

Chapter 100

Behavioral Intention towards E-Government in Malaysia: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study examines an amplified unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) in the context of eGovernment to get a better understanding of users' behaviour towards eGovernment. Two hundred and six respondents (206) participated in the study and the data was analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM). The study revealed that Performance Expectancy, Risk Taking Propensity, Attitude towards Computer and Web Trust dimensions are essential precursor of behavioural intention of Malaysians towards eGovernment. The study further suggests that policy-makers can increase eGovernment usage by creating applications that meets expected demands and needs of the people with provision of trust facilitating environment and security conditioned systems.

INTRODUCTION

Many developed countries have used the benefits of using Information Technologies (IT) to improve the quality of customer service delivery. Regrettably, a very small number of developing countries have been able to do likewise successfully. Therefore, the digital divide gap between

the developed nation and developing nations continues to expand. While most developed nations extended the use of IT from business and education to public administration, developing countries could only make frantic efforts toward the use of IT in administering services to their citizens. There are several definition given to e-Government, Stiedel (2003) defined

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eGovernment as the “service delivery of Information, goods and services through the use of Technology.” Jain (2004) defined e-Government as the use of information and communication technologies to improve the functioning of the government. But there has not been any generally accepted definition, while the authors above have been generic in their definition some have been explanatory and specific. The council for excellence in government (2001) stated that “e-Government links people to the public place of Ideas, debate, priorities, initiatives, innovations, services, transactions and results. It puts ownership of government truly in the hands of all Americans”. The contexts of the definition are unison with a little variation in the content. With regards to developing nations, e-Government can be defined as the use of Information Technology as agent of change towards development by improving the quality of service delivered to citizens while fostering efficiency, accountability and transparency in governance.

In the Information System (IS) domain, several studies have attempted to explain the relationship between user satisfaction, attitude and behavioural intention towards IT usage (Gefen et al., 2003; Hsu et al., 2004; Ong et al., 2004; Roca et al., 2008). The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) proposed by Venkatesh et al. (2003) has been used recently in explaining user acceptance and adoption of Information technology and its use. UTAUT predicts that acceptance of technology by users can be determined by four constructs: Performance Expectation, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence and Facilitating Conditions. UTAUT was derived from the Theory of Reasoned Action, the Technology Acceptance Model, the Motivational Model, the Theory of Planned Behaviour, a model combining the technology acceptance model and the theory of planned behaviour, the model of PC Utilization, the Innovation Diffusion Theory, and the Social Cognitive Theory which posit that the perception

of satisfaction, ease of use, influence and relative assisting conditions determined individual behavioural intention towards using the system.

Researchers have studied how citizens developed confidence towards government by using the e-services provided by the government without face to face contact with government officials. Moreover, in the context of e-Government in developing nations, citizens have rather shown their reluctance in carrying out transactions with the government in virtual work space (Lean et al., 2009). User acceptance of IT is an important criterion for efficient execution of IT projects. Venkatesh et al. (2004 p.446) gave a precise definition of user acceptance as “initial decision made by the individual to interact with the technology.” Prior to adoption of the technology, individuals are expected to have direct experience with the technology and make a decision to adopt.

Our paper is one of the few to extend UTAUT analysis to trust perspective, attitude, and personality traits within the context of e-Government in developing nations. Focus of many studies in IS has been on studying the use of IT and its acceptance (Roca et al., 2008; Lean et al., 2009; Shih, 2004). Furthermore, limited studies have used UTAUT to predict the adoption behaviour of citizens (AlAwadhi et al., 2008; Al-Shafi, 2010; Taiwo et al., 2010). The objective of this paper is to investigate the factors that influences acceptance of eGovernment within the context of a developing country.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model by Venkatesh et al. (2003) was designed from eight prominent Information Technology acceptance model from

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