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Implicit Attitudes and Behavioral Intentions to Use IT

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One major objective of information system (IS) research is to predict and understand IS acceptance and usage. Numerous investigations aim at explaining IS use by observing users' explicit attitude [6, 8]. Next to such conscious attitudes, IS usage might also be caused in unconscious, implicit attitudes [2]. Hence, we try to analyze *whether implicit attitudes influence behavioral intentions towards IS usage?*

Explicit attitudes represent the favorable or unfavorable disposition towards some stimulus objects such as people, places, or things [1]. They are characterized by a conscious awareness of the attitude during the corresponding action or during self-reports. The prominent TAM proposes that explicit attitudes lead to behavioral intentions towards using the IS. Based on well-established research in this stream, assuming an influence of explicit attitudes on behavioral intentions [8], we assume: H1: *The higher the explicit attitude towards using the IS, the higher the behavioral intention towards using the IS.*

Implicit attitudes are *"introspectively unidentified ... traces of past experience that mediate favorable or unfavorable feeling, thought, or action towards social objects"* [2, p. 8]. The automatic and implicit categorization of the stimulus object as either favorable or unfavorable has a direct influence on the behavior, because this automatic process evokes thoughts and cause actions [2]. Hence, we assume that: H2: *The higher the implicit attitude towards using the IS, the higher the behavioral intention towards using the IS.*

Based on the Single Category Implicit Association Test (SC-IAT) which captures implicit attitudes, by measuring their underlying automatic associations between various stimulus objects and various evaluative attributes [3] and a survey, we conducted a study that captures explicit and implicit attitudes. We recruited a sample of 131 participants. Since we only consider Facebook users, i.e. only the subjects who currently have a Facebook account, we eliminate all participants without a Facebook account. We used a Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach for analysis and ensured that the structural model is valid and reliable. The results based on 131 participants show that implicit attitudes ($\beta=0.123$; $p<0.05$) besides explicit attitudes ($\beta=0.584$; $p<0.005$) influences behavioral intention towards using the IS and thereby explain 35,1% of the variance.

The present research zooms into the attitude construct by differentiating between explicit and implicit attitudes

towards using the IS. By revealing that explicit and implicit attitudes are two distinct constructs (ANOVA: $F(2, 324) = 12.423$, $p= 0.001$) we confirm empirically the theoretical assumption that the attitude system is a dual system which contains two distinct constructs [2] in the context of IS acceptance and usage. Attitudes are among others important antecedents of predicting behavioral intentions [4]. We contribute that next to explicit attitudes also implicit attitudes determine behavioral intentions. Hence, we extend IS acceptance and usage literature [7], as TAM and other acceptance models should include implicit attitudes as a predictor of behavioral intentions. The present research extends the work by Kim [5] who pays special attention to the role of memory in the post-adoption stage by focusing on the role of implicit memory in terms of implicit attitudes and its role in the IS acceptance process of individuals. Moreover, measuring unconscious associations in the stream of IS use with SC-IAT, we contribute by increasing the diversity of methods [8] and propose a suitable method to measure implicit attitudes towards IS use.

As we now know that beside explicit attitudes implicit attitudes influence behavioral intention towards using the IS further research should focus on the relationship between implicit and explicit attitudes and look at the influence of implicit attitudes on behavior.

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