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Mobile Government Applications Usage and Adoption in Qatar

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Abstract
As part of its National Vision 2030, Qatar is committed to building a knowledge-based society, and utilizing government-provided mobile applications is essential to accomplishing this goal. It seeks to ascertain the degree of mobile service consumption and M-Government acceptance among Qatari citizens and higher-income foreigners. It offers policy and practice recommendations that are in keeping with the objectives stated in the E-Government 2020 Strategy based on the survey results. Participants' education level, gender, employment status, age, nationality, and income levels were among the many demographic details gathered by the survey. The poll also looked at how users utilized mobile devices to access government services.

Keywords: *mobile applications, M-Government, National Vision 2030, citizens, mobile service*

الملخص
في إطار رؤيتها الوطنية 2030، تلتزم قطر ببناء مجتمع قائم على المعرفة، ويُعد استخدام تطبيقات الهاتف المحمول الحكومية أمرًا أساسيًا لتحقيق هذا الهدف. ويهدف هذا المسح إلى تحديد مدى استخدام خدمات الهاتف المحمول ومدى قبولها بين المواطنين القطريين والأجانب ذوي الدخل المرتفع. ويقدم المسح توصيات بشأن السياسات والممارسات التي تتوافق مع الأهداف المنصوص عليها في استراتيجية الحكومة الإلكترونية 2020، وذلك استنادًا إلى نتائج المسح. وكان المستوى التعليمي للمشاركين، وجنسهم، وحالتهم الوظيفية، وأعمارهم، وجنسيتهم، ومستويات دخلهم من بين العديد من البيانات الديموغرافية التي جمعها المسح. كما تناول المسح كيفية استخدام المستخدمين للأجهزة المحمولة للوصول إلى الخدمات الحكومية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: *تطبيقات الهاتف المحمول، الحكومة الإلكترونية، الرؤية الوطنية 2030، المواطنون، خدمات الهاتف المحمول*

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1. Introduction

Qatar is dedicated to creating a knowledge-based society as part of its National Vision 2030, and using mobile applications, which are provided by government organizations, is crucial to achieving this objective. Through a variety of mobile applications, the government of Qatar has embraced mobile technology in recent years as a major facilitator of the nation's digital transformation as well as a means to improve and promote public service, boost transparency, enhance public communications, and spread government information throughout the nation. By enabling citizens and foreigners to perform government-related operations straight from their smartphones without having to physically visit government service facilities in the nation, these applications offer ease and flexibility (El-Kassem, 2025).

The adoption of mobile government applications in Qatar is a key element in the country’s digital transformation, enhancing interaction between citizens and government institutions through smartphone-based digital environments.The study indicates that a variety of factors influenced the usage of mobile government applications (MGAs) from technological adoption models including TAM and UTAUT noted that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness were significant measures in user attitudes of mobile government applications. The findings suggest that demographic and behavioral factors (e.g., age, mobile device literacy, and

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frequency of use) as well as psychological and technical variables (e.g., trust, user experience, and user satisfaction) were other important categories of variables. The study identifies that government communication channels and personal preferences or hesitation are important factors as well, in the way usage is influenced and in developing intention toward usage. The researcher, concluded that the promotion of the adoption of mobile government applications in Qatar will require strategies which are able to be responsive to these user's needs, or remove barriers related in effectively trusting the use of MGAs, which would ultimately contribute to increased engagement and the overall quality of services of the digital government (El-Kassem, 2025).

Nevertheless, the actual adoption of the provided government mobile applications has fallen short of the initial projections. Therefore, additional study is required to investigate and evaluate the primary adoption elements that may influence users' choices to accept and make use of mobile government applications. One such effort is this study, which used computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) techniques to interview a representative sample of 1,872 participants (including natives and higher-income expatriates) (El-Kassem et al., 2020). The opinions of the respondents were examined and expanded upon in the ensuing sections.

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2. Research Problem and Questions

Governments may use the internet to distribute information to the public, cut national spending, and provide services more successfully and efficiently than ever before. Consequently, e-government has expanded worldwide. All governments, whether in developed or developing nations, are making significant investments to improve their efficacy, transparency, and responsiveness. However, popular adoption of e-government has fallen short of expectations in many regions of the world. Governments throughout the world are now using social media tools to boost the uptake of their e-government systems by making their systems and transactions more visible and participatory.

When the e-government project was first introduced in Qatar in 2000, its acceptance rate was quite low. In order to interact with the public and work toward a more open, effective, and responsible government, the Qatari e-government portal implemented new communication tools and made use of the newest social media platforms. The portal started making some of its data publicly accessible as part of this endeavor. Recently, the Ministry of Interior joined this effort by opening up its data to the public on its website. The Ministry of Transport and Communications' endorsement of an open data policy and its incorporation into its vision for an open or national e-government made this feasible.

Accordingly, to address the mentioned problem, this research seeks to answer the main question: **“How are Mobile Government Applications used in Qatar?”**
The main question is divided into the following sub-questions:

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1. What are the governmental applications used by mobile in Qatar?
2. How are the mobile government applications adopted in Qatar?
3. To what extent is the availability of government applications for mobile devices in Qatar?
4. What is the influence of advertising methods of M-Government applications?

3. Research Aim and Objectives

The current research aims **"to investigate the usage of mobile government applications in Qatar".**

The main goal is divided into the following sub-objectives:

- Highlighting the governmental applications that are used by mobile in Qatar.
- Investigate the adoption of mobile government applications in Qatar.
- Determine the availability of government applications for mobile devices in Qatar.
- Investigate the influence of advertising methods of M-Government applications.

4. Research Significance

This study is the first of its kind to examine public opinion on the effectiveness of Qatari government mobile applications. It sheds light on the availability of these government applications in Qatar, the level of awareness and adoption, and identifies the most frequently used applications. The research also aims to understand the

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impact of advertising methods used to promote the use of government applications on users.

5. Methodology

In May and June of 2024, a nationally representative wireless telephone sample will be used for the Mobile Government survey. 1872 persons who are 18 years of age or older will be interviewed by SESRI, comprising 1,025 Qatari citizens and 847 higher-paid foreign workers. A Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) technology will be used to administer the survey.

Questions about demographic traits like education, gender, employment, age, nationality, and income will be included in the final survey instrument. Additionally, it will inquire about the frequency of usage of mobile devices, mobile government applications, and the internet. A part rating the user experience with these applications will come next. Lastly, a last section will test theories on the variables that could lead to a greater uptake of these applications by users.

Internal testing of the questionnaire will be conducted at SESRI. The project team can use this stage to determine whether respondents could comprehend and reply to the questions, as well as to pinpoint any issues that might influence responses. BLAISE, a powerful and adaptable tool from Statistics Netherlands, will subsequently be used to program the modified questionnaire into a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interview) system.

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6. Literature Review

6.1 Internet and Mobile Government Usage

Because mobile technology is more affordable and has better connectivity, its use has exploded globally. Social interactions, the educational system, political procedures, corporate operations, and many other facets of life have all been rearranged by mobile technology. All groups of people, including those who lack literacy, use mobile phones, according to UNESCO. Additionally, the use of mobile technology and its features has expanded due to mobile phones' access to the Internet. Mobile online communication includes using mobile apps to access material and browsing the mobile web. In order to effectively maximize their contacts and transactions with people and other entities, governments have implemented policies that include the creation of mobile government applications in step with the improvements in mobile technology (UNESCO 2023).

6.2 Types of Mobile Devices

Ninety-five percent of the respondents indicated they use smartphones, three percent said they use both smartphones and traditional phones, and two percent said they only use traditional phones.

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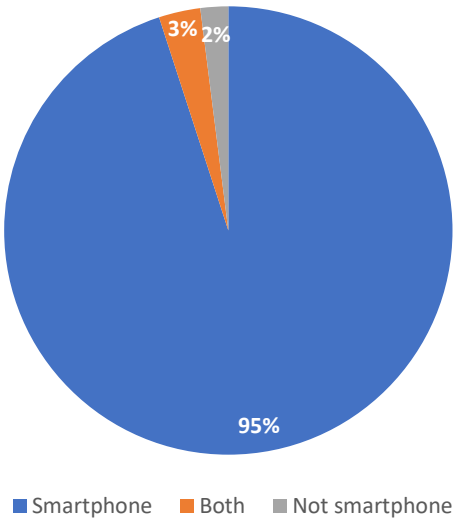
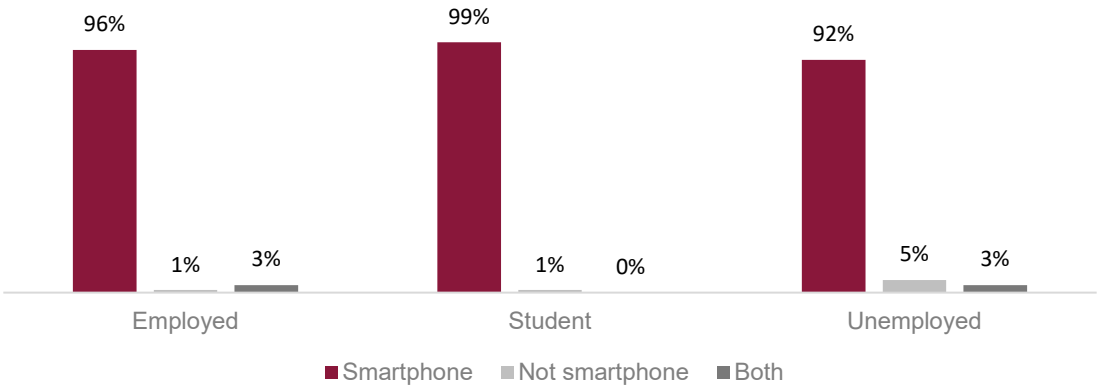


The findings indicate that, in comparison to respondents with higher levels of education, such as undergraduates (97%) and postgraduates (97%), fewer respondents with secondary or less education (91%) used a smartphone. While 96% of employed people and 92% of jobless people reported using smartphones, nearly all student respondents (99%) did the same.



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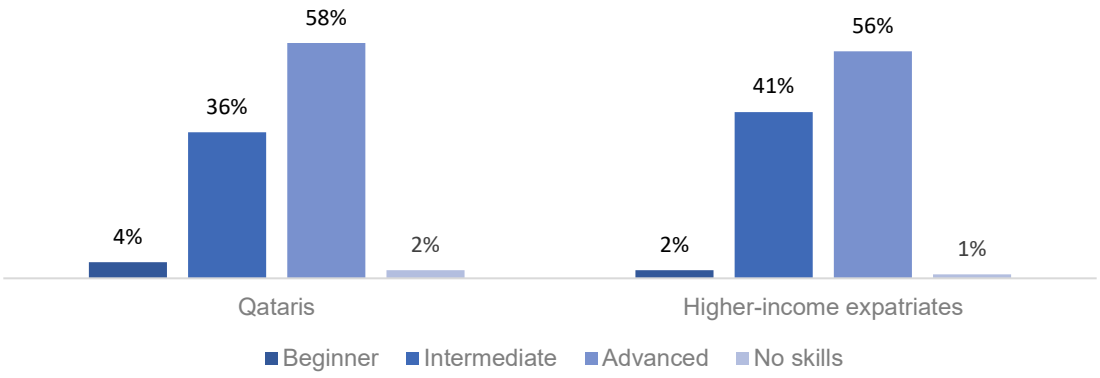
6.3 Mobile Skills

Self-perception of mobile skills was one of the survey's questions. As a result, the respondents were asked to classify their proficiency with mobile devices as either beginner, moderate, advanced, or nonexistent. Forty percent of respondents ranked themselves as intermediate users, while the majority (56%) considered themselves to be advanced users. Figure 8 shows that slightly more Qataris (58%) than higher-income expats (56%) identified as advanced users. Two percent said they were beginners, and two percent said they had no mobile abilities. Compared to expatriates with higher incomes (2% and 1%, respectively), more Qataris reported being novices (4%) and unskilled (2%) users (Al-Kubaisi, 2018).



As expected, 72% of respondents between the ages of 18 and 24 said they were advanced users, compared to only 30% of respondents over the age of 55.

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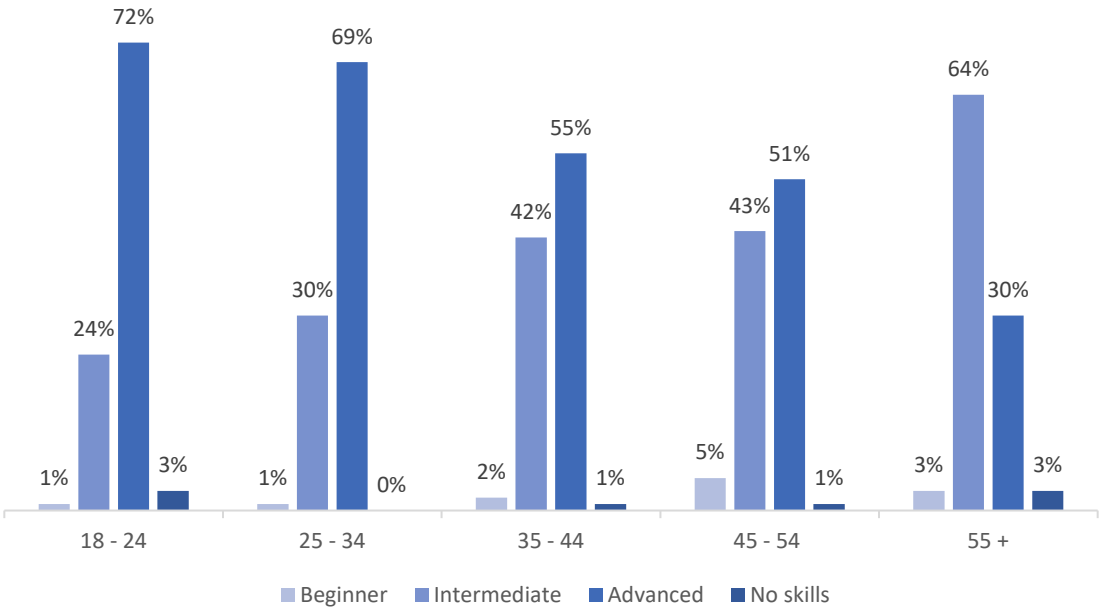

Compared to respondents with secondary or fewer studies (47%), a larger proportion of postgraduate respondents (65%) identified as advanced users. Respondents who were jobless (41%) assessed themselves as advanced mobile phone users, compared to those who were working (59%) and students (72%). Additionally, those who earned more than 50,000 QAR (65%) were significantly more advanced mobile phone users than those who earned less than 50,000 QAR (48%) (Elayah, 2025).

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6.4 Frequency of Mobile and Internet Usage

Mobile devices, especially smartphones, have become a significant part of people's lives all over the world since they offer a variety of features that may be used for everyday tasks, employment, entertainment, business, health, social interactions, and more. Any kind of task may be completed more quickly and effectively thanks to the development of mobile applications and simple access to the Internet, which has increased reliance on and usage of mobile devices and the Internet (Mensah & Mwakapesa, 2022).

6.5 Purpose of Mobile Phone Usage

Respondents were asked to rate their use of a mobile phone on a scale from "always" to "never" in order to ascertain the reasons behind their use. The results on the primary motivations for using a mobile phone are shown in Table 1. While social media (50%), email (43%), and information search (53%) were also among the most popular reasons, the majority of respondents (58%) stated that they only ever use their cell phone for making calls. A sizable percentage of respondents said they never used their phones for online shopping (15%) or SMS communication (16%). It appears that 37% of respondents occasionally use their mobile phones to access government applications, while 24% do so consistently (Elbatanouny et al., 2023).

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Type of purpose	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Communication via SMS	22%	10%	21%	31%	16%
Government applications	24%	18%	37%	17%	4%
Online shopping	13%	15%	35%	22%	15%
Information search	53%	21%	20%	4%	2%
Social media	50%	25%	19%	4%	2%
Online entertainment	25%	21%	32%	13%	9%
Email	43%	18%	21%	12%	6%
Just for calling	58%	18%	18%	5%	1%

6.6 Most Used Mobile Government Applications in Qatar

The ministries and governmental organizations in Qatar work to make it easier for people and residents to receive services. In order to maximize data services via cellphones, governmental organizations adopted a mobile strategy. More people may have easy, efficient, and quick access to government services with the advent of interactive apps and fully transactional services on smartphones. The respondents were asked to indicate five of the mobile government apps they most frequently use in order to determine the top five ministries in Qatar that are accessed through mobile

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applications. Interviewers urged participants to check their cellphones if they were unsure, but they were still free to provide their own choices. However, they were advised to list the apps they actively use rather than just those they had loaded on their phones. The applications identified by the respondents were grouped and recoded under the ministries, which are their developers, in the data analysis (Ahmad & Khalid, 2017).

The vast majority of people (98%) used the Ministry of Interior's mobile portals and platforms, followed by the mobile applications of the Ministry of Municipality (23%), the Ministry of Public Health (14%), the Ministry of Communications & Information Technology (14%), and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (6%). When cross-tabulated with nearly every type of ministry, with the exception of the Ministry of Communications & Information Technology, the sociodemographic variables of respondent type and gender demonstrated importance (Hukoomi. 2020).

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Type of Ministry	Total	Respondent Type		Gender	
		Qataris	Expatriates	Male	Female
Ministry of Interior (Metrash, Ehteraz, QDI)	98%	95%	99%	99%	96%
Ministry of Municipality (Oun, Al Murshid)	23%	44%	19%	27%	18%
Ministry of Public Health (Nar'aakom)	14%	11%	15%	13%	17%
Ministry of Communications & Information Technology (Tawtheeq, Hukoomi, Tasdeeq)	14%	15%	13%	15%	11%
Ministry of Education and Higher Education (Maarif)	6%	8%	5%	4%	9%

6.7 User Experience with Mobile Government

Respondents were asked to score their overall mobile government experience. Of the respondents, 79% thought their experience was very good, 20% thought it was adequate, and only 1% thought it was extremely awful. The experience with mobile government was assessed as very good by more expats with higher incomes (80%) than by Qataris (76%), and by more men (82%) than by women (75%).

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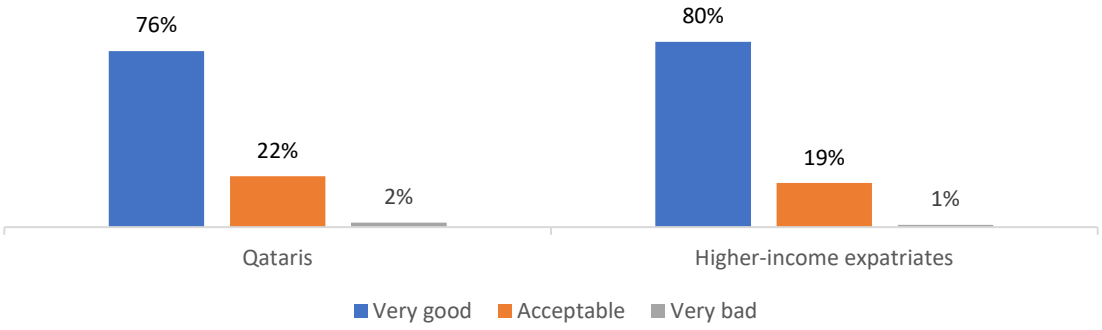

Marital status is a significant predictor; compared to respondents who were never married (77%) and those who were previously married (75%), married respondents (81%) assessed their experience as very good. Compared to students (72%) and the unemployed (73%), working respondents (82%) were more likely to rank their experience as very good (El-Kassem, 2025).

6.8 Non-Governmental Mobile Applications

Additionally, the respondents were asked if they had ever utilized non-governmental mobile applications, like mobile banking, hotel reservations, and airline bookings. Of the respondents, almost 77% said they had used non-governmental applications, whereas 23% said they had not. The utilization of non-governmental applications is significantly lower (77%) than that of Qatari governmental applications (94%). More males (83%) than females (67%) and more Qataris (84%) than higher-income expatriates (75%) reported using the non-governmental applications (SESRI, 2024).

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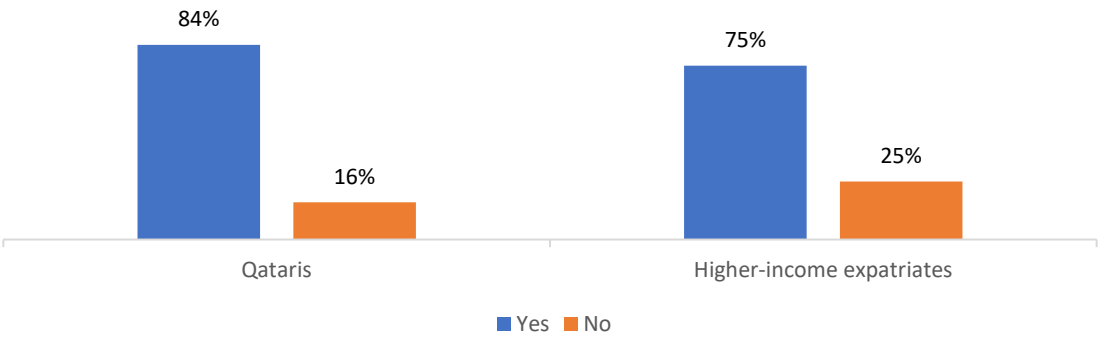
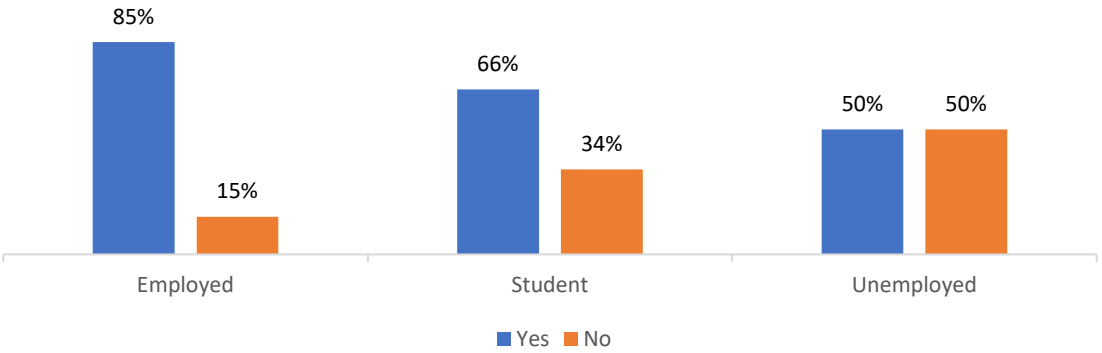


Age-wise, people over 55 (66%) appeared to use the non-governmental applications the least, while those between the ages of 25 and 34 (82%) appeared to use them the most. Those with secondary education (60%) were the least likely to have used such applications, while postgraduates (92%) were the most likely. Compared to students (66%) and jobless people (50%), a much higher percentage of employed respondents (85%) used non-governmental applications.



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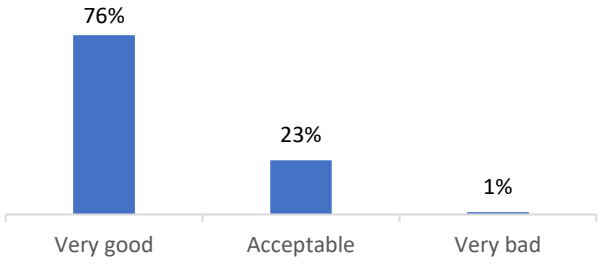
The use of non-governmental applications is also significantly influenced by income; individuals who earn more than 50,000 QAR (91%) are more likely to have utilized non-governmental applications than those who earn less than 50,000 QAR (79%).

Just 1% of respondents thought their experience using a non-governmental application was extremely terrible, compared to 76% who thought it was very good and 23% who thought it was OK. More women (80%) than men (74%) and more Qataris (83%) than higher-income expats (76%) thought their non-governmental application process was excellent (AAPOR, 2023).



6.9 The Influence of Advertising Methods of M-Government Applications

Six statements measuring respondents' perceptions of the degree of influence of various mobile government application advertisements were given to them in this part. A Likert scale with 1 denoting "very influential," 2 "somewhat influential," 3

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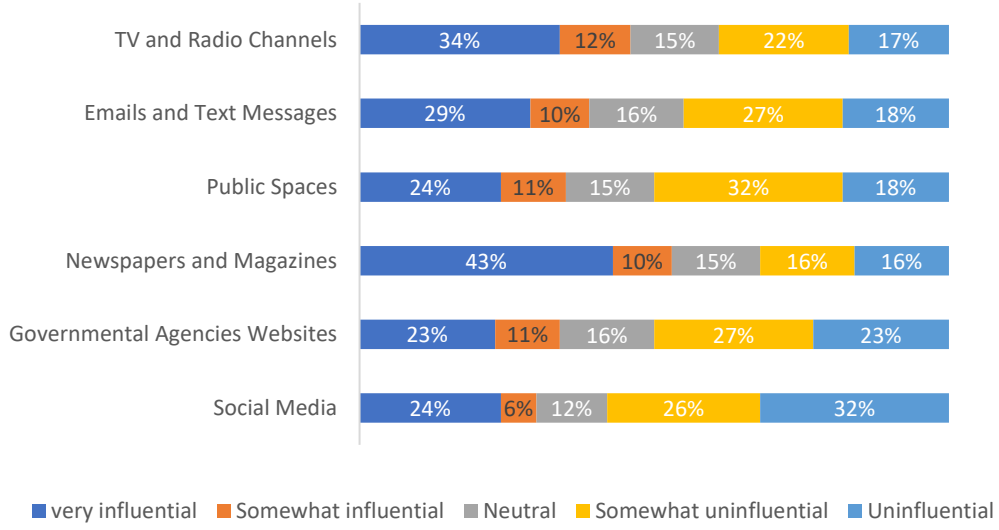
"neither influential nor uninfluential," 4 "somewhat uninfluential," and 5 "uninfluential" was used to score these statements.



Newspapers and magazines were ranked as the most influential of the six advertising strategies offered (43% reported extremely influential, and 10% reported somewhat influential). It's interesting to note that 51% of younger respondents, those in the 18–24 age range, said that newspapers and magazines are a "very influential" technique for mobile government applications. However, older respondents, especially those 45–54 and 55 and older, were less inclined to choose this approach as "very influential," with only 39% of respondents in both age groups agreeing. Additionally, more Qataris (59%) than expats with higher incomes (39%) said that

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advertisements in newspapers and magazines were "very influential." Similarly, compared to 42% of those who were employed and 41% of those who were jobless, 54% of students said that newspaper and magazine ads were "very influential." (El-Kassem, 2025).

However, only 24% of respondents rated social media ads as "very influential," and only 6% rated them as "somewhat influential," making them the least influential. Social media ads were most likely to be viewed as "very influential" by older respondents, especially those who were 55 years of age or older. On the other hand, only 20% of the youngest generation (18–24 years old) rated them as "very influential," making them the least inclined to do so. Additionally, there was a notable difference between Qataris and higher-income expatriates: just 12% of the latter reported being "very influential," compared to 27% of the former. Lastly, compared to 18% of students and 17% of unemployed respondents, 27% of employed respondents said that social media ads were "very influential."

TV and radio channels were rated as "very influential" by 34% of respondents and "somewhat influential" by 12%, making them the second most influential form of advertising behind newspaper and magazine ads. Only 32% of higher-income expatriates shared this opinion, whereas 40% of Qatari respondents said this approach was "very influential." The third most effective strategy was email and text message advertising, which was rated as "very influential" by 29% of respondents and "somewhat influential" by 10%. Similarly, compared to 26% of higher-income

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expatriates, more Qatari respondents (38%) said this was "very influential." In this instance, compared to just 27% of respondents who were employed and 28% of those who were jobless, 42% of students believed that emails and text message advertisements had an impact (Wansink, 2020).

Just 23% of respondents said that ads on the websites of governmental organizations were "very influential." This approach was seen as having greater influence among expats with higher incomes than among Qataris. In particular, only 3% of respondents from Qatar thought it was "somewhat influential," compared to 12% of expatriates. In a similar vein, only 24% of respondents said that public space advertisements were "very influential." Only 14% of respondents between the ages of 18 and 24 thought these advertisements were "uninfluential," although 20% of respondents 55 and older shared this opinion.

Qataris' perceptions of the most significant m-government application advertising platforms are similar to those of higher-income foreigners. Newspapers and periodicals were deemed highly important by the majority of Qataris (59%) and a significant portion of higher-income expats (39%). TV and radio stations come next, with 40% of Qataris and 32% of foreigners citing them, respectively. The third most important channel for advertising, however, is different for the two groups. While higher-income expats (27%) said social media platforms were extremely important, Qataris (38%) thought email and text messages were very influential.

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7. Conclusion

Ninety-five percent of the respondents said they use a smartphone on a daily basis, and three percent said they use both smartphones and regular phones. This indicates that nearly 98% of Qatari citizens and higher-class expatriates already use smartphones for communication, demonstrating the widespread influence of mobile technology and its great potential to be used for improved end-to-end communications between the public and various government agencies. Furthermore, only 5% of users disagreed, with 95% of participants confirming that mobile government apps are appropriate for their particular device type.

The research's conclusions demonstrate that social influence, which is fueled by cultural norms, intimate social networks, and views of modernity, is a significant factor in determining whether or not mobile government applications are adopted and used in Qatar. The research study also shows that participants' intentions to utilize m-government services are significantly influenced by the culture element, especially when it comes to lowering interpersonal biases, overcoming uncooperative users, and raising users' perceptions of sophistication. However, there are still some areas where cultural norms, including the preference for in-person encounters over using mobile apps to do any kind of business with government agencies, may have an impact on adoption.

Strong confidence in the security and dependability of mobile government apps to carry out any official business is indicated by the study. Respondents had a great deal of faith that mobile government apps would safeguard their privacy and prevent

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abuse of trust, as well as that they would promptly notify them of significant transaction modifications. As a result, the majority of respondents had faith that government organizations offer trustworthy m-government apps.

Both Qatari nationals and foreigners strongly support the use of mobile government applications. The majority of white-collar expats and Qataris concur that they will utilize mobile apps more in the future and think it's a good idea to do so. In a similar vein, the majority of respondents anticipate using m-Government and favor its adoption. According to the results, respondents plan to use m-Government. The fact that Qataris and white-collar expats value government mobile applications and want to employ them to provide more effective and efficient public services is heartening. Given that it will increase digital involvement and strengthen ties between the populace and the government, this is a positive move for Qatar and its citizens. Promoting m-Government is therefore strongly advised to improve operations and services for the nation's people and foreign residents alike.

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