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INVESTIGATING THE TRUST IN GOVERNMENT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP ON E-GOVERNMENT SERVICE USAGE

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the correlation between trust in government and the adoption of e-government services in Malaysian communities. Through a quantitative methodology involving a questionnaire distributed to 152 respondents in Taman Cempaka, Ampang, the study examines the influence of trust on e-government service usage. Data analysis, conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), reveals a strong positive relationship between trust in government and the utilization of e-government services. The findings suggest that individuals perceive e-government services as trustworthy, yet express concerns about security during transactions. Drawing on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) theory, the research highlights the importance of trust in shaping perceptions of e-government systems and services. The study's outcomes provide valuable insights for policymakers and government entities aiming to enhance e-government service delivery and citizen engagement. By understanding the impact of trust on e-government adoption, authorities can tailor strategies to improve service quality, accessibility, and digital literacy, ultimately fostering greater trust and utilization of e-government services among the populace.

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Trust in government, usage of e-government services, E-government, Technology acceptance model (TAM) theory

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the intersection of trust in government and the utilization of e-government services holds significant importance. Trust in government is a fundamental pillar of democratic societies, shaping citizens' perceptions of governance and public services. The level of trust individuals have in their government directly impacts their willingness to engage with e-government platforms, which are increasingly becoming vital for service delivery and citizen-government interactions.

In contrast to the prevailing view that trust in government positively influences the adoption of e-government services, there is a body of research that suggests a more nuanced relationship. While trust is generally considered crucial for citizen engagement with e-government platforms (Carter, 2008), some studies indicate that trust in government has been declining over the years (Tolbert & Mossberger, 2006). This decline in trust may lead to skepticism towards government initiatives and hinder the effective implementation of e-government services (Tolbert & Mossberger, 2006). Additionally, factors such as privacy concerns Mutimukwe et al. (2017) and perceived barriers to the use of electronic government services López-Sisniega et al. (2016) can also impact trust and influence individuals' willingness to engage with e-government platforms.

Moreover, the study by Uthaman & Vasanthagopal (2022) suggests that trust may not be a significant contributing factor in the success of e-governance initiatives in certain contexts. This challenges the notion that trust is universally critical for the adoption of e-government services. Furthermore, the research by Myeong et al. (2014) indicates that the perceived quality of e-government services may influence trust in government, implying a more complex interplay between service quality and trust.

Therefore, while the dominant narrative emphasizes the importance of trust in government for the utilization of e-government services, competing evidence suggests that declining trust, privacy concerns, perceived barriers, and contextual factors may also significantly influence individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards e-government adoption. Understanding these competing perspectives is essential for policymakers and researchers aiming to enhance citizen participation, improve service delivery mechanisms, and strengthen citizen-government relationships in the digital age.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Perceived Ease of Use

Perceived ease of use is a critical factor in determining citizens' intention to use e-government services. Several studies have emphasized the significance of perceived ease of use alongside other factors such as trust, compatibility, and perceived usefulness in influencing individuals' acceptance of e-government services (Carter & Bélanger, 2005; López-Sisniega et al., 2016; Zhao & Liu, 2019; Suradi et al., 2020). The ease of navigating websites, the understandability of the content, and the consistency in design play a vital role in enhancing the perceived ease of use (López-Sisniega et al., 2016). Additionally, the perception that new technologies are user-friendly and do not require extensive training contributes to the acceptance and usage of e-government services (Zhao & Liu, 2019).

Moreover, the relationship between perceived ease of use and trust in the government has been explored in various studies Suradi et al. (2020) . Trust in the Internet, trust in the government, and perceptions of ease of use have been found to be related to the intention to use e-government services (Suradi et al., 2020). The results suggest that citizens' trust is as crucial to e-government as perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use .

Furthermore, the importance of perceived ease of use in encouraging specific demographic groups, such as youths, to utilize e-government services has been highlighted . The ease of use of e-government services was identified as a significant factor in encouraging young citizens to engage with e-government platforms .

In conclusion, perceived ease of use plays a vital role in shaping citizens' attitudes and intentions towards using e-government services. It is closely linked to trust, compatibility, and perceived usefulness, and efforts to enhance the ease of use of e-government platforms can significantly impact their adoption and usage by citizens.

Perceived Trust

Trust in government is a significant factor influencing the adoption and usage of e-government services. While some studies suggest a positive relationship between trust in government and e-government service usage, there is conflicting evidence challenging this idea. Alzahrani et al. (2017) point out that trust in e-government adoption has been extensively studied, often overlooking individual aspects like personality, culture, and education level, indicating that trust in e-government is influenced by various individual factors.

Moreover, Yağanoğlu & Serim (2020) conducted a study with US federal government service users and found no significant relationship between trust in the federal government and the acceptance process of e-government. This suggests that trust in the government may not always directly translate into trust in e-government services. Additionally, Khayun & Ractham (2011) suggest that trust in e-government websites is linked to perceived website quality rather than trust in the government itself.

These contrasting findings imply that while trust in government is crucial for e-government adoption, it is not the sole determining factor. Individual characteristics, perceived website quality, and trustworthiness of e-government services also significantly influence citizens' trust and subsequent adoption of e-government services. Therefore, policymakers and researchers need to have a nuanced understanding of the multidimensional nature of trust in e-government, considering individual and service-related factors to effectively promote e-government service uptake.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) Theory

"Perceived ease of use" and "perceived usefulness" are two significant elements that influence people's adoption of information systems, according to Davis's 1986 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). This theoretical viewpoint holds that citizens' assessments of the effectiveness of e-government impact their decision about whether or not to utilise its capabilities (Irani et al., 2012). As a result, it's critical to take into account whether citizens' usage of e-government and their assessments of the system's usability are connected with high scores in e-government performance evaluations. E-government investment by the government ought to be correlated with suitable levels of public usage. (Rodriguez-Chicharro, M., Rosa, C. P., & Moro, R. P. 2020).

3.0 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The research framework for this study involves examining trust in government influence the usage of E-government service among communities in Malaysia.



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Based on figure 1 are showing independent variable and dependent variable of this research. The independent variable is trust in government meanwhile the dependent variable is usage of E-government service. The operational framework shows the relationship of the independent variables that influence the dependent variables.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

Table 1 Research Methodology

Research Design	The research study utilizes a quantitative research methodology, employing a structured questionnaire and applies suitable statistical tools for the data analysis. The study design demonstrates a high level of validity and appropriateness in relation to the research inquiries.
Target Population	The community residing in Taman Cempaka, Ampang.
Sample Size	The poll included a total of 152 participants.
Data Collection	The survey was administered on an internet platform, specifically Google Form, and then distributed to the head of the Taman Cempaka community via the messaging application WhatsApp.
Instrument/ Questionnaire	The questionnaire is comprised of seven parts. Part A includes six demographic questions. Part B focuses on accessibility of e-government services and includes four items. Part C assesses the awareness of e-government service with five questions. Part D examines perceived quality and includes four items. Part E measures trust in government with four items. Part F evaluates digital literacy with three items. Finally, Part G assesses usage of e-government service with three items. Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 is employed in the questionnaire for this study.
Data Analysis	This article examines the gathered data by employing techniques such as data cleaning, organization, and analysis. The reliability of the data and the correlations between independent and dependent variables are assessed using Cronbach's Alpha values and the Pearson correlation coefficient.

5.0 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This section presents the results of the demographic data of the respondents, as well as the study of dependability.

Demographic	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	less than 20 years old	18	11.8%
	21-30 years old	63	41.4%
	31-40 years old	20	13.2%
	41-50 years old	31	20.4%
	above than 50 years old	20	13.2%
Gender	Male	51	33.6%
	Female	101	66.4%
Occupation	Government servant	48	31.6%
	Non-profit sector	3	1.9%
	Student	51	33.6%
	Private	32	21.1%
	Others	18	11.8%
Education	Phd Degree	2	1.3%
	Master Degree	5	3.3%
	Bachelor Degree	63	41.4%
	Sijil Matrikulasi	61	40.1%
	Spm	20	13.2%
	Others	1	0.7%
Race	Malay	150	98.7%
	India	1	0.7%
	Chinese	0	0%
	Other	1	0.7%
Years of use internet	Less than 1 year	1	0.7%
	1-2 years	3	2%
	3-5 years	6	3.9%
	More than 5 years	142	93.4%

Table 2 Respondent's Demographic

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In table 2 shows that the respondent’s demographic data shows a majority of female respondents (66.4%) in the 21-30 age group (41.4%), mainly students (33.6%) with Bachelor's degrees (42.4%).

Reliability Analysis

Variables	No of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient (α)
Trust in Government	4	0.780

Figure 2: Trust in Government

Figure 2 indicates that the independent variable had a Cronbach's Alpha value of $\alpha = 0.780$. Therefore, out of all the variables, the coefficients produced for these four questions concerning the Malaysian community's trust in the government were the fifth most dependable.

Correlations Analysis and Hypothesis

		Trust in Govern- ment	Usage of E Gov- ernment Servi- ces
Trust in Govern- ment	Pearson Correlation	1	.757**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Usage of E Govern- ment Servi- ces	Pearson Correlation	.757**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 3: Result Trust in Government of Pearson Correlation

Ho: There is a positive relationship between trust in government with usage of e-government services.

Figure 3 demonstrates the strong positive relate ($r = 0.757$) between the use of e-government services and public trust in the government. The highly significant threshold of 0.05 is exceeded by the two significant values of .000. It demonstrates a strong correlation between using e-government services and having faith in the government.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this report emphasizes the necessary findings on usage of e-government services, digital literacy, accessibility of e-government services, awareness of e-government services, perceived quality of e-government services and trust in government. The objectives of the study were achieved, the research questions were answered, and the hypotheses were confirmed and accepted in this study based on the analysis of the total of 152 questionnaires that could be used. The overall relationship shown in this study is between usage of e-government services. This research can help other researchers in making research on the level of communities' usage in e-government services and can be used as their reference.

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