Does position within the library affect mobile technology acceptance?

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In seeking to determine the influence of factors likely to affect the uptake of technology across the higher and further education sectors, research has focused on the different technologies, user groups and organisational contexts. In particular, studies have explored factors such as age, computer experience, skill level, job position, work sector, computer access, work setting and geographic area to determine the likelihood of technology acceptance.

A recent study into the vocational education and training (VET) sector libraries across Australia and New Zealand sought to examine the association between position type, technology competence and attitude towards technology usage and deployment within the workplace.

Forty-two library staff from 14 VET sector libraries were interviewed regarding the competencies and training required for delivery of library services to mobile technologies. Library staff were selected from three position types: library manager, systems librarian and qualified librarian. Their levels of mobile technology competence self-assessment were analysed to examine association between position type and technology competence. A theory of technology acceptance, the Unified Theory of Use and Acceptance of Technology (UTAUT) was tested against the data collected. A series of hypotheses tested the influence of position upon aspects of technology acceptance.

The results demonstrated position played a definite role in technology acceptance. Findings indicated library managers placed greater emphasis on planning for technology impact while other staff positions realised the benefits of positively accepting mobile technologies. Systems librarians were not concerned with perceived ease of use of mobile technologies as an impact upon the work environment however, this concern was noted with regard to

training methods. Qualified librarians demonstrated a preference for modifying existing training packages; creating communities of practice, either within the institution or across the profession, for a particular learning purpose; and favoured face-to-face training and the use of mentors.

Successful implementation of technology into the workplace depends on planning, implementation, sustainability and institutionalisation. Understanding the factors involved in the acceptance of technology improves the likelihood of desired outcomes. The role of professional position has been demonstrated to influence how staff will approach technology implementation.