Journal of PR esearch
Middle East
Journal of Public Relations Research Middle East
Scientific refereed Journal - Supervision by Egyptian Public Relations Association - Eighth year - Twenty Eighth Issue - July / September 2020
Arab Impact Factor 2019 = 1.5 Arcif Impact Factor 2019 = 0.1321

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(ISSN 2314-8721)
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Journal of PR esearch
Middle East

Journal of Public Relations Research Middle East
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Scientific Refereed Journal
Twenty Eighth Issue - Eighth year - July / September 2020

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ISSN for the printed copy

(ISSN 2314-8721)

ISSN of the electronic version

(ISSN 2314-873X)

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Deposit number : 24380 /2019

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Use of Communication Technologies by the General Directorate of RAK Police

Awatef Abdulla (*)

(*) *Researcher in the Faculty of Communication - Sharjah University.*

Use of Communication Technologies by the General Directorate of RAK Police

Awatef Abdulla
aabdulla@hct.ac.ae
Researcher in the Faculty of Communication,
Sharjah University

Abstract

Researchers have always argued about the impacts of communication technologies in our current societies, for example the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has created an extraordinary vision to improve government communication strategies. The UAE has set specific roles as an example of the communication Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).
This research study was conducted at the General Directorate of Ras AL Khaimah Police in order to analyze the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in relation to communication technology use.

Keywords: Communication, Technology, TAM, RAK, the UAE

Introduction:

In the last decade, the UAE witnessed a dramatic change in the communication technologies used in content delivery. Traditional media have become less used, and they are targeting a specific number of people. This research study was conducted at a government entity, which is the Ministry of Interior - the General Directorate of Ras Al Khaimah Police. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has inspired this research paper. Fred Davis proposed this model in 1985; it is focused on three main factors of technology acceptance, which are the attitude towards use, the behavioral intention for use, and technology use.

The study was conducted in order to understand the acceptance of the communication technologies tools and patterns used at a local government entity. The qualitative research method was used to collect data from the Communication and Media Department employees.

Literature review:

Communication technology was used in the United States by Texas Health Center. The technological enhancements in communication have affected on the Texas Health System in adopting the feature to serve its patient effectively. The adoption of communication technology assisted a TX SCN project powered by the Texas Department of Health. This project was a multistage project that provides services to patients all over the United States (US). The main areas of the study were e-mail, conferencing, video conferencing, and a website, as there

was internet access when the research was conducted. The findings support the claim that communication technology has saved time and travel cost and removed the distance barriers (Ward, 2002).

Regarding examining information and communication technology (ICT) adoption, a research study was conducted in the United Kingdom (UK) in SMEs small services. A theoretical framework was used to support the concept of the dynamic capabilities approach, and the results proved that the adoption of (ICT) helped to unveil the recursive nature of information and how factors vary at the single and the multistage

types of adaptation. An in-depth analysis was conducted at (EICT), in the three dimensions which are integration, learning, and reconfiguration. This model proposed that most of the information communication goes through this process which supports companies in their work and emphasizes the importance of using ICT to obtain the best results (Chinedu-Eze, 2014).

In the UAE, profit organizations were the first to use communication technology in order to serve the public. The banking sector uses this facility to serve business ends at the least cost unlike the traditional forms of communication and services. This analysis comes to emphasize the importance of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) which uses a quantitative method to study the user-end (Shen, 2012).

After sufficient organizational experience, the UAE adopted the m-government services as a necessity where all the entities changed their services into smart services, which is what this study analyzes. The primary variable of this study was the trust, cost, social influences and a variety of services in the technological model (TAM).

This study uses the (TAM) to demonstrate the acceptance of services from the user-end perspective. The affordable cost of technological features allows the country to decide to obtain and use them in government services. The research results offer empirical support for the theoretical framework used to understand the users' needs and the intention to adopt them in government services. Additionally, the high power distance and collectivism culture features in the UAE have a noticeable impact on the social influences in relation to using and forming a behavioral intention (Khalid, 2017).

Another study examined knowledge sharing, firm innovation capabilities, and competitiveness in the UAE. The research covered many aspects such as technological factors and the knowledge sharing process which uses information and communication technology (ICT). This framework proposed that the uses and sharing are correlated as the ICT allows rapid search access and regeneration of data. In the UAE, there is a significant relationship between knowledge sharing and the process of knowledge sharing, as culture sharing can be promoted with the rise of innovation performance and competitive advantages (Taleb, 2015).

In 1989, Davis developed the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) that explains the general resolve of computer acceptance. (TAM) leads to demonstrate behavior for a wide range of users and user populations. Three main concepts are underlying this model; the first concept is Perceived Usefulness (PU) which is defined as the potential user who is more likely to use a specific system. The second is the Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) which refers to the extent of the potential user's expectation that the system is effortless (Lai, 2017).

The (TAM) comes in three core phases: adaptation, validation, and extension. In the adaptation phase, it is tested and adopted by a massive amount of information system. In the validation phase, (TAM) uses a precise measurement of users' acceptance behavior in various technologies. The last phase is the extension which indicates that there are many variables and relationships between the (TAM) contracts (Momani & Jamous, 2017).

Research problem:

The core research problem is to investigate how Ras AL Khaimah Police Directorate is using the new emerging communication technology tools to communicate with the Ras AL Khimah population, especially that RAK have multinational citizens who live and work in this city.

Research questions:

1. How does the RAK Police Communication Department use communication technology in delivering content?
2. To what extent are RAK Police satisfied with their use of communication technology?

Method:

A qualitative research method was adopted – In-depth interviews were used to collect data. The sample consisted of three employees from the General Directorate of RAK Police working at the Media and Public Relations Department. The aim was to choose a purposive sample that represents the employees in the Communication Department who use communication technologies as per their job title and description, by which they share the same characteristics. The sample was chosen based on specific criteria which are the uses of communication technologies.

The Media and Public Relations Department at RAK police has three sub-departments. The first department is the Media Relations Department which is responsible for publishing, digital media, campaigns, and awareness. The second sub-department is the Public Relations Department which focuses on public

relations using traditional communication methods. The third is the Sport and Social Activity Department that focuses on public activities. The in-depth interview was conducted in almost one hour and 35 minutes.
Each participant took almost 30 minutes to answer the research questions —5 extra minutes were given to add any extra information.

This interview assumed that the Technological Acceptance Model helps to convey messages from RAK Police to the public. Meanwhile, this model has become a trend for all UAE government entities to improve public communication strategy. The limitation of this research method is the sample; there were only three employees who use the communication technologies as the rest of the team members are responsible for lectures, public relations, and administrative duties.

Results:

The General Directorates of RAK Police use the latest communication technology platforms to communicate with their audience. Social media are one of their core communication platforms where they use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. As per the participants, Instagram is the top platform according to locals, while the Facebook page has a diversity of local and non-local audiences.

According to one of the interviewee, Snapchat is a complicated tool to use, as it is not flexible like the other social media platforms which allow instant interactions. The Snapchat account has 8,000 followers, which is considered a quite large number. The participants stated that the Instagram account has helped them to be connected directly with the locals and serve their needs. They use a special tool to analyze their message delivery, and they most likely receive positive feedback.

Most of the interviewees agreed that authorized social media influencers who represent the new global trend play a vital role in their message delivery by using the trending social media channels. Munther Al Mazaki and Hamadan Al Bukhti are the leading influencers who convey the news and activities of RAK Police frequently. Traditional media channels are still considered a vital activity, and they should be planned and used on a daily basis. A daily news article should be sent to a respected RAK Police partner for publication in both the printed and the online versions. This press release should be also posted on their website news sections and their internal portal. The radio is another tool that is used to broadcast a weekly program (Al Ain Al Saahera). This program is broadcasted every Thursday at 9 am and is rerun on Saturday at 12 pm. The program covers all the activities of the General Directorate of RAK Police over the week by hosting the relevant guests from RAK Police. The radio is used

because it serves a large segment of old people who prefer the radio to the other communication technologies, and it is available for people who drive cars. Instagram live is used to broadcast this program and respond to people's comments and questions instantly.

The Technological Acceptance Model influences the innovation standard of RAK Police. The interviewees said that creativity and innovation have become a must for our Federal United Arab Emirates government. Due to that, the RAK Police have become the first to use the cinema network outlets in RAK to promote their campaigns before the movie begins. This initiative came after in-depth research on the local citizens as the cinema audience is considered a complex group of people of different ages, genders, and nationalities. They agreed that there is no main timeline for media posting and sharing, but there is a main goal to be active and look for any related topic to publish.

Streets advertisements are another tool used by RAK Police, specifically the giant TV screens to convey the messages to audiences and conduct awareness campaigns. Phone messages are another tool used in critical situations, especially on rainy days or in dangerous situations to communicate with the local public and ensure their safety, as this is the main goal of the police.

Discussion:

The findings show support for the Communication Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The General Directorate of Ras AL Khaimah Police uses the (TAM) and tries to reach a large audience throughout the year; it was a bit challenging as they expressed. Social media play a vital role in their daily communication, and one of their main goals is to be active along with the other official media channels. The experience of adopting the new technologies has increased creativity as the interviewees said, and it is considered necessary to use technology and be creative in order to be aligned with the UAE 2021 Vision (Vision 2021, 2018).

RAK Police have undergone this technological transformation efficiently, as per the literature review; there were great demands to adopt the new emerging technology due to many reasons, as it removes the time and place barriers. There is no doubt that the new technology is instant and accessible in all devices and for a large audience. It was adopted in many sectors like health, business, media news platforms, and many others all over the world.

As for the first research question, the interviewees provided clear and compatible answers in terms of the tool used, as they all agreed on the fact that using social media networks has become a necessary and efficient tool to communicate with RAK citizen. The UAE government is upgrading its systems based on UAE Vision 2021 (Vision 2021, 2018). This vision aims to raise

knowledge and computer competencies as the UAE government is emphasizing the use of the internet, artificial intelligence, and digital platforms to be accessible all time for the UAE citizen. RAK Police use a variety of media platforms such as traditional media, printed media, radio, and TV. They share the news updates, rules, and regulations via the official media channel in UAE; their main aim is to publish at least one news story on a daily basis. Moreover, they use new digital media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat to communicate with different citizens in RAK. They use these channels to stop spreading the rumors as there was a lot of fake news that was reported and went viral. The RAK Police reacted by publishing posts about these stories.

As for the second research question, RAK Police are satisfied with the end results of most of their media messages and media communication with the public. New digital platforms assist RAK Police to be more innovative in delivering their message as they were the first to use the cinema to broadcast their short awareness videos before the movie starts. In addition, they use the new social media platforms intensively as they have a daily agenda to react with the audience. RAK Police share a variety of content such as photos, videos, and short social media press releases. They also use the statistics from this website to analyze their post reaches, likes, comments, and reposts. Furthermore, RAK Police, the main communicator in this research, use the Technology Acceptance Model to transmit their messages to the audience (receivers). The emergence of computer-mediated communication has revived the significance of uses and gratifications. In fact, uses and gratifications have always provided a cutting-edge theoretical approach in the initial stages of each new mass communication medium (Ruggiero, 2009).

There were two main limitations in this research; the first is the sample size as it was too small and limited. Another limitation is that when I asked for evidence for their claims about the social media records and interactions, they told me to contact another department as it is the responsibility of the Strategy Department team that is keeping this confidential data analysis.

Recommendations include using all social media platforms and exploiting their available options. For instance, the live option in Instagram can be used to broadcast any event or activity conducted by RAK Police. Moreover, the Media and Public Relations Department needs a specialized social media expert to manage the accounts, keep the messages, and post efficiently.

Conclusion:

Overall, RAK Police have adopted the three stages of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by using different new media platforms via the internet. In fact, this model has been implemented in all police directorates in the UAE as they are under one umbrella which is the Ministry of Interior. Technology adoption and use are a must for all UAE government entities

according to the leadership's Vision 2021. New technologies help RAK Police to use different media platforms and communicate with the citizen efficiently and innovatively using the new interactive platforms.

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