affecting the consumers' online purchase intention through different social media platforms widely used in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook. **Methodology:** A structured questionnaire was used to measure the influence of perceived risk, social influence, and the social media Apps design and content quality on individuals' online purchase intention. Data were collected from 171 respondents and analyzed using SPSS software. **Findings:** The findings indicate that social influence and the social media Apps design and content quality significantly affect consumers' online purchase intention. In contrast, the perceived risk does not affect the consumers' online purchase intention. The results also indicated no difference in perception of perceived risk among the respondents, based on age, gender. There was no difference in perception of perceived risk and the social media Apps design and content quality. However, the difference was found in social influence. **Originality:** This study focused on online purchase intention factors in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain due to the widespread buying of online websites and apps. There are very few studies about this issue in both countries. **Research limitations/implications:** The research was conducted only in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other countries. Future studies can also follow a comparative approach, finding differences in the customer intention between both regions.

Keywords: Perceived Risk, Social Influence, Social Media, Apps Design, Digital Marketing, Online Purchase, Online purchase intention, Content Quality.

Introduction

Today, with the advanced technology of the internet, businesses now have multiple opportunities to advertise their products and services to a much larger market than was previously the case (Luo, Y.2021). Social media plays a vital role in this process. Social media has become a convenient location for interaction without a physical presence. Its reach across demographics and global access opportunities have provided marketers with various possibilities. This study investigates the many factors influencing the online purchase intentions of consumers. Although there are several factors to consider, this study focuses on

exploring the effect of three in particular: social influence, social media platform design, and perceived risk that may impact consumers' online purchase intentions. It also aims to investigate the moderating role of age and gender on these considerations.

Social media has evolved into the most prevalent form of communication for the 16-25 age group. Social media comprises various platforms allowing for interaction on an unprecedented scale. Such interactions occur in multiple forms, such as liking a post, adding comments, sending feedback, and sharing information (Marengo et al., 2021). Many companies have joined social media platforms to promote and sell their products. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and WhatsApp allow users to exchange content or information regarding brand-related sources (Duffett, 2017). In their study, Ashley & Tuten (2015) observe how marketers have embraced the shift from traditional marketing techniques towards social media marketing for various reasons, including building customer relationships, sharing information, increasing brand awareness, providing services, sales transactions, and promotions. Marketing on social media allows for a better understanding of customer behavior and tailoring products to suit particular requirements (Park & Ahn, 2021). Ashley & Tuten (2015) also identify thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, and experiences within these interactions between online consumers, which provides opportunities to create associations with individual brands in the consumer's mind.

Previously, interacting with customers online was advantageous in marketing a particular product/service, but recently, it has become a success requirement (Alalwan et al., 2017). Ashley & Tuten (2015) have pointed out that marketers have many options within social media apps such as sponsored ads, social networks, and developing opportunities for engagement and social interaction between platforms. With the vast range of companies and social media influencers, consumers are swiftly updated on the availability of products in-store. The ease of interaction between companies and consumers leads to positive results in customer satisfaction. Consumers then share their experiences with others (Martin & Serban, 2013). Forbes (2013) found that companies could boost sales and future purchases by encouraging consumers to post products/services on different social media platforms. Snapchat, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook help consumers navigate each platform through the simple click of a button. Consumers can view products and make purchases without leaving the platform itself (Neti, 2015). Bauerly (2009) and Hanaysha (2018) agree that customers must feel secure when buying products/services through social media platforms since they cannot interact with a physical individual. They further suggest that if the consumer feels insecure while transacting or has doubts about the online information, they will be unlikely to proceed with a purchase.

Hanaysha (2018) explains the consumer decision-making process, noting that the marketer's responsibility is to focus on the purchasing process instead of targeting the customer's purchase decision. The consumer's intention is not easy to gauge, as several psychological or cultural factors may influence customer behavior before each purchase. This research will focus on consumer behavior towards online shopping and outline the factors that impact consumers' behavior. This research paper begins with a literature review followed by the objectives and rationale of the study. The methodology is then addressed, leading to a discussion of the results found through the deployment of a questionnaire and the SPSS software. Finally, the study ends with the managerial implications, possible limitations, and recommendations for future research.

Literature Review and hypotheses

The literature review is divided into four parts: Online purchase intention, social influence, perceived risk, and the social media Apps design and content quality. Online purchase intention is the dependent variable, whereas social influence, perceived risk, and the social media Apps design and content quality are the independent variables.

Online purchase intention (Dependent Variable)

Athapaththu & Kulathunga (2018) have discussed online purchase intention as the final stage before an online transaction occurs. The customer intends to use a particular website to purchase a specific product. The process begins with the customer evaluating a specific product or service, applying knowledge, experience, and external information. The external information plays the most crucial role in the purchase intention process by influencing the consumers' attitudes. Although there are many external factors, as discussed in previous research by Athapaththu & Kulathunga (2018) and Alzahrani (2019), for this study, the focus pertains to social influence, perceived risk, and the social media Apps design and content quality as external factors.

Social Influence

In their study, Akar et al. (2015) define social influence as the process by which people directly or indirectly influence others' thoughts, feelings, and actions, in ways that may not necessarily occur during face-to-face interactions. Before the advent of the internet, social influence was limited to an individual's social circle. However, now it has broadened with Jalilvand et al. (2011) and Akar et al. (2015) explaining the four differences as to how social influence on the internet is different from the physical reality:

- Users can interact with others anonymously.
- Physical distance is no longer a consideration.
- Physical appearance is now not imperative.
- Interactions do not need to be simultaneous.

Peer pressure is another form of social influence whereby an individual might change his preferred choice to conform to society's ideals (Akar et al., 2015). With the invention of the internet, online word-of-mouth is also an essential factor influencing consumer decisions to buy products (Almohaimmeed, 2021). The addition of the 'like' and 'dislike' buttons and comments on social media platforms significantly affect people's decision-making. Social influence derived from social media platforms strongly affects consumer purchase intention, referred to as eWOM, i.e., electronic word-of-mouth by Yusuf et al. (2018). They found a significantly positive influence of eWOM on purchase intention, builds online trust, and plays a vital role in purchasing decisions,)Prasad et al., 2017).

Akar et al. (2015) discuss how online customer reviews play two roles in social influence, either being informative, i.e., providing additional user-focused information, or being suggestive, i.e., giving positive or negative signals of product popularity. Yadav et al. (2013) and Akar et al. (2015) observe that the social environment is an essential factor influencing people's decisions. People are more likely to adopt a similar product when they follow other people evaluating it. In their study, Yang et al.(2015) found that others' recommendations and the trust in those recommendations strongly influenced online purchase intention. Combining user-generated positive content and eWOM on social networking platforms significantly influences attitudes towards specific brands and

customer purchase intentions (Kudeshia & Kumar, 2017).

In a study conducted in 1991 by Meyers-Levy & Sternthal, the authors infer that purchase attitudes and intentions vary between genders. Women are seemingly more sensitive to online information while making judgments than their male counterparts. Karatsoli and Nathanail (2020) have found significant differences in social influence perceptions between males and females. While the available online content equally influenced women and men, women were more influenced than men for the reviews and ratings posted on the social media app. In their findings, Dewi et al. (2019) state that social influence and other factors in their model significantly positively affect online purchase intention. However, research conducted on consumers in Indonesia found that social influence among female and male consumers showed no differences. Their study was inconsistent with Pascual-Miguel et al. (2015), who suggest that gender does indeed act as a moderating factor between the relationship of social influence and purchase intention.

In his study, Suki (2013) found that students' social needs and social influence affected their online purchase intentions or behavior. Moreover, Malik et al. (2020) ascertained that in many families, teenage children influence their families' purchase decisions due to them being influenced by the internet. Conversely, Teo et al. (2019) recommended that marketers focus and invest strongly in visual marketing content because social influence was limited when tested on Instagram. This literature review has resulted in the formulation of the following hypothesis:

H1: Social influence significantly affects consumers' online purchase intentions.

H1a: There is a significant difference in variance in the perceptions of social influence between males and females.

H1b: Mean perception of Social influence differs significantly between males and females.

H1c: Mean perception of social influence is significantly different across different age groups.

Perceived Risk

Mobile apps have become a trusted confidante in performing online transactions during the past few years. Leeraphong & Mardjo (2013) state that before an individual intends to buy, they go through a series of assessment steps, i.e., the individual assesses a situation, weighs potential alternatives, makes a decision, and acts accordingly. Each alternative in the decision-making process involves risk and uncertainty, and the degree of perceived risk varies from individual to individual. Jahankhani(2009) suggests choosing the alternative with the least perceived risk and the most pleasing possible outcome. He defines perceived risk in his study as "The amount of risk that a consumer will experience consists of the amount at stake (consequences) and the individual's feeling of subjective certainty of success or failure." If the customer perceives the risk level as too high to purchase a product/service, he will not complete the transaction (Leeraphong & Mardjo, 2013). Perceived risks that the customer might encounter comprise security concerns such as a website taking personal details, coming across a fake website, or buying a product with negative reviews attached to it. Al-Alawi & Al-Bassam (2020) indicated that "The Internet generates massive business gateways and profits. Nonetheless, it also yields risks". Daily attacks on information systems include hacking, damaging,

accessing accounts, stealing information and money, or disrupting business operations. Currás-Pérez et al. (2013) indicate that operational and perceived social risks affect social networking users' attitudes. Operational risk is defined by Currás-Pérez et al. (2013) as the risk perceived by the individual upon the function-ability of the social media Apps itself. A study by Bhukya & Singh (2015) records that financial, physical, and psychological risk directly affects consumers' purchase intentions. While Beneke et al. (2012) found that only functional and time risk negatively impact consumers' purchase intentions, the financial risk has no effect.

D'Alessandro et al. (2012) state that a seller's marketing strategy and the buyer's perceived privacy with security risk influence purchase intention. Nasir et al. (2015) found that perceived security risk does have adverse effects on an individual's purchase intention. One of the main factors deterred consumers from purchasing products/services online. A review of the literature resulted in the formulation of the following hypothesis:

H2: Perceived risk negatively affects customers' online purchase intention.

H2a: There is a significant difference in variance in the perception of perceived risk between males and females.

H2b: Mean perception of perceived risk differs significantly between males and females.

H2c: Mean perception of perceived risk is significantly different across different age groups.

Social media Apps design and content quality

Athapaththu & Kulathunga (2018) describe how a customers' intention to purchase or repurchase a product is more likely to increase when two conditions are satisfied: perceived usefulness and ease of use. These two conditions follow the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which suggests that perceived usefulness and perceives ease-of-use influence an individual's adoption of technology (Kanwal & Rehman, 2014). Newman et al. (2018) found that ease of use markedly influences mobile apps' online purchases. Hence companies need to develop and offer user-friendly mobile apps to satisfy customer needs. The quality of the information and content is one of the most critical components of an app. When customers perceive excellent value in online buying, they trust the source. Athapaththu & Kulathunga (2018) have suggested that consumers base their judgment on the information, features, and content available to them.

In his study Huang (2012) reports that platform features, social identity, and interactivity are essential to shaping consumers' online experiences. He found social identity to be the most substantial influence on consumers' involvement, directly affecting purchase intention. However, Wang et al. (2017) argue that information quality and relationship building with consumers is essential and effective tools for influencing consumer purchase intention. Duffett (2015) found that user-friendly platforms affect purchase decisions positively, and a study by Ali (2016) on the hotel sector reports that website quality influences consumer satisfaction and purchase intention. According to Duffett (2015), advertising on Facebook positively influences purchase intention due to usage characteristics, demographic influence, and online duration.

Similarly, customers use different features on different apps to create and find reviews of products and services which affect purchase intention, such as closed public discussions

on Facebook, WhatsApp groups created by relatives and friends, comments below YouTube videos (Naeem, 2019). A review of the available literature resulted in the formulation of the following hypothesis:

H3: Social media Apps design and content quality is positively related to consumers' online purchase intentions.

H3a: There is a significant difference in variance in the perception of social app design and content quality between males and females.

H3b: Mean perception on social app design and content quality differ significantly between males and females.

H3c: Different age groups significantly differ in the mean perception of social media app design and content quality.

Research Methodology

The primary source of data collection in this study is a specifically structured questionnaire. This questionnaire was distributed using a snowball sampling technique through WhatsApp. A total of 171 respondents residing in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia participated in the survey. A rating scale was used to identify the most frequently used social media Apps in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Each question used for evaluating the above hypotheses was linked to a seven-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" (Number 1) to "Strongly agree" (Number 7). A nominal scale was used to ask participants demographic questions. Closed questions were utilized in the questionnaire. A short explanation of the topic was made available to the respondents to understand the questionnaire better. It was translated into Arabic to attract more respondents, as Arabic is the mother tongue in both Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. In order to analyze the responses, the SPSS data analysis tool was used in testing each hypothesis. Below are the hypotheses and the theoretical framework used in this study:

Hypotheses

H1: Social influence significantly affects customers' online purchase intention.

H1a: There is a significant difference in variance in social influence perception between males and females.

H1b: Mean perception of social influence differs significantly between males and females.

H1c: Mean perception of social influence is significantly different across age groups.

H2: Perceived risk negatively affects customers' online purchase intention.

H2a: There is a significant difference in perception of perceived risk between males and females.

H2b: Mean perception of perceived risk differs significantly between males and females.

H2c: Mean perception of perceived risk is significantly different across different age groups.

H3: Social media apps design and content quality is positively related to the consumers' online purchase intention.

H3a: There is a significant difference in variance in the perception of social app design

and content quality between males and females.

H3b: Mean perception on social app design and content quality differ significantly between males and females.

H3c: Different age groups significantly differ in the mean perception of social media app design and content quality.

Theoretical Framework

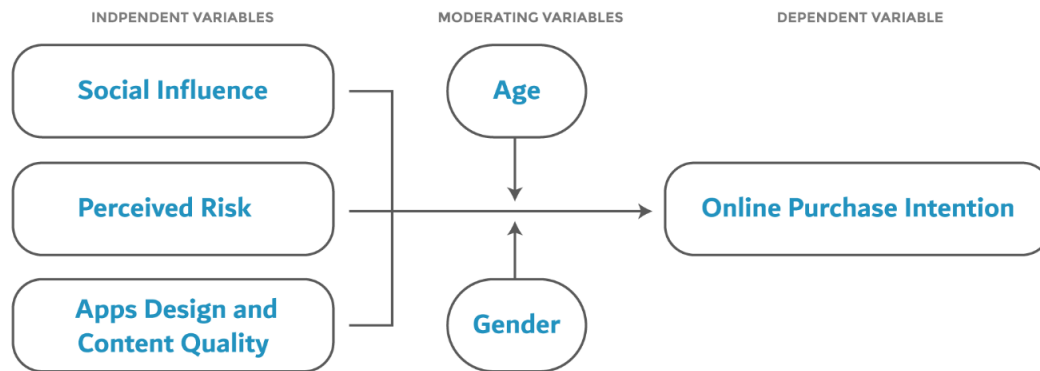The theoretical framework applied to the research is as follows:

Figure 1: Theoretical framework for the research

As shown in Figure 1, consumers' online purchase intention is the dependent variable of this study. In contrast, the independent variables are social influence, perceived risk, and the social media Apps design and content quality. Age and gender are the moderating variables.

Discussion and Analysis

Demographics

At the beginning of the survey, the respondents were asked to select their preferred language. The majority chose Arabic to complete the questionnaire as expected; only 8.19% of respondents chose English. Amongst the participants, two groups were categorized based on factors of gender and age. Among the 171 participants, 61.4% were female, whereas only 38.6% of males participated in the survey. The respondents were divided into four age groups: below 20 years of age, 21-30, 31-40, and 41+. 34% of the participants in the survey were aged 41+. The age group of 21-30 comprised 31% participants, 28.6% participants were aged 31-40, and 6.4% participants were aged 21 or less.

Frequency of Social Media daily usage

The respondents were asked a control question regarding their daily use of social media

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[1] Daily: almost every day.
[2] Usually: at 80% of the time.
[3] Sometimes: at less than half of the time.
[4] Rarely: at 20% of the time.
[5] Never: at no time.
[6] Always: almost all the time.

while carrying out a purchase in order to eliminate the responses that did not apply to the survey due to a lack of experience in social media platforms. Among the participants, 29.8 % reported using social media daily, 49.1% use it usually, 17.5% use it sometimes, 1.8% use it rarely , and 1.8 % never use any platform, so they were eliminated.

Frequency of purchasing products seen on social media

The respondents were asked, 'How often do you purchase products/services, as seen on social media platforms such as Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp?'. The survey results report that only 1.8% always buy the products/services seen on social media, whereas 7% The respondents were asked, 'How often do you purchase products/ services, as seen on social media platforms such as Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp?'. The survey results report that only 1.8% always buy the products/ services seen on social media, whereas 7% usually , 38% sometimes , 41.5% rarely, and 11.7% never purchase products/services on social media platforms.

Reliability test

The first test conducted was for reliability to measure the internal consistency in this study. The value of Cronbach's Alpha indicates an acceptable level of reliability with a value of 0.637.

Frequency of social media platforms usage

It was also required from the survey respondents to rate the apps based on their usage for the purchase of products/services, with 1 being the least used App by the respondent and 5 being the most used App by the respondent on a rating scale.

The results showed that WhatsApp's the most used App, with a mean value of 3.86. Next comes Snapchat (mean =2.79), Instagram (mean = 2.75), others (mean =2.58) and Facebook (mean= 2.14), respectively.

Descriptive Statistics

The questionnaire utilized a Likert scale and asked questions regarding the variables: social influence, perceived risk, social Apps design, and content quality, and Online Purchase intention. Where SOCIAL is social influence, RISK refers to the perceived risk, and DESIGN refers to the social Apps design and content quality, INTENTION refers to Online Purchase Intention.

The statements listed below (a-d) are used to measure the variable SOCIAL:

    Customer reviews affect my buying decisions.

    I am more likely to buy products with good reviews.

    Various people have influenced my decision to purchase products/services (such as influencers, family, friends, and colleagues).

    I am often influenced by advertisements when making my purchase decisions.

The statements listed below (e-i) are used to measure the variable RISK:

    I lost trust in buying products/services online due to a bad experience with a fake website.

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7 Usually: at 80% of the time.
8 Sometimes: at less than half of the time.
9 Rarely: at 20% of the time.
10 Never: at no time.

I am concerned that social media apps will collect too much information about me.

I do not feel safe buying products/ services marketed on social media.

I do not feel secure when transacting through social media apps.

I believe that products/services seen on social media are trustworthy.

The statements listed below (j- l) are used to measure the variable DESIGN:

I perceive the content quality (i.e., information) on social media apps as appealing.

I perceive the appearance (i.e., overall graphic look) on social media as appealing.

The social media apps I used to buy products/services were easy to navigate.

The statements listed below (m-p) are used to measure the variable INTENTION:

I often purchase products/services on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, etc.) platforms.

The advertisements and accounts of products/services on social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.) attract me.

The products/services I purchased met my expectations.

I would recommend others to use social media to purchase products/services.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for the 168 respondents

Ind. Var.	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
SOCIAL	168	4.00	25.00	13.6310	4.77087
RISK	168	10.00	35.00	21.6429	4.90666
DESIGN	168	3.00	21.00	11.2500	4.12637
Valid N (listwise)	168				

The results for descriptive statistics are listed in Table 1 and Table 2. Table 1 lists the results for the entire sample of the respondents. Based on the results listed in Table 1, the standard deviation represents the respondents' level of agreement. The highest standard deviation is observed in the variables RISK and SOCIAL among the respondents, DESIGN showing the lowest standard deviation. When considering the mean value, it was found that the highest mean value is for RISK (perceived risk) followed by SOCIAL (social influence), then DESIGN (social Apps design and content quality).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics divided by gender

GENDER (M.V.)		SOCIAL	RISK	DESIGN
Male	N	65	65	65
	Mean	14.7692	21.6308	11.2308
	Median	15.0000	22.0000	11.0000
	Std. Deviation	4.76894	4.67897	4.19363
Female	N	103	103	103
	Mean	12.9126	21.6505	11.2621
	Median	12.0000	21.0000	10.0000
	Std. Deviation	4.65287	5.06760	4.10395

Table 2 lists the descriptive statistics for all male and female respondents. Based on the mean value, it was found that males and females share almost the same impression for DESIGN and RISK. However, there is a slight difference in their impression of SOCIAL (Social influence). The standard deviation for RISK was also found to be lower (4.67) than the standard deviation among the female respondents (5.06).

Table 3: Pearson Correlation

Ind. Var.		SOCIAL	RISK	DESIGN
SOCIAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.268**	.571**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	168	168	168
RISK	Pearson Correlation	.268**	1	.410**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	168	168	168
DESIGN	Pearson Correlation	.571**	.410**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	168	168	168

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Pearson Correlation

Hanaysha (2018) reports that a Pearson coefficient value of 0.90 or greater leads to an issue in multicollinearity among the variables. The Pearson correlation results are listed in Table 3 below. All variables have a value less than 0.90. The highest correlation observed is between DESIGN and SOCIAL, with a value of 0.571. It can be concluded that there is no issue of multicollinearity between the results.

Table 4: Independent sample t-test

Ind. Var.		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (-2tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
SOCIAL	Equal variances assumed							.74420	.38730	3.32592
	Equal variances not assumed			2.481	133.712	.014	1.85661	.74838	.37641	3.33681
RISK	Equal variances assumed	.160	.690	-.025	166	.980	-.01972	.77959	-1.55891	1.51948
	Equal variances not assumed			-.026	144.232	.979	-.01972	.76560	-1.53295	1.49352

DESIGN	Equal variances assumed	.104	.748	-.048	166	.962	-.03137	.65562	-1.32579	1.26305
	Equal variances not assumed			-.048	134.020	.962	-.03137	.65885	-1.33445	1.27172

Independent t-test and the ANOVA test Along with the hypotheses included in this study, it was addressed whether there was a difference between the male and female respondents' perceptions of the three variables: RISK, SOCIAL, and DESIGN. The results of the Independent sample t-test are listed in Table 4.

The hypotheses proposed before the present study was undertaken:

H1a: There is a significant difference in variance in the perception of the social influence between males and females

H2a: There is a significant difference in variance in the perception of perceived risk between males and females

H3a: There is a significant difference in variance in the perception of social media Apps design and content quality between males and females.

Based on the results observed under Levene's Test for Equality of Variances, the significance values (0.735) for SOCIAL, (0.690) for RISK, and (0.748) for DESIGN are reportedly more than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the hypotheses (H1a, H2a, H3a) are rejected.

Following this, the test for equality of mean was also conducted. The results of the significant values listed under the Equality of Means in Table 4 can be used to test the following hypotheses:

H1b: Mean perception of Social influence differs significantly between males and females

H2b: Mean perception of perceived risk differs significantly between males and females

H3b: Mean perception of social media Apps design and content quality differs significantly between males and females.

Based on the significant values listed in Table 4, i.e., RISK (0.980) and DESIGN (0.962) are more than 0.05 level of significance, which leads to the rejection of (H2b, H3b). Simultaneously, SOCIAL had a significance value of (0.014), lower than the 0.05 level of confidence. Therefore, H1b is Accepted.

According to the results of the independent sample t-test, it was found that there is no significant difference in variance in the perception of social influence, perceived risk, and social media Apps design and content quality between male and female respondents. However, the mean perception of perceived risk and the social media Apps design and content quality does not vary significantly between males and females, but social influence does.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics based on Age Group

AGE (M.V.)		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Below 20	SOCIAL	11	5.00	25.00	14.9091	5.43055
	RISK	11	16.00	32.00	23.0909	5.92376
	DESIGN	11	4.00	21.00	12.0909	4.32330
	Valid N (listwise)	11				
21 – 30	SOCIAL	52	6.00	23.00	12.4423	4.73789
	RISK	52	12.00	35.00	21.8846	4.93747
	DESIGN	52	4.00	21.00	10.6346	4.10179
	Valid N (listwise)	52				
31 – 40	SOCIAL	49	4.00	25.00	13.1429	4.08758
	RISK	49	10.00	35.00	21.3061	5.57974
	DESIGN	49	3.00	21.00	10.4286	4.43001
	Valid N (listwise)	49				
41 and Above	SOCIAL	56	6.00	25.00	14.9107	4.98097
	RISK	56	14.00	35.00	21.4286	4.04006
	DESIGN	56	3.00	20.00	12.3750	3.63099
	Valid N (listwise)	56				

Research variables based on age were then applied to observe if the mean perception of social influence, perceived risk, and social media apps design and content quality differed across the different age groups. Table 5 lists the number of respondents who participated in the study; only 11 individuals were below the age of 20, whereas the majority of the participants were above 41 years of age.

Table 6: ANOVA test

Ind. Var.		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
SOCIAL	Between Groups	194.829	3	64.943	2.953	.034
	Within Groups	3606.290	164	21.990		
	Total	3801.119	167			
RISK	Between Groups	34.232	3	11.411	.469	.704
	Within Groups	3986.339	164	24.307		
	Total	4020.571	167			
DESIGN	Between Groups	131.408	3	43.803	2.649	.051
	Within Groups	2712.092	164	16.537		
	Total	2843.500	167			

The results for the ANOVA test are listed in Table 6 above. The significance values listed in Table 6 are significant to the original hypotheses. Before conducting the ANOVA test, the following hypotheses (H1c, H2c & H3c) were posited:

H1c: Mean perception of social influence is significantly different across age groups.

H2c: Mean perception of perceived risk is significantly different across age groups.

H3c: Mean perception of social media Apps design and content quality is significantly different across different age groups.

The significance values of both RISK (0.704) and DESIGN (0.051) are more than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence hypotheses (H2C & H3C) are rejected. However, SOCIAL

with a significance value of (0.034) is less than 0.05 level of significance, thus (H1C) is accepted.

Sample t-test for hypotheses testing

Table 7: Linear Regression

Model Ind. Var.		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	8.581	.645		13.314	.000
	SOCIAL	.114	.034	.270	3.349	.001
	RISK	-.053	.030	-.128	-1.769	.079
	DESIGN	.180	.042	.369	4.335	.000

Dependent Variable: INTENTION

Linear Regression Analysis was conducted to test the original hypotheses of this study, and the results are listed in Table 7 above.

Listed below are the hypotheses of this study:

H1: Social Influence has a significant effect on customers' online purchase intentions For SOCIAL (social influence) it was found that the p-value (0.001) < 0.01 level of confidence. It can be concluded that hypothesis H1 is accepted with a 99% confidence level.

H2: Perceived Risk has a negative relationship with customers' online purchase intentions For RISK (perceived risk), it was found that the p-value (0.079) > 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis H2 is rejected. Consequently, it can be concluded that the perceived risk has no significant effect on customers' online purchase intentions.

H3: Social media Apps design and content quality is positively related to the consumers' online purchase process For DESIGN (social media Apps design and content quality), it was found that the p-value (.000) < 0.01 level of significance. It can be concluded that hypothesis H3 is accepted with a 99% confidence level.

Conclusions

It is evident that social media apps usage is trending, and the number of users is rapidly increasing. This has led many companies to launch marketing campaigns on these platforms. Many users post their opinions on these apps, evaluating their purchases and the companies. In addition to this, businesses on social media platforms provide their customers with extra benefits following their purchase reviews. Moreover, some customers began advertising for products and services themselves. In this age of digitalization, many companies have become proactive in using Apps in building consumer relationships to better market and sell their products and services.

The research detailed above found that social influence and social media app design and content quality significantly affect consumers' online purchase intentions. However, perceived risk had no significant impact on consumers' online purchase intentions in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. The variables chosen for this study were based on the results obtained from earlier research. These factors have previously been considerably affecting consumers' online purchase intentions. Yet, it was found that perceived risk

had no significant effect on online purchase intention for consumers living in Bahrain or Saudi Arabia. This result would justify the increased internet security protocols provided and made available to consumers. Prospective customers may judge the authenticity of a website from reviews posted by consumers on the company's website or other social media. Banking corporations have made purchasing online easier by introducing electronic wallets that reduce the perceived risk of theft. Furthermore, a "cybersecurity component is a defense and safeguards the firm's financial information, intellectual properties, and reputation against unauthorized parties.". Al-Alawi & Al-Bassam (2021).

It was found that the perception of individuals on independent variables was as follows: Perceived risk and social media app design and content quality did not differ based on gender or age, only via social influence. In many households, the younger generation influences the purchase intentions of the parents. In addition to this, to market their product and services, many companies utilize the services of influencers by sending them their products or services to review and share with their online followers. As a result, a busy schedule and perceived ease of use have increasingly led people to purchase products and services online.

Managerial Implications

This study provides tested findings to guide marketing professionals who advertise a particular product in Bahrain or Saudi Arabia through online social media platforms. It addresses the probabilities of finding potential online customers and the most appropriate social media platform to attract them.

Limitations / Future Research

Future studies should conduct comparative research between older and younger age groups to identify the best methods for marketers to reach each demographic. As this research was conducted in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, the findings cannot be generalized concerning other countries. Therefore, it is recommended to replicate this research in GCC and MENA countries to explore other stakeholders' perspectives. Future studies may also follow a comparative approach, identifying differences in customer intention between regions. Moreover, it is also recommended to include alternative variables for comparison to provide a more comprehensive view for marketers. Finally, it is highly recommended for future research to explore whether the current COVID-19 pandemic moderates the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

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العوامل المؤثرة على نية المستهلكين للشراء عبر الإنترنت من خلال منصات التواصل الاجتماعي في المملكة العربية السعودية ومملكة البحرين

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المُستَخلَص

الغرض: تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فهم العوامل التي تؤثر على نية المستهلكين للشراء عبر الإنترنت من خلال منصات التواصل الاجتماعي المختلفة المستخدمة على نطاق واسع في المملكة العربية السعودية ومملكة البحرين، مثل تطبيق واتساب وإنستغرام وسناب شات وفيسبوك. **المنهجية:** تم استخدام استبيان منظم لقياس تأثير المخاطر المتصورة والتأثير الاجتماعي وتصميم تطبيقات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وجودة المحتوى على نية الأفراد للشراء عبر الإنترنت. تم جمع البيانات من 171 مشاركاً في الاستبيان ثم تم تحليلها باستخدام برنامج التحليل الإحصائي SPSS. **النتائج:** تشير النتائج إلى أن التأثير الاجتماعي وتصميم تطبيقات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وجودة المحتوى يؤثران بشكل كبير على نية المستهلكين للشراء عبر الإنترنت. وعلى النقيض من ذلك، فإن المخاطر المتصورة لا تؤثر على نية المستهلكين للشراء عبر الإنترنت. كما أشارت النتائج إلى عدم وجود فرق على أساس العمر ونوع الجنس بين المشاركين في تأثرهم بالمخاطر المتصورة وتصميم تطبيقات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وجودة المحتوى. ولكن، تم العثور على الفرق في التأثير الاجتماعي. **الأصالة:** ركزت هذه الدراسة على العوامل المؤثرة في نية الشراء عبر الإنترنت في المملكة العربية السعودية والبحرين بسبب انتشار عمليات الشراء على نطاق واسع عن طريق المواقع والتطبيقات عبر الإنترنت مؤخراً. كما أن هناك عدد قليل جدا من الدراسات حول هذا الموضوع في كلا البلدين . **قيود البحث:** تم إجراء البحث فقط في البحرين والمملكة العربية السعودية. ولذلك، لا يمكن تعميم النتائج على بلدان أخرى. كما يمكن للدراسات المستقبلية اتباع نهج المقارنة لإيجاد أي اختلاف بين توجه المستهلكين بين البلدين و استخدام المتغيرات في دراسات أخرى.

الكلمات الدالة: المخاطر المتصورة، التأثير الاجتماعي، وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، تصميم التطبيقات، التسويق الرقمي، الشراء عبر الإنترنت، نية الشراء عبر الإنترنت، جودة المحتوى.