Chapter III

E-Government Adoption and Acceptance: A Literature Review and Research Framework

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Abstract

Despite increased research interest on e-government, existing research has not adequately addressed two key issues concerning the implementation and integration of e-government systems: a better understanding of the factors influencing the adoption and acceptance of e-government systems, and a better understanding of the factors that influence the effective usage of these systems. The objective of the present chapter is to lay the groundwork for the development of a theoretical framework of e-government systems implementation. Based on an extensive review of the literature the chapter provides a synthesis of existing empirical findings and theoretical perspectives related to e-government adoption and presents the premises of a conceptual model that reflects the multidimensional nature of the acceptance and use of e-government systems.
Introduction

Electronic government refers to the use of information technologies (IT) to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and responsibility of public governments (Kraemer & King, 2003; World Bank, 2007). Viewed as radical, yet unavoidable transformation projects (Jaeger, 2003), the implementation of e-government systems has been attracting increased research interest, and is believed to constitute one of the most important IT implementation and organizational change challenges of the future (Marche & McNiven, 2003; Warkentin, Gefen, Pavlou, & Rose, 2002). According to some estimates, e-government systems are already helping save 2% of the annual U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) (UNDP, 2001). However, the realized savings are still far less than what is potentially possible. For example, World Bank (2007) figures indicate that even the countries that are most advanced in the implementation of e-government systems are able to capture only 20% of their real savings potential. Moreover, implementation failures of e-government systems are also common and often lead to adverse financial consequences (e.g., the Gires project in Québec or the Canadian Firearms Registry which cost $400M and $1 billion, respectively) (Radio Canada, 2003).

Despite the potentially significant impacts of e-government systems on public administrations, organizations, individuals, and society, there is presently a dearth of systematic and thorough studies on the subject (Jaeger, 2003; Kraemer & King, 2003, p.12). In addition, the research themes, as well as the research approaches and perspectives employed in the study of e-government implementations also exhibit significant diversity, making it difficult to reach conceptual clarity on the subject (Grönlund, 2005a). Finally, several authors remain skeptical (Kallinikos, 2003, 2004; Kraemer & King, 2003) regarding the relevance of a radical transformation of the public bureaucratic model, with others seriously questioning the viability of the outcomes that result from IT-led transformations of institutionalized governmental processes (Ciborra, 2005; Du Gay, 2003, 2004; Kallinikos, 2004; Stokes & Clegg, 2002).

Given the importance and complexity of the topic, and the lack of published comprehensive literature reviews of e-government adoption and acceptance, the present chapter provides a synthesis of existing empirical findings and theoretical perspectives on this subject, and presents the theoretical premises of a conceptual framework that reflects the multilevel and multidimensional nature of the adoption and acceptance of e-government systems.

The chapter is organized as follows: the first section presents an analytical framework for conducting the literature review; the second section describes the main findings from this review; and the third section provides a discussion of the findings and the conclusions of the study.
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