



Universitatea
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HABILITATION THESIS

SUMMARY

Title: Marketing research regarding the impact of technology on individual consumers and companies in the digital era

Domain: Marketing

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The first part of the thesis includes the most valuable scientific and professional achievements after obtaining the PhD degree in Marketing and it is structured in two chapters: one focused on individuals behavior and the other one focused on the organisations behavior.

The first chapter of the thesis is dedicated to the analysis of the impact of various technologies on individual behavior in the digital era context. This analysis was performed considering 3 major fields: education, health and environment.

For analysing *the impact of technology on individual consumers in the education field (chapter 1.1)*, two surveys were conducted in order to compare the academics and students perspectives on the topic.

The first research analyses the attitudes and perceptions of the teaching staff and researchers from several higher education institutions in Romania with respect to online collaboration and communication applications (OCCA), and the impact these applications have on their work (teaching and research). The findings have demonstrated that the extent to which these applications are accepted and used seem to depend directly on personal variables, the most significant ones being the technology anxiety and self-efficacy. The aim of the second research was to evaluate the attitudes and perceptions of higher education students regarding the online communication and collaboration applications and their use in learning activities. Both studies are relevant for the management of higher education institutions (HEI) because they offer solutions for the adoption and tailoring of communication and collaboration platforms for students, based on their personality traits and motivational dimensions, leading to a more individualised and focused approach. Understanding the way students perceive and use OCCA, academics can adapt their teaching manner and style for improving the communication with the young generation. More than that, HEI can improve their educational offer by including new online courses based on the students' interest in learning by using OCCA.

For assessing *the impact of technology on individual consumers in the health field (chapter 1.2)*, secondary data analysis was performed and 2 articles were considered. The growing sophistication of new technologies is transforming the accessibility and management of health services and information. The digital society offer people the opportunity to seek on the internet for different information about health issues and treatments. Better informed patients behavior lead to: less anxious and more satisfied people who follow advice better and starts the treatment earlier. The aim of the first article was to identify the factors which could improve population health outcomes and healthcare quality by analysing the influence of education level and internet use for seeking health information on population health status.

The aim of the second article was to identify and analyze some of the determinants of the self-perceived health status across the EU28 area and to determine how the digitalization of health is impacting the self-rated health of the European populations. The

results indicate that there is a direct relationship between the way people are assessing personal health, the ability to use the Internet for seeking health-related information, and the use of various apps to purchase health-related items online.

For evaluating *the impact of new technologies on individual consumers from the environmental perspective (chapter 1.3)*, two quantitative marketing researches were conducted. The aim of the first research was to identify and analyze the Romanians' opinion on increasing the energy efficiency in their households and their intention in using energy obtained from renewable resources. The main idea is that the potential consumers of renewable energy, encouraged by companies, could become prosumers who can create new technological solutions and collaborate with other consumers by sharing their ideas and knowledge. The research results revealed that there is a need of public information campaigns on the importance of using renewable energy-based systems, especially for the environment protection and the long-term wellbeing of society. The second research focused on identifying and analysing the attitude and behavior of Romanian students regarding the electric vehicles acquisition. Although electric vehicles have positive consequences in reducing pollution, their number is still insignificant in many countries due to the adoption barriers. The research results show that the opinions of young Romanians are similar to those from economically advanced European countries, such as United Kingdom, proven fact by the number of students who would be willing to buy an electric vehicle. Also, the research includes an overview regarding the costs and financial benefits provided by the Romanian Government to the electric vehicles owners, such as acquisition price reductions or tax reductions.

Chapter 2 is dedicated to *the analysis of the impact of technology on companies activity in the digital era*. The most important aspect of the digital dimension is that allows knowledge sharing and the rapid growth of Web-based platforms that facilitate online social behaviour has significantly modified the nature of human interactions. For this chapter, four studies were considered.

The first study (conducted in 2015) used secondary data analysis to show that social media has the ability to change a business model and is an appropriate tool for companies to spread the information about sustainability issues. Consumers and communities are demanding more information about corporate sustainability and responsibility and they are sharing online their opinions about companies.

The second study was a survey focused on identifying the opinions of Romanian managers on using augmented reality in promoting the company activity on the market. Augmented reality (AR) is an experience in which the real world is enhanced by computer-generated content depending on certain locations and/or activities. Based on this, the managers have to become aware that this technology can provide a better communication with the customers and stakeholders because it increase individuals' knowledge and understanding of what is happening around them.

The third study focused on highlighting the advantages of using facial and emotion recognition, as a useful tool for providing meaningful experience to customers, considering and protecting their privacy. The paper provides an example of how facial and emotion recognition works, using human subjects who agreed to participate in this experiment and have their personal data mentioned in this paper.

The fourth study analyzed the specific aspects related to the adoption of Internet of Things (IoT) technologies and the impact they have on the sustainable growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Romanian IT industry. It was considered that digital marketing in general, and IoT in particular, have enormous potential for the aforementioned entities, and the acceptance and adoption of IoTs by companies in different sectors can significantly influence the way they operate, leading to sustainable growth. The results showed that although a large proportion of the Romanian IT industry SMEs use advanced marketing technologies, relatively few of those have integrated IoT solutions to date, mainly due to specific cost challenges.

The second part of the habilitation thesis includes the plan for the evolution and development of the professional career. This plan is created based on the professional experience and the proposed objectives. The plan focuses on the development of teaching activities and research activity and also, coordinating PhD thesis in Marketing field.