

Chapter 69

Promoting Voluntariness on Technology Usage in Organisations: A Mobile Technology Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Voluntariness in technology adoption and use is vital in promoting technology diffusion and use in organisations. Various technology adoption models have been proposed to explain the adoption of technologies in different settings, such as organizational and individual, as well as in the voluntary and mandatory contexts. Recently, uptake of mobile phones in achieving organisational targets has been increased in developing countries and Tanzania in particular. This is due to the notable improvements in both hardware performance and sophistications. In organisation context, not all users are willing to use technology as required. In such circumstances, they are mandated to use it in order to fulfil their working duties. This leads to poor uptake of technology and results to unclear understanding regarding to their attitudes towards using it. While some studies have discussed the impact of voluntariness in using traditional desktop computer systems and thin client computing, mobile phone technology has not received the deserved attention. Discussing voluntariness in using mobile phone technology in organisations in relation to other technologies is essential especially due to its usage in both working and private purposes. This paper describes the voluntary aspects of using mobile phones in performing activities of the firms in Tanzania and compares it with desktop and thin client technologies. Also, it proposes possible ways of handling such situation in order to improve its use. Among others, the paper has analysed mandatoriness on usage of mobile technology. Further, it highlights key areas which should be addressed in order to improve the usage of mobile technology in organisations and eventually cover the gap caused by such mandatory situations.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has attracted attention of research covering various computing technologies. Such technologies include desktop computing, thin client-computing, and recently mobile computing. Mobile phone technology adoption has seen its uptake by individuals and organizations (Mashenene, 2015; Mramba, Sutinen, Haule, & Msami, 2012). Due to the low level of ICT readiness (Hourali, Fathian, Montazeri, & Hourali, 2008) particularly in catching up with non-mobile computing technologies, developing countries have opted to rely on mobile phones in performing majority of their activities as an alternative of desktop computers (Choucri et al., 2003; Makame, Kang, & Park, 2014).

The adoption and use of technology in organisation level has seen to be affected by the social influences (Venkatesh, 2000). Social influence refers to the perceptions of users that people who are important or credible think that they should or shouldn't use technology (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008; Byomire & Maiga, 2015). In the organisation settings, credible people may include high ranked staff and other superiors. As such, one of the key social influences includes mandatoriness in using technology (Brown et al., 2002).

Despite the existing studies in the aspects of voluntariness in using technology, little have been covered especially in the usage of mobile phone technology. There is a need of bringing up issues which will guide stakeholders in the adoption and use of mobile phone technology in organisational settings. This study reviews the current literature followed by conducting interviews with the employees in various cadres from operators to managers of Tanzania firms.

The leading technology acceptance models such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) and the Unified Technology Adoption and Utilisation of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, & Davis, 2003) show that the social influences affect the extent of using technology by users. Under these circumstances, dealing effectively with voluntariness will ensure that user satisfactions with the use of mobile phone technology in organisational settings are reinforced.

Stakeholders in the mobile phone technology have roles to play in making sure that the uptake and contribution of mobile phone technology in Tanzania is improved. However, for successful implementations, a clear picture which highlights issues concerning the use of mobile phones in the organisational perspectives is vital. Section 2 of this paper provide an introduction of the leading technologies used in organisations and their usage operational conditions in the organisational level, and section 3 discusses issues concerning voluntariness, and how it impacts attitudes of users with respect to technology. Section 4 provides discussions showing how key stakeholders can possibly deal with voluntariness issues while the conclusion is set within section 5 of this paper.

2. COMPUTING TECHNOLOGIES

A. Mobile Phone Technology

In mobile technology, the computing services and internet are basically accessed by the mobile devices in the wireless medium (Byomire & Maiga, 2015; Lopez-Nicolas, Molina-Castillo, & Bouwman, 2008). The main advantage of mobile technology is its mobility which allow users to access computing services anywhere and at any time (Sarker & Wells, 2003; Sheng, Siau, & Nah, 2010). The time and space

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