ABSTRACT

Crowdsourcing has drawn much attention from researchers in the past. Thus, there are already attempts to conceptualize and classify the phenomenon. All of the existing work has their merits; however they lack an overviewing perspective or meta-characteristic. They are conceptual in nature, lack theoretical grounding, and – most importantly – are not empirically validated. Hence, we develop an empirical taxonomy of crowdsourcing intermediaries embedded in the theory of two-sided markets. Collecting data from 100 intermediaries and performing cluster analysis, we identify five archetypes of crowdsourcing intermediaries: Micro-tasking, knowledge work, design competition, testing and validation as well as innovation. The taxonomy establishes a systematic and comprehensive overview of crowdsourcing intermediaries and thereby provides a better understanding of the basic types of crowdsourcing and its core functions. For practice, we provide decision support for crowdsourcers as well as crowdsourcees on which platform to be active on.

Keywords: Crowdsourcing, empirical taxonomy, two-sided markets, cluster analysis