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## **DISSERTATION ABSTRACT**

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### **Attributes of the Internet Perceived by Saudi Arabian Faculty as Predictors of Their Internet Adoption for Academic Purposes**

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The theoretical framework for this study was based on Rogers' model (the diffusion of innovation). The aim of the study was to determine Rogers' attributes of the Internet as perceived by Saudi faculty members for academic purposes and how their perception can be used to predict the adoption of the Internet to enhance their scholarly work.

Hypothesized predictors included relative advantage, image, compatibility, ease of use, result demonstrability, visibility, trialability and voluntariness.

Data for this study were collected through a survey of 453 faculty members at three selected Saudi universities. Descriptive statistics were used to identify the most important characteristics of the variables. The inter-method multiple regression model was used to examine whether the eight variables of innovation characteristics of using the Internet for academic purposes can be used to predict the adoption of the Internet for academic purposes. The findings indicated that approximately 40 % of variation on Internet adoption by Saudi faculty could be explained by the combination of the eight independent variables. However, looking at each predictor separately, it showed that relative advantage, image, compatibility, ease of use, and visibility are significant predictors for the adoption at  $\alpha = 0.005$  but result demonstrability, trialability and voluntariness are not. In the present study, a reduced model, using only image, relative advantage, compatibility, ease of use, and visibility constructs was a significant predictor of the adoption of the Internet for academic purposes by Saudi faculty members.

Moreover, data showed that using the Internet as new innovation in Saudi universities is still in the stage of early majority adopters and in the period of rapid growth. The study, further, has identified 21 barriers to adopting the Internet applications for academic purposes among Saudi faculty members. Among these barriers were availability of internet access, quality of access, negative attitudes about the Internet, administration support, age, English language, Internet and computer experience, fear and computer phobia, firewalls, cost, security, time and infrastructure barriers. Based on these barriers the diffusion process of the Internet among Saudi faculty can be grouped into three levels of responsibility. These levels of Internet diffusion process were individual duty, organizational duty and governmental duty.