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Predicting the use of web-based information systems: self-efficacy, enjoyment, learning goal orientation, and the technology acceptance model

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Abstract

With the growing reliance on computerized systems and increasing rapidity of the introduction of new technologies, user acceptance of technology continues to be an important issue. Drawing upon recent findings in information systems, human computer interaction, and social psychology, the present research extends the technology acceptance model by incorporating the motivation variables of self-efficacy, enjoyment, and learning goal orientation in order to predict the use of Web-based information systems. One hundred nine subjects participated in the study, which was conducted in a field setting with the Blackboard system, a Web-based class management system. A survey was administered after a 2-week trial period and the actual use of the system was recorded by the Blackboard system over 8 weeks. The results largely support the proposed model, highlighting the important roles of self-efficacy, enjoyment, and learning goal orientation in determining the actual use of the system. Practical implications of the results are provided.

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1. Introduction

Organizations cannot realize any return on their investments in information systems (IS) unless the systems are actually used by their intended users. Despite

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their sizable cost, IS have been found underutilized or sometimes abandoned because of the lack of user acceptance (McCarroll, 1991; King, 1994; Gillooly, 1998). The utilization of technology has been a shared key concern between IS (Kwon and Zmud, 1987; DeLone and McLean, 1992) and HCI (human–computer interaction) researchers (Nickerson, 1981; Carroll and Rosson, 1987). With the growing reliance on computerized systems and increasing rapidity of the introduction of new technologies, understanding the factors that promote effective utilization of IS continues to be a vital issue for researchers and practitioners.

Over the last two decades, a significant body of research has focused on identifying various factors that influence user acceptance behavior, advancing several theoretical models. In particular, the technology acceptance model (TAM), introduced by Davis and his colleagues (Davis, 1989; Davis et al., 1989), has received considerable attention (see Lucas and Spitler, 1999 for a recent review) and has become established as a parsimonious yet powerful model for explaining and predicting usage intentions and acceptance behavior. TAM theorizes that an individual's actual system usage is determined by behavioral intention, which is in turn jointly determined by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness is the extent to which a person believes that using the technology will enhance his or her job performance, and perceived ease of use is the extent to which a person believes that using the technology will be free of effort (Davis, 1989). Behavioral intention is defined as the extent to which an individual intends to perform a specific behavior (Davis et al., 1989). TAM posits that the impact of other external variables on behavioral intention is fully mediated by these two beliefs of usefulness and ease of use.

Recent findings on intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy in social psychology indicate that enjoyment, goal orientation, and self-efficacy play important roles in determining a person's behavior. Prior research on technology acceptance behavior examined the effects of self-efficacy and enjoyment on ease of use (Venkatesh, 2000), but did not assess their roles within the full nomological net of TAM. Goal orientation, while it has been recognized as being important in understanding individual differences in motivated behavior, has not received much attention with regard to technology acceptance. Drawing upon recent findings in IS, HCI, and social psychology, the present research extends TAM by incorporating the motivational variables of self-efficacy, enjoyment, and learning goal orientation in order to predict the use of Web-based IS. Given that the Web is a relatively new technology and is a richer environment than any other traditional information technology in meeting various personal needs, we expect that these motivational variables will play critical roles in influencing individuals decision to use a Web-based technology.

Although most prior research on TAM relied on subjective (self-reported) measures of system use, an objective measure (e.g., actual system access frequency recorded by the computerized system) has many advantages over a self-reported measure. Computer-recorded, objective measures can rule out the reporting biases due to selective recall (Davis et al., 1992) and inaccurate estimation

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