The Influence of Self-Efficacies on Readers’ Intention to Use E-Reading Devices: An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

E-books and e-Reading Devices (E-RDs) markets have been enlarged due to the rapid progress of digital technologies. What are the possible factors to increase readers’ willingness to use electronic devices? To improve the predictive value of the original TAM model, this study incorporates three additional constructs to form e-Reading Device Acceptance Mode: reading self-efficacy, computer self-efficacy and perceived enjoyment. This model consists of six constructs and 11 research hypotheses. The research questionnaires were distributed in Taiwan, and the research results showed that reading self-efficacy shows positive influences on readers’ intention to use the E-RDs. On the contrary, computer self-efficacy does not show positive influences on perceived usefulness or perceived enjoyment. Moreover, the perceived ease of use of E-RDs does not show significant impacts on readers’ intention to use the devices. Explanations of the causes and reasons are given in this paper, and the finding of this research may provide useful references and materials for e-book publishers, e-reading device developers, and researchers for further studies.

Keywords: Computer-Mediated Communication, Distance Education, Interactive Learning Environments, Media In Education, Telelearning

INTRODUCTION

Those who are literate have the ability to self-learning as well as to enjoy the pleasure of reading. There is a close relationship between a person’s reading ability and his/her country’s competitiveness. As a result, many countries have been striving to promote their citizens’ reading ability. Lin (2010) noted the situation in Taiwan:

1. In average, a person spends only 3.06 hours reading per week, which is much lower than the time (i.e., 19.13 hours) a person spends on watching TV per week.

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2. The statistics based on age showed that those who are employees and are between the age of 40 and 59 seldom read books, and the rate increases from 20% to 35.8% as the age level increases.

3. In average, a person reads 2.02 books per month, and the number decreases as the age rate increases (i.e. people between the age of 60 and 69 read only 1.43 books per month). Consequently, how to increase people’s reading intention so as to elevate their learning effectiveness has become an important issue for Taiwan.

Since the development of the digital technology and applications, the instant, interactive, personalized and other characteristics of reading on digital devices have been widely accepted by readers. Portable e-reading devices (E-RDs) enable e-books to be downloaded (Shamir & Shlafer, 2011). Nowadays, e-books have increased its popularity and a lot of E-RDs can be downloaded from the internet (e.g. offered by e-books, e-magazines, and e-news publishers). Especially, E-RDs are not only used for reading e-books but also for interaction. Readers can share and discuss the contents of the articles and their feedbacks with others on the internet, such as through discussion group, blog, facebook, etc.

Following mobile phones, tablet PCs are new technology products expected to arouse another wide popularity. According to the survey done by Google’s Admob, 84% of the 1,430 tablet PC owners listed gaming (84%) as the first of their tablet usage, followed by information searching (78%) and emailing (74%) ranked the second and the third. But only 46% of the tablet PC owners used their tablet PCs for reading e-book, which was ranked the seventh and was lower than expectation (Cush, 2011). Nevertheless, it is another important issue to discuss the factors that may influence the readers’ acceptance of e-reading. This question is worthy of studying in Taiwan for the reason that Taiwan possesses a complete supply chain and technique for publishing and producing e-books.

In previous investigation of users’ acceptance of new technology systems, the ease of use and usefulness of the systems are considered as important factors to influence their intention of usage. Bhattacherjee & Premkumar (2004) pointed out that the perceived usefulness would influence and change the users’ beliefs and behaviors toward the systems, and thereby influence their intention to use and their behaviors toward the systems. Based on a psychological attitude theory, Davis (1989) proposed Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and provided that the external variables (e.g. system characteristics and user characteristics) are led by the cognitive attitudes (i.e. perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use), and the external variables will in turn influence and change the users’ behaviors toward the systems. To take the hedonic information systems (van der Heijden, 2004) as an example, both perceived enjoyment and perceived ease of use are shown to have more influence on the users’ intention to use than perceived usefulness.

As a consequence, this study proposes that the e-reading system acceptance model can be explored by taking the hedonic technology acceptance system as its main theoretical basis. The motivation and the objectives of this research are:

1. To adopt hedonic technology acceptance model as a theoretical basis; to read self-efficacy and computer self-efficacy as the external variables added to the model; and to explore the influence of the variables on the readers’ intention of usage;
2. To discover whether perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and perceived enjoyment show influence on the readers’ intention to use E-RDs and whether the influence is the same as the hedonic information systems;
3. To use questionnaire to explore the reasons why readers intend to use E-RDs, and then offer suggestions to e-book publishers and e-book device developers.
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