Behavioural Intention to Use E-Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic Based on UTAUT2 Model

A.L Alaa Salam Jameel
Department of Public Administration

Introduction

- The COVID-19 pandemic is forcing universities to turn to distance learning and online learning to continue education delivery while controlling the spread of the virus. As information technology evolves rapidly in most countries, electronic learning (E-learning) is increasingly implemented in higher education nowadays. The reason for preferring E-learning nowadays is due to the pandemic of COVID-19 which limits the students from attending in-campus courses as in normal situations. In addition, some students prefer E-learning due to job commitment that do not permit them to physically attend courses in the university campus.
- UNESCO (2020) indicates that the closure of universities and schools has several damaging effects on students, such as interrupted learning that denies students' learning growth and development opportunities. Higher education institutions in developing countries have used tools to promote and deliver education through the use of ICT.

E-learning

The delivery of educational content through digitally activated devices such as personal computers, laptops and smartphones can be represented as E-learning.

E-learning relies on the preference of a learner or student to employ technology, expressed as behavioural intention in the literature [20].

E-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic plays an important role to provide teaching and learning to a university student. E-learning seeks to support teachers, colleges and universities during the times of universities and schools' closures to provide student education.

E-learning success highly depends on the level of acceptance of students who should benefit from it [7].

Challenges facing E-learning

E-learning in most developing countries is facing several challenges [7] related to

1. the quality of training [13],

2. ICT infrastructure [14],

3. ICT policies [7],

4. lack of awareness[15]

5. and resistance to change [7].

Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology (UTAUT)

UTAUT model is described as a comprehensive model which include all the previous theories such as the theory of reasoned action (TRA), the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), and technology acceptance model (TAM). UTAUT is considered as one of the latest theories in information system which was proposed by Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, and Davis [12].

UTAUT consisted of four elements [21].

1. **performance expectancy**
2. **effort expectancy**
3. **social influence**
4. **facilitating conditions**

Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology (UTAUT2)

UTAUT has been extended by Venkatesh, Thong, and Xu [23] and named UTAUT2. The extension included three elements namely

1. Hedonic motivation,
2. Price value and
3. Habit.

Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology

Performance expectancy the 'degree to which an individual believes that system use will yield gain in work performance' and is typically the strongest predictor of intention. For workplace e-learning to be perceived as useful, learners judge their ability to achieve outcomes in their working environment (Chau, 2010).

Effort expectancy occurs when an individual has trouble-free experience with the selected technology [23], and the extent to which system use is effort-free [25].

Social influence Social influence represents the pressure of subjective norm defined as the 'perception of group influence on an individual's decision'.In an organisation, users may perceive a technology to be more useful in helping to achieve job-related goals if referent others in the organisation, such as managers, endorse the use of such technology.

Facilitating Conditions would be determined by students' understanding of how they could access the required tools and support to increase the ease of use of E-learning services. Technical support and services that support a system use are typically grouped as FC. In response, the administrators at universities must facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructure (e.g. computers, Wi-Fi) for better support services and easy accessibility to E-learning resources [6].

Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of Technology (UTAUT2)

Hedonic motivation is described as the pleasure of using specific technology, and the use of technology is obviously directly influenced by HM [23].When a user is comfortable and enjoy using certain technology, then he or she has more tendency to continue using the technology [27].

Price Value pertains to a cost-benefit analysis. A student perceives technologies as more valuable if their advantages are greater in comparison with the cost. This argument seems to be valid in a consumer setting in which PV refers to the cognitive balance between the benefits perceived by a person and the amount spent on using a technology [6].

Habit is an essential indicator that can redirect end users' intentions and has a significant effect on behavioural intention. Established routines in the workplace, for finding information and learning job-related skills can be important in determining future actions with respect to achieving work-related goals and participating in work-related initiatives, such as e-learning.

Conclusion

The policymakers at universities and practitioners gain a deeper understanding of the factors affecting students' choices about Web-based learning technologies and to develop corresponding strategies to encourage student to use E-learning. The theory of UTAUT is useful for universities, teachers and educators, decision-makers at universities and the higher education system in designing and implementing their online system, as well as in making appropriate decisions to allow an increased number of university students to embrace E-learning.