Cultural Impact on E-Service Use in Saudi Arabia:
The Role of Nepotism

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Abstract

This paper reports the results of a mixed method approach to answer: To what extent do cultural values impact on e-service use in Saudi Arabia, and if so how? This paper will firstly, introduce the importance of culture and define the aspects of Saudi culture. It will then describe the method used and present the questionnaire findings related to the role of nepotism. The review of the literature on nepotism indicates there is still much to be studied and learned. The legal aspects of nepotism, in addition to its impact on human resource management appear to be the more reported issues. However, nepotism's impact on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has not been studied. This research aims to cover this gap by investigating to what extent nepotism, as one of Saudi Arabia's cultural values, impacts on e-service use in Saudi Arabia. The tested hypothesis was found consistent with its predicted outcome: nepotism is a negative predictor of intention to use e-services in Saudi Arabia. It is evidenced that consideration of the impact of the cultural values will mainly contribute to the enhancement of social and organisational aspects of e-society research and practices, by deeply understanding them as of the influntials to e-service implementation.

Keywords: Cultural impact, nepotism, e-service, Saudi Arabia

1. Introduction

Culture has become a very important factor in Information and Communication Technology improvement. Cultural sensitivity may cause impediments, and require companies and governments to exert themselves to find a practical way to implement e-service. Culture is identified as an impediment to IT use by many researchers. It is a major factor, especially in Eastern countries values that emphasise interpersonal relationships even in business [34]. Additionally, culture has been identified as a barrier to e-commerce by 62% of 89 Small and Medium Enterprises in 17 countries [8]. Data collected from 9,400 male commercial airline pilots in 19 countries confirms that national culture had an impact on cockpit behaviour over the professional culture of pilots [27]. This finding that even in a highly educated business environment (e.g. pilots, medical specialists …) the impact of culture still exists [27].

According to [4] different uses of IT are sometimes derived from the nature of a country's national culture. The cultures that enfold the individual interact and comprise the individual's unique culture, eventually influencing the individual's subsequent actions and behaviour.

Since culture plays a vital role influencing technology implementation and use, this paper, as part of a full study, discusses the method and results of a quantitative study to measure the values of Saudi culture. A scarcity of large scale studies dealing with this topic and context to date, and the impact of cultural influence, emphasise the significance of this research.

2. Culture

There are various definitions for culture; some suggest it is "the human-made part of the environment"; while another sees culture as a "shared meaning system"; Culture is also defined as the "individual's characteristic way of perceiving the man-made part of one's environment". Definitions of culture in general entail the observation of rules, customs, responsibilities, and morals, which are affected by a range of levels of culture such as language, sexual characteristics, race, belief, geography, and employment. These aspects all influence interpersonal deeds [4]. Ideals are obtained at the early stage of someone's life from family, and the region in which they live. The combination of these creates a value system which is naturally stable but changeable over time, replicating changes in culture and individual knowledge [35]. Hofstede defined culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" [20].

The sensitivity to cultural diversity plays an essential role in the success/failure of e-business [23], and a successful system interface the design should consider cultural values, and keep in mind national culture. In fact, [25] contends:

> "No matter how promising a new e-business model or business practice appears on paper, if no one adopts it and uses it well, all strategizing, planning and development efforts will go to waste. This means that the success of e-business strategies depends on other people's behavior. And unfortunately, the e-business strategist has no direct control over other people's behavior. However, e-business strategists can significantly improve their chance of success by understanding why people sometimes resist e-business innovations and by knowing about the tradeoffs between the design and implementation of e-business innovations."

The unique feature of IT from other fields is its flexibility, which can result in similar products being implemented with very different forms and functions in different organisations [10]. However, much of the technology is designed and produced in developed countries, and the result is that it is "culturally-biased" in favour of their social and cultural values [36]. Consequently, developing countries encounter cultural and social obstacles when attempting to transfer technology, created abroad, into practice at home. The culture of a country or region greatly affects the acceptance of technology through its beliefs and values about modernization and technological development.

The [15] study, found that the lack of suitable cultural and organisational readiness was the main contributor to the failure of software implementations [15]. Moreover, the inconsistency between IT and the organisational culture can lead to the failure of an implementation, and this should be well controlled during the uptake phase. It has been suggested that "analysing the impact of a change before its implementation reduces the risk of failure" [40].

3. Saudi culture

There are many principles that form Saudi's culture, based firstly on religion, then the tribal system. Saudi Arabia has a unique position in the Islamic world since it is home to the two Holy Mosques for Muslims. Islam plays a significant role in Saudi's culture by defining the social manners, traditions, obligations, and practices of society. Kinship and tribal systems still impact on the individual's place in society and could affect their success or failure, both in the traditional and in the new areas of activity. In fact, the tribal system considered a major impact on the work place [3].

Islam, as the first element of Saudi culture, sets the moral principles and behaviours in society through the Koran (the holy book) and the Sunna (the sayings and practices of the prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him). The Koran has been a unifying force that significantly impacts and acts as a driver to create a common culture and legal system, Sharia, in the Arabic countries. Equality is ensured for all regardless of their health or wealth or any other criteria since the Muslim community is a brotherhood. The widespread statement is that morals come from religion [21].

Family is a highly valued part of the Muslim society, and its significance can be perceived from high to non-educated people in all types of living; Bedouin, rural, and urban. In these societies, self-interest comes after the family-interests [22]. Family importance has been emphasised by the Koran and the Sunna. Individuals are expected to sustain good relations with their relatives and provide help when needed rather than being generous to others. This interdependence in a network of relationships offers security to individuals through attachment and commitment to their groups, more than separateness and privacy. As part of the strong values towards group and family collectivism, leaders are expected to behave in a "paternalistic" style and provide employment opportunities and privileges to the in-groups, family

members, and relatives of their own and employees. Many managers are criticized for providing privileges to their followers who are totally unproductive, which is regarded as unethical conduct. The person who is in the more powerful position solves many personal problems of the dependents, like helping in finding job opportunities, a place in the hospital for family members or personal business in the police station [22].

Arab culture is the second source that forms Saudi culture and a strong predictor of resistance to IT transfer [36]. [19] described the key characteristics of Arabs as: fatalism, culture of mind versus culture of heart, open versus closed mind, and vertical versus horizontal values. Religion, family, and national traditions often negatively affecting the acceptance of new innovations. The Arab culture stresses the importance of home and the traditional nature of its influence on adopting new technologies; culture sets the agenda for people's social lives. [36] contend that Arab societies (Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and the Sudan) negotiate their technological issues within the context of their culture. Cultural conflicts between the organisation and management style of Western and Arab business leaders and workers have influenced the system development process and result in unsuccessful approaches to computer use and policy. Diverse cultural values have emerged from a common linguistic, historical, and spiritual background.

4. Nepotism

Nepotism has historical roots and is not a current phenomenon [14 and 41]. The history of nepotism is discussed in different disciplines such as "evolutionary biology, anthropology, religion, sociology, psychology, political science, history, law, and economics" [9 and 24]. People have different "racial, national, linguistic, tribal, and religious" backgrounds, which derives the practices of nepotism [38]. Nepotism is common around the world, despite the fact that it is more obvious and critical in the developing countries [1].

The word nepotism is originally adopted from "the Latin word (nepot)" [14]. It is also related to the Italian word (nipóte), which refers to any male or female family member [9]. Defining nepotism is problematic [24]. There are many definitions; most of them agree that nepotism is "the employment of relatives" [14], whether in the same organisation [14 and 18], or even "working or being supervised by their relatives in the same department" [1].

Nepotism according to Webster's International Dictionary is defined as "favouritism shown to nephews and other relatives, as by giving them positions because of their relationship rather than their merit" [1]. While it has been defined by the Longman dictionary of Contemporary English as ''the practice of favouring one's relatives when one has power or a high office, especially by giving them good jobs'' [5].

From a human resource management point of view, Padgett and Morris (2005) defined nepotism as "the practice of showing favouritism during the hiring process toward relatives or spouses of current employees in an organisation" [30]. Similar to this, Vinton defines

nepotism as the practice of hiring relatives [39]. Ciulla (2005) adds, "hiring an incompetent relative" to the definition [9]. Moreover, nepotism involves "undeserved rewards, or unfair discrimination in granting employment or other advantages to relatives" [41].

Robertson-Snape (1999) argues that business in Indonesia is all about "who you know" and not "what you can do" [33]. In such a culture, individuals' loyalty to their families is more than that to their country. Consequently, they see their duty in their jobs as mainly to "further the economic or employment opportunities of that family" and regard this as "legitimate in terms of the official's priorities" [33]. Unfortunately, this kind of authority abuse "is unlikely to be documented" [33 and 30], which makes the study of nepotism's impact more challenging. The scope of this study does not extend to corruption, for nepotism happens as a result of non-monetary factors like family obligations, whereas corruption relates to monetary rewards or benefits exchange.

According to Vinton (1998), the culture of a country or area has a possible impact on nepotism. Thus, studying the surrounding environmental factors contributes toward "a more thorough understanding of the impact of nepotism policies and practices" [39]. Taking this in consideration, our study deals with nepotism as one of the elements of Saudi culture.

4.1. Causes of nepotism

According to Arasli et al. (2006) nepotism is likely to occur more frequently in small societies with the effect of other factors like "sociocultural, economic, educational and political structures that force people to support their close relatives or friends" [5]. Nepotism is an expected "result of the existing economic, cultural values, and educational system" [5]. Chances also increase in non-democratic societies [38].

Hayajenh et al. (1994) conducted a study to examine the relationship between nepotism and certain organisational characteristics (size, ownership, and geographic region) in Jordan and Egypt. They contend that the main reasons behind nepotism in Arab countries include:

(1) Socio-cultural structure and behaviours: They indicated that the discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia has truly changed Arabia. Discovery of oil and the sudden increase in oil revenue, while solving some national problems created a new set of problems (e.g. decline in work ethic, conflicting values and changes in group alliances and social values). They indicate that an individual of desert origin exists as part of the kingship network and his welfare and fate depend on the actions of that network as a whole rather than upon his individual actions.

These values and norms encourage nepotism in Arab societies in order to fulfil the individual's responsibilities toward his or her family. The tribal systems require a strong commitment from all

individuals to their tribes, thereby allowing and encouraging nepotism if it concerns relatives.

(2) Economic structure: Since the basic economic structure is based on agriculture and limited industry the outcome of this structure is a high unemployment rate which calls for nepotism in finding job opportunities.

(3) Educational structure: Educational systems in most Third World countries were designed or influenced by the Colonial powers whose main objectives were to train local administrators and military personnel. This type of education was not helpful to economic development. Such educational systems created an imbalance in the labour market.

(4) Political structure: The public sectors in Arab independent states, like other less-developed countries, are the largest employers leaving little room for the private sector. These governments have assigned educated tribal chiefs and their sons to key public positions to buy their loyalties [17].

Dwivedi (1967) views the associations in these countries such as "family, kinship, neighbourhood, village, ethnic origin and religious affiliations as the associational forms that have the first and the greatest call on individual loyalties", and hence nepotism is still alive [13].

4.2. Positive impact of nepotism

Nepotism has drawbacks but is also thought to have some advantages [1 and 9]. The variety of judgement on nepotism is caused by the fact that "an unethical act in one culture may be socially acceptable in another" [13 and 33].

Abdalla et al. (1998) have reviewed the literature with focus on the advantages of nepotism. Their review resulted in the following primary advantages:

- It provides an efficient way to identify dedicated personnel to staff organisations.

- Permitting nepotism allows consideration of all potential employees who might be effective toward the organisation rather than not including them because of their blood relation to an existing employee.

- It tends to foster a positive family-oriented environment, which boosts morale and job satisfaction for all employees, relatives or not.

- It prompts family competition toward the benefit of the company.

- It keeps difficult younger generations off the streets.

- Nepotism keeps companies alive. Chances are that if succeeding generations are

brought into oneness, they will develop a pride of ownership and family ties [1].

Ford and McLaughlin (1986) categorised the advantages of nepotism into different groups such as: "the desirability of working in a warm family-type atmosphere, improved communications, consistency of policy, smoothness of executive transition and acceptance of a family-led organisation by customers and the community" [14].

4.3. Negative impact of nepotism

Nepotism can also have negative consequences [39]. As they reviewed the advantages nepotism through the literature, Abdalla et al. (1998) identified the following drawbacks of nepotism with more focus on family-owned businesses:

- "Allowing nepotism lowers morale for those people who supervise relatives of high-level executives, those who must work with them, and those who feel that promotions and rewards are given unjustifiably to a relative.

- Nepotism puts incredible and unfair pressure on employees. It can be an awful burden for the relative to be unsure if organisational rewards were earned by what he or she did or only because of who he or she is.

- Permitting nepotism needlessly exposes the organisation to problems of family conflicts, sibling rivalry over managerial succession and improper combinations of business with corporate decision-making processes" [1].

According to Ford and McLaughlin (1986), the drawbacks of nepotism can be generally grouped. These groups include: a negative impact on morale, the tendency of family affairs to get mixed up with business decisions, and the problems shared by people who can never know for sure if they were hired, promoted or given a raise on the basis of actual performance or kinship" [14].

Laker and Williams (2003) stated, "if there is nepotism there will be favouritism, inequity, employee dissatisfaction and lower commitment" [24]. This kind of judgment expresses a real need to investigate whether nepotism has positive, negative, or no impact at all [30]. Arasli et al. (2006) investigate the possible impacts of nepotism on multiple organisational dimensions in the tourism industry. They found it to effect behavioural outcomes such as job satisfaction, quitting intentions and word of mouth communications. It also affects human resource management practices in general, especially in "heavily nepotism-oriented businesses". Indeed, the existence of nepotism demotivates employees and decreases their level of satisfaction [5]. Those consequences are not specific to current employees, but also to prospective new employees by discouraging them from joining such a business [5].

Consistent with Arasli et al. (2006), Abdalla et al. (1998) found that the nepotism will also dissatisfy, and demotivate employees in their jobs. In addition, there might be disloyalty and lack of commitment toward their organisations. Lack of curiosity in their work involvement and lack of cooperation with their colleagues will also possibly occur. All of these negative consequences will lower the employees' morale [1, 5, and 41]. The likelihood of "absenteeism and increase in the overall turnover" will rise as a consequence of nepotism practices. Failure to deal with such issues is a serious problem that in turn could affect the organisational performance in general [18 and 1]. In their conclusion, Arasli et al. (2006) contend that the presence of nepotism in the workplace "mostly may drive employees to have a closer relationship with family members in order to strengthen their positions rather than displaying higher performance" [5].

Investigating the impact on employees, management and organisations, Hayajenh et al. (1994b) found nepotism to be negative. They interviewed employees, middle and lower managerial levels in several overseas organisations in Egypt and Jordan and found many of them have confirmed the negative effects of nepotism on their "satisfaction, motivation, morale, loyalty, commitment, cooperation, and productivity" [18]. In fact, many of those managers "will quit because nepotism blocked their advancement" [18].

Ford and McLaughlin (1986) conducted one of the leading studies on nepotism. They found that, on the whole, participant managers declared that the drawbacks of nepotism strongly outweigh its benefits [14]. Organisations, whether public or private, should consider allowing nepotism "whilst developing and enforcing boundaries/guidelines to avoid the potential negative aspects" [24]. They "must be extremely careful to avoid the adverse impact that nepotism can have on productivity, morale, and continuing social support" [14]. The following section gives an overview about nepotism policies.

5. Methodology

This study uses a mixed method approach to answer To what extent do cultural values impact on e-service use in Saudi Arabia, and if so how? Cultural theories, dimensions, and models previously identified in the literature. In addition to individual interviews and focus groups were obtained in an attempt to answer this question.

A survey questionnaire was the most frequently used method to study nepotism. Ford and McLaughlin (1986) developed, pre-tested and mailed their questionnaire to a random sample of 900 members of the American Society for Personnel Administration (ASPA) [14]. Hayajenh et al. (1994), and Hayajenh et al. (1994b) used the same scale developed by Ford and McLaughlin. They initially collected "pool of concepts from the literature and interviews with employees and management in the participating organisations". The aim was to measure the attitudes of Human Resource Managers towards the

impact of nepotism on the functions and policies of Human Resource practices in their own jobs [17 and 18].

Although quantitative methods are less likely to be used alone, they "appear to be better delineated and more focused than qualitative" [29]. As a result of the individual interviews and focus groups we conducted earlier, and since most of the cultural studies conducted in Saudi Arabia used the existing global cultural indices, culture here was measured with special attention to nepotism as an element of the Saudi culture values. This new built construct needed to be examined in wider population in order to confirm and build the final framework of cultural values. This method has been selected to confirm the critical cultural values that impact on e-service use in Saudi Arabia and be able to generalise it. This illustrated the first part of our research model (Fig. 1) which is culture. The second part measures the use of e-service in Saudi Arabia using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) designed by [11].
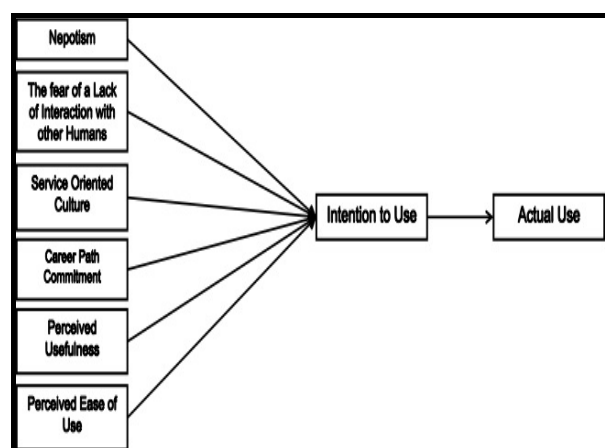

Figure 1. The research model

6. Sampling procedure

Using snowballing technique, employees of public and private sector in Saudi Arabia were targeted for this study. Snowball is a sampling technique that is "based on social network logic whereby people are linked by a set of social relationships and contacts" [31]. According to [26], public sector employees in Saudi Arabia number over one million (1.098.127) in 2010, while in the private sector only 724.655 Saudi employees registered in the same year [28]. The link to the online questionnaire was sent to 195 emails from the researcher's personal list asking them to participate and invite their colleagues and friends to participate as well. The same invitation letter was also posted on the researcher's personal profile on facebook, and a modified message (because of the characteristic length restrictions) on Twitter. The invitation message was written in Arabic and included a brief about the research, the research team and their contact details, the research ethics committee approval and their contact details for any complaint or comments on the research conduct.

One of the disadvantages of snowball sampling is the difficulty of "obtaining parameters of representation" [31]. Sample selection and size influence "the kind of statistical procedure" and consequently they reduce the potentiality of generalisation [6]. Consequently, a first follow up email was sent one week after the questionnaire was opened, and then a second and last email was sent one week before closing it thanking those who completed the questionnaire and reminding who not completed or started.

7. Pilot study

Piloting the questionnaire differs from one researcher to another; but there is no one way agreed upon [12]. Moore and Benbasat (1991) contend that the development of a questionnaire goes through three stages namely: "item creation" by identifying the existence in the literature that could measure your construct and creating something new if there is nothing. The second stage is to review these items to ensure their useability by experts. The final stage is to test the whole questionnaire before finally inviting participants to commence participation.

Culture and language differences are considered to be two major challenges for translating a research instrument [2]. Our questionnaire was created in English then, translated into Arabic by the researcher to ensure the accuracy especially in terms of cultural context. It was then, as suggested by [2], translated back into English by a certified translator to confirm the proper language was used in the first translation attempt. A comparison between these two versions was made and only minor differences obtained which confirms the questionnaire useability. As a result the questionnaire of this study was administrated in Arabic to ensure the clarity and avoid influencing the response.

The wording of questions is another challenge that the researcher must consider when constructing the questionnaire. Using the wrong terms is problematic; "from excessive vagueness to too much precision, from being misunderstood to not being understood at all, from being too objectionable to being too uninteresting and irrelevant" [12].

Q-sort method asks for categorising the newly built items under a suitable category [7]. Four Saudi Arabian research fellows were asked to sort the questionnaire items. They were given a sheet with two tables in it; the first one included the category names (8 categories) and alphabetical codes, while the second one included 49 items with numerical codes. The second table had three columns: item number (random order), item statement and a blank column headed by section. The task was to place the suitable section code that each item belongs to in the section column. As stated by Block (1961, p.72), "casual but still informative method of simply identifying the discrepantly placed Q-items is recommended". The highest variance percentage in the q-sort we obtained was about 15%, which is traditionally acceptable.

The potential participants should be engaged in piloting the questionnaire and "the convenience of the pilot sample" [2] should be considered. Those could be research fellows who have the same interest and / or the study purposes [12]. The other categories are "the potential users of the data … to find people with substantive knowledge of the questionnaire topic" and of course some of the targeted population [12]. The questionnaire was piloted in two phases; first phase had nine participants, while the second phase had twenty participants. They both contributed to the design of the questionnaire.

To wrap-up, the questionnaire was piloted in two phases; first phase has nine participants, while the second phase has twenty participants. They both contributed to the design of the questionnaire. Accordingly, our questionnaire was comprised of nine sections that include close-ended questions with ordered choices except the last two optional questions that were asking participants about their job title and comments on the questionnaire.

8. Construct's foundation

This study aimed to measure the cultural impact on e-service use in Saudi Arabia. Since most of the cultural studies conducted in Saudi Arabia used the existing global cultural indices, culture here was measured with special attention to the Saudi context through using new constructs. These constructs were built after conducting Focus Groups in Saudi Arabia with two different categories. The first category was e-service general users, and the second was experts from the Saudi e-government program (Yesser). Both categories were divided into two groups with respect to their age (30 years and below, and 31 years and above). The following paragraph states the construct's definitions:

Nepotism is defined by the Cambridge online dictionary (dictionary.cambridge.org) as "using your power or influence to get good jobs or unfair advantages for members of your own family". The two main drivers of nepotism in Saudi Arabia are tribe and region. Therefore, this construct initially was separated into two different sub-constructs: Tribalism and Regionalism. Each of these sub-constructs has new created five indicators. However the results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis showed they all loaded on one factor with two low loading statements. Eventually this construct has eight statements.

The second part of the research model (Figure 1) measures the use of e-service in Saudi Arabia using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) [11]. Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use were measured using six indicators for each one of them. The remaining two factors of TAM were measured using one statement each. There were some modifications in the statements to fit the study context.

9. Statistical procedrure

Partial Least Squares (PLS) path analysis is a relatively modern technique which is becoming increasingly more popular, particularly in business research [37]. It operates by partitioning the multidimensional variance to predict hypothetical cause and effect relationships between variables [16]. The analysis assumes that all the variance is useful, and can be explained. Consequently, there is no concern for residual or unexplained variance, as involved in ordinary least squares regression. PLS path analysis operates by constructing latent variables from the indicator variables measured by the researcher, using principal components factor analysis. Each latent variable is assumed to consist of one factor. The main assumption is that the latent variables are reliably measured (i.e., that the indicators hang together strongly to define a factor, or unidimensional concept). PLS path analysis is a very robust method, meaning that it can operate simultaneously on a large number of dependent and independent variables with minimal assumptions about their distributional or measurement characteristics. Unlike regression analysis, it is not restricted by small sample sizes, multicollinearity (i.e., strong inter-correlation between independent variables), or deviations of the variables from normality.

PLS path analysis is not supported by generalized statistics packages such as SPSS, and requires the use of dedicated software. The analysis performed in this study using Smart-PLS Version 2.0 [32], chosen because it is very user friendly. Its GUI (graphic user interface), including tools to enhance the colour, size, and layout of the path diagram, permits the analysis to be performed relatively quickly and easily [37]. The path diagrams constructed using the GUI interface for the purposes of this study is presented in Figures 2 (The hypothetical relationships between variables). The variables were functionally defined as either latent variables or indicator variables. The indicator variables (i.e., the individual item scores measured by the researcher, and imported into Smart-PLS from an SPSS data file) were specified using yellow rectangular symbols. Each indicator variable was alphanumerically coded so that it could be indentified in the path diagram. The latent variables (i.e., the variables computed by the Smart-PLS algorithm using principal components factor analysis) were specified using blue oval symbols.

10. Results

A total of 341 responses were received, 254 out of them completed and valid for the analysis making the percentage about 74.50%. The majority (61.8%) of the participants ranged between 25 and 34 years with 44% having a master degree and 70.5% working for the public sector.

The results were only partly consistent with hypothesis H1: Nepotism is a negative (-) predictor of Intention to Use. There was a very weak negative relationship between Nepotism and Intention to Use indicated by a path coefficient of -.117.
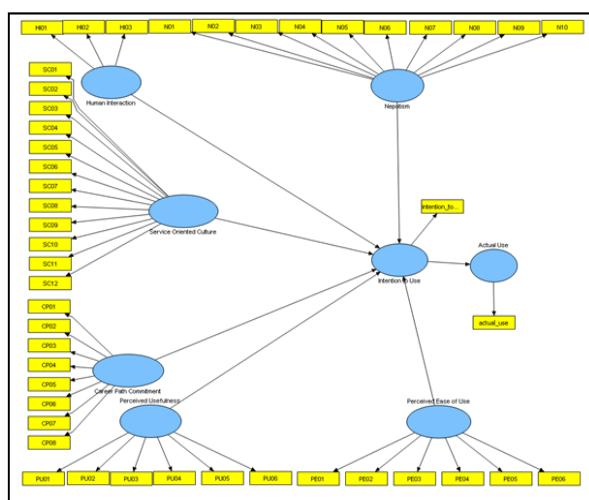
Figure 2. The hypothetical relationships between variables

11. Discussion

Nepotism is defined by the Cambridge online dictionary (dictionary.cambridge.org) as "using your power or influence to get good jobs or unfair advantages for members of your own family". It is also defined as "the employment of relatives in the same organisation" [14]. Unlike other studies who supported this definition of nepotism [e.g. 24] and in order to cover our scope, the definition was extended to include members of your region in addition to your family.

This study has clearly identified and limited the term nepotism only "in favour" of relatives or people from the same region. Nepotism was discussed in some studies mixed with corruption. In fact, nepotism as defined in our research context is only happening because of the relationship and not because of other factor associated like a bribe [13].

Most studies confirmed that nepotism has a negative impact on work practices [18, 24, and 5]. The more the society has different ethnical groups the more the negative impact of nepotism confronts [38]. In Saudi Arabia, nepotism is "negatively affecting e-service" use as indicated by one of the focus groups participants.

Consistent with the literature, this study results confirmed the negative effects of tribal system, as one of the derivers for nepotism, on business environments in Saudi Arabia [3, 13, and 35]. Individuals in collective societies secure themselves through the "attachment and commitment" to their groups as this kind of attachment is enough to cope with life difficulties [22]. Some other individuals however do not believe in such attachment but find themselves enforced to behave accordingly.

Based on such importance of relatives, leaders are expected to offer job opportunities not only for their own relatives but even for their employees' relatives as well. This "is regarded as unethical conduct" since many of these jobs go to unqualified people consequently resulting in less business efficiency. Managers in this culture, as a

consequence, concentrate on building and maintaining "personal contact", for the purpose of nepotism, more than doing the actual business in order to "earn the trust of the parties" [22]. Thus, people in high positions are not overly willing to adopt and motivate the use of e-service to avoid losing such a privilege.

A contribution this study has made to the existing body of knowledge is that nepotism was examined using mixed method approach, which strengthens the outcome rather than using only one method. As Nepotism is a vague and sensitive matter in Saudi culture, this study raised this issue clearly and provided a measurement scale for it with focus on the research context instead of relying on the existing models that do not consider some cultural differences. What distinguishes our study is that it has been applied in the Information Systems field that, lacks the study of nepotism and its impact on the implementation and use of different IS.

12. Conclusions

The PLS model used in this study was relatively well specified in terms of the reliability. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were greater than 0.7. which means most of the factor loadings were > 0.5.

The R^2 value of .200 indicated that 20% of the variance in Intention to Use was explained reflecting a medium to large effect. While the R^2 value of .074 indicated that 7.4% of the variance in Actual use was explained too reflect a relatively small effect size, and therefore the research model exhibited somewhat limited practical and theoretical significance.

There are many organisations throughout the world that have failed to successfully implement and use e-service, especially in developing countries. Culture has been widely addressed as a reason behind this [e.g.8, 23, and 27]. However, values that construct culture have not attracted the same attention. This paper tested nepotism as one of the Saudi cultural values that have not been studied sufficiently in the literature. Consideration of the impact of these values in the future will mainly contribute to the enhancement of social and organisational aspects of e-socity research and practices by deeply understanding them as of the influntials to the use and implementation of IT.

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