

Information Technology Governance Adoption: Understanding its Expectations Through the Lens of Organizational Citizenship

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ABSTRACT

IT Governance (ITG) can support the organizational decision-making on its IT initiatives, increasing the alignment IT/business. The goal is to understand how ITG influences the behavior of individuals within organizations. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) concept was selected to analyze individuals' voluntary commitment within an organization that is not part of their contractual tasks. The premise is that ITG influences organizational citizenship behavior such as job satisfaction and rewards perception. The research was conducted through a focus group made up of the members of an IT State Governance Committee in Brazil and semi structured interviews with IT managers from the state departments. Questions based on OCB were discussed in order to understand the behavioral changes expectations along the ITG mechanisms adoption. The preliminary results showed that citizenship behavior could improve because of the ITG process. Based on the results, a preliminary conceptual model was proposed.

KEYWORDS

Expectations, IT Governance Adoption, IT Governance, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Public Organizations

1. INTRODUCTION

New models of the relationship between state and society have been arising with the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), generating opportunities to transform the connection between government and citizens (Cunha & Miranda, 2013). This has brought up the claim for a more efficient state focused on the citizens' social rights (Bresser-Pereira, 2015).

As the discussion about a new model of relationship between citizens and government evolves, it is possible to observe a gradual change in the government initiatives from tools that improve the services to tools that support the citizen participation (Yildiz, 2007). This set of changes – citizen profile, government positioning and openness – generates new demands for data, information and services whose operationalization depends, evolves or is enhanced by ICT solutions. It may be a challenge not just because the focus is changing from internal to external, but because changes related to technology and process are also necessary. By using ICT in an innovative way, governments have

been improving services to citizens and interacting in a more open and transparent way with all stakeholders (Luna- Reyes et al., 2012).

However, the demands for fast reliable ICT solutions that could be accessed from highly available platforms are increasing. Considering this scenario, managing Information Technology (IT) is no longer enough; it is necessary to go one step further in a governance process. Van Grembergem and De Haes (2009) indicate that the differences between management and governance are related to time and business orientation: management involves short term and internal aspects, while governance deals with long term and external aspects. Governing IT, consequently, can assist an organization in meticulous IT decision-making, increasing or maintaining the alignment between IT and stakeholders' expectations (Wu, Straub and Liang, 2015).

For a public organization, to consider long term and external aspects is mandatory, considering that they are part of a complex network of actors. In this kind of organization, an integrated operation of several actors is typically required to have the concretization of a service. A special challenge in public organizations is to turn the IT decisions perennial and related more to the state than to the government. As shown by Meijer and Bolívar (2016), the demands of the population need to be thought in the long term. IT decisions that are not changed in every administration are more consistent and their implementation is more likely to be kept over the years within an IT Governance process.

IT Governance may be considered as a set of organizational arrangements and patterns of authority for primary IT activities and may include IT infrastructure issues and desirable IT use and management (Sambamurthy & Zmud, 1999). Weill and Ross (2004) claim that ITG is characterized as a set of mechanisms associated with the structure, processes and relationships of IT that defines the decision-making structure, rights and responsibilities for encouraging desirable behavior.

Studies on IT Governance suggest the existence of two main ITG pillars. The first and most common centers on legal and regulatory aspects and involves, according to Van Grembergen and De Haes (2004), the specification of the key IT decisions and every actor's IT decision rights. The second pillar centers the behavioral aspect inherent to individuals dealing with IT. According to Weill and Ross (2004), Huang, Zmud and Price (2010) and Bradley et al. (2012), the ITG mechanisms should be able to encourage individuals desired behavior regarding IT issues.

The encouragement of desirable behavior complements the normative IT Governance pillar and goes beyond regulatory compliance and also contributes to a more consistent and aligned relationship between business and IT. This behavioral expression of IT Governance is the focus of this research. We intend to understand individuals' behavior, which is influenced by several aspects and situations, such as rules, norms, processes, hierarchical structures and decision rights. The Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) concept was used to understand these phenomena. According to Smith, Organ and Near (1983), it describes a person's voluntary commitment to an organization or company that is not part of his or her contractual tasks. OCB is characterized by the existence of employees' protective actions that aim the safeguard of an organization and whatever belongs to it, contributing to a favorable environment. Our premise is that IT Governance acts on the antecedents of the organizational citizenship behavior such as job satisfaction and rewards perception. Thereby, citizenship behavior might improve because of the ITG process. The understanding of this process is the purpose of this study.

The proposed relationship between IT Governance and Organizational Citizenship Behavior is based on the potential impact of ITG mechanisms adoption exercise on the OCB constructs. As an example, we can mention the adoption of relationship mechanisms that can influence the individuals' perception on the organization's isonomic treatment. The same occurs in the adoption of structure mechanisms, that can turn the decision-making process more transparent, giving to the employees a perception of equitable IT decisions.

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