Critical Factors Influencing E-Government Adoption in India: An Investigation of the Citizens’ Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, the authors present an integrated model based on Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), trust and citizen satisfaction, to explore the factors which influence the adoption of e-government services in Delhi (India). The findings indicate that effort expectancy, performance expectancy, and trust in technology followed by trust in government, citizen satisfaction, and facilitating conditions are significant predictors of citizen adoption of e-government. The findings also reveal that facilitating conditions can be divided into two factors: ‘Available Facilitating Conditions’ (AFC) which are concerned with the facilitating conditions available at the user’s end and ‘Provided Facilitating Conditions’ (PFC) which refer to the facilitating conditions provided by the government. According to the findings of the study, AFC has a greater impact on e-government adoption, as compared to PFC.

KEYWORDS
Citizen Adoption, Citizen Satisfaction, E-Government, India, Information and Communication Technology, Trust, UTAUT

1. INTRODUCTION

E-government is the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for receiving and delivering information and government services, efficiently and inexpensively. It is one of the important processes of bringing reforms in the systems of government. The key objectives of e-government are to share information and deliver services with quality at minimum cost, improve interactions with citizens, businesses, government employees and to make system transparent and reliable. Out of the four delivery models of e-government applications - Government to Citizen or Government to Consumer (G2C), Government to Business (G2B), Government to Government (G2G), and Government to Employees (G2E), G2C is the most fundamental model of e-government. A citizen transacts with the government for various public utility services viz. medical facilities, transportation, electricity, education etc. and also for democratic services relating to the citizenship such as ID Cards, passports, registration, licensing, taxation, etc.

The success of e-government is dependent on government support as well as citizens’ acceptance. There are various challenges of adopting e-government which include administrative problems, technological challenges, infrastructural problems, lack of trust on online services, security concerns
and the digital divide. Apart from these challenges, there are many social challenges like language barriers, low IT literacy, low user friendliness of government websites, inability to access internet and lack of awareness in citizens.

Several researchers have studied the factors influencing citizen adoption of e-government in the contexts of various developed and developing countries. However, existing research has not adequately provided a better understanding of the factors that influence citizen adoption and acceptance of e-government in India. The reason for the same can be attributed to the fact that e-government research in India is in its early stages (Gupta and Jana 2003). In this paper, we present an integrated model based on Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh, 2003), trust (Belanger and Carter, 2008) and citizen satisfaction (Al Hujran et al., 2013), to explore the factors which influence the adoption of e-government services in India. We have selected Delhi as the location for the study, because Delhi is an important administrative unit of Government of India, being the capital of the country. Also, Delhi has the advantage of its cosmopolitan society where there are people from every nook and corner of India. The study is based on the citizens’ perceptions regarding the e-government services offered by New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC).

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 briefly explains the development e-government in India. Section 3 presents the review of literature and the proposed research model. The employed research methodology is discussed in section 4 and the data analysis and results are presented in section 5. Section 6 concludes the paper with implications and limitations of the research.

2. E-GOVERNMENT IN INDIA

E-government originated in India during the 1970’s with a focus on automation and interconnection in the areas of defence, economic monitoring, planning, elections, census, tax administration, etc. In 1980’s, National Informatics Center (NIC) took a significant stride by connecting all the district headquarters through ICT. From the 1990’s, e-government has witnessed the use of ICT for wider applications with emphasis on connectivity, setting up systems for information processing and delivering services. The applications include automation in individual departments, electronic file handling, public grievance systems, payment of bills and taxes etc. Keeping in mind the various positive impacts of e-governance, the Government of India approved the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) on May 18, 2006. The plan was formulated by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DEITY) and Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG). The aim of NeGP is to make all government services accessible to the common man and ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND PROPOSED RESEARCH MODEL

The models which are widely used for studying citizen adoption of e-government are based on the models which are used in the contexts of e-commerce (Carter and Belanger, 2005). Previous researches have employed many such models viz, Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Diffusion of Innovation (DOI), Perceived Characteristics of Innovation (PCI) and Trust, for studying the factors which influence citizen adoption of e-government (Table 1).

In this paper, we propose an integrated model to examine the citizen adoption of e-government in India. The proposed model integrates the constructs of UTAUT (performance expectancy,
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