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Entitled

*THE EFFECT OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE SECTOR ON CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION: THE CASE OF AL AIN CITY MUNICIPALITY*

By

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Date & Venue

08:45 am – 09:45 am

Friday, 19 April 2024

H3-2021

Abstract

Information and Communication Technology has transformed how individuals and organizations interact with each other and the way they function, produce, and consume. As more than 59 percent of the world's population is on social media, the social channels have become an integral part of an organization's service delivery plan. Government's too started service provision and relationship building with their customers through social media, as part of their e-Governance strategy. To understand the role of technology as an enabler to Enact Electronic Government Success (EEGS), the present study focuses on the effectiveness of social media use by local government, viz., the Al Ain City Municipality (AACM). Since the effectiveness of social initiatives depends on the outcomes experienced by the customers, the study adopts the customers' perspective. A three-stage theoretical framework is developed by incorporating relevant constructs from well-established theories that explain technology adoption – namely, the Technology Adoption Model, Innovation Diffusion Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory. The first stage will examine the customers' use of AACM's social media initiatives. The effects of AACM's implementation of social channels as reflected in the levels of customer awareness, sync of AACM's approach with their views and preferences as well as the customer value created will be studied in the second stage. Finally, the influence of these effects on customer satisfaction will be gauged in the third stage. Thus, the study offers comprehensive insights on the adoption factors, implementation outcomes and the effects on customer satisfaction, as it is the ultimate result of a local government's use of social media in a context that is not much researched. Based on a positivist paradigm, quantitative measures are employed to measure study variables. To assess the effectiveness of social media implementation by AACM, a survey was conducted of AACM's online customers to understand their technology adoption and level of use of AACM's services provided on social channels. A Snowball Sampling method was used to collect responses from 405 respondents comprising both citizens and expatriates. Government online customers who use social media platforms were the study population as the study examines whether the use of social media extends to the use of government services as well. A structured questionnaire was developed based on well-established measures and validated scales obtained from past studies on technology adoption, social media, and customer satisfaction. These insights will help in enhancing the E-government success significantly, not just for AACM, but other municipalities and local government organizations as well. Further, the study will add to the theory of knowledge by identifying the specific factors that help in Enacting Electronic Government Success in a new geographical and cultural context.

Keywords: Abu Dhabi, Al Ain City, Social Media Usage, Social Media Adoption, Social Media platforms, Technology Acceptance, Public Services, Municipal Sector, Technology Adoption Model, Innovation Diffusion Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, Social Media Marketing, Customer Awareness, Customer Value, Customer Satisfaction, UAE.