



Chapter II

The Impact of Personal IT Innovativeness on Use of the Internet Among Employees at Work

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Abstract

Examining Internet use among employees, this research investigated the theoretical proposition that personal IT innovativeness will positively impact the use of novel computer technologies. The research model included the individual traits of age, gender, experience with IT, and educational level. The article discusses the categories of organizationally relevant versus personal use of the Internet. Using a questionnaire, data was collected from 328 respondents in one organization. The results indicated that users perceive structural differences across various types of Internet use areas, although no clear support for a distinction between organizationally relevant and personal use was found. Additionally, the

analyses indicated that personal use is considerably lower than organizationally relevant use of the Internet. However, employees may not distinguish clearly between these two categories. Personal IT innovativeness was the best predictor of organizationally relevant use of the Internet. Age contributed negatively to Internet use. Males appear to use the Internet more frequently than females. Educational level had no impact on Internet use.

Introduction

A recurring theme within the domain of end-user computing is explaining differences in individual computer use patterns among employees (DeLone & McLean, 1992; Harris, 2000; Powell & Moore, 2002; Seddon, 1997). Recently, Internet usage has emerged as an area of particular importance (Otto, Najdawi, & Caron, 2000; Stanton, 2002). Because of the recent dot-com bubble collapse and numerous e-commerce failures, one would expect the Internet to have less importance to individual users. However, in addition to some dot-com successes, private and public institutions are developing an increasing number of Internet services. Employees of large organizations are active users, and their use is expected to grow (Charlton, Gittings, Leng, Little, & Neilson, 1998; Roberts, 2000). Research addressing differences in personal Internet use patterns has relevance.

Based on the view that change is key, a series of studies has investigated the effect of *personal information technology (IT) innovativeness* on the use of novel technologies. Studies addressing *personal IT innovativeness* often differ from research using the technology acceptance model (Chau, 2001) because the impacts of attitude, beliefs, and intention on behavior (i.e., use) are not the focus. Rather, *personal IT innovativeness* has been viewed as a trait that in its own right may explain use. Hence, the present research builds on the theoretical assumption that *personal IT innovativeness* is positively related to the use of novel technologies regardless of usage area.

The samples used in previous studies addressing *personal IT innovativeness* are users (in general) of the World Wide Web (Agarwal & Karahanna, 2000), online shoppers (Limayem, Khalifa, & Frini, 2000), academicians (Pajo, 2000), and adolescents (Wolfrandt & Doll, 2001). The overall interpretation is that *personal IT innovativeness* has a positive impact on Internet use, yet the relationship between *personal IT innovativeness* and Internet use among the broad population of employees in business organizations has not been directly investigated.

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