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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the validation of the Business-to-Employee (B2E) Portal User Satisfaction (B2EPUS) scale in the South African context. The results indicate that the scale remains reliable and valid outside its country of origin and is applicable to other industries, particularly mining, petrochemical, consulting, and retailing. Industry practitioners can confidently employ the scale when measuring the success of their B2E portal implementations.

Keywords: E-business, IS Success Measure, Portal, Scale Validation, User Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Many IS researchers have long investigated ways to measure IS success (Delone & McLean, 1992). System quality (Srinivasan, 1985), information quality (Mahmood & Medewitz, 1985), system use (King & Rodriguez, 1981), individual impact (Bergeron, 1986), organizational impact (Benbasat & Dexter, 1986), return on investment (Delone, 1988) and user satisfaction (Baroudi & Orlikowsky, 1988) are several success measures that have been commonly proposed in the past literature. Each of these measures has their own advantages and disadvantages; some are more relevant to particular organizations than the others and thus making it more difficult to conclude which the best success measure is for IS implementations. Nevertheless, IS researchers seem to agree that user satisfaction is the most extensively utilized surrogate measure of IS success (Au, Ngai, & Cheng, 2002). In addition to its applicability and ease of use, Delone and McLean (1992) suggest that the popularity of user satisfaction measures are due to their high degree of face validity, the availability of reliable tools for measuring satisfaction, and the fact that other
proposed measures are still conceptually weak or empirically difficult to obtain.

User satisfaction assesses whether the needs of system users are being satisfied and hence most user satisfaction measures capture the perceptions of system users toward the information quality and system quality attributes (Doll, Deng, Raghunathan, Torkzadeh, & Xia, 2004). Previous research including Ein-Dor and Segev (1978) and Hamilton and Chervany (1981) found that user satisfaction is most appropriate when a specific system was evaluated. Consequently, a large number of user satisfaction measures for particular types of IT applications, such as Executive Information Systems (Benard & Satir, 1993), Electronic Data Interchange (Jones & Beatty, 2001), Enterprise Resource Planning (Calisir & Calisir, 2004), Knowledge Management Systems (Ong & Lai, 2004), and websites (Muylle, Moenaert, & Despontin, 2004) have been developed.

This article focuses on one most recent user satisfaction scale specifically developed for the employee portal environment, namely the Business-to-Employee portal user satisfaction (B2EPUS) scale (Tojib, Sugianto, & Sendjaya, 2008). This scale was developed to respond to the call for an adequate theoretical framework to guide organizations in determining the extent to which their portal implementations are successful. A rigorous multi-stage process of scale development employed in the original study had sufficiently demonstrated the reliability and validity of the B2EPUS scale (see Tojib et al., 2008 for details). In the attempt to extend the generalizability of the B2EPUS scale, this study aims to further examine the stability of structure and dimensionality of the construct, as well as to assess the reliability and validity of the scale. In this article, we focused on testing the scale on portal users of African employee systems.

This article is organized as follows. The next section describes the background and motivation of the current study. Subsequently, the method, analysis, and results of the structural assessment of the B2EPUS construct, the reliability and validity assessment of the B2EPUS scale are presented. The theoretical and practical implications of the study, as well as directions for future research, are discussed in the concluding sections of this article.

**RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION**

B2E portals, also known as employee/staff portals, are the latest generation employee support systems developed to facilitate the access and availability of customized and personalized information for employees (Davydov, 2001). Operating on the web platform, these portals are accessible anytime, anywhere, providing convenience to mobile employees. Given the ability of the portals to integrate various work-related applications such as e-mail, reporting tools, online training, Employee Self-Service, and Manager Self-Service as well as personal-related links, many portal vendors promote these portals as a modern-day solution to effectively and efficiently manage information flow within business corporations. They envision B2E portals as a one-stop desktop destination, whereby employees could sufficiently use all information available from the portal to perform their tasks. With such positioning strategy, it is not surprising that since its introduction in the early 2000s, B2E portals have been widely implemented across industries, both locally and internationally (Cedar Crestone Survey, 2007). IBM, Toshiba, HP, General Motors, and Ford are just a few of those, which have implemented these particular systems.

Similar to other IS implementations, top-level management staff and the portal project team would like to know whether their portal implementations are successful. In our context, a portal project is considered to be successful if after their first use, the portal users could see the benefits of using the portal and hence keep accessing the portal to perform their tasks whenever necessary. Given the cost of portal implementations could hit six-digit figure (Bannan, 2002) and the great amount of time allocated to portal projects (Remus, 2006),
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