Chapter 4
An Empirical Investigation of M–Government Acceptance in Developing Countries:
A Case of Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Technological development in the past decade has motivated governments in developing countries to focus on leveraging new technologies for efficient and effective public service delivery. M-government has been singled out as one of the fundamental aspect for socio-economic growth in developing countries. Therefore, this study aims at investigating the factors that influence individuals in adoption of new technology, specifically m-government in the context of developing countries. Precisely, this study was to present and empirically validate a research model based on user behavior that examine m-government acceptance in developing countries and inspect the moderating role of facilitating conditions on m-government adoption. The

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research model was tested using data from 248 respondents from Kenya, surveyed between August and September 2011. The results indicated that the proposed model explained a variance of 60.5 percent of behavior intention to use m-government. In addition, facilitating conditions were found to be a crucial spur to m-government acceptance in developing countries.

INTRODUCTION

In the quest to catch-up with the developed countries, governments in developing countries have been investing heavily on information technology in order to have an infrastructure that provides extensive and proactive services to their citizenry. However, these efforts are thwarted by low levels of acceptance of information technology. It is indisputable that m-government is an essential element for socio-economic improvement in developing countries; yet, little is known about factors and conditions surrounding its acceptance in developing countries.

Consequently, policy makers in developing countries are faced with a dilemma of determining the success levels of m-government projects before the actual introduction. Thus, unless there is a clear understanding of perspectives and factors related to how developing countries perceive and accept m-government (Avgerou, 2002), this essential technology will remain speculative, and therefore, alien to the populace in developing countries.

Prior to the advent of the Internet, governments provided services manually through multiple service locations countrywide, for example, provincial, district, and location government administrative offices. In contrast, e-government which is predecessor to m-government, paved way for provision of services online. Recently, growth in mobile technologies, particularly the introduction of smart phones, ipads, and mobile phones that have access to the Internet and wireless networks, a new channel to deliver government services to the citizens in a more effective and economical way has been created (Du Preez, 2009; Yoojung Kim et al., 2004). These developments have advanced a new avenue known as m-government, which brings government services closer to the people. According to Ostberg (2003), m-government is the use of mobile wireless telecommunication technology within the public administration, to deliver services and information to citizens and businesses.

Currently, many governments in developing countries are directing their efforts towards efficient public service delivery through e-government projects (Ishmatova & Obi, 2009). However, advancement in mobile technology together with high mobile device penetration, which has by far exceeded personal computer adoption
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