



TOWARDS HARNESSING E-GOVERNMENT ADOPTION IN ZIMBABWE

**FORGET CHATERERA
MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY, CULTURAL HERITAGE
AND MUSEUM STUDIES**

**Paper presented at the Archival Conference on Archiving and Digital
Continuity in the context of E-Government in Sub-Saharan Africa,
Pretoria, 11-13 July 2012**

Introduction

- Successful e-government adoption leads to good governance.
- Adoption by citizens is critical to the success of e-government initiatives.
- Electronic government promotes dialogue between users and the government.
- Ultimate goal of e-government is improved public service delivery.

Background

- For this paper, e-government refers to services offered by the government through the internet.
- World over governments are making efforts to offer services on-line including Zimbabwe.
- The Zimbabwe national portal www.zim.gov.zw
- Zimbabwe is hoped to be a digital information societal country by 2015

Background

- The diversity of user expectations have to be understood.
- Adoption plays an important role in the success of e-government initiatives. E-government adoption rests on the social factors and not on technical issues.
- e-governance initiatives should be, meaningful and relevant to the citizens.

Perceived problem

- More attention has been given to how to design technologically sound websites
- Factors that influence both awareness and use of e-government services by Zimbabweans have not been well documented.

Theory that informed the study

- Technology Accepted Model (TAM).
- Commonly used theories on e-government adoption by previous studies include;
 1. Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)
 2. Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)
 3. Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT)

Methodology

- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Participant observation through touring and interacting with the Zimbabwe government website

Study population

- Thirty Midlands State University Lectures
- Forty five individuals distributed among high, medium and low density suburbs.
- Nineteen randomly selected employees from the CBD-Gweru
- Twenty students from Gweru Polytechnic College

Research model

- The model adopted validates the TAM model
- Guided by the research model the assumption were made on the following issues;
 1. Perceived ease of use.
 2. Innovativeness and literacy.
 3. Perceived usefulness and adequacy.
 4. Security.
 5. Privacy.
 6. Social influences.

Findings and discussions

E-government awareness and use

- High level of awareness by respondents from MSU and Gweru Polytechnic College.
- Technical errors reported.
- Inadequate and outdated information.
- Physical visits and phone calls are preferred.

Awareness level of e-government initiatives by Zimbabwean citizens

- Midlands State University lecturers-80%.
- Gweru Polytechnic students-65%.
- Employees in the CBD of Gweru-31.6%
- High density suburbs-15%.
- Medium density suburbs-35.7%.
- Low density suburbs-36.4%

NB* Average awareness rate-48.24%

Efforts by the Ministry of Information Communication Technology in promoting e-government adoption

- Zimbabwe to be fully digital by 2015.
- Infrastructure developed in rural areas.
- Setting base stations in remote areas.
- Fibre optic cables-2011.
- Removal of duty on ICT products.

Barriers to ICT's Ministry efforts

- Electricity shortage.
- Poor internet connectivity.

Usability of the Zimbabwe's government Website

- Website is partially usable.
- Authoritative, inadequate and outdated information.
- Weak connectivity.
- Server errors.

Personal follow up to the usability of the Zimbabwe government website

- All the thirty two government ministries in Zimbabwe have links.
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Services and the Ministry of Media, Information and Publicity were not functional.
- Ministry of Home Affairs' site was down for maintenance.
- Some links could not be followed as there was no server to process the request

Attitude of citizens towards e-government adoption

- Negative attitude. Most respondents perceived the government website as not very useful.
- Consulting the government website is considered a waste of time.
- They believe that not much can be provided.
- The paper system is chaotic and electronic services can therefore not be better.
- Attitude and perceived usefulness are powerful factors that affect e-government adoption.

Is there a dialogue between users and the Zimbabwe government website?

- Citizens must be able to interact with government websites.
- Seventy five percent of the Zimbabwe government ministries have feedback mechanisms.
- It helps attain relevance and meaning.
- Diverse user expectations are known.

Recommendations

- Increase general public awareness.
- Consider citizens' input.
- Shared approach is recommended.
- Be citizen driven and consider using local languages.



THANK YOU!

Conclusion

- Lack of awareness, negative attitude and technological challenges.
- E-government adoption issues are multi dimensional and needs careful consideration.
- E-government has the potential to enrich the social, economic and political well being of citizens.