Chapter 11

Conclusion: Contributions, Limitations, and Future Research Directions

Abstract

This chapter provides a conclusion of the results and discussions of the UK case study research presented in this book. The chapter begins with an overview of this research in the next section. This is followed by the main conclusions drawn from this research. Following this, a discussion of the research contributions and implications of this research in terms of the theory, policy and practice is provided. This is ensued by the research limitations, and a review of the future research directions in the area of broadband diffusion and adoption. Finally, a summary of the chapter is provided.
Chapter 1 defined the research problem and outlined the motivation for conducting this research. Given the large-scale investments in developing and upgrading broadband infrastructures, the slow uptake, and decreasing rate of residential broadband adoption in the UK provided the stimulus for this research. The literature analysis indicated that existing research on broadband had frequently examined this issue from macro level perspectives, such as the geography of the country, density of population, competition amongst Internet service providers (ISPs), local loop unbundling, stakeholder analysis, and government policies. Although these studies were helpful in the preparation and promotion of the broadband market, they offered limited implications to the ISPs who are the most important supply side stakeholders and who are directly involved with the household consumers.

However, the analysis of the literature suggested that an examination of broadband adoption, usage, and impact from the consumers’ perspectives has just begun to emerge and is yet to be undertaken. It was also found that initial studies from the broadband consumers’ perspective were mainly data driven and exploratory in nature. A recently conducted study (Oh et al., 2003) had made initial efforts in investigating the influence of the diffusion of innovation characteristics on attitude building towards the use of broadband in South Korea. However, the contributions of the study were also limited, as it did not examine how various factors including attitude influence the behavioural intentions (BI) and actual adoption of broadband. This study also excluded the issue of broadband usage and impact on consumers and how it differs from narrowband consumers. Since both these neglected issues are imperative for understanding broadband adoption, the implications of the study for ISPs and policy makers were limited.

Therefore, this research aimed to identify and determine the consumer level factors that influence broadband adoption and use and, consequently, its impact on UK household consumers. The objectives to achieve the overall aim included: developing a conceptual model; developing and validating a research instrument; conducting data collection and analysis in order to validate and refine the conceptual model; and finally outlining implications for theory, practice and policy. Chapter 1 also provided brief information on potential research approaches and the research contribution to theory, practice and policy.

In order to achieve the first objective of this research, Chapter 2 first reviewed the various technology adoption and diffusion related theories and models including the diffusion of innovations, TRA, TPB, DTPB, TAM, MATH, and use diffusion models. Since these adoption and diffusion theories and models provided this research with a number of underlying constructs or factors, they were considered to be guiding frameworks for this research. Chapter 2 then discussed and justified the reason for selecting factors that were expected to predict the BI to adopt broadband,
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