Chapter VII

The Case Study: Methodology and Results

Introduction

This chapter provides details on the case study that was conducted in order to validate the research model and framework proposed in Chapter IV. Additionally, it seeks to validate the three tools proposed in Chapters V and VI. This chapter is guided by the seven research questions proposed in the previous three chapters and presents both the methodology used as well as the results of each section of this study.

Straub (1989) suggested a three-phase method for valid and sound results of survey instruments in IS research. The first phase that he proposed included a qualitative technique of exploring the phenomena and developing a theoretical framework grounded in previous theories. The second phase includes quantitative empirical techniques in order to explore the proposed theory. The third and last phase includes conceptual refinements based on the findings in the previous phases. The methodology proposed in this study follows closely these three phases for the development of valid and sound instruments to assess the value and satisfaction of e-learning systems.
Phase I (see Figure 1) includes a qualitative assessment of characteristics that learners’ value and express satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) when learning online. The findings of this phase were added to the findings previously reported in literature. Phase II of the study is noted as the “pilot study” and includes the development of a survey instrument based on all the characteristics found in literature as well as those newly uncovered in Phase I of this study. Pilot data collected in Phase II was analyzed via exploratory factor analysis using principal components analysis (PCA) to identify the distinct factors resulting from the data. This was done in order to provide initial validation of the instrument and to help clean items that do not add to the overall validity. Adjustments were made to the developed instrument based on preliminary
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