Chapter 11

Public Acceptance of M–Government Services in Developing Countries: The Case of Jordan

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ABSTRACT

Mobile telecommunications networks have been exploited over the past few years as a means to provide additional flow of information and services to citizens and businesses. This is in addition to using the conventional channels such as the Internet, landline telephones, kiosks, and call centers. The use of mobile communication technology to offer public services to citizens and firms is referred to as mobile government (m-government). In developing countries such as Jordan, there has been an increasing interest in the provision of m-government services. However, the majority of citizens have still never used them. The research reported in this chapter intends to address the m-government adoption issues in an empirical field study that extends the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) with two constructs related to the uncertain context of m-government: trust and information privacy. The results indicate that the strong predictors of citizen intention to use m-government services are performance and effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, and trust. Surprisingly, the results also suggest that information privacy is not a significant predictor of citizen intention to use m-government services. The theoretical and managerial implications of these results are also discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

Governments around the world have long been exploring the utilization of different channels, including proprietary solutions and private infrastructures, for the purpose of delivering public sector services. The use of mobile and wireless communication technologies within government administration to offer public services to citizens and businesses has become commonly known as mobile government (m-government) (Ntaliani et al., 2007; Zefferer and Teufl, 2011). Provision of public services through mobile and wireless technologies has the potential to deliver real-time information, offer location-based services, perform transactions, and use the extant mobile network to reach citizens and to provide new customized and personalized services (El Kiki et al., 2005; Kuscu et al., 2008; Ntaliani et al., 2007). With the growing popularity of mobile technologies, the potential of this service delivery channel to improve public services has been recognized (Zefferer and Teufl, 2011). Encouraged by a strong demand for multi-channel service delivery, many developed and developing countries around the world are now offering m-government services to improve interactions with the public, taking advantage of an advanced, stable, and well-developed wireless infrastructure that has been installed by governmental and private mobile operators (Al-Hujran, 2012, Kim et al., 2004).

M-government exploits the high penetration rate of mobile phones among citizens to achieve the goal of e-government. In this sense, Susanto and Goodwin (2010) argued that SMS-based e-government should become a priority system for delivering e-government services in developing countries. However, although Arab countries including Jordan are increasingly interested in m-government, such initiatives have struggled to gain ground among citizens. In addition, the Jordanian e-government program and its mobile channel face the problem of the low-usage levels of the electronic services (Al-Hujran et al., 2011; Al-Jaghoub et al., 2010). Recent studies have indicated that more than 85 percent of the Jordanian population has never logged in an e-government Website (Al-Jaghoub et al., 2010). A better understanding of the factors that influence citizen adoption of e-government and m-government services in Jordan is critical to grasp this important policy issue. Therefore, the overarching objective in this research is to investigate the key factors that influence citizen adoption of m-government services in the Arab countries, specifically in Jordan. To fulfill this aim, this book chapter extends UTAUT to study the acceptance of m-government services. Our proposed framework incorporates two constructs into UTAUT: trust and information privacy. Employing trust and privacy perceptions in the uncertain context of m-government is a rational undertaking. This study identified these two key factors to be integrated into UTAUT, thus tailoring it to an m-government context.

This chapter is organized as follows. In the following section, we present the literature review. Then, we provide the proposed research model and research hypothesis and describe the research methodology of this study. In the section that follows, we present data analysis and results. Finally, we present the discussion along with our research’s practical implications, limitations and conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Growth of M-Government and Mobile Technology

Recent advances in wireless and mobile communications infrastructure are enabling governments to deliver information and services to citizen efficiently and economically. Research shows a dramatic increase in the use of wireless technologies in both developed and developing countries. As Figure 1 illustrates, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) (http://www.
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