



A Qualitative Analysis of Consumers' Perceptions of the Trustworthiness of e-Commerce

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Introduction

- The phenomenon of consumer e-trust is widely discussed, but the concept of trustworthiness has not aroused much interest among researchers which has led to confusion between the two concepts
- At the moment there are limited number of studies concentrating in the less-studied concept of trustworthiness of e-commerce
- The aim of the paper is to investigate what meanings consumers give to the concept of trustworthiness of e-commerce

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The Concept of Trustworthiness

- Trust is a characteristic of the trustor, while trustworthiness is a characteristic of the trustee
- Traditionally, the concept of trustworthiness includes several dimensions like consistency, openness and honesty
- However, e-Trust research emphasizes three dimensions of trustworthiness, namely competence, benevolence and integrity



Method, Data Collection and Analytical Approach(1)

- The purpose of the empirical study was to explore what meanings consumers give to the concept of trustworthiness
- A qualitative method was applied due to the unexplored nature of the phenomenon
- The interviews were conducted in a context of electronic grocery shopping



Method, Data Collection and Analytical Approach (2)

- The sample consisted of 10 informants, five men and five women
- Interview data was collected via theme-interviews
- The analysis of the data consisted of four steps



Findings (1)

- Eight different issues emphasized the competence of the EGS:
 - sufficient paying methods
 - delivery of the products
 - appearance of the product deliverer
 - opportunity to cancel or change the delivery
 - changing the product order without consumer's permission
 - quality of perishable products
 - the accuracy of the delivery time
 - price level of the products

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Findings (2)

- One issue emerged in the benevolence dimension:
 - response to feedback
- Two issues emerged in the integrity dimension:
 - access to consumer's personal information
 - information of the service provider, prices and products



Discussion

- Our study revealed several new attributes of trustworthiness
- Our findings indicate that the competence of the EGS is emphasized among consumers
- Questions aroused based on our findings: Are the three dimensions of trustworthiness adopted in e-trust research the most important ones? Why the other dimensions of trustworthiness suggested by previous research are neglected in e-trust research?

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