

Chapter 10

Users' Experiences of Internet-Based Systems in Malaysian Research Universities: Success Factors and Barriers as Starting Points to Best Practices in a Developing Country

Mohd Azul Mohamad Salleh
The National University of Malaysia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Internet-based systems are providing more interactive and collaborative forms of participation in many kinds of organizations, particularly with the spread of the Internet and Web 2.0 technology. They have been designed to enhance organizational communications processes, information management and staff interaction. This qualitative study explores employees' experiences in Malaysian research universities, and particularly strives to understand successes and problems in the implementation of Internet-based systems. Based on in-depth interviews with officers and academics at four research universities, the study found that employees were most concerned with three issues that determined success or failure in this scenario: technological features of the systems; social and human factors; and organizational initiatives. Organizations such as universities and senior management may improve employees' satisfaction with Internet-based systems as e-government applications by implementing several recommendations arising from this study's analysis.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-4173-0.ch010

INTRODUCTION

The public and private sectors have realised the importance of using information and communication technology (ICT). The use of Internet-based systems has been significant in ensuring more flexible and efficient forms of communication and organizational management. This chapter discusses the successes and challenges in using Internet-based systems as experienced by employees at four research universities in Malaysia. The Malaysian government encourages the country's universities to use ICT and online systems to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their services, and to close the communication gaps between faculties and departments, and provide quicker information services. For example, in order to support the implementation of ICT, the Malaysian government has allocated an ICT-specific budget outlay as part of the Malaysian National Plan and the Country's Annual Budget (Kaliannan, Raman, & Dorasamy, 2009).

Internet-based systems have grown exponentially in universities due to the government implementing ICT-related policies and a strategic plan, such as the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) in 1996 (Hashim, 2008). The most heavily promoted project under MSC is e-government which aims to accelerate ICT development by focusing on the digital environment in terms of government-to-government and government-to-public communication (Abdullah, Kaliannan, Mohamed Ali, & Bakar, 2006). It is important to implement and develop Internet-based systems because the e-government platform intends to transform the way that government agencies operate and deliver better services. The objective of raising Malaysia's national profile means developing an information society that understands the basics of: interoperability, better information sharing, and collaborating internationally with other organizations or countries.

In order to transform Malaysia's higher education institutions into better functioning

organizations, the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) is playing an important role in creating innovative communities and workplaces. According to Othman, Ismail and Md Raus (2009), the implementation of online systems in universities is important for improving the management and use of data, information and records. In order to implement these, the research universities should design their strategic plans so that they include electronic governance systems and e-government applications that are 'world class' and allow Malaysia's premier universities to be internationally competitive (Hadi, Jelas, Mokhtar, & Abdul Aziz, 2002).

Internet-based systems or applications in research universities now incorporate important web technologies that manage and distribute information to their staff, students and other stakeholders. This type of online system is designed not only to share information and make collaboration between stakeholders in research universities possible, but functions to support the implementation of e-government flagship in Malaysia. It is important for the research universities to continue using Internet-based systems in managing information and resources so that their performance and productivity is enhanced and makes the education sector competitive. In addition, from the e-government perspective, Internet-based systems are also important in reconnecting citizens to government agencies in order to change the way governments communicate with their citizens (Schwester, 2009).

This chapter discusses the findings based on a qualitative research study of employees at four pioneer research universities in Malaysia, incorporating in-depth interviews with academic and officer personnel. It emerges that these employees are concerned with three issues: systems' technological features, social and human factors, and organizational initiatives in using Internet-based systems. In order to succeed in the democratization of information exchange and communication in higher education, especially universities, the cur-

15 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/users-experiences-internet-based-systems/76640

Related Content

From Bureaucracy to Citizen-Centricity: How the Citizen-Journey Should Inform the Digital Transformation of Public Services

Deepak Saxena, Laurent Muzellec and Joe McDonagh (2022). *International Journal of Electronic Government Research* (pp. 1-17).

www.irma-international.org/article/from-bureaucracy-to-citizen-centricity/305230

Six Sigma Approach to Improve Quality in E-Services: An Empirical Study in Jordan

Salah Alhyari, Moutaz Alazab, Sitalakshmi Venkatraman, Mamoun Alazab and Ammar Alazab (2012). *International Journal of Electronic Government Research* (pp. 57-74).

www.irma-international.org/article/six-sigma-approach-improve-quality/67091

Digital Government and Citizen Participation in the United States

Marc Holzer, Lung-Teng Huand Seok-Hwi Song (2004). *Digital Government: Principles and Best Practices* (pp. 306-319).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/digital-government-citizen-participation-united/8399

A Multiagent Service-oriented Modeling of E-Government Initiatives

Tagelsir Mohamed Gasmelseid (2008). *Electronic Government: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 2296-2315).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/multiagent-service-oriented-modeling-government/9859

Incident Preparedness and Response: Developing a Security Policy

Warren Wylupski, David R. Champion and Zachary Grant (2008). *Electronic Government: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 994-1015).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/incident-preparedness-response/9764