


# Social Media Influence and Mobile Government Adoption: A Conceptual Framework and its Validation

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## ABSTRACT

The study focuses on developing a mobile government (MG) adoption framework with a key consideration on social media (SM) influence. As social media is now becoming a prominent channel for various marketing activities knowing its impact on MG adoption is crucial. Further, as MG is constantly evolving, a deeper understanding on the adoption behaviour of the citizens is quintessential for strategizing its implementation. Thus, a detailed review of the articles on citizen's perspective on MG adoption and social media, was performed. It was found that the integration of theories like DOI and URT, which are critical during the evolving stages of MG adoption is significant. The other key contribution is the consideration of social media and its impact on MG adoption. Further, the factors such as awareness, social influence, and facilitating condition were also found to be very crucial. The SM-MG adoption framework developed integrating the theories like DOI, URT along with Social media is validated using a Structural Equation Modelling and results of which are discussed in detail.

## KEYWORDS

Awareness, Diffusion Of Innovation, Mobile Government, Service Quality, Social Media, Uncertainty Reduction Theory

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The advent of mobile internet and social media has transformed the participatory and interactive technologies. It has also revived the government-citizen interactions. Social media (SM) has provided an all-new way for communication and information sharing between people (electronic word of mouth) and between business and consumers (digital marketing) (Hajli, 2014). Its influence is found to be ubiquitous, time-consuming and habit forming (LaRose, 2015). This is evidenced in the global surge of the internet and social media usage. There are about 4.39 billion internet users and 3.48 billion social media users as on January 2019 with an annual increase of nine per cent (Kemp, 2019). The popular social media sites globally are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube (Kemp, 2019). The businesses are benefiting immensely from this in the form of improved consumer reach, and in delivery of effective customer-oriented services (Voramontri & Klieb, 2019). It also helps in creating awareness and building trust towards a brand (Ansarin & Ozuem, 2015). Further, faster sharing of information is also expected to improve the transparency of a system (Alryalat, Rana, Sahu, Dwivedi, & Tajvidi, 2017). Thus, social media has an enormous impact on the adoption of any product

DOI: 10.4018/IJEGR.2019070103

or service. This potential of social media is gaining attention not just by the private stakeholders, but by the public institutions as well. Governments across the globe are making a conscious effort to use social media to disseminate the policies and implement the visionary projects for the benefit of the masses.

Mobile government (MG), the initiative to transform the activities using mobile technology, has been introduced as a natural extension of the technological advancement in various parts of the world. MG with smartphones and social media has a tremendous potential to grow. The combination of social media with MG services is believed to improve civic engagement and build trust and transparency towards the government. It is also expected to support the various MG activities and provide services effectively. Here, social media is likely to help the government in promoting their services and enhancing the efficiency of interaction with people there by assisting the faster diffusion of these services among the people.

Nevertheless, the introduction of MG had a mixed response towards its success which has resulted in gaining prominence as a potential area of research (Saxena, 2018; Shahzad, Xiu, Khan, & Wang, 2019). The studies have highlighted the significance of understanding the citizen's perspective before planning the implementation of these services (Saadi, Ahmad, & Hussain, 2017; Sharma, Al-Badi, Rana, & Al-Azizi, 2018). Citizen's attitude towards the government and its services and the availability of infrastructure is crucial in the acceptance of MG (Wirtz & Birkmeyer, 2018). Lower awareness is found to be a significant barrier to the success of these services. Social media being a prominent channel with its tremendous potential in addressing these issues are even used for MG services. Hence, studies focusing on knowing the citizen's perception towards the use of social media by the government along with other factors is crucial and helps in strategically positioning these MG services (Al-Aufi, Al-Harthi, AlHinai, Al-Salti, & Al-Badi, 2017).

Further, the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory reflects on the innovation characteristics such a relative advantage, ease of use, compatibility, and image which tends to persuade the user in adopting any new innovation. The DOI has been proved as a vital theory in explaining the adoption characteristics of any technology. Though, few studies on MG have adopted DOI theory the literature on the same is scarce and requires further exploration (Mandari, Chong, & Wye, 2017; Saadi et al., 2017). Furthermore, studies have also highlighted the need to integrate various technology adoption theories to have a broader understanding on MG adoption. Though literature is available on MG it is believed to be insufficient in providing a complete essence of adoption behaviour (Liu et al., 2014; Saadi et al., 2017).

Thus, this study focuses on understanding the influence of social media in creating the awareness, trust, and transparency towards MG services. Subsequently, the study also focuses on assessing the key factors under integrated DOI-URT theory and other external factors such as social influence and facilitating condition on the adoption of mobile government among the individuals. Here, the understanding based on URT is significant as MG is still in its evolving phases, especially in most of the developing countries (Shahzad et al., 2019). Further, the capability of the framework in assessing the impact of social media use on MG is another significant contribution.

For the analysis purpose in order to validate the model a Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique using Partial least Square (PLS) approach is adopted. Overall the model developed is comprehensive and holistic which brings in various crucial dimensions impacting the adoption of MG and thereby enhances the understanding of the same. The two main research questions that the developed model addresses are:

- Is there a significant influence of social media in creating awareness and building trust and transparency towards MG services?
- What are the key factors that influence the adoption of MG among the individuals?

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