

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
LCDB7003

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Assessment

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PART 1

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS OF E COMMERCE BUSINESS AND FORMULATING E COMMERCE STRATEGY IN PAKISTAN'S BUSINESS MARKET.

ABSTRACT

This research proposal starts with the curiosity to have an insight about the e-commerce industry of Pakistan from marketer's perspective. The area has still been not researched yet as Pakistan as a developing country has experienced slow growth in e-commerce industry comparative with developed countries like America and Europe. The study aims to identify the Critical Success Factors of 10 successful industries in international market, secondly how e-commerce strategy is formulated in Pakistan and how the CSFs drive to formulate e-commerce strategy in Pakistan. The interpretive research paradigm for qualitative research enables the researcher to adopt semi-structured interview, observation and case study as instrument. The case studies of internationally renowned and successful companies will be conducted whereas founders of successful e-commerce companies in Pakistan will be interviewed. This research provide the insight of CSF which Pakistani e-commerce companies has adopted, and the CSF's which enable the business to adopt e-commerce strategy for the business.

INTRODUCTION

From smoke signals to telegraph to telephone to telex to e-mail, and the World Wide Web, the speed of business communications has increased (Lindberg, 2002). The rapid speed of communication going local to national, national to international, and international to globe. All credit goes to internet which has almost overtaken every space including schools, homes, work, government, leisure activity and business. One of The most effected sectors around the globe is business; the internet changes the dimensions in which the businesses were conducted. The process of electronically buying or selling goods, services and information or any other kind of transactions which takes place over the internet is known as Electronic Commerce (Turban et al, 2000). Significantly improved Return on investment (ROI) is achieved through electronic business which is the complete digitalisation business processes of an organization (Lones, 2000).

‘Buying things on the internet’ is the working definition for this dissertation proposal (Chan and Swatmann, 1999); the trade could be between business to customer or business to business, this transaction involves transmission of value between two or more parties in exchange of physical goods or services. Numerous dot-com companies were come up and started E-commerce initiatives in 1999; realizing the benefits of offering products and services globally in order to expand return on investment. Hundreds of thousands of online business taken the initiative to work with the help of E-commerce technology, but the reality was there were only a handful of business strategies that lead to success (Pastore, 2001). The main focus of this dissertation will be the critical success factors of E-commerce business in global market, and how these strategies formulate the E-commerce strategies that emerging Pakistani E-commerce market has adopted.

Background of E-commerce in Pakistan

In the developed countries e-commerce has flourished at fast pace predominantly, where its usefulness has been realized quite rapidly (Suhail et al., 2009). Whereas there is numerous amount of developing countries in the world where people have low awareness regarding e-commerce, and in those countries adaptation level of e-commerce is quite different from the developing countries (Khan et al., 2013). Compared to countries like America and Europe the awareness of online shopping is quite high in comparison with Asian countries, especially south Asian countries (Sohaib and Kang, 2014). The scenario of usage of technology in Pakistan shows e-commerce as least adoptable technology. With almost 200 million populations, Pakistan is among 6th largest country in the world (Research and market, 2015), where 36% of population is living in urban place and 66% lives in rural places (Youngblood, 2014; Sohaib and Kang, 2014).

Considerable growth of ICT in Pakistan still did not enable e-commerce to penetrate into Pakistani market, trust deficit and lack of security for online transaction are among the major challenges that e-commerce market faces (Research and market, 2015). Furthermore insufficient lack of infrastructure could also be considered as one the major cause behind the low popularity of e-commerce in Pakistan. A report in 2013 by ‘The world economic forum’s Global information technology’ declares Pakistan on 104th place out of 144 countries, which shows that the country’s readiness to participate in the electronic world is not satisfactory for the wider adoption of the e-commerce by all segments of the society (Moomal and Masrom, 2015).

With the arrival of 3G and 4G technologies in smartphones there has been seen a rise in the e-commerce users. People have started trusting in online shopping, and increases internet activities to make sales and purchase. The potential of e-commerce market is expected to reach over US\$ 600 million dollar as the users of internet are expected to grow up to 56 million by the end of 2019. Irrespective of few hiccups, this is time for e-commerce market to ripe in Pakistan, and the industry is all geared up to produce massive waves in the country, with colossal scope for innovation and improvement as well as exponential long-term growth (Ahmad, 2015).

The researcher would like to know the critical success factors behind the on-going success of e-commerce market in Pakistan.

Research problem

The challenges mentioned in the background of e-commerce industry face in Pakistan are the point where this research idea has taken birth. There were plenty of researches which are done to know the challenges that e-commerce customer face in the developing country and most of the research reflects the customer perspective in terms of challenges. With the scenario of Pakistan's e-commerce market, the researcher felt the gap to dig out the perspectives of market players as well. The researcher wants to dig out the critical success factors of the international market which has been adopted by developing e-commerce market like Pakistan. With the gain of e-commerce business strategy in Pakistan there is also need to find more about this strategy from market perspective.

Research objectives and research questions

The objective of the research is to find out:

1. To identify the critical success factors of e commerce business in international market
2. To find out how e commerce strategy is formulated in Pakistan
3. To find out the how Critical success factors drive to formulate e commerce strategies in Pakistan?

So to complete the above objectives of the research the research questions are:

1. To identify the critical success factors of e commerce business in international market

What are the critical success factors of e-commerce business in international market?

How Pakistani e-commerce market has practically learned from success and failures of international e-commerce market?

2. To find out how e-commerce strategy is formulated in Pakistan

How the e-commerce strategy is generated in Pakistan

Challenges in making that strategy from market perspective

3. To find out how critical success factors drive to formulate e-commerce strategies in Pakistan?

What are Critical success factors that drive to formulate e-commerce strategy in Pakistan's market?

LITERATURE REVIEW

E-commerce and internet is completely committed towards every developed country, but what researcher think that it can be accomplished and can make a remarkable benefit to developing countries. According to Hasan et.al (2013) e-commerce companies have increasingly become a fundamental component of business strategy and a strong catalyst for economic development, it is a revolution & turning point in online business practices and can make a huge contribution to the economy. There has been a lot of scholarly work done on e-commerce which basically is online shopping, a large group of researchers focus on necessities and possibilities of online shopping, whereas in the developing country traditional marketing is still been practice to make the business viable (Salehi, 2012)

E-commerce in market perspective

The restriction on selling and purchasing goods in the traditional market is witnessed by the majority of sellers and buyers, whereas online marketing has lesser boundaries or limitation. According to (Johnson, 2001) there is a massive difference between traditional marketing and E marketing. In market perspective marketer has to communicate the products to the customer round the clock, whereas in e marketing one product can be viewed by plenty of potential customers. So the companies who go for e-commerce strategy in the market should highly consider not following traditional way of communication in the market.

Critical success factor

Easily identifiable operational goals shaped by the industry, the manager, the firm, and the broader or macro environment that are considered to ensure the success of an organization is defined as Critical Success Factors, if these goals are attained, the success of the company is

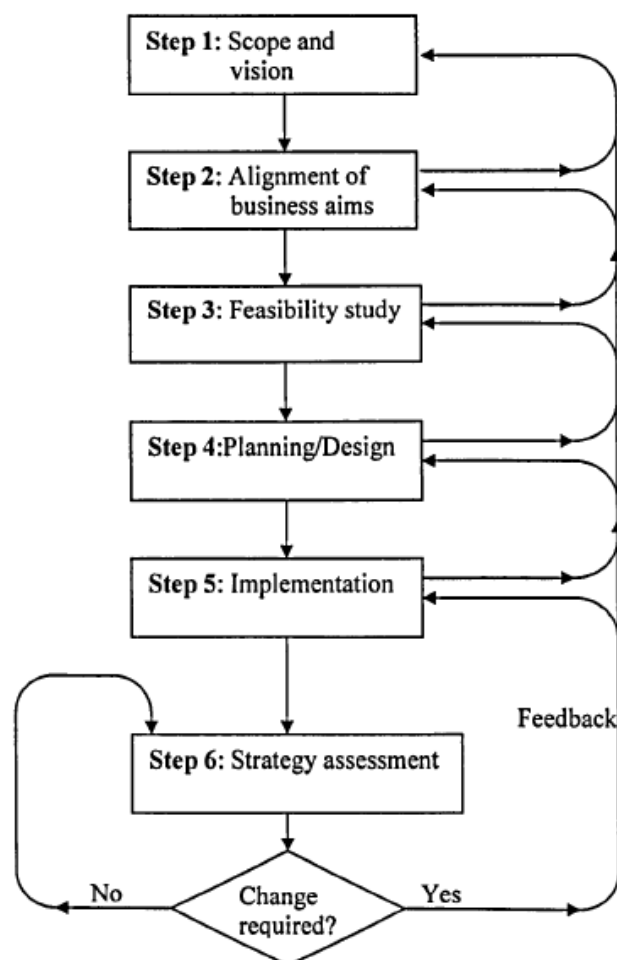
ensured (Rockart, 1979). These success factors must focus on some specific areas where it is essential to put the efforts in, in order to bring out the high performance (Boyton and Zmud, 1984). Most of the managers focus their limited resources (including time) especially on those aspects that really make the difference between success and failure, and consider it as key to their success (Bullen and Rockart, 1981). The ideology behind critical success factor theory is simple: certain factors are critical to the organization and if they remain unachieved the organization will collapse or fail.

The concept of critical success factor is smooth to apply, flexible and does not require a rigorous format in their use (Pollalis and Frieze, 1993). To conduct this research we take critical success factors as: a factor which significantly increases the chances of success or a factor which significantly reduces the chances of failure. To fulfil the purpose of the research the researcher will discuss twelve critical success factors and how they are derived in the big companies to maximize the success and minimize the failure. These twelve factors from journals, conference paper and articles will allow the researcher in the process of analysis that which companies has adopted them and how well that factor works for the organization. The factors and contributors to drive those factors in the e-commerce literature are mentioned below:

1. Ensure the website is secure Hagel and Rayport (1997), Aldridge et al (1997), and Bennett and Eustis (1999)
2. Keep the website simple and easy to navigate Eloffson et al (1998)
3. Listen to customers Bum and Barnett (2000)
4. Sell the right product or service Kiffer (1999)
5. Have the right infrastructure and link with the backend system Turban et al (2000) and Chaston (2001).
6. Keep up with innovation Jahng et al (1999)
7. Market the website Turban et al (2000)
8. Build brand name and image Gonsalves et al (1999)
9. Build in quality within the website, products and services Athey (2000), and Bennett and Eustis (1999)
10. Follow all the legal issues, patent and trading laws Turban (2002)
11. Have the right skilled workforce Lee et al (2000)
12. Have a well-defined strategy Drobik (2000)

E-commerce strategy

According to Teltech Resource Network, (2000) A set of directions use to bring an idea or goal to execution, it encloses the blueprints that define the direction a company will take on the basis of current position, it is more like circumstantial strategy. If we blend both terms e-commerce and strategy together it identifies the specific direction the company will take regarding trading in the electronic marketplace. It helps define the business goals for its E-commerce venture and lays out an action plan for achieving them. Turban et al. (2000) suggested starting point of the framework for E-commerce strategy formulation and comes up with strategy derivation model, furthermore there were few modifications done in the life cycle model to show the E-commerce decision-making stages and the feedback loops that occur (Figure below).



The figure shows actual stages of decision making while considering e-commerce business. The process goes through the system lifecycle of a project, a set of feedback loops has been included to show the more iterative process of e-commerce strategy formulation. According to Knott and Dawson (2000) it is necessary to incorporate the feedback iteration loops of

modern technological development because e-commerce is heavily dependent on technology as well as business and social attributes. The model will help the researcher to understand that how it is used in Pakistan to make up an e-commerce strategy while considering the technological, social and business attributes.

The literature review of the research topic gives the reader enough insight about the concept and models of e-commerce, also the contribution researcher whose work drives critical success factors and enables other researcher to access those factors in context of the company.

RESEARCH DESIGN, METHOD AND METHODOLOGY

Research Philosophy

The view that reality is subjective and differs from person to person is relativism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110), and the ontological position of interpretivism is relativism. In the absence of conscious our world is meaningless; our realities are mediated by our senses. We realize that reality is emerged at a stage when conscious engages with objects which are already expectant with meaning (Crotty, 1998, p. 43). There are as many realities as individuals, reality is constructed individually, and language actively moulds and shapes reality (Frowe, 2001, p. 185). So through the interaction between language and aspect of independent world the reality is constructed. The interpretive epistemology is one of subjectivism which is based on real world phenomena, and the world does not exist independently of our knowledge of it (Grix, 2004, p. 83).

Knowledge has the trait of being historically situated and culturally derived because different people may construct meaning in various ways (Crotty, 1998, p. 9), but the truth is the agreement formed by co-constructors of the knowledge (Pring, 2000b, p. 251), and interpretive paradigm accepts the ideologies; to question the ideologies instead. In this study, researcher will be the interpreter of social reality, and interviewer will be the one to co-construct the reality (Pring, 2000b, p. 251).

The interaction between two humans and their world construct knowledge and meaningful reality, and it is developed and transmitted in a social context (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). So, the individuals who are participating in can only understand the social world (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 19). The participants of this research and the researcher will interact and researcher acting as an interpreter tries to understand knowledge and meaningful reality in social world. The

subjective nature of interpretivism allows the researcher to make attempt to understand subjective meaning of action in an objective manner (Schwandt 2000, Mason 2002). Researcher's ability and willingness to listen to and 'give voice' to participants reflects the objectivity of the study (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 43). The data is interpreted and reinterpreted as the researcher's understanding of the social world grows and changes, resulting in better theory (Gummesson 2003).

The researcher will present the etic approach by working (scientifically) as an outsider of the business market (Morris et al., 1999). Here the etic approach is most suitable for the research because researcher is not physically present or playing any part in the function of e-commerce market of Pakistan. To identify the key success factor of Pakistani e-commerce market adopted, to find out the e-commerce strategy formulation in Pakistan the interpretive and etic approach is most suitable to scientifically analyse the results in objective manner.

The researcher is student of Doctor in Business Administration and intended to do her research within limited period of three years. The ethnic background allows the researcher to access the Pakistani e-commerce market in order to conduct this research. The limitation of data about Pakistan's e-commerce market from market perspectives confined the researcher to rely on international scenario of e-commerce market.

Research approach

The research approach suitable for this study is inductive approach. Inductive approach is an unstructured approach where no single theory or hypothesis is tested (Crane, 2000) whereas in the end theory emerges from the analysed data (Pettigrew 2000). The exploratory nature of the study in inductive approach does not allow researcher to start the research with pre assumption or pre conceived notion that what data will look like (Saunders et al, 2007). So this approach allow to access the critical success factors in international market and how those factors are being incorporated in Pakistan's e-commerce market, and to explore about the e-commerce strategy formulated in Pakistan. It provides a holistic investigation of potential issue.

Multiple Research strategies

Researcher chooses case study (Saunders et al, 2007) strategy to analyse the critical success factors of international companies and semi-structured interviews (Patton, 2002) will be done by the researcher in order to know that what critical success factors has been adopted by Pakistan's e-commerce market and interviews with the e-commerce market officials will also enables the researcher to understand the e-commerce strategy formulation in Pakistan. Total

10 case studies of successful international e-commerce organization will be done to identify the critical success factors behind their accomplishment. An empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984).

To incorporate case study into this research no experimental control or manipulation is used, whereas the boundaries of the phenomenon are not clearly evident at the outset of the research. Case studies in this research are done in natural setting, employing multiple data collection methods to gather information from one or few entities like people, groups or organization Jackson (2001). To analyse the critical success factors of the e-commerce company's case study remain the dominant feature of the research; the approach was chosen since it was considered to be the most appropriate to develop understanding about the company's success factors in e-commerce market of Pakistan. The edge to use case study for this research is that it is more valid and generalizable, and include multiple cases, though there are instances where a single case is instructive (Lee, 1989).

After identifying the critical success factors by using case study strategy, to understand how Pakistani e-commerce market has adopted those success factors, moreover how e-commerce strategy is formulated in Pakistan's business market and what challenge the marketers face during the process and lastly which critical success factors drive to formulate e-commerce strategies in Pakistan. To fulfil rest of the research objectives researcher choose to incorporate semi structured interviews to have holistic understanding of CSF of e-commerce organizations in Pakistan, and the formulation of e-commerce strategy at organizational level in Pakistan.

Interviews can be beneficial for this study as they attempt to understand the things which cannot be directly observed (Patton 2002). By talking to those involved in running the e-commerce market and adapting the e-commerce strategy, it will be possible to better understand the process that are occurring at organizational level, and meaning ascribed to it at individual (participants) level. A qualitative and active interview approach as a process of actively creating meaning on a given topic (Holstein and Gubrium 1995) will enable both researcher and respondent to play as conversational partners (Rubin and Rubin 1995). The adapted qualitative interview approach for this study, in consistency with interpretive, exploratory research, the researcher will be able to gather rich, in-depth data in the form of example, stories and accounts of how respondents understand their own experience, which

can be taken into account to understand social phenomenon in e-commerce market that how the e-commerce strategies are developed (Rubin and Rubin 1995).

Mono-method

The method researcher has adopted is qualitative method, it will enable the researcher to deepen the understanding of given problem. The aspects of reality that cannot be quantified is been taken into account in qualitative research. The objective to choose this research method is to produce in depth and illustrative information in order to understand the various dimension of the problem under analysis. According to Maxwell (2013) 'qualitative research works with the universe of meanings, motives, aspirations, beliefs, values and attitudes, which corresponds to a deeper space of relationships, processes and phenomena that cannot be reduced to the operationalization of variables'.

The qualitative method is most suitable method to conduct this research in order to have a deeper understanding of e-commerce market of a developing country. The phenomena and processes of e-commerce market in context of present study cannot be reduced to variables to be testified. The subjective nature of the chosen research strategies provides method to examine contemporary real life situation. The qualitative study will be in cross sectional time horizon. Researcher do not intend to do a comparison of sample over longer period of time so the most suitable time horizon will be cross section in which the researcher will observe the behavior of a group of people or an aspect at one point of time.

Data collection and analysis

In order to have an insight of the CSF phenomenon and e-commerce strategy formulation interview will be most suitable data collection tool to collect primary data. The participants will be provided with few topics to have a look on and later they will be asked open ended question (Gillham, 2000) about the topic where their answers will lead the researcher to the next question. For this purpose researcher will use the interview guide (Patton 2002), the researcher will make sure that similar basic guidelines for interviews were followed with each participant (Patton, 2002), therefor participants of the interviews will be encourages to share their own perspective based on their own knowledge and experience about the CSF of e-commerce and e-commerce strategy formulation in Pakistan (Denzin, 20012).

All of this interview process will take place in a formal environment and all the ethical considerations will be taken into account first. In the very first section of the research proposal few research questions were generated by considering research objectives, although

the research will be purely inductive but all researchers enter the field with some level of pre-understanding (Gummesson 2003). The questions of the interview guide will formulate in the light of research questions which will be based on previous encounter with e-commerce literature (secondary source). Researcher will act as an interviewer and will keep on observing the tones, gestures, emotions and rest of the body language and will note all of them down to use them while interpreting the responses.

Sampling

The emerging e-commerce market in Pakistan has given chance to many entrepreneurs to come up with new strategies which lead to potential success in the market. The researcher has chosen non-random purposive sampling technique (Saunders et al 2007) to conduct this research. The sample required identifying companies that are successful and as well as have e-commerce strategy in the business. The key person who applies the e-commerce strategy in the business and is aware of CSF behind the business is targeted, to ensure the potential participant has a firm understanding of e-commerce strategy formulation process and how the critical success factors of international market contributes to shape those strategies.

The researcher will use personal network of e-commerce marketers to identify interview participants. These e-commerce marketers will be talking to well-connected people in the field and ask for recommendation of people with appropriate experience, and it is expected those interview participants will recommend appropriate participants both inside and outside the company. Researcher aims to conduct 30 interviews from the appropriate participants (mostly founder or senior managers) to fulfil the research objectives. Researcher will try to conduct the interviews within three major urban cities of Pakistan which is Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad.

Validity/ Reliability

The extent to which a measure can be generalized to other measures can be understood as reliability, whereas validity can be understood as concerned with measuring that which is intended (Silverman 2001). Reliability in the present qualitative research will be improved by confirming a systematic recording of events right after the event occur. Recording of events separates the researcher's own interpretation about the event so field notes will be considered more systematic and accurate results in improving both reliability and validity (Silverman, 2001). For the interview part, researcher will take support of multimedia to record the interview carefully with digital recorders. According to Silverman (2001) carefully

transcribing interviews using accepted transcription protocols and presenting long extracts of data in the write-up, which acts to give readers improved access to raw data.

Social Desirability Bias

In the field of ethics social desirability bias is one the most obvious problem in context of validity (Weaver et al 1999) as people try to remain ethical in both personal and professional life. Most of the researchers face distortion while conducting the interview and this is the phase where participant observation is beneficial for the researcher, but for this research participant observation is not adopted as data collection method. To minimize the social desirability bias researcher will emphasize to inform the participants that the purpose of the interview is not to generate company specific data. At this point the researcher will ensure the participants about the confidentiality of their responses.

Analysis

According Mintzberg (1979) the process of breaking down raw data, reorganize; categorize and interpretation relies on the insight and imagination of the researcher in identifying what this re-organization and re-constitution means is known as analysis. Iterative process of moving back and forth from data to theoretical concepts in the process of developing/building on good theory (Silverman 2001), which is further shaped through the writing process is typically adopted within interpretive research.

The data analysis will start with a small portion of data, later the set of categories will be generated, and actively looking for refute and describe all data within the emerging theory (Silverman 2001, Strauss and Corbin 1998). In order to analyse the data it has to go through the operation that is categorisation, abstraction, comparison, dimensionalization, integration, iteration and refutation, these operation are neither discrete nor occur in an ordered, sequential fashion.

Expected Results and Presentation

By taking the literature into account, there is less information about e-commerce market of Pakistan. The design of the research is to find out the 12 prominent critical success factors (CSF) in companies that already exist. Those case studies are being done by previous researchers so for present study researcher will just look into case studies of 10 international successful e-commerce companies, to identify CSF present in the successful companies.

So on the basis of that researcher will make the interview guide. And after the interview researcher will be able to know that which success factors are present in Pakistani e-commerce market from marketer's perspective, this is the area which has not been researched

before. The companies who have adopted e-commerce strategy to compete in the market are also very few, so it will be unfair to declare any expected result without going deeper into the issue

With the last objective of the research the CSF of e-commerce in Pakistan which could drive e-commerce strategy will not be known before conducting the research. So researcher hesitates to give any expected results, first of all it will be unfair to declare the result without following the scientific procedure secondly the researcher do not have sufficient literature about the issue in context of e-commerce in Pakistan.

The presentation of the data will be graphical (Morse, 2006) where it is needed. The qualitative method may not let the researcher play with graphical representation so just the theoretical framework could be presented in a flow chart.

Limitations

Starting with the limitation of research paradigm the researcher has chosen. Same criteria are not used as scientific paradigm making a judgment in interpretive research. Without claiming uncontested certainty, legitimacy and trustworthiness need to be achieved; however reaching a consensus is problematic. Research participants cannot be expected to arrive at exactly the same interpretations as researchers (Rolfe, 2006, p. 305) when the reality is subjective in nature and differs from person to person. Validity of the research is questionable after this point. As the methods of interpretive research are more open-ended and intimate than scientific research, respondent's autonomy and privacy can be compromised, According to Howe & Moses (1999, p. 40) this intimacy and open endedness may bring up discovery of unwanted secrets, lies and oppressive relationships.

Another limitation of this paradigm is that respondents are vulnerable and do not have complete control to the researcher imposing their personal interpretation upon them. According to Danby& Farrell (2004, p.41) participant's sociological understanding produces theorised account by the interpretive researcher. Here the question raises that who owns the data, how will the data be voice? That's the researcher who always decides to give meaning to the responses and make the data public. So less control over the responses and its interpretation is among the major issue in interpretive research paradigm. The external structural forces which influence the behaviour of individuals also get neglected in interpretive research (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 26). Therefore, participants might not be aware of invisible ideology which guides their actions.

The inductive method adopted by the researcher also has limitations that it does not allow the researcher to cover all the aspects of single phenomenon. The inductive inference is at best highly probable but never demonstrative, therefore according to Mill inductive methods are 'the methods of discovery' rather than the methods of proofs. Another drawback is that these methods are always dependent on observed correlation yet they turn out to be deceptive sometimes (Mill, n.d).

The mono-method chosen by researcher is qualitative method which suits to fulfil the objectives of the research. Under the qualitative method the techniques have been challenged by many researchers, Oppong (2013) shows the concern of sample and shows uncertainty of limited sample number being true representative of the population and Alshenqeeti (2014) shows the concern about interview as data collection tool, and question the transparency, reliability and validity of this instrument. Whereas Jamshed (2014) adds the observation along with the interview to defend interview as an effective data collection instrument of qualitative research.

Not only interview but researcher also has added 10 case studies of successful e-commerce businesses.

Furthermore where the enthusiasm for case study in e-commerce field is evident as useful and informative approach for the research, there are few limitations case study reveals in the field of research. Generalizing from the results of a small number of studies is not possible, case study approach is surrounded with scepticism. However well planned case study is, it lacks the scientific weight and general applicability of conventional research methods. Whereas in certain cases like present research the case study results as one of the most appropriate research strategy to conduct the study.

The semi structure interview also have some limitation it's more time consuming, more expensive and have difficult access to the respondents as it takes time of both interviewers and interviewees. Semi structured interviews are also labour intensive and require interview sophistication. The interviews require a handsome amount of time to conduct and later to analyse them systematically (Adams, 2015). So time limitation may also put a lot of pressure on researcher to organize the interviews so carefully that researcher and participant's time should not be wasted.

As Oppong (2013) shows concern about sampling technique in qualitative research methods, the chosen sampling technique purposive sampling also have few limitations this sampling method can be highly prone to researcher bias, it is more judgmental in nature.

Conclusion

The research proposal gives an insight of the e-commerce and gives the essence of the background. The e-commerce in the developing and developed countries has different parameters to follow to make the business successful. The literature shows that Pakistan has potential in e-commerce market in near future. The statistics gives a clear picture of potential growth in e-commerce industry. Previous researcher shows numerous barriers in growth of e-commerce market from customer perspective but the market perspective is not researched as such. For this purpose the researcher intends to take Critical Success Factors of 10 successful international companies in to consideration, and later analyse that how the growing e-commerce companies in Pakistan has adopted those success factor. The e-commerce business strategy formulation in context of Pakistan's e-commerce industry has been taken into investigation. The most essential part of the research question will be answered when the researcher will be able to identify the CSF which drives to formulate e-commerce strategy in Pakistan. The selected research paradigm, method and methodology to conduct the research were most suitable to fulfil the objectives of the research. This research will ultimately give an insight of CSF of growing e-commerce industry of Pakistan and will highlight the e-commerce strategy formulation and challenges in the process.

PART 2

REFLECTIVE ESSAY

This part of the assignment will contain reflective essay to provide an insight of researcher's approach towards qualitative and quantitative research. This essay throughout contain my views in the light of my experience. At academic level 7 of I felt opportune to use quantitative research design as most of the business researches are quantitative. At academic level 8; I intend to do qualitative research as it gives complete insight of the problem and very few qualitative researches has been done in field of business, so I will feel accomplished to make my contribution in the field.

My personal experience

The qualitative and quantitative are the approaches which lead the direction of any research, some people use both to portray picture of issue in-depth. The differences between these approaches are famous among the researcher of all fields. In this part I will discuss my own perspective about both approaches by adding my own experiences.

As an ex student of sociology I have given chance to do study both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Later in my MBA degree I chose to do quantitative research to complete my degree. The main things I find while doing the research is that:

Quantitative research was easier for me to conduct. At first stage of formulating my research to elaborate my research problem comparatively easy, the topic was regarding marketing makes me get deeper into the literature. The quantitative method have given me advantage to make a hypotheses to be testifies. The research questions were precise and exploring the impact of one variable on another. The operationalization of the variable was smooth. There were a lot of marketing and branding theories to support the variable which were under discussion throughout the research. The positivist research philosophy enables me to bring quantifiable responses and do the statistical analysis (Saunders, *et al.* 2009; p.101). The positivist research philosophy was a bit easier to follow because to observe the phenomena it detaches the researcher from the research setting and make the researcher more independent. The statistical information provides a comprehensive result to the reader to understand the sensitivity of the phenomenon. I personally find deductive approach easier than inductive approach because deductive approach Deductive approach deals in developing hypothesis and theory which get tested by researcher selected methodology to validate in the real world by experimental or survey inspection, whereas Inductive approach is totally opposite of the deductive approach where the researcher initially collects and analyse the data, and develop a theory based on result of data analysis (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). Another reason to feel more convenient to work with deductive approach is that it gives comprehensive conclusions in the end (Kumar, 2008). Moving on to the research strategy part I felt more convenient to go for survey questionnaire, the design to build survey questionnaire was easier as I have to generate close ended question, so I took 5-point Likert scale to record the responses. The survey questionnaire was easy to distribute among participants, they were self-explanatory, in the beginning of the research the ethical part was mentioned and only the willing participants were welcomed. I was able to give questionnaire to my friends to distribute to the relevant individuals, but if it was a qualitative result I may not be able to do that. Survey questionnaire is less time consuming, cheap, accessible, convenient for the participants, and have close ended questions.

To choose sampling techniques in both quantitative and qualitative is equal according to my point of view. The technique researcher should adopt must be chosen wisely, researcher should first analyse the accessibility to the participants and then should choose sampling

technique. In the light of my previous work I feel purposive sampling was most convenient for most of my researches. The limitation of purposive technique is that it is judgmental in nature, but the selection of the sample might be judgmental but the responses of the participant still remain unbiased. The sample size of the quantitative researcher is quite flexible to represent the population. The flexibility in sample size is one of the major advantages to select this approach

In the light of my experience the secondary data collection takes more or less same time and energy for qualitative and quantitative research. But primary data collection has totally opposite time, energy and money consumption. The process and tools for analysis in quantitative is more dependent on computer. In my point of view only data entry in SPSS software is a bit challenging and time consuming, but when the data is entered few operations in the application reflects the correlation of the testing variables. The interpretation part of the quantitative research approach is entirely different from qualitative. The advantage to do the quantitative research was that interpretation of the data is done through statistical results and it is easy to interpret with minimum resource consumption, here the resources mean time, money, human resource, and intellectual resource. The data is easier to display as it is in number, pie charts, tables, bars and graphs are commonly use to present the data in the result chapter. One of the most essential aspect that is most favourable for me as a researcher is reliability and validity of the research. The objective nature of quantitative method increases the reliability and validity of collected data. So my choice for research in academic level 7 was quantitative method and I felt to choose it because I felt it was more convenient and easy for me to do it at that stage.

Why to choose Qualitative for doctoral research

I would like to choose qualitative method for my doctoral research the reasons are discussed further. While making a research proposal I came across few things which will be the part of this essay. Qualitative research method deepens the understanding of the given problem and is not concerned with numerical representation. The main objective of the qualitative methodology is to generate in-depth and illustrate information for the purpose to understand the several aspects of the problem under analysis, the researcher is also both subjective and objective in the research. The approach deals with dynamics of social relation, the deeper space of relationship, process and phenomenon that cannot be minimized to the operationalization of variable. The focus on understanding the context of the problem,

dimension of the group which is studied in qualitative methodology is wider in comparison with quantitative methodology. Qualitative research methodology is more time consuming.

Theoretical framework or hypotheses is unstructured while in quantitative it is structured, Flexibility and exploratory analysis is quite lower in quantitative methodology whereas it is higher in qualitative methodology. Qualitative researches have been done in wide range domain, like social care Moriarty (2011). Qualitative research can help researchers to access the thoughts and feelings of research participants, which can enable development of an understanding of the meaning that people ascribe to their experiences.

According to my experience in generating a qualitative research proposal it is often used to conduct social and behavioral studies because human interactions are more complex than molecular reactions in a beaker. Subjectivity, nonrandom sampling and another advantage to incorporate qualitative methods in the research is that small sample size distinguishes qualitative research from quantitative research, it is small and precise. The ability to deeply probe and acquire rich descriptive data about social phenomena through semi- structured interviews, case studies and observation, cultural immersion is A big advantage of qualitative research this also include ethnography, narratives and grounded theory to get a sharp picture of phenomena.

So both of the qualitative and quantitative methods; have their own advantage and disadvantage to incorporate them while conducting the research. For the academic level 7 it was convenient for me to select quantitative but when I go in depth of advantages and usefulness of qualitative research I have realized that this research methodology will give me great edge to have in-depth information about the observed phenomenon. And moreover I would like to contribute in the field of business administration as a qualitative researcher instead of quantitative researcher as most of the researches in business field are already done by following quantitative research methodology.

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