PERSON TECHNOLOGY FIT AMONG IT PROFESSIONALS: IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

A

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ABSTRACT

Research suggests that IT (Information Technology) professionals exhibit higher levels of intent to leave and report high stress levels as compared to other professionals. Despite much of the research on IT professionals, it is believed that there are many avenues which still remain unexplored and possess potential to explain their work behavior. In the present work we are exploring the role of a given technology in explaining the work behavior of IT professionals. Although the impact of technology on individuals is a well researched area in the field of IS research, we did not find relevant literature in the context of IT professionals. The academic literature has discussed different aspects of technology and how it affects individuals. One of the most prominent research frameworks in this area is Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) which explains that how different characteristics of technology influence the intent to use a given technology among technology users. Another significant stream of literature explores the relatively new construct of technostress which suggests that invasive and the ubiquitous nature of technology is leading to increased levels of stress among individuals. Despite ample amount of studies in this domain, studies to assess the impact of technology on IT professionals are in short supply. The individual-technology interaction as a phenomenon has been primarily studied among technology users. This study introduces a new construct, person technology fit and particularly defines and measure technological dimensions which are hypothesized to have an impact on work outcomes (career satisfaction, work exhaustion and turnover intent). Person-Environment (P-E) fit model is employed as a theoretical lens to examine person technology fit.

The first phase of the study is exploratory in nature since the phenomenon is not explored in the extant literature. We found that IT professionals evaluate a given technology based on their individual perceptions and needs. This evaluation, either positive or negative, influences their work outcomes. Further, we explored the technological dimensions which make a

technology preferable to others. In the present study we have defined and explained how technology is conceived by IT professionals and have extracted five technology characteristics which are relevant to the work behavior of IT professionals. Based on the findings, we define the construct, "Person Technology Fit" to capture the fit between individual preferences and the characteristics of technology a professional is working in. The first phase of the present study has contributed in describing the unexplored phenomenon of individual-technology interaction among IT professionals and its impact on the work outcomes.

The finding of the qualitative study and the extant literature guides our research model. The survey design methodology is used to test the proposed research model. Field data for 386 working IT professionals was obtained using web based survey. Our hypotheses assert that person technology fit will impact (a) career satisfaction, (b) turnover intention and (c) work exhaustion among IT professionals. The construct of person technology fit is defined and measured across the five dimensions/characteristics of technology. In general, the results of polynomial regression analysis supported the hypotheses from the model. The results suggest that Person technology fit is present among IT professionals (and is a significant predictor of studied work outcomes such as turnover intention). The results from this study have implications for both research and practice.

Keywords: Person Technology fit, Technology characteristics, IT professionals, mixed method

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