

Chapter 66

Factors Affecting the Adoption of Entertainment Mobile Applications in Iran: An Integrated Framework

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ABSTRACT

While previous research on application adoption has partly advanced our understanding of factors affecting the adoption of mobile applications, less attention has been given to the whole process of application development, from idea characteristics to the supportive activities after launch. In particular, less is known about these factors in the context of developing countries, where mobile applications are gaining increasing popularity. In this vein, this paper, adopting a grounded theory approach, aims to identify factors influencing the adoption of entertainment mobile application from the developer's points of view focusing on different phases of application development in the novel context of Iran. The authors' in-depth semi-structured interviews with experts in mobile application development firms indicate 15 factors classified within four categories based on the application development process, entailing idea characteristics, design, marketing communications and supportive activities. The implications of these findings provides valuable insight into why some mobile applications are more successful than others.

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INTRODUCTION

New developments in mobile industries (such as latest generation smartphones, tablets and related applications) have made the mobile device a powerful platform for engaging consumers. According to Gartner (2013), sales of smart phones had 20.3 percent growth in the last quarter of 2014 and reached 301 million units. Accordingly, 66 percent of phones are smart phones and will reach to 9 out of 10 phones until 2018. Moreover, in 2012, the amount of annual mobile application downloading around the world has reached 64 billion, creating 18 billion dollars' revenue for developers. This is predicted that the mobile apps downloads will increase to 268.7 billion per year by 2017 (Gartner, 2011). Furthermore, evidence and trends show the increased use of mobile applications, Internet and videos (Wong, 2012; Bohm & Constantine, 2016). However, the results of recent studies on thousands of mobile applications developers around the world reveal that the rate of mobile application failure is very high (Developer Economics, 2014; Hwang, Chan-Olmsted, Nam, & Chang, 2016). The figures illustrate that only 2% of developers in the mobile applications market have 50% of revenues in this market.

The novel research stream of mobile application adoption is attempting to identify factors affecting the acceptance and success of mobile applications (Peng, Chen and Wei Wen, 2014; Flora Wang, & Chande, 2014; Liang Huang, Yeh, & Lin, 2007; Zhou, 2010). This research stream has revealed factors such as poor User Interface design (simple developers), clutter, poor navigation, noncompliance with user needs, security problems, download problems, and inconsistency with various platforms as the main reasons for failing mobile applications (Wong, 2012; Hermansson, 2013; Flora *et al.*, 2014; Dehlinger & Dixon, 2011). Less attempt, however, has been made to identify and categorize the factors affecting the mobile application adoption in different phases of application development. In particular, recent studies argue the potential importance of contextual factors in the adoption of mobile applications (Hermansson, 2013; Wang, Li, Li, & Zhang, 2016; Bohm & Constantine, 2016). This is specially the case with the entertainment category where consumers' behaviors can be affected by institutional and cultural factors (Rogers, 1995). While previous research on application adoption has partly advanced our understanding of factors influencing the mobile application adoption, most studies have mainly examined the phenomenon from the consumer's points of view (Taylor & Levin, 2014; Hew, Leong, Ooi, & Chong, 2016), and less consideration has been given to the developers who are an important part of application development (Flora, Wang, & Chande, 2014). Moreover, the identified factors are not mainly related to the whole process of application development, from idea characteristics to the supportive activities after launch, and hence the literature lacks an integrated model considering the entire process. Finally, most studies have been conducted in the context of developed countries (Bohm & Constantine, 2016), and less is known about mobile application adoption in emerging markets such as Iran.

To address this gap, this research adopts a case study with grounded theory approach (Eisenhardt, 1989; 2007) to theorize factors affecting the entertainment mobile application adoption. The reason for selecting the entertainment category is its increasing popularity and the growing rate of download and hence business income over the last few years (Apple store, 2015; Google Play, 2015). Moreover, it has been widely utilized by both users and developers in emerging markets such as Iran (Newzoo, 2015). This article uncovers 15 influential factors on mobile application adoption classified within 4 categories based on the application development process, entailing idea characteristics, design, marketing communications and supportive activities. This paper makes at least two important contributions to the literature of mobile application. First, from a theoretical perspective, this study develops an integrated framework explaining factors influencing mobile application adoption in different phases of development. Second,

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