

THE ACCEPTANCE OF ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE AMONG ACCOUNTING STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this paper is to determine students' acceptance of accounting software. The respondent of this study were students of Politeknik Ungku Omar (PUO) who have just completed the Computerized Accounting System (CAS) course for June 2018 session. The variables included in this study were perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. The data was collected using online questionnaire that distributed to 133 students from 4 classes. The findings of this study stated that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influencing the student acceptance of accounting software. Perceived usefulness is variable that contribute the most significantly to the acceptance of accounting software. The findings of this study can be used by educators to make their teaching and learning session interesting. At the same time, student understanding and skills to use the accounting software can be enhanced.

Keywords: accounting, accounting software, accounting students, students' acceptances, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

1. Introduction

The emerging of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0) has brought various technological trends. This technology can improve the efficiency of business and organization. The employers also required professional accountant to be technology savvy (The Committee to Strengthen the Accountancy Profession, 2014). Technology makes it simple for the accountants to produce financial information that is reliable, relevant, timely, understandable, and testable which is useful for end users' decision making. In other words, the current accounting practices have changed. One of the changes is in terms of processing, sorting and organizing the data from paper based to computerize based.

In accordance with this change, many accounting software were developed in order to simplify the data processing. Various types of accounting software are available in the market such as Sage UBS Accounting, Auto Count, MYOB and Peachtree. The use of accounting software will reduce the time needed to prepare financial statements. Additionally, human error also can be reduced.

Besides that, the knowledge in using accounting software such as MYOB, UBS, Great Plains, SAP, and Oracle, Accounting software tax return software, electronic working papers, time management and billing System is important. This is because; most of the businesses are using it on daily basis for recording economic data transactions (Amirul et al., 2017).

In order to prepare the Malaysian accountancy profession for the technological trends, Malaysian Institute of Accountant (MIA) has developed MIA Digital Technology Blueprint. The MIA Digital Technology Blueprint (2018) has reported a survey conducted by MIA from July to September 2017. The number of respondents were 1052 MIA members from four sectors; academia, commerce and industry, public practice and public sector. The survey stated that 61% of the respondent stated the technology is very important for accountancy profession. 36% stated it is important and the rest, 3% stated that it is moderately important. The survey also finds out that 97% of the respondent occasionally used Microsoft application. 92% of the respondents frequently used accounting software. In addition, 46% of the respondents intend to deploy accounting software in the next 3 years in their sector.

Education is one of the platforms to equip the future accountants with technological knowledge. Politeknik Ungku Omar (PUO) offered Computerized Accounting System (CAS) courses. It is compulsory for Diploma Accountancy Students to take this course. During this course, students will be exposed to two types of accounting software; Sage UBS Accounting and Auto-Count Accounting.

Unfortunately, students' overall performance was not favorable. Result for CAS course gathered from the Assessment and Examination Unit of PUO showed the failure rate is 3.01% for June 2018 session. However, no students fail for this course in December 2017 and June 2016 session. In June 2017 and December 2016 the failure rate is 1.72% and 2.63% respectively. Although the failure rate is low, the failure rate is fluctuated and June 2018 session shows the highest failure rate. Besides that, no student got A+ grade for June 2018 and December 2017 session. However, for June 2017, December 2016 and June 2016 session, the rate of students who got A+ grade is 3.45%, 7.89% and 8.96% respectively. The rate of student who got A+ grade is decreasing. The student achievement based on another grade is fluctuated from June 2018 to June 2016 session.

The motivation to learn and to use the accounting software during the study is important to build a positive attitude towards accounting software. It can influence the accounting software usage when they enter the job market. Otherwise, student will learn to use the accounting software for exam purpose only. This is consistent with the opinion of Brezavšček et al. (2014) in their study of SPSS acceptance among students. Therefore, this study was conducted to gain students acceptance on accounting software usage.

2. Literature review

Technology acceptance model is a model that explains the acceptance of a system is determined by two criteria. The criteria are perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. It has been identified by previous study conducted by Davis (1989), Goodwin (1987); Gould et al. (1991) and Hill, et al. (1987). According to Davis (1989), perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are different constructs.

A study conducted by Davis et al. (1989) determines the computer acceptance through the measure of the intention. The intention is measured through perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. Technology acceptance model is a robust, powerful, and parsimonious model for predicting user acceptance (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Therefore, this study would employ the technology acceptance model to determine students' acceptance of CAS course.

2.1. The Acceptance of CAS Course

Preparation of accounting information can be done manually or computerized. Preparation of accounting information using computer involve the use of information technology. Normally, small business keeps their accounting records manually. While big and medium businesses computerized their accounting records. Accounting systems based on computers are recognized as accounting information systems and computerized accounting systems (Zybery and Rova, 2014). Therefore, accounting information systems and computerized accounting systems is used interchangeably in this study.

The acceptance of the AIS course is the student's perception on the accounting material and the IT material provided in the course (Weli, 2015). It is important to motivate students to learn and accept the importance of AIS courses. However, only a few scholars and studies addressed this critical issue yet (Dr Wong and Dr Wong, 2017).

2.2. Perceived Ease of Use

Perceived ease of use is user perception that little effort is taken in order to use a system or the system is easily understand or operated. The example is the easily understood of accounting software (Davis, 1989). While Muhammad Auwal Kabir et al. (2017) stated that ease of use is a user belief that the system is very simple to use. In other words, if user belief the accounting software is easy to use, they will use it. Otherwise, they will refuse to use it (Sriwidharmanely & Vina Syafrudin, 2012).

In research done by Ong et al. (2004); Morris and Dillon (1997); Azleen and Nurul Nazirah (2013), perceived ease of use was found to be significant factor in determining behavior intention use software.

However, Venkatesh and Davis (2000) found that the perceived ease of use was a significant determinant of intention to use but it is less significant compared to perceived usefulness. User can accept the difficulty in using a system but the system must be useful (Davis, 1993).

Besides that, based on many empirical studies that have been conducted, the effect of perceived ease of use on intention is inconsistent (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000). In addition, Muhammad Sharif et al. (2011), found that perceived ease of use did not show any effect towards intention. Based on the theoretical basis and previous studies, the hypothesis of this study as follows:

H1: There is a relationship between perceived ease of use and the acceptance of Computerized Accounting System course

2.3. Perceived Usefulness

Perceived usefulness is a condition where user perception that the system would enhance their job performance (Davis, 1989). While Azleen and Nurul Nazirah (2013) stated that perceived usefulness is a user believes that the system is useful for them. In other words, perceived usefulness is user perception that their productivity and effectiveness can be improved using the system (Mou, Shin and Cohen, 2017). The aspect of usefulness of the system is preferred than perceived ease of use (Davis, 1993).

The relationship between perceived usefulness and intention to use has been tested in many studies. Azleen and Nurul Nazirah (2013) found that perceived usefulness considered as important factors in determining users' behavior intention. In research conducted by Muhammad Sharif et al. (2011), they found that perceived usefulness showed direct effect to behavior intention.

In addition, the perceived usefulness had a positive significant effect on the behavioral intention to use accounting software (Sriwidharmanely and Vina Syafrudin, 2012). The accounting students agreed that if the accounting software was useful for them then they would have a tendency to continue to use it (Sriwidharmanely and Vina Syafrudin, 2012). Based on the theoretical basis and previous studies, the hypothesis of this study as follows:

H2: There is a relationship between perceived usefulness and the acceptance of Computerized Accounting System course

2.4. Research Model

The research model of this study is adapted from Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). TAM is always used in information system study in order to predict the acceptance and usage of information system (Vankatesh et al., 2003). According to TAM, there are two factors that affect user acceptance of technology; perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use.

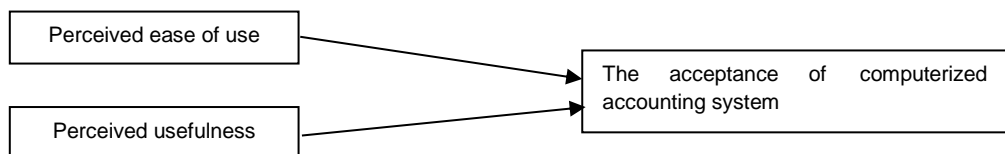


Figure 1. Research Model

3. Methodology

The number of populations for this study is 133 students which are the same as sampling frame of the study. It consists of students that have completed CAS course for June 2018 session. Primary data was collected using questionnaires. The questionnaires were adapted and modified from Davis' research (1989), Rogers (2016), Malhotra and Galletta (1999). The questionnaires consist of 4 sections; Section A:

Demographic, Section B: the acceptance of accounting software, Section C: perceived ease of use and Section D: perceived usefulness. The items required the respondent to state their level of agreement or disagreement using Likert Scale of 1-4; started from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Students were required to answer the questionnaires through <https://goo.gl/3uS8t7> . The statistical mode of analysis is the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

4. Data Analysis and Findings

The study was conducted at PUO. The respondents were Semester 3 Diploma Accountancy students who just have completed their CAS course.

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. 12.8% (17) of the respondents were between 19-21 years old. 87.2% (116) of the respondents were below 19 years old. While no respondent with 22 years old above.

Majority of the respondents were female 64.7% (86). Male contributed only 35.3% (47) of the respondents. 90.2% (120) of the respondents were Malay. Chinese, Indian and others contributed to 1.5% (2), 4.5% (6), and 3.8% (5) of the respondent respectively. 3.8% (5) of respondents rated their computer skills as low. 87.2% (116) rated their skills as medium. The rest, 9% (12) rated it as advanced.

Table 1. Demographic Profile

	Item	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Below 19	116	87.2
	19-21	17	12.8
	22 above	-	-
Gender	Male	47	35.3
	Female	86	64.7
Races	Malay	120	90.2
	Chinese	2	1.5
	Indian	6	4.5
	Others	5	3.8
How would you rate your computer skills or knowledge about computers?	Low	5	3.8
	Medium	116	87.2
	Advanced	12	9.0

The internal consistency of the research instrument was measured using Cronbach's alpha test. According to Hair et al. (2006), the value of Cronbach alpha 0.6 and above is accepted. The values were reported in Table 2. All of the items had a Cronbach's alpha value above the standard guideline of 0.6. Therefore, the items can be used to measure variables under study.

Table 2. Reliability Statistics for Instrument Measurements

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
The acceptance of accounting software	0.841
Perceived ease of use	0.856
Perceived usefulness	0.920

Pearson correlation analysis was employed to test hypotheses that had been articulated. In order to determine the strength of this correlation, we used the guidelines of Hatcher (2003), who suggests the following classification: no correlation ($r = 0.00$), weak ($r = 0.01-0.49$), medium ($r = 0.50-0.79$), strong ($r = 0.80-0.99$) and perfect ($r = 1.00$).

For H1: There is a relationship between perceived ease of use and the acceptance of accounting software; showed a significant positive medium correlation between these variables ($r=0.602$, $p<0.01$). Thus, H1 was accepted. It can be concluded that an increasing in perceived ease of use will cause the increasing in the acceptance of accounting software.

For H2: There is a relationship between perceived usefulness and the acceptance of accounting software; showed a significant positive medium correlation between perceived usefulness and the acceptance of accounting software ($r=0.703$, $p<0.01$). Thus, H2 was accepted. It can be concluded that an increasing in perceived usefulness will cause the increasing in the acceptance of accounting software

Table 3. Correlation Analysis

Items	1	2	3
The acceptance of accounting software	1	0.602	0.703
Perceived ease of use	0.602	1	0.706
Perceived usefulness	0.703	0.706	1

5. Conclusion

This study suggests perceived usefulness of accounting software has significant effect on the acceptance of accounting software. The finding is consistent with study conducted by Ong et al. (2004); Morris and Dillon (1997); Azleen and Nurul Nazirah (2013). This means, accounting students who perceived the accounting software as useful, will contribute more to the acceptance of the software.

This study also suggests that perceived ease of use has significant effect on the acceptance of accounting software. The findings is in accordance with Azleen and Nurul Nazirah (2013); Muhammad Sharif et al. (2011) and Sriwidharmanely and Vina Syafrudin (2012) study. Therefore, the difficulty in using the accounting software can discourage the acceptance of accounting software.

Factors that strongly correlate to the acceptance of accounting software are perceived usefulness. This is congruent with study conducted by Davis (1989). This means, users acceptance of accounting software primarily because it can enhance their job performance. After that, the aspect of easily understand or operated is taken in to consideration.

The practical contribution of this study is the acceptance of accounting software is influenced by perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness of accounting software. Therefore, educators should emphasis these aspects in accounting software usage. Besides that, suitable learning material should be provided in order to improve students understanding.

This study employs Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) since it is widely use in explaining and predicting users acceptance of information system. Therefore, it is suggested the future research to use the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model. This is because, it is widely use in the technology acceptance in various areas (Williams et al., 2015). In addition, TAM has been frequently discussed together with UTAUT.

Besides that, the researcher should enlarge the sample size. The larger sample size can depict more accurately the whole pictures of PUO accounting students acceptance of accounting software.

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