

A Review of the Factors Affecting User Satisfaction in Electronic Government Services

Vishanth Weerakkody, Business School, Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UK

Zahir Irani, Business School, Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UK

Habin Lee, Business School, Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UK

Nitham Hindi, College of Business and Economics, Qatar University, Doha, Qatar

Ibrahim Osman, American University of Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon

ABSTRACT

Even after more than a decade of intensive research work in the area of electronic government (e-government) adoption and diffusion, no study has yet undertaken a theoretical evaluation of research related to 'e-government satisfaction'. The purpose of this study is to undertake a comprehensive review of the literature related to e-government satisfaction and adoption with a particular focus on the most critical factors and their manifested variables that influence user satisfaction in e-government. Usable data relating to e-government research were collected from 147 papers identified from the Scopus database and by manually identifying relevant articles from journals dedicated to e-government research such as Electronic Government, an International Journal (EGLJ), International Journal of Electronic Government Research (IJEGR) and Transforming Government: People, Process, and Policy (TGPPP). A meta-analysis of existing e-government studies found that the majority of the construct relationships demonstrated a significant range of average summative correlation, and effect size, but the influence of perceived ease of use, effort expectancy on behavioural intention, behavioural intention on use behaviour, and perceived trust on risk were still found to be non-significant. A broader analysis of e-government satisfaction and adoption research seems to reflect that although a large number of theories and theoretical constructs were borrowed from reference disciplines such as Information Systems, e-commerce and public administration, their utilisation by e-government researchers appears to be largely random in approach.

Keywords: Adoption, E-Government, Meta-Analysis, User Satisfaction, Weight Analysis

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INTRODUCTION

In the last decade the influence of the Internet and evolving Information and Communication Technology (ICT) innovations has changed the field of public administration as never before. Following the success of e-business, governments across the world are clutching at digital reforms to broaden services for their citizens and enhance efficiency of public services through e-government (Kamal et al., 2011; Luna-Reyes and Gil-Garcia, 2011). Lau et al. (2008) argue e-government as the process of associating citizens electronically with their government to access information and services provided by public agencies. E-government also refers to the use of information technology (IT) by governments to augment access to and conveyance of its information and services to citizens, business partners, professionals, other organisations, and even public entities themselves (McClure, 2000; Symonds, 2000; West, 2004).

It has been argued that previous e-government literature has paid more attention to e-government service adoption from the supplier side (Lee et al., 2011; Reddick, 2005a) or fundamentally investigating public administration based supply of information and services (Medaglia, 2007; Coursey and Norris, 2008). However, the user's perspective (e.g. citizen or business) has been almost overlooked (Lee et al., 2011; Reddick, 2005b) and very little has been explored from the citizen's perspective (Moon and Welch, 2005; Thomas and Streib, 2003, 2005). It has been realised recently that 'supply side' driven development might not result in the widely proclaimed outcomes where user expectations and satisfaction are much higher on the priority list (Kunstelj et al., 2009). Over the years, many studies (e.g. Carter and Bellanger, 2005; Chen et al., 2010; Fu et al., 2004; Kunstelj et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2003; Morgeson et al., 2011; Verdegem and Verleye, 2009) on e-government research have emphasised the need to measure user satisfaction. However, there has not been any effort to comprehensively analyse such literature. For these reasons and a lack of knowledge in this area, this study

undertakes a comprehensive review of e-government satisfaction and adoption research to explore more about the predominant factors in such research. In doing so, the study aims to introduce researchers performing research in this area to the various methodological and theoretical aspects. A comprehensive weight-and meta-analysis performed for the variables used in this research might serve as guidelines to identify relevant factors suitable to consider for such research.

This study is particularly influenced by the research conducted by Welch et al. (2004), which looked at the link between citizen satisfaction with e-government and trust in government, published in the *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 15(3). In this seminal research, the authors question the extent to which citizens recognise and are satisfied with e-government strategies. Although eight years have passed and several other studies have been undertaken since this research was published in 2004 (e.g. Carter and Bellanger, 2005; Teo et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2011), the questions raised in the study still remain underexplored. Moreover, Welch's et al., study is even more significant in the evolving e-government service landscape where rapid advancements in ICT and large investment by governments have not been matched by citizens' enthusiasm for electronic services in the public sector. Numerous studies have indeed singled out citizens lack of satisfaction and related factors as the prime cause for poor e-government adoption (Carter and Weerakkody, 2008; Loo et al., 2009; Reddick, 2010). Yet, no single study has comprehensively reviewed and profiled all relevant factors that affect citizen satisfaction with e-government. Although a recent study by Belanger and Carter (2012) carried out a general profiling of e-government research through a literature review, this study focused primarily on top IS journals (e.g. those listed in the Association for Information Systems Senior Scholars' basket) and, therefore, is limited in scope. Moreover, the authors did not have a particular focus nor employ a rigorous and systematic methodological protocol and statistical method to identify

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