
**UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER CENTRIC APPROACH TO ADD
VALUE TO SOCIAL ECRM (SECRM)**

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Abstract

Social media is fastest and strongest growing platform and can be seen as a New Business Model (NBM) for firms to develop and conduct their business operations. This development has strengthened the social consumers and has motivated the firms to apply new technologies to align with the NBM. The most important Information Systems strategy for many firms is to make consumer as focal point for all business operations in Social Electronic Customer Relationship Management (SECRM). This is a new concept started only in 2009 as an e-business strategy for firms to enable customer relationship management (with social customers) utilizing social technology and termed as Social Electronic Customer Relationship Management (SECRM). There the many applications that are labeled as SECRM but all these applications lack the framework of working and do not have effective planning and design for the implementation in such a ways that customer relationship can be developed. It is also found that many firms are using SECRM just as one of the method of communication channel, selling platform but not many firms considering the SECRM as one of the strategy to build firm image and earn profit and eventually build good ECRM. This study tries to build a conceptual framework for plan and design for SECRM and explains the benefits of using customer centric approach to build SECRM. Results are based on secondary data collected from various web sources presenting the advantages of using customer centric approach to build SECRM and to for developing the conceptual framework for the plan

Keywords: New Business Model, Social Electronic Customer Relationship Management, conceptual framework, customer centric approach

1. Introduction

The fast proliferation and wide-adoption of Web 2.0 technologies have given rise to a new class of customers, called social customers [1]. Many companies see tremendous opportunities in harnessing the social technology to build relationship with this new class of customers. As such, Social CRM (Customer Relationship Management), or SCRM, has emerged in late 2009 and become the latest research of Social Electronic CRM (SECRM) initiatives. However, SECRM is yet to be fully utilized as a tool in improving customer relationship—which is believed to eventually drive profitability—as companies are still trying to understand this new type of customer and are adapting to the newsocial commerce environment [2]. The context of SCRM today is drastically different from the pre-Web 2.0 era in many ways. In particular, the interaction space on social media

cannot be controlled by the firms as they did in the past with well-defined, one-to-one channels, such as phone calls to call centers [3]. There are no more “channels” in social media, only touch points: Customers are interacting with many companies and “friends” in different platforms *simultaneously*. Furthermore, the speed of eWoM (word of mouth) is unprecedented: social customers can become a firm’s free promoters or brand destroyers; their likes/dislikes can spread virally and instantly. The fast real-time ripple effect of brand damage raised urgent needs to address the challenges of SCRM design and implementation.

Customer-centricity is a business strategy that’s based on putting your customer first and at the core of your business in order to provide a positive experience and build long-term relationships [4]. Figure 1 shows the customer centricity for long term relationship for CRM

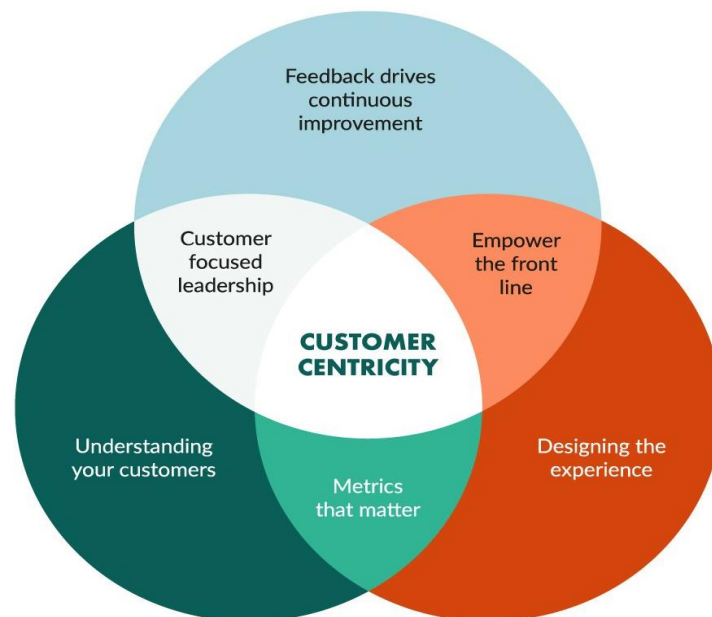


Figure 1. Customer centricity for CRM [4]

The customer is firmly in the driving seat and with it comes a required change in how they build and nurture relationships with potential and existing customers. Companies that put the customer at the heart of their organization are experiencing an increase in customer lifetime value and a reduction in churn. This can be done by being customer-centric like becoming a truly customer-centric organization takes time, but you can start small. The research provides 4 best practices to becoming a customer-centric company and share 3 ways to measure success. Customer-centric ways of doing business is focused on providing a positive customer experience before and after the sale in order to drive repeat business, enhances customer loyalty and improve business growth. However, a customer-centric company requires more than offering good customer service [5]. Both Amazon and Zappos are prime examples of brands that are customer-centric and have spent years creating a culture around the

customer and their needs. Their commitment in delivering customer value is genuine. In fact, Zappos is happy to fire employees if they do not fit within their customer-centric culture [6].

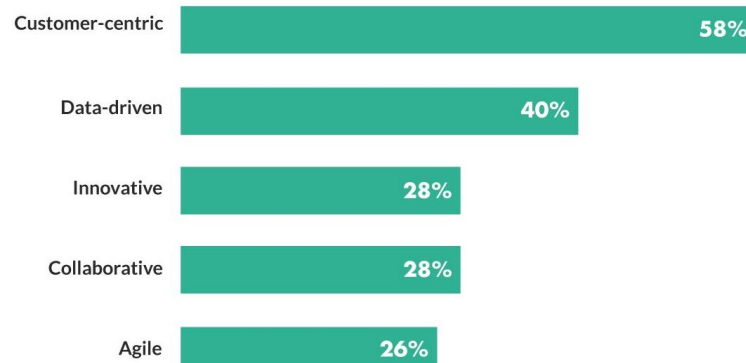


Figure 2. Characteristics important for building digital native culture for the firm [7]

The statistics in figure 2 shows that customer centricity is most important characteristics to build digital native nature of the firm. An E-CRM strategy defines the goals for your CRM or social CRM program and then creates a roadmap of the changes to process, tools and team needed to make it a reality. The failure rates of CRM projects have discredited CRM, but that doesn't mean the approach is flawed. In this research, e-CRM is measured with 3 dimensions, which consist of information quality, customer service efficiency, and ease of navigation [8]. There are five dimensions of CRM include information sharing, customer involvement, long-term partnership, joint problem solving and technology-based CRM are selected to measure their relationship with innovation capabilities including innovation in product, innovation in process, innovation in administrative affairs, innovation [9]. The dimensions of customer services are tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The 3 elements of service quality are based on the question for how to measure service quality? To answer this question three elements have to be defined as given below:

- Tangibles: appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials.
- Reliability: ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.
- Responsiveness: willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.

There are five gap model of service quality which are given below:

- The gap between Service Quality Specification and Management Perception
- The gap between Service Quality Specification and Service Delivery
- The gap between Service Delivery and External Communication
- The gap between the Expected Service and Experienced Service

A social CRM strategy is essentially what it sounds like: adding a social element to customer relationship management. The goal in bringing social to CRM is not only to

increase brand awareness, but also to engage with customers more often and with higher quality interactions.

A social CRM is the integration between your customer relationship management (CRM) software and social media channels. This empowers your teams to understand and engage customers, gain market insights, and provide better customer service.

There are many Tips for creating and achieving SECRM such as make sure you have a good platform for conducting social CRM, make sure you have the right resources, identify and engage your social influencers, reward loyal customers, use list and group features, talk with your customers, respond to customers in a timely manner.

2. Literature Review

SCRM: The Changing Landscape

Social CRM, as the name implies, was broadly and loosely defined to integrate CRM technology and social platform capabilities to engage customers and optimize customer experiences to drive profitability (Greenberg 2010). Since its conception in late 1990s, ECRM, or simply CRM, appeared to be at the core of strategic initiatives for businesses to compete profitably (Chen and Chen 2004). It is well-recognized as information-technology (IT)-enabled relationship marketing (Ryals and Payne 2001). The premise of ECRM is that customer equity (Rust et al. 2004) is the key to increasing enterprise value and customer equity is a partial function of customer relationships.

Social CRM continues ECRM's central practice of using IT to enable relationship management. It is also called CRM 2.0 by some, mirroring its underlying technology—Web 2.0—which enables virtual communities and collaboration on a scale never seen before. Evolving SCRM The differences between traditional ECRM and SCRM contexts and goals are shown in Table 1 and described below. It is important to note that SCRM is a continuous evolution of ECRM and that SCRM is still evolving. Business Philosophy: SCRM continues the philosophy of ECRM to use IT to enable customer relationship. Technology Base: Traditional ECRM uses Web 1.0 technology in facilitating customer relationship-building (e.g., to attract and retain profitable customers) while SCRM is enabled by Web 2.0 technology. Process: There are five broad technological “engines” used in a traditional ECRM system including: information storage engine (database or data warehouse), customer segmentation engine, personalization engine, multi-channel broadcast engine, and transaction engine (Microstrategy 2001). These five engines support four generic CRM processes (IDIC): Identification, Differentiation, Interaction, and Customization (Peppers and Rogers 2004). The difference is that in traditional ECRM the IDIC processes are internal, and transaction-based and can be easily applied in well-defined, firm-controlled channels while SCRM has dynamic customer-driven processes wherever touch-points the customers happens to be active. For instance, a customer may complain about a brand on a blog, or help solve another customer's problem on Facebook through an iPhone app or may provide a product review on YouTube.

Interaction place: Traditional ECRM typically engages customers in one-to-one interaction via well-defined channels, such as email, phone calls, direct marketing, a company website, or face-to-face in physical stores. In a SECRM context, “many-to-many” interactions in the service eco-system are typical, where customers simultaneously interact with many other customers and other companies (including competitor companies) on social platforms. As such, there are no well-defined “channels” for interaction but dynamic, customer-driven touch-points realized in social media.

Segmentation, Broadcast Message flow, Control: Traditional ECRM segmented customers’ transaction data for campaigning/customization and broadcasted messages from firms to customers including phone calls, email, TV ads; these are pushed-based communications. A SCRM system does not usually segment customer data, as it is less meaningful or effective. In the SCRM context, message flow is often pull-based, such as through a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed or by having customers follow companies on Twitter or “like” companies on their Facebook pages. The company is no longer in control of the process; the social customers are: Design/Analysis scope, Data Store, Data analysis: Traditional Analytical CRM is based on advanced data warehousing and mining technology to offer a 360° view of customers (based on transaction data) that allows profiling, personalization, customization and making recommendations for cross- or up-selling. These are subject-oriented techniques of data warehousing technology, in which each item of customers’ transaction data can be a “subject.” Many systems for personalization are in use for ECRM in general and SCRM as well but many more, new analytical tools mining social data have been developed, combining web crawlers technology and, for instance, deep packet inspection (DPI) of social customers’ click stream behavior across all touch points at ISP levels. The data of interest are not transaction-based only, they focus on customer network effects, interactions, conversations, sentiment, advocate behaviors, customer contributed content, etc. Metrics: New metrics are being called for and are rapidly emerging. In traditional ECRM, quantitative measures such as Decency, Frequency, Monetary (RFM) or Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) analysis based on transactional data are common but these are not suitable for SCRM. SCRM is more interested in, for instance, how influential a customer is among his or her community—Customer referral value (CRV). Also of interest are share of voice, size and engagement of communities, and sentiment (like or dislike). Many commercial SCRM technology companies, such as IBM, now offer a range of new metrics (Forrester 2010). Viral Marketing, Crowd sourcing, Customer Loyalty: Viral marketing campaigns are easier to achieve with SCRM technology. Instead of, or in addition to, repeat patronage, social customers provide electronic word of mouth (eWOM); their advocating for a brand is viewed as a sign of customer loyalty. Crowd sourcing strategies such as collective product reviews and the creation of new products, can be affected by SCRM technologies to achieve lower operation costs and greater innovation for companies.

Need for a New Design Thinking: Although SCRM aims to foster outcomes from good relationship marketing practices and the social technology provides ample opportunities for open dialogue to engage and co-create with customers, many SCRM initiatives have nonetheless fallen short. This is because some companies are unable to adjust their design thinking for the new social, Web 2.0 context. There are two major reasons for this. First, some companies see the new social platform as just “another” communication channel. We have seen that the one-to-one “channel” approach is at odds with how social customers communicate and act in their networks. Without changing their design thinking, the companies’ messages are pushed to customers on social media, just like in traditional ECRM in the Web 1.0 era. The pushed messages run the great risk of being perceived as lacking in perceived sincerity (O’Malley and Mitussis 2002; Mitussis et al. 2006). Customers’ reaction on the social world is unpredictable. For example, McDonald sent two tweets with the hashtag “McDStories” to customers, which were hijacked by customers and the messages were changed not in the way McDonald has expected or hoped for (Huffington Post 2012). This firm-centric approach of pushing messages, grounded in G-D logic, renders their SCRM efforts ineffective. This is because customers are not seen as value-creation partners; they are seen as outside the company and processed as transactions, rather than cultivated for value-creating relationships. Moreover, the perceived insincerity can spread virally and damage their brand image more quickly and widely than ever before. Second, many managers view SECRM, like traditional ECRM, as a technological magic bullet that will dramatically improve their bottom line. ECRM has not been the panacea that many had hoped (Kale 2004; Newell 2003). It is clear that IT does not create relationships or customer advocacy. It is, arguably, a necessary condition, but not sufficient for ECRM or SCRM success. Despite the lessons from traditional ECRM failures in past years, companies view SCRM as yet another new technology to be implemented without fundamentally rethinking the ways they do business in the new social commerce, multi-dimensional network context.

3. Results and Discussion

Segmentation, Broadcast Message flow, Control: Traditional ECRM segmented customers’ transaction data for campaigning/customization and broadcasted messages from firms to customers including phone calls, email, TV ads; these are pushed-based communications. A SCRM system does not usually segment customer data, as it is less meaningful or effective. In the SCRM context, message flow is often pull-based, such as through a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed or by having customers follow companies on Twitter or “like” companies on their Facebook pages. The company is no longer in control of the process; the social customers are: Design/Analysis scope, Data Store, Data analysis: Traditional Analytical CRM is based on advanced data warehousing and mining technology to offer a 360° view of customers (based on transaction data) that allows profiling, personalization, customization and making recommendations for cross- or up-selling. These are

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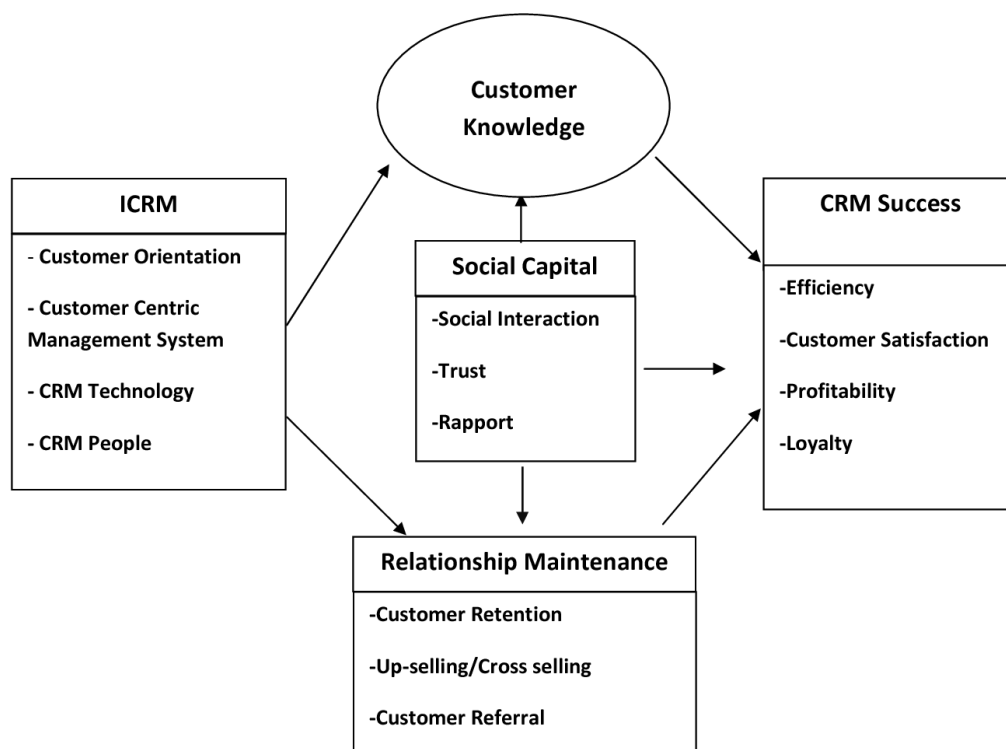


Figure 3. Relationship between SECRM and CRM success factors

Viral marketing campaigns are easier to achieve with SCRM technology. Instead of, or in addition to, repeat patronage, social customers provide electronic word of mouth (eWOM); their advocating for a brand is viewed as a sign of customer loyalty. Crowd sourcing strategies such, as collective product reviews and the creation of new products, can be affected by SCRM technologies to achieve lower operation costs and greater innovation for companies. Figure 4 shows the use cases for SECRM that help in building the relationships.



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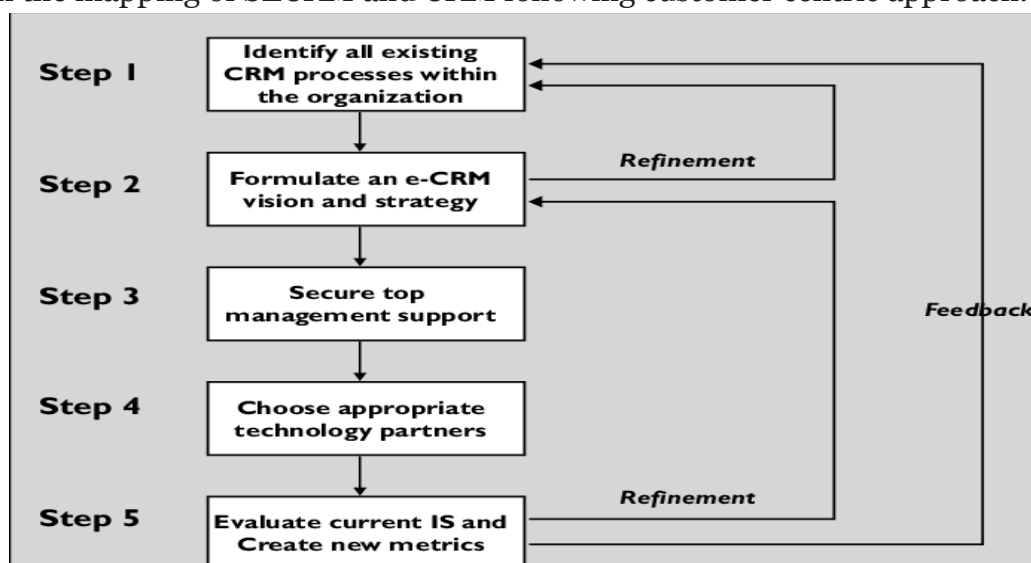


Figure 5. Steps to design the mapping of SECRM and CRM following customer centric approach

4. Conclusions

This research contributes to examine the new social commerce open environment context for SECRM development as opposed to the traditional closed world mapping with CRM and explains the relevance of customer centric approach in their mapping. Also this research explains types and dimensions of SECRM and SECRM important for the design and analysis. The research concluded why customer centric approach is relevant and what role it plays in mapping of SECRM and CRM.

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3. Factors of Consumer Behaviour of youth from middle-east when purchasing Organic Food

Abstract

The objective of this paper is to analyse consumer behaviour (CB) of youths from middle-east for buying organic food. Our study brings information which can potentially be used for further research and will also be useful for organizations with a practical interest in the production sale and distribution of organic food. To investigate the influence of the various factors in CB, we have applied the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Price Effect Theory (PET). In the current concept, there is no significant research conducted in measuring the factors of CB that influence youths in middle-east for organic food. The theoretical part deals with the concept of consumer behaviour, factors that affect the CB, and the conceptual framework of TPB and PET. In the analytical part we have collected data from the sample of 200 potential consumers who are students in the various universities in the metropolitan cities of three countries of middle-east, namely Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), United Arab Emirate (UAE) and Oman. Questionnaires are focused on measuring the CB for purchasing organic food while following the theory of TPB and PET. Particular items were measured using a 6-point Likert's scale, where 1 represented a negative attitude (completely disagree or definitely not) and 6 represented a positive attitude (completely agree or definitely yes). The authors opted for an even Likert scale in order to avoid the middle value and thus obtained the real opinion of the consumer who had to select one of the possibilities and thus adopt a position on the research issue. In the middle-east, the young consumer are influenced mainly by factors such as personal attitude and subjective norms. Limitations of this study are the fact that in our questionnaire we focused on how the consumer viewed the purchase of organic food

in general and not how they view the purchase of individual organic. Our contribution is to identify the factors that influence youth's buying behaviour and choice for organic food in middle-east because their buying behaviour would help companies to innovate organic food and know the demand trends for the same.

Keywords: Consumer Behaviour, Organic Food, Theory of Planned Behaviour , Price Effect Theory

Introduction

Health and a healthy lifestyle have become increasingly important trends in recent times. Consumers have become increasingly interested in what they eat in particular, the nutritional value and the level of artificial additives in food. These changes in preferences have led to changes in consumer behaviour and significant growth in the demand for organic food which has become one of the fastest growing markets in the food industry. According to Naim (2022), this boom in organic food is set to continue and a recent report from the TechSci Research company gave a positive outlook for the future Arshi (2021). In order to respond adequately to these changes, it is important to understand the factors influencing the behaviour of consumers when purchasing organic food, both for the retailer and producer, as well as for politicians involved in ecological farming.



Figure 1. Factors affecting Consumer Behaviour

In addition, many of the authors mentioned above have mainly dealt with the behaviour of the adult population, which is the main purchasing force. As a result, the behaviour of the younger generation, which will very quickly be of productive age and become the new purchasing force, has received little investigation.



Figure 2. Subfactors affecting consumer behaviour

In the Middle-east Republic, it is more obvious, because there has only been one study on the behaviour of this sector. For this reason, we decided to focus our research on identifying the factors behind the consumer behaviour of the younger generation. To distinguish our research, we used the model of TPB, which was used in Middle-east.

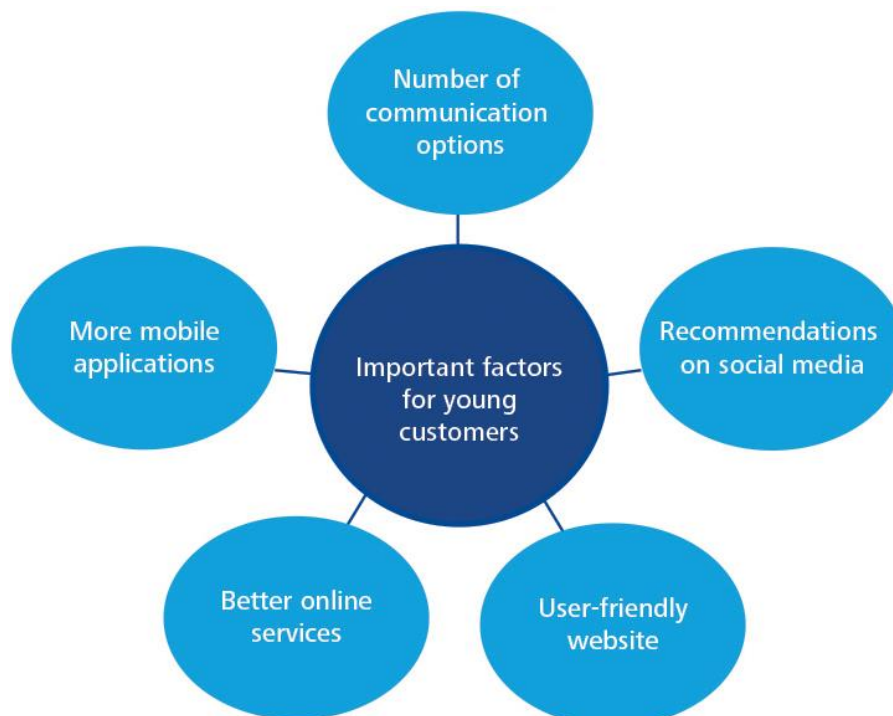


Figure 3. Factors of Yourn consumers for CB

Further, we incorporated additional constructs (moral attitude, health consciousness, and environmental concern) in the TPB who measured its appropriateness in Indian surrounding. Combining both - young generation and extended model of TPB bring crucial information which can potentially be used

not only as a basis for further research but will also be useful for organizations with a practical interest in the production, sale and distribution of organic food.

Literature Review

Organic food, which can be defined as: 'food produced without using the conventional inputs of modern, industrial agriculture: pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), irradiation or food additives' (Allen and Albaladejo, 2007), is by law food from ecological farming which seeks not only to cultivate high-quality food, but also protects the environment. In addition to the health and safety requirements, the production and processing of this food have to fulfill the requirements set out in the Council Regulation (EC) no. 834/2007 and also the law on ecological farming in the Middle-east Republic no. 242/2000 Coll. (eAGRI, 2016). Organic food can also be simply distinguished from conventional food by its special 'euro-leaf' label which has been used for all ecological products produced in the EU since 2010. In addition to this label, there can also be a national logo, which falls under the competence of the appropriate country (eAGRI, 2017).

The applicability of TPB for organic food has also been demonstrated by several studies across diverse cultures (Yadav and Pathak, 2016), while recent research has shown that other factors also have an important influence. Amongst those which are cited most frequently are moral aspects (Yazdanpanah and Forouzani, 2015, Arvola et al. 2008), health concerns (Smith and Paladino, 2010, Yadav and Pathak, 2016) and concerns about the environment (Smith and Paladino, 2010; Pagiaslis and Krontalis, 2014). Additionally, it has also been shown that the inclusion of other prognostic variables into the original model improves its predictive ability, which is particularly desirable (Arvola et al., 2008; Donald, Cooper and Conchie, 2014).

If we include for organic food, the individual factors can be described in the following way. We understand personal attitude to mean the extent to which the consumer thinks that organic food is healthier, tastier and of better quality, and the extent to which the purchase of organic food is considered to be wise and sensible behaviour (Hughner et al 2007; Gil and Söder 2006; Aryal et al. 2009). Subjective norms refer to whether those close to the consumer (family, friends, colleagues) believe that a specific behaviour is correct and that the consumer should, therefore, also behave in that way (Chen, 2007). Conscious control of behaviour represents the higher price, accessibility and the trust of consumers in the certification system and the label 'organic'. In other words, this variable tells us how easy it is for the specific consumer to purchase organic food (Yadav and Pathak, 2016; Yazdanpanah and Forouzani, 2015). We understand the moral aspects to be the concerns of the specific consumer about him/herself, as well as society and the environment (Arvola et al., 2008; Yadava and Pathaka, 2016). Concerns about your own health are the extent to which health and the content of food are important for the con-

sumer when deciding whether or not to buy organic food. In the case of concerns about the environment, it is about the extent to which ecological issues enter into the consumer's decision-making process – when purchasing organic food, do they consider the negative impacts from its production and distribution on the environment? (Yadav and Pathak, 2016).

Results/ Discussion

The factor which the research results in consumer behaviour indicated were significantly influential was subjective norms. This finding led us to the conclusion that this might also be the case for the young consumer.

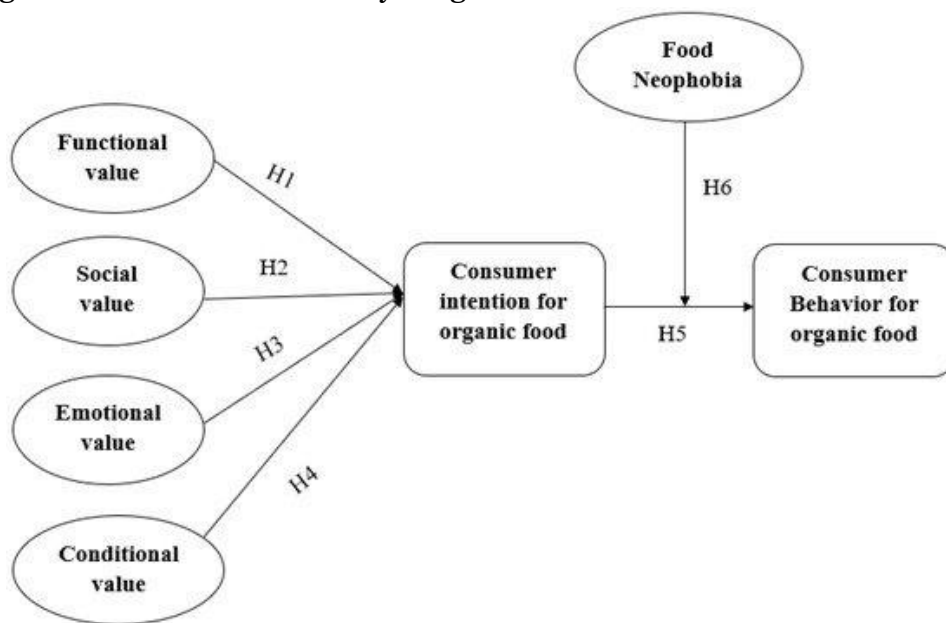


Figure 4. Factors identified in the research to measure CB for Organic food in Middleeast.

The research also showed that organic food is viewed negatively by the families of consumers who do not buy organic food as well as by those who prioritize it. From this, we deduced that there may be a limited level of independence in the decision-making of students from Brno, which may be one of the main reasons why a large number of young consumers still prefer conventional food.

The last factor which was added to the original TPB model, and the significance of which is agreed upon by a number of authors was moral aspects. Its significance stems from criticisms of rational models and represents people's convictions about what is and is not correct. The significance of this factor in predicting the consumer's intention to purchase organic food was also demonstrated in this research and the value of the standardized beta coefficient indicated the most substantial association in comparison with the other factors.

CONCLUSIONS

Our use of the social-psychological TPB model to explain the behaviour of young Middle-east consumers when purchasing organic food brought us some interesting conclusions. It transpired that the most important factors were moral aspects and health concerns, which reinforces the results of previous research which pointed to the important influence of other variables. On the other hand, the influence of conscious control of behaviour was shown to be insignificant, which corresponds to the trend in healthy living and the result that consumers are willing to pay higher prices for organic food.

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