TO ASSESS IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS ON CLOUD COMPUTING ADOPTION IN SMEs

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This dissertation is dedicated to my mother and my best friend, Emad kasra for their endless support and encouragement

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ABSTRACT

Cloud computing has emerged as one of the most challenging topics, discussed among enterprises of IT professionals. Multiple factors influence on cloud computing adoption, and evaluating the impact of organizational factors on cloud computing adoption in SMEs, was determined as the main purpose of this study, which leads to focusing on the TOE framework as a famous theory on the evaluation of IT adoption. Due to the mentioned purpose, organizational context divided into three main factors based on TOE framework. Three sets of critical success factor's criteria were chosen by review of previous studies for each level of the three organizational factor's levels. The proposed framework in this study is comprised of TOE framework, organizational factors and critical success factors criteria, which will be helpful for small and medium size enterprises which aim to evaluate their organizational condition for adopting the cloud based services. This framework has been examined empirically on 20 SMEs in Iran which apply cloud computing. Results after data analysis indicated that top management support, firm size, and technology readiness have a positive effect of adopting cloud based services in SMEs.

ABSTRAK

Awan pengkomputeran muncul sebagai salah satu topik yang paling dibincangkan di kalangan perusahaan profesional IT. Pelbagai faktor mempengaruhi penggunaan perkomputeran awan.Menilai kesan faktor organisasi mengenai penggunaan perkomputeran awan dalam PKS telah ditentukan sebagai tujuan utama kajian ini dan membawa kepada tumpuan kepada rangka kerja TOE sebagai teori yang terkenal di menilai penggunaan IT. Bagi tujuan ini, konteks organisasi dibahagikan kepada tiga faktor utama dalam asas rangka kerja TOE. Tiga set kriteria faktor kejayaan kritikal yang dipilih oleh kajian kajian lepas bagi setiap tahap tiga faktor organisasi. Rangka kerja yang dicadangkan dalam kajian ini terdiri daripada rangka kerja TOE, faktor-faktor organisasi dan kriteria faktor kejayaan kritikal. Ia boleh membantu untuk perusahaan kecil dan sederhana yang mahu menilai keadaan organisasi mereka untuk menggunakan perkhidmatan berasaskan awan. Rangka kerja ini empirikal diuji ke atas dua puluh PKS di Iran yang menggunakan perkomputeran awan. Melalui analisis data, keputusan menunjukkan bahawa sokongan pengurusan atasan, saiz firma dan kesediaan teknologi mempunyai kesan positif ke atas menggunakan perkhidmatan berasaskan awan dalam PKS.

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CHAPTER I

PROJECT OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

Cloud computing is developing globally, which present the facilities such as services and resource sharing, external information storing, full availability, auto-scalability and most importantly pay-as-you-go or the services renting concept. The cloud computing knowledge was introduced in 1969, however the biggest evolution in this field occurred since 2000.

Cloud provider are capable of delivering the computing resources as a service, and cloud services are included as well, such as software, hardware and platform. It recommends a shift from computing as a product that it owns, to computing as a service that is delivers to the consumers, through the internet from large-scale data centers or clouds. This facility will make the cloud users to be able to utilize these resources everywhere, and every time. Otherwise rapid service delivery will encourage companies to make changes in IT agility for reengineering their business process. The company makes a fundamental revolution in application and interacts with consumers. The results of economic and business research in Europe have shown that cloud computing could build \in 763 billion (\$1.05 trillion), and 2.4 million new careers by 2015 (Son & Lee, 2011).

Enterprises especially SMEs, strongly require to improve their business strategies and technological equipments, hence, they are suggested to try the reduction of the complexity of their business and operations to reach their enhanced advantages. In the United States, cloud computing is chosen as a first IT strategy, and in 2011, president Obama mentioned his opinion on cloud which is "The adoption of cloud computing will play a pivotal role in helping the government close the productivity gap between the public and private sectors" (Obama, 2011).

Competition in business market has grown swiftly, therefore it caused all companies to be dependent on having updated skills and technology for producing new services related to market requirement (Pauly, 2011). SMEs limited recourses, usually leads them to gain less advantages, in compare to other competitors. Small and medium size enterprises are not able to access all new required IT services technology.

These mentioned findings, and implementing new strategized ideas are strongly required for SMEs, to achieve more advantages in the global market. This new strategy should be able to help SMEs for adopting new required technology. Developing in enterprise IT infrastructure supports us to eliminate some of the barriers for participating the global marketing, helps SMEs to have efficient business, and it gives the users this opportunity to compete in global markets (Tiago Oliveira & Maria F Martins, 2010).

Cloud computing has the ability to play a critical role for SMEs. Due to adopting cloud computing, SMEs is being able to improve their marketing strategy. Cloud providers are ready to offer various tasks for their customers such as infrastructure as a service, software platforms, and business applications. All cloud services are accessible on demands, and they offer full support for purchasing, installing, configuring and operating services, as well (Pauly, 2011). Cloud computing provides an opportunity to the users to access technology every time and everywhere by themselves, without intervening by internal IT (Keane, 2011).

However, still there are some issues and difficulties to implement cloud computing services for SMEs. The purpose of this study is to provide the solution, regarding the following issue: how organizational factors can have an impact on cloud computing adoption in SMEs? The main objective of this survey is to assess the positive impact of organizational factors, on adopting cloud computing in SME based on Technology, Organization and Environment (TOE) framework. This chapter includes the introduction of the study.

1.2 Problem Background

The small and medium size enterprise does not possess sufficient financial and human recourse, in comparison to the large size factories, hence they they are not capable of upgrading their IT requirements efficiently, hence, it will not allow them to have a sufficient chance to compete with powerful competitors, in a business environment. Researches in United Kingdom have shown that SMEs companies are willing to apply the internet and services, for increasing their business opportunities. SMEs understand that the update of the technology usage leads to advance in business fields (Jlelaty & Monzer 2012).

A company is not able to make a quick decision on applying the cloud computing, which is a critical determination which requires investigating all the reasons for any changes and calculating the percentage of company advance, in comparison to the traditional procedure. There are challenges in enterprises, in terms of adopting cloud, due to practical and sociopolitical reasons.

In 1990, Tornatzky and Fleischer developed the TOE framework for adopting IT efficiency in organizations. This framework defined in three main aspects, which are technological context, organizational context and environmental context. TOE was designed for covering the organizations request in adopting and implementing technical innovations, and moreover, it was investigated during three decades in different IT fields, and researchers define specific factors for each context, as well. In 2011, Low *et al.* proposed a TOE framework for cloud computing adoption, and they defined their framework in three main contexts and eight factors. The organizational context includes Relative advantage, Complexity, Compatibility, Top management support, Firm size and Technology readiness, and the environmental context which can be integrated with Competitive pressure and Trading partner pressure .They investigated their framework for high-tech industry in Taiwan, and they showed that all specified factors had a positive impact on cloud adoption in high-tech industries, except complexity. However, unfortunately, this framework has been investigated in high-tech industry only, therefore maybe their framework may not show the same results on SMEs. Low *et al.* did not cover each factor exactly, with sufficient elements. Therefore organization which requires to adopt cloud computing, will not be able to apply this framework as a complete reference, due to this fact that this framework does not cover all the aspects which are necessary for deciding cloud adoption.

1.3 Research Question

This study assesses the impact of TOE organizational factor, on cloud computing adoption in SMEs, ant it will cover three constructs which are used to evaluate the organizational factors impacts on adopting cloud, based on service in SMEs. Therefore, to provide some instructions and guidance's for the research problem, two research questions were identified and formulated, which are:

- 1. What are the organizational factors that influence on the adoption of cloud computing, in SMEs?
- 2. How these organizational factors might have a positive impact on cloud computing adoption in SMEs?

1.4 Project Objectives

The research objectives are:

- 1. To identify the factors that have influence on cloud computing adoption in SMEs, based on TOE model.
- 1. To propose an organizational context for cloud computing adoption in SME, based on the TOE framework.
- 2. To evaluate suggested organizational context in SME.

1.5 Scope of Study

The research explored SMEs Company in Iran, to assess the impact of TOE organizational context in SMEs. Due to the fact that the importance of small and medium size enterprises for using new technology are increasing and growing fast, this research highlights two main scopes of the study:

- 1. The prime highlight is to focus on TOE organizational context, for assessing the impact of organizational factors in SMEs.
- 2. The second highlight is to concentrate on measuring the SMEs experience in Iran, which evaluates the impact of defined organizational factors on cloud computing adoption, based on the TOE model.

1.6 Significant of Study

The adoption of cloud computing is increasing swiftly between enterprises, and the cloud provider companies offer new services promptly with higher quality, however the lack of a complete framework for evaluation of the cloud computing impact is felt clearly. The development of the framework for cloud computing adoption, can be useful for both users and providers.

TOE (technology, organization and environment) is one of the crucial frameworks which is aside since 1990 for IT adoption. Low *et la.* performed this framework for cloud adoption in high- tech industry in 1990, and defined eight factors for these contexts, and their results proved that seven factors of them play a positive role in cloud adoption, unlike complexity which has a negative impact on it. Hence, we aim to evaluate the impact of TOE organizational factors on SMEs.

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