

Chapter 7

ERP User Perceptions and Service Delivery Challenges

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ABSTRACT

This chapter introduces the service delivery challenges experienced by users of enterprise resource planning systems (ERP) by discussing the user perceptions. The authors administered questionnaires to users of ERP systems and user perception of ERPs was found to affect them in service delivery. Software complexity, software usability, and user resistance were found out as challenges contributing the challenge of service delivery. Attribution theory, diffusion of innovation theory, and compatibility maturity model are discussed; existing theories are discussed in the chapter. Findings are outlined and conclusion made based on the questionnaires addressed to the respondents.

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INTRODUCTION

Generally, individuals tend to interpret their sensory impression in order to give meaning to their environments thus influencing groups and organizations at large to think in certain way regarding their daily works. Application of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software in a business function forms important part of such environment which is perceived to aid in enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of academic and support service activities, support decision making and further meant to improve their Return on Investments (ROI). Realization of these objectives is largely dependent on the perceivers of ERP. The programme developers, academia, support service staff in universities and university students hold certain attitudes, motives, interests, experience and expectation of the ERP to deliver expected result. On the other hand, ERP programme is viewed to be the solution to complex data management and source of competent decision making by managers. Reliability of this view is subject to novelty of the programme, past successes associated with the programme, size and complexity of the functions in an organization. However, the overriding determinant will be the situation in organizations that embrace application of the ERP, including appropriate timing for introduction, work setting, organizational structure and socio-technical environment prevailing. Thus, analysis of ERP effectiveness and efficiency necessarily have to employ multi-faceted approach encompassing the synergy and integration of human, technical, social, structural and leadership variables of an organization.

Features that have made ERP systems attractive for adoption and implementation within universities include: a common data set, standardized data definitions, adaptability of the system and external systems intercommunication (Basir, Khoubati, Ismaili, & Nizamani, 2014). Functional processes within a university context include and are not limited to student management, faculty management, human resource, finance, procurement, assets management, library services and research. In the adoption and use of Enterprise Resource Planning systems (ERPs), some of the benefits enjoyed by Universities include easier and fast access of information for better planning and management of the institution; improved services to students, faculty and other administration staff; better ways of risk management and improved data management for better decision making (Robert Kvavik, 2003).

Service delivery management in ERP faces a myriad of challenges in the quest towards automation of manual processes. It affects the areas of customers, projects, resources and programs. The challenges surround the areas of communication, relationship, problem identification and solution, planning, 24/7 support, technology,

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