Digital Divide Initiative Success in India

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ABSTRACT

Digital divide initiatives in developing countries are an important avenue for socio-economic advancement of those countries. Yet, little research has focused on understanding success of such initiatives. The research project, which spans five years with data collected from multiple villages in rural India, seeks to understand the determinants of success of a digital divide initiative. The indicators of success that we examine are economic and health outcomes. Within this broader project, the paper that will be the focus of the presentation and discussion develops and tests a model of technology use and economic outcomes. We use social networks as the guiding theoretical lens as it is well-suited to such a context given the low literacy, high collectivism and an oral tradition of information dissemination in developing countries. We test our model with longitudinal data gathered from 210 families in one village. As theorized, we found that the social network constructs predicted technology use, with the variance explained being 41%. Also, as we predicted, technology use partially mediated the effect of social network constructs on economic outcomes, with the variance explained being 49%. We discuss implications for theory and practice.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Viswanath Venkatesh is Professor and George and Boyce Billingsley Endowed Chair in Information Systems, Walton College of Business, University of Arkansas. His research focuses on understanding the diffusion of technologies in organizations and society and has appeared in leading information systems, organizational behavior, marketing and psychology journals, where his articles are among the most highly cited in his field. Forthcoming and recent papers include a study of the role of social networks in influencing system use and a paper predicting different conceptualization of system use (MIS Quarterly); a proposal for TAM 3 and a research agenda in technology acceptance (Decision Sciences Journal); and a paper examining expectation confirmation models in the context of information systems satisfaction (Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes). He holds and has held several editorial appointments, including currently serving as a Senior Editor at Information Systems Research and AIS Transactions on Human-Computer Interaction, an Associate Editor at Decision Sciences Journal, and the editorial review board of Productions and Operations Management. For more information about Professor Venkatesh, visit his web site at: http://www.vvenkatesh.us/