



Customers' Experiences with E-banking: A Case of Academic Staff at Mzumbe University, Tanzania

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Abstract: This study investigated the customers' experiences with e-banking. The study was carried out at Mzumbe University because the faculty members, especially those from the Faculty of Science and Technology, have the ICT know-how required to offer insightful analyses of e-banking systems. The study employed a qualitative research approach, using the case study design. Through purposive sampling, the researchers selected 12 participants who were knowledgeable in technology-related fields. ICT expertise was required to ensure that participants could provide insightful comments during the effective discussion on e-banking systems. Their technological expertise improved the overall quality, credibility, and relevance of the research findings. The study used an interview guide as source of data, in-person and telephone-based. The study used the thematic approach in analyzing data. The study revealed that most of respondents used the e-banking platforms, which helped people manage their accounts more efficiently and reliably while also saving money. The convenience of executing transactions and obtaining account information prevailed, which increased the perceived value and general convenience of e-banking platforms. On the other hand, a few individuals reported hesitation due to prevailing security issues. The study recommends that banks should create user-friendly interfaces and improve the efficiency and convenience of the online banking platforms. Furthermore, there is a need for strong security protocols that address the prevailing security issues.

Keyword: Mobile banking; financial institutions; user experience; technological advancement; usefulness; user preferences.

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Introduction

In recent times, significant advances in technology have resulted in a notable transformation within the banking industry, particularly in the realm of e-banking (Raisi et al., 2020; Alsmadi et al., 2023; Mosa, 2022; Aduaka & Awolusi, 2020; Ghasemi et al., 2021). The emergence of e-banking platforms such as online banking, mobile banking and

automated teller machines (ATMs) has brought about a considerable shift in how customers access and manage their financial services (Tahtamouni, 2023; Inegbedion et al., 2020; Etim et al., 2023; Mogos & Jamail, 2021; Mosa, 2022). Technological advancements have led to a significant transformation in the banking industry, particularly in the field of e-banking (Raisi et al., 2020; Alsmadi

et al., 2023; Mosa, 2022; Aduaka & Awolusi, 2020; Ghasemi et al., 2021). The introduction of e-banking platforms such as online banking, mobile banking, and automated teller machines (ATMs) has greatly altered the way customers avail and manage their financial services (Tahtamouni, 2023; Inegbedion et al., 2020; Etim et al., 2023; Mogos & Jamail, 2021; Mosa, 2022).

Research on a global scale has examined different aspects related to adoption of e-banking, patterns of usage and preferences of users. The studies resulted in recognition of key factors that are considered vital by users of e-banking, including the administration of online accounts, payment of bills, transfer of funds and utilization of mobile banking apps (Tahtamouni, 2023; Saprikis et al., 2022; Chumo, 2022; Chmielarz & Zborowski, 2022).

Global research examined different facets related to the adoption of e-banking, patterns of usage and preferences of users and resulted in the discovery of important elements considered crucial by e-banking users, including the handling of online accounts, bill payments, transferring funds and utilization of mobile banking apps (Tahtamouni, 2023; Saprikis et al., 2022; Chumo, 2022; Chmielarz & Zborowski, 2022). Extensive inquiries have equally identified significant factors that are deemed critical by e-banking users (Tahtamouni, 2023; Saprikis et al., 2022; Chumo, 2022; Chmielarz & Zborowski, 2022). In addition, the implementation of security measures such as two-factor authentication and fraud detection systems significantly affects the establishment of trust and assurance for individuals utilizing e-banking services (Apaua & Lallie, 2022; Khan et al., 2023; Gupta et al., 2023; Omotosho et al., 2023).

Literature indicates that several factors, such as perceived usefulness, convenience and perceived level of security, play a significant role in influencing individuals' intentions to adopt e-banking services (Akhter et al., 2022; Rawwash et al., 2020). In addition, trust in the banking institution, the quality of customer service and the availability of support channels have substantial impact on users' satisfaction and loyalty (Ayinaddis et al., 2023; Iqbal et al., 2021).

External factors that have significant impact on users' attitudes and behaviors towards e-banking include socio-economic conditions, technological infrastructure and regulatory environment. Researchers have dealt with these factors and

revealed that such factors have a considerable influence on users' attitudes and actions towards electronic banking (Kimiagari & Baei, 2022; Khan, 2022; James & Inyang, 2022; Almaiah et al., 2022).

Studies in Tanzania engaged various aspects of e-banking adoption and usage patterns, providing valuable insights into the local context (Mlaki, 2022; Sausi et al., 2021; Lulazya, 2021). These studies identified factors that influence the acceptance of mobile banking services by Tanzanian consumers. The findings indicate that ease of use, perception of usefulness and trust have a significant impact on consumers' intention to embrace mobile banking in the country. Other few studies evaluated the security concerns associated with e-banking in the country (Mori & Mlambiti, 2020; Chille et al., 2021; Koloseni, 2021; Mlelwa, 2023). Based on this background, this study sought to explore the perspectives and experiences of participants concerning usefulness, security and convenience of online banking platforms.

Methodology

The study employed a qualitative research approach. Particularly, the case study design guided the study. The research was carried out at the Faculty of Science and Technology, Mzumbe University, to take advantage of the faculty members' knowledgeable viewpoints and technological know-how, guaranteeing pertinent and high-quality insights into e-banking systems in Tanzania. Purposive sampling method selected 12 participants who are knowledgeable in technology-related fields. ICT expertise was required to ensure that participants could provide insightful comments during the effective discussion on e-banking systems. Their technological expertise improved the overall quality, credibility, and relevance of the research findings.

Instruments

The study used the interview guide as source of data. The study used two methods for conducting interviews: in-person and telephone-based. In-person interviews took place with participants who were geographically proximate and had flexibility in their schedules while telephone interviews took place with those who were geographically distant and had time constraints. Three participants were interviewed in-person while the remaining nine were interviewed over the phone.

Credibility and Dependability

In order to ensure the reliability and trustworthiness of the perspectives and personal accounts shared by participants, the researchers subjected the interview methodology to thorough evaluation. The researchers implemented measures such as member validation and peer review to enhance the credibility and reliability of the gathered data, in accordance with suggestions from Reed (2020).

Data Analysis

The study used the thematic approach as a way of analyzing data. Thematic analysis, is a qualitative method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns or themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Ethical Considerations

The researchers obtained a research approval from Mzumbe University. Prior to their involvement in the study, participants were duly informed about the purpose of the study and were required to indicate an informed consent to participate in the interviews. The researchers maintained anonymity and confidentiality of data provided by respondents.

Findings and Discussion

This section summarizes participants' positive and negative viewpoints on usefulness, security and convenience

Research Question: What is the customers' experiences with e-banking at Mzumbe University in Tanzania?

Usefulness

The analysis unveiled varying trends in the utilization of e-banking platforms among participants. Several participants indicated a regular and frequent e-banking usage, employing e-banking on a nearly daily basis due to its convenience and time-saving advantages. For instance, Participant 1 stated, "I utilize e-banking practically daily as it provides convenience and saves me time." Similarly, Participant 3 acknowledged, "I heavily depend on e-banking for the majority of my financial transactions."

In relation to experience, a number of participants conveyed favorable perspectives, underlining the convenience and dependability of the e-banking. Participant number 2 reported, "I consider e-banking highly convenient and reliable." Participant number 6 shared a comparable belief by expressing, "I have faith in e-banking platforms and have

encountered no concerns with them." The participants' emphasis on the efficiency and cost-saving benefits of e-banking platforms mirrors the convenience aspect that previous research has emphasized. For example, Rahi et al. (2023) found that individuals utilizing electronic banking services highly valued the effectiveness of performing transactions and the financial benefits connected to digital banking. Similarly, Kimiagari and Baei (2022) reported that customers appreciated the convenience offered by electronic banking platforms, specifically highlighting functions such as efficient transaction processing and round-the-clock availability of account details, factors that lead to financial efficiencies. Hafiza et al. (2022) highlighted the significance of convenience as a key motivator for the adoption of electronic banking. Users value features like seamless fund transfers, utility payments and account information accessibility ultimately lead to financial savings. Features such as effortless money transfers, bill payments and access to account information contribute to users' perceptions of convenience, thereby facilitating smooth financial management (Rahi et al., 2023; Kimiagari & Baei, 2022; Hafiza et al., 2022). Financial institutions have the ability to enhance the future utilization and approval of their digital banking platforms by recognizing the importance of specific features in enhancing convenience (Kimiagari & Baei, 2022; Hafiza et al., 2022).

Some participants highlighted the benefits of e-banking in terms of efficiency and cost savings, which in turn explain their perception of convenience. Participant 1 emphasized the efficacy of e-banking, expressing, "E-banking proves to be highly effective and aids in cost savings." This perception demonstrates the convenience factor, as e-banking enables users to swiftly conduct transactions and obtain account details without the requirement of personally visiting brick-and-mortar bank establishments.

Similarly, Participant 8 articulated the benefit of conveniently accessing account information and conducting transactions, emphasizing this point. "The advantage of being able to utilize your funds at any given time, regardless of your whereabouts." This is in line with the efficiency factor, as e-banking allows individuals to efficiently handle their finances from any location, at any given moment (Etim et al., 2023). The positive perspective of these individuals regarding the efficiency and cost-saving advantages

of e-banking platforms contributes to their overall perception of convenience.

Participant 5 emphasized the convenience of certain aspects like the simplicity of transferring money and making bill payments. Participants mentioned, "Crucial features include electronic payment, which allows me to pay for utilities such as water and electricity. Additionally, I can access my account whenever I need to make withdrawals or deposits." These attributes directly enhance the perceived convenience of e-banking as it enables users to conveniently make payments and effectively manage their finances using their devices (Akhter et al., 2022).

Moreover, Participant 7 underscored the utmost convenience offered by mobile banking and QR code payments, expressing, "The ability to cover bill payments and purchase electricity becomes effortlessly accessible through my account, rather than having to physically visit a bank or an intermediary." The incorporation of these functionalities allows users to carry out transactions swiftly and reliably, thereby amplifying the overall convenience provided by e-banking platforms. Essentially, these characteristics improve the convenience of e-banking by granting users convenient entry to their accounts and enabling them to perform transactions effectively, thereby resulting in time and cost savings (Akhter et al., 2022).

Participant 1 demonstrated a substantial level of trust in the security of e-banking. They confidently stated, "I have never experienced any instances of financial loss," reflecting their strong belief in the reliability of the implemented security measures. Finally, Participant 5 expressed favorable encounters with security measures, asserting, "I place my trust in them due to the presence of authentication and robust security measures." This implies a considerable level of confidence in authentication techniques and security measures.

Challenges amid the Usefulness

A few individuals revealed their hesitation towards using e-banking more frequently, citing security concerns. For instance, participant 7 stated, "Due to my concerns about security, I utilize e-banking occasionally." Participant 10 echoed, "I only turn to e-banking on rare occasions because I am anxious about security."

Several other participants raised concerns regarding security despite admitting to the convenience provided by e-banking. Participant number 5 voiced their concerns by saying, "Although it is convenient, I harbor apprehensions about the safety of my transactions." Participant 9 echoed similar sentiments, mentioning, "While I appreciate the convenience offered by e-banking, I exercise caution due to the inherent security risks."

The reported worrying situations relate with the findings by Almaiah et al. (2022) who revealed that participants' adoption of e-banking was hampered by security concerns, particularly those related to the protection of financial and personal information. In reference to wireless transactions, Participant 7 expressed skepticism about security by saying, "Security concerns me as transitioning to online can lead to financial losses." This statement reveals a certain level of skepticism towards the security measures, especially when it comes to online transactions.

These results are consistent with those of Kimiagari and Baei (2022) and Khan et al. (2023) who noted usage of the e-banking among participants. In a similar manner, the findings are similar to those by Almaiah et al. (2022) who found that participants' acceptance of e-banking was significantly hampered by security concerns, resulting in lower usage. Moreover, the positive experiences that participants had with e-banking platforms align with earlier studies that stressed reliability and convenience of the systems. For instance, Khan et al. (2023) found that participants appreciated the e-banking's accessibility and ease of use. In a similar vein, Kimiagari and Baei (2022) found that customers valued the ease provided by e-banking platforms, pointing to features like quick transaction processing and anytime access to account information.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The study highlights the variations in user opinions regarding the usefulness, security and convenience of e-banking platforms by highlighting both positive and negative experiences of e-banking users. The ease of use and time-saving advantages of online banking were often mentioned by the participants. Many of them routinely used these platforms for a range of financial operations. Good

feedback highlighted how e-banking helps people manage their accounts more efficiently and reliably while also saving money. The convenience of executing transactions and obtaining account information at any time and location prevailed, which increased the perceived value and general convenience of e-banking platforms. On the other hand, a few individuals reported hesitance as they did not use the e-banking very often because of security issues. These people emphasized concerns about possible monetary losses and doubts about the strength of the security protocols in place. These concerns were due to banks' opacity and lack of information regarding security procedures, which reduced the perceived value of online banking.

Recommendations

The study recommends that banks should create user-friendly interfaces and improve the efficiency and convenience of the online banking platforms. They should also hunt for regular customers' comments to improve most popular features, like fast transaction processing and simple account information access. There is a need for strong security protocols that address security issues. To protect users' financial and personal information, there is a need of sophisticated authentication techniques and routinely upgrading the security measures. Banks should also employ open communication tactics to inform customers about the security controls in place and how their transactions are safeguarded. User manuals, educational initiatives and real-time security update alerts are necessary. Banks should also set up avenues for customer feedback so they can keep an eye out for and respond to any security issues. This can encourage confidence and comfort users who are apprehensive about the security of e-banking services. Users, especially those who are not well experienced with e-banking should receive regular training and assistance to help them become more comfortable and proficient in utilizing these services.

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