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SPECIAL ISSUE on “Social and Economic Influences of E-Commerce Adoption in Developing Countries”. Guest edited by **Jatinder N. D. Gupta**, University of Alabama in Huntsville and **Sushil K. Sharma**, Ball State University

EDITORIAL PREFACE

Jatinder N. D. Gupta, The University of Alabama in Huntsville

Sushil K. Sharma, Ball State University

Many nations have started leveraging e-commerce technologies for economic and social development, yet there are many barriers. The guest editors introduce the special issue and provide an overview of the four articles included in this issue.

ARTICLES:

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFLUENCES OF E-COMMERCE ADOPTION

Sushil K Sharma, Ball State University, Indiana, USA

Jatinder N.D. Gupta, The University of Alabama in Huntsville

The adoption of Internet and e-commerce has rapidly spread across the world. Most countries, especially in the developing nations category, are making substantial investments in raising IT infrastructure, building a strong telecommunications infrastructure, promoting Internet and e-commerce adoption in businesses, government, and various communities. As electronic commerce grows and its benefits realized, important socio-economic affects are likely to emerge. This paper proposes a framework for investigating the socio-economic influences of e-commerce adoption. The framework is illustrated by considering the adoption of Internet and e-commerce in India.

STRATEGIC VALUE AND ADOPTION OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF CHILEAN SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES

Elizabeth Grandon, Southern Illinois University, USA

John M. Pearson, Southern Illinois University, USA

By combining two independent research streams, we attempt to identify specific relationships between a manager’s perceptions of the strategic value of e-commerce and the variables that may influence its adoption. Eighty-three top managers/owners of small and medium size companies in Chile participated in the study. The results corroborate previous theory that posits several factors as determinants of the strategic value of e-commerce in other information technologies as well as factors that may influence e-commerce adoption. In addition, we found a significant relationship between the strategic value of e-commerce and e-commerce adoption. Factor analysis was conducted in order to test the measurement model while canonical analysis was employed to test the structured model.

A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING E-COMMERCE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Chitu Okoli, Concordia University, Canada

Victor A. W. Mbarika, Louisiana State University, USA

Sub-Saharan countries are experiencing tremendous growth in Internet connectivity, the use of computers, and in the diffusion of wireless communications. Electronic commerce is one of the growth areas for information and communication technologies (ICTs) in Africa. This paper presents a research framework for assessing electronic commerce in Sub-Saharan Africa. It describes the nature of the digital divide, and explains the need for the commercial applications of the Internet in developing countries in general. Further, it presents literature on e-commerce frameworks, ICT diffusion, and ICTs in developing countries that shed light on different aspects of e-commerce in Sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, it proposes a consolidating framework that synthesizes these various literature streams and lays groundwork for a focused body of research in this area.

E-COMMERCE ADOPTION IN THAILAND: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SMES)

Chalerm Sak Lertwongsatien, Ministry of Finance, Thailand

Nitaya Wongpinunwatana, Thammasat University, Thailand

Thailand has initiated and implemented a series of national plans and activities to promote e-commerce adoption in both public and private sectors. Despite such efforts, e-commerce adoption rate is still slow. It is important to understand factors affecting a firm's decision on e-commerce adoption in Thailand. This study examines the factors influencing e-commerce adoption decisions in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Thailand. We classify firms into three main groups based on the earliness of e-commerce adoption, namely *adopters*, *prospectors*, and *laggards*. Three groups of factors influencing adoption decisions are identified, including organizational, technology, and environmental factors. Data was collected through a national survey. The statistical analysis results strongly support the hypotheses.