

Social Media Effects on E-Commerce Activities: The Case of Kuwait during and following the COVID-19 Pandemic [†]

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Abstract: This paper discusses the impact of social media on the e-commerce industry in Kuwait. The paper highlights the slow growth of e-commerce in the region due to traditional shopping practices and lack of knowledge about e-commerce instruments. The paper explores the potential of e-commerce in Kuwait and how social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram are contributing to its growth. The paper also highlights the efforts of the Kuwaiti government in enhancing its e-Government potential and adopting laws in line with international regulations to make e-commerce more efficient and secure. Finally, the paper discusses the growth of regional-wide platforms in Kuwait and the shift towards the integration of digital technologies into the national economy.

Keywords: e-commerce; social media; online platforms; pandemic

1. Objectives

Social media has become a dominant variable in product marketing among companies. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Kuwait's business people and the government had recognized the need to digitize their systems to maximize sales and marketing activities [1]. Due to the availability and reliability of Internet connectivity in Kuwait, millions of people can access social media platforms. This paper shall address how social media platforms have impacted e-commerce [2]. It specifically focuses on the relationship between accessibility to social media platforms and its effect on e-commerce usage in Kuwait.

2. Methodology

This study will employ a quantitative research approach. Data collection will involve a quantitative survey consisting of a five-point Likert scale to formulate reliable and suitable findings. The survey will be distributed to a random sample of 300 respondents, including Kuwaiti males and females who hold a bank account/card across different eligible age groups (i.e., 18+).

3. Results

The results of this study will be shared after data collection and analysis. It is important to note that businesspeople in Kuwait have started utilizing social media platforms and social networks to connect with the e-market and advance their trading activities. Kuwaitis extensively use social media platforms and are determined to ensure that they maintain their online presence [3]. Accordingly, it is predicted that this research will provide insights into the significance of social media in relation to e-commerce activities conducted by local individual consumers in Kuwait. Even senior residents are involved in engaging with online platforms, meaning that businesspeople have a chance to reach out to a significant audience.



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4. Implications

The advancement in e-business is happening or being experienced because of multiple factors. For instance, integrating traditional marketing methods with modernized systems results in reliance on e-commerce [4]. This study will develop a theory related to the effect of social media on e-commerce activities during and following the COVID-19 pandemic. The use of social media platforms for business activities is expected to gain support and focus from the government and the private sector. Accordingly, this study will provide practical benefits for businesses by showing the importance of social media platforms in engaging with individuals and converting them into customers. As a result, the successful performance of local businesses will positively reflect on the Kuwaiti government's economic situation.

5. Originality Value

The country has advanced in technology and innovativeness, and people are increasingly engaged with online systems. Diverse purchase behaviors have forced businesspeople to focus on meeting their increased social and emotional needs in the business world. Kuwaitis also shop in malls after learning about products on social media platforms [5]. The pandemic forced them to change their scope and focus on e-commerce as an alternative means of responding to COVID-19 safety guidelines. However, the effect of social media on e-commerce activities during and following the COVID-19 pandemic remains understudied.

6. Contribution

Kuwait's government has been supportive of e-commerce through its willingness to transact online and create a favorable environment for such trading activities. The focus on e-government services has meant that Kuwaitis are able and willing to trust companies with online transactions with the hope that the anticipated or ordered goods can be delivered [6]. Millions of Kuwaitis have joined social media platforms, particularly Instagram and Facebook. Accordingly, this research contributes to the existing literature by showing e-commerce entrepreneurs the changes in consumer behavior patterns during and following the COVID-19 pandemic.

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