

Chapter 2.37

The Development and Empirical Validation of the B2E Portal User Satisfaction (B2EPUS) Scale

Dewi Rooslani Tojib

Monash University, Australia

Ly Fie Sugianto

Monash University, Australia

ABSTRACT

Advances in information technology (IT) and the rapid growth of the Internet use over the past decade have considerably changed the way organisations interact with their employees. An increasing number of organisations have implemented a business-to-employee (B2E) portal as a communication and facilitating tool to assist employees in performing administrative, personal-related, and specific tasks more effectively and efficiently. An understanding of what constitutes employees' satisfying use of a portal is crucial for developing a successful B2E portal. To date, very little research has been devoted to establishing a measurement of user satisfaction with Web-based information systems, specifically

B2E portals. The aim of this study is to develop a scale for measuring user satisfaction with B2E portals. This paper discusses three main sequential studies in developing the scale: domain identification, content validation, and an exploratory study. Evidence about reliability, content validity, criterion-related validity, convergent validity, and discriminant validity is presented. Finally, we conclude this study by discussing limitations and future research avenue.

INTRODUCTION

Flexibility in work arrangements offered by organizations has created a wider variety of working modes than ever before. Typical organizations may

have office-based employees in various locations, telecommuting home-based employees, and contract employees. They are sometimes required to complete their work outside their working hours, either from office or remotely. Therefore, they need a tool that enables them anytime anywhere to perform their work-related and personal-related tasks as well as to remain connected with the organization and their colleagues. One tool that has been widely implemented by an increasing number of organizations is the business-to-employee (B2E) portal.

The B2E portal is a type of a corporate portal, which is specifically developed to support the access and availability of customized and personalized information for employees. It is different from other types of employee support systems such as the Intranet, in that it supports dynamic content, personalization, and customization. Through the Internet connection, employees are able to access a range of relevant internal and external information in the password-protected portals. Such portal supports four key zones of employee interactions (Teuke, 2001). The first is the employee-to-enterprise zone, which mostly covers traditional HR functions such as updating personal files and scheduling leave. This is achieved through the integration of the Employee Self Service and/or Manager Self Service. The second zone is employee-to-employee which facilitates collaboration among employees. The portal integrates groupware applications which enable employees to share information and ideas and collaborate with their colleagues through e-mail, chat, or discussion threads. The third zone is employee-to-task where the portal offers tools and applications specific to each employee's job function. For instance, pricing and stock information are exclusive to sales staff while organization financial report to finance staff. The last zone is employee-to-life. The portal links employees to a range of internal and external information related to their interests, such as staff-travel information, or employee financial

planning. By accessing the portal, employees are able to do not only their allocated but also their administrative tasks.

Very little systematic research has been undertaken to measure B2E portal success in organizations. An accurate measure of its success is required to assist organizations in evaluating the worthiness of such portal implementation. Although there are a number of approaches for measuring the success of IS such as cost benefit analysis, system usage estimation, utility analysis, and information attributes examination (Thong & Yap, 1996), user satisfaction is the most widely used measure (DeLone & McLean, 1992) and the most common and accepted surrogate measure of IS success (Melone, 1990). Therefore, a multidimensional scale that measures user satisfaction with the B2E portal would be useful.

Extensive research has been done in the past on the measurement of user satisfaction. Since the 1980s, considerable conceptual and empirical studies have been devoted to establish a standard user satisfaction scale. Bailey and Pearson's (1983) and Doll and Torkzadeh's (1988) are the most frequently adopted or adapted scales when measuring user satisfaction with IS applications (Wang, Tang, & Tang, 2001). The former was initially developed to measure general user information satisfaction for the Traditional Data Processing (TDP) environment while the latter was developed to measure user satisfaction with specific application for the End User Computing (EUC) environment. Apart from these scales, previous researchers have developed user satisfaction scales for different types of applications such as ERP systems (Calisir & Calisir, 2004), knowledge management systems (Ong & Lai, 2004), and e-learning systems (Wang, 2003).

The review of the user satisfaction measurement literature showed that studies specifically examining user satisfaction with B2E portals are virtually non-existent. The existing user

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