Acceptance of Users on the TAUSI Portal in Application for Business Licence in Local Government Authorities: A Case of Morogoro Municipal Council

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Abstract: The TAUSI Portal, established in 2023, is designed to simplify the process of acquiring business licences through Local Government Authorities in Tanzania, including the Morogoro Municipal Council (MMC). This article examines user acceptance of the portal using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), with a focus on factors such as perceived ease of use, usefulness, security, cost, reliability, and overall satisfaction. A mixed methods approach included collecting data from 119 licensed business owners and 16 MMC staff using questionnaires and interviews. Findings indicate that users generally trust the security aspect of the portal, appreciate its cost-saving features, and would recommend it. However, perceptions of convenience, processing speed, reliability, and overall satisfaction appear mixed, pointing to usability challenges. There are barriers like limited internet access, low digital literacy, and weak technology, which make it impossible to complete the adoption of the system. Thus, the study recommends that targeted user training, performance improvements of the system, and a comprehensive marketing of the gains obtained from the new service are required to enhance the adoption of this portal. Further recommendations would guide implementations on enhancing digital governance and inclusiveness of the public services in Tanzania.

Keywords: TAUSI Portal, User Acceptance, Business Licence, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), E-Government, Usability.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Digitization in rendering public services has been an important reform across nations in facilitating and improving licensing processes for businesses. Similarly, in Tanzania, the government rolled out the TAUSI portal in the year 2023 as a flagship system designed to simplify the process of acquiring business licences from Local Government Authorities (LGAs). The portal allows traders to license their businesses online, make electronic payments, and track applications in real time, thus lowering bureaucratic hurdles and the need for physical visits to government offices (URT, 2021). Nonetheless, limitations on the usability include factors like restricted internet access, low digital literacy, and the requirement for regular system updating (Seif, 2022).

Before the launch of TAUSI, licensing processes involved queuing, spending a lot of money, and paperwork. It was a slow, inefficient, and corruptible procedure due to face-to-face interactions with officials. Thus, the TAUSI system was conceived to ameliorate challenges using ideas such as enhanced transparency, reduced time in processing, and a centralized database of registered businesses (URT, 2021). Other barriers limiting traders from fully utilising the system are scanty infrastructure and high costs of digital services, as well as limited capacity of users (Rohadin, 2021). Indonesia and Philippine cases show that while digital licensing platforms

may upgrade the whole procedure, many become ineffective due to problems related to socio-economic status and infrastructure-related constraints (Bayani et al. 2014).

In Africa, experiences in digital licensing reform have been mixed. Countries such as Zambia and South Africa illustrate the potential of digital systems for reducing corruption and thereby broadening access, but affordability as well as weak infrastructure remain formidable obstacles (Mayombe, 2018). Initiatives of that sort in Tanzania include MKURABITA and the Business Activities Registration Act of 2005, geared towards formalization and transparency. Yet, the small-scale enterprises continue to grapple with high costs, cumbersome procedures, and income-related inequalities that limit their participation in digital systems.

The TAUSI Portal does not have wide usage by people in the municipal council of Morogoro, where small traders usually face so many limitations, such as poor internet connectivity, a low rate of digital literacy, and expensive purchase of digital devices. These limitations can raise questions as to whether this

system can be deployed effectively in delivering the expected benefits. The government has implemented programmes for training, provision of digital tools, and expansion of internet coverage have been implemented but gaps in usability and acceptance remain. This situation justifies the commissioning of this study to establish the factors influencing user acceptance of the TAUSI Portal at the MMC as part of strengthening digital governance, efficiency, and inclusive access to licensing services in Tanzania.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was influenced by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which was propounded by Davis in 1989. The model was developed to provide a conceptual and methodological framework within which the adoption and use of new technology by individuals is analysed (Davis, 1989). As shown in Figure 1, the TAM identifies two main determinants of user behaviour towards technology: *perceived ease of use* and *perceived usefulness.*
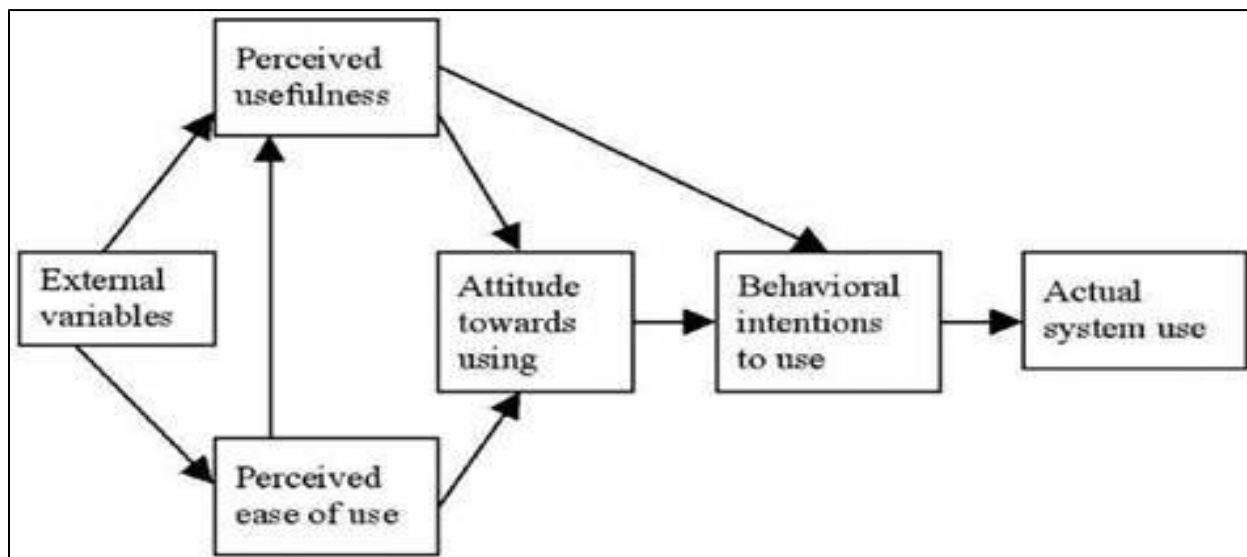

Fig 1: Technology Acceptance Model
Source: Davis (1989)

Perceived ease of use is the extent to which a person thinks that using the particular system would need little effort, whereas perceived usefulness is the extent to which a person feels that the system will improve job performance. Altogether, these perceptions create an attitude towards using the introduced technology, which, in turn, affects the intention to use and actual use of the technology (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

The extensions of TAM that were proposed later reaffirmed its importance in describing different technological scenarios. As an example, in 2000, Venkatesh and Davis proposed that the elements of social influence and cognitive instrumental processes should be included in one's

understanding of perceived usefulness and amend the original version of TAM. In time, Venkatesh et al. (2003) emerged to develop the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), which attempts to amalgamate TAM with other theories to generate a more holistic theoretical foundation for the explanation of technology adoption. Such reformulations imply that while perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness remain central, social norms, organizational support, and infrastructure conditions are crucial additional factors to technology acceptance significantly.

The TAM offers a very structured lens to assess the factors that determine user acceptance of the TAUSI Portal in the

MMC. Far more concretely, the investigation focused on whether users perceive the portal as easy to use and beneficial in the business licensing process for traders and small business owners. It has been proven across both developed and developing settings (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Awa et al., 2010) that TAM has predictive ability; hence, it was most appropriate in ensuring rigour and systematic analysis of acceptance towards digital licensing platforms in Tanzania.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study followed a pragmatic research philosophy, which allowed for the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Pragmatism was chosen since the research required obtaining objective data like usability rates and internet access, along with data subjected to personal opinion, like attitudes and perceptions (Saunders et al., 2019). This allowed questionnaires and interviews to be applied so as to capture both statistical trends and user experiences. Within a cross-sectional framework, mixed methods were employed.

The study population included licensed business owners and ITI Division staff of the ICT Department, whose activities include management and support of the TAUSI Portal in the Morogoro Municipal Council. A sample of 16 MMC staff and 119 registered business owners using the portal comprised study participants. Simple random sampling was used in selecting the business owners, while purposive sampling was employed in choosing the MMC staff. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were analysed using content analysis. This mixed method provided a comprehensive insight into factors influencing TAUSI Portal usability.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the willingness of business owners to use the TAUSI Portal for business license applications in the Morogoro Municipal Council is summarised in Table 1. The table brings key perspectives of users as per the effectiveness, security, speed, cost-effectiveness, reliability, and overall satisfaction for these experiences offered by the portal.

Table 1: User Acceptance of the TAUSI Portal for Self-Service (n = 119)

Statements	SA		A		UN		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Preference for Using the TAUSI Portal	21	17.6	42	35.3	3	2.5	31	26.1	22	18.5
Portal Speeds Up the Licence Application Process	17	14.3	46	38.7	8	6.7	31	26.1	17	14.3
Belief in Information Security on the Portal	33	27.7	40	33.6	23	19.3	13	10.9	10	8.4
Portal Reduces the Cost of Applying for a Licence	33	27.7	40	33.6	23	19.3	13	10.9	10	8.4
Willingness to Recommend the TAUSI Portal to Other Business Owners	36	30.3	69	58.0	2	1.7	6	5.0	6	5.0
Belief in the Portal as a Reliable Method for Applying for Licences	25	21.0	45	37.8	6	5.0	33	27.7	10	8.4
Satisfaction with the Experience Using the TAUSI Portal	9	7.6	10	8.4	8	6.7	44	37.0	48	40.3

NB: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, UN = Undecided, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, f = Frequency and % = Percent
Source: Filed Data (2025)

➤ *Preference for Using the TAUSI Portal*
The majority of the respondents (52.9%) agreed that they would rather use the TAUSI Portal than an in-person licence application at a government office, thereby showing that the convenience of the portal is widely appreciated. However, the portal is either not being used by a significant number of business owners, or it is actually just not preferred for them, as indicated by the 44.6% that disagreed. This means that there is considered to be a sizable proportion of business owners who feel reluctant to use the portal or prefer going the traditional way. An additional 2.5% were undecided, meaning that probably some business owners do not yet have a strong opinion about the application. This finding indicates a mixed perception toward the convenience or utility of the portal, with a large number of respondents not completely supporting its usage.

A member of staff from the Trade and Investment Division made the following comment:

"Many business owners who are tech-savvy appreciate the portal. But we still get walk-ins daily from those who don't feel confident using it." (ITI3, Personal Communication, 18 March 2025)

This coincides with conclusions drawn by Pramita et al. (2014), stating that willingness to use digital licensing systems depends on perceived efficiency and easy use. Seif (2022) also indicated that socio-economic factors such as business scale and education level influence usability, thereby explaining some remaining hesitation of business owners. The split responses in this study reflect prevailing tendencies in which those who perceive some immediate benefits quickly adopt the

digital system, while those who are comfortable with the traditional ways or face resource constraints appear to resist adopting it.

➢ *Portal Speeds Up the Licence Application Process*

The speed of the licence application process is an important usability factor. Here, 53.0% of the respondents believed that the portal speeds up the application process, indicating that the majority see it as a viable alternative to face-to-face applications. On the other hand, 40.4% disagree with this assertion, and some are questioning whether the portal even speeds up the application process. An additional 6.7% were neutral, further creating uncertainty on the effects of the portal on turnaround time. Therefore, this result shows that the portal is potentially a time-saving tool in the minds of many, but not all business owners are convinced of its efficiency.

As one member of staff in the ICT Department explained:

"We've put in place strong encryption and regular security updates, but many clients are unaware of this, so they remain doubtful." (ICT2, Personal Communication, 13 March 2025)

This is affirmed by Tortor et al. (2019), who pointed out that if digital systems like BPOSys are well optimized, they would, with time, reduce processing times considerably. Onate et al. (2018) also observed that with the coming of e-Government platforms, licences are processed in less than a day, further affirming the promise behind the TAUSI Portal. Nevertheless, the apprehension shown by some users suggests that the portal's performance may have been inconsistent or even unperceived in an acute sense at some time, thus raising the question of whether more awareness and education were warranted before its acceptance.

➢ *Belief in Information Security on the Portal*

Information security perception is important for usability on the digital platforms, and results show that 61.3% believe having their information secure while using the TAUSI Portal. This shows that a fair amount of trust exists among many regarding the portal's security measures. However, 19.3% disagreed, indicating some business owners remained a bit sceptical about security on the portal. Another such percentage remains neutral, possibly indicating a lack of awareness or not much information about the portal's security protocols. Nevertheless, the data indicate that while a large number of people are confident about the security of the portal, quite a number have some concerns that may hamper their willingness to use such systems.

According to Chen and Aklikokou (2020), trustworthiness serves as a bridge that opens communication between e-governance and citizen users, thereby influencing user attitude. Similarly, Menshah et al. (2020) found that usage intentions for digital services were significantly predicted by perceived service quality and trust in government. Therefore, the undecided population in this study may end up trusting the portal if transparency in security measures is enhanced.

➢ *Portal Reduces the Cost of Applying for a Licence*

Cost motivations are strong propellers behind the usability, as indicated by the survey results showing affirmative responses to the portal. A total of 91.6% agreed with the statement that the portal brings down the cost of applying for a licence. Such an indication is taken to mean that the large majority of the business owners considered the portal implementation as one of the strongest cost-saving means. Only 5.9% opposed it, meaning very little resistance was posed on the basis of cost. Also, the very small figure of 2.5% of undecided represents yet another set of people who would want to suggest that nearly everyone has considered the reasons for savings and costs in regard to the attractiveness of the portal. This finding reinforces that decreasing costs is a major reason for the favour of the portal and may likely enhance the marketing of this portal among business owners.

Ayumna et al. (2023) observed that digital licensing systems lower the costs of operational businesses, in harmony with the good reception rated in the baseline of this study. In addition, Temba (2025) noted that e-governance operates in the reduction of the costs of all paperwork and administrative burden, thereby probably influencing the high ratings that others would report on cost efficiency; otherwise, the dissenters would work in favour of the generally accepted understanding toward the portal, thus advancing its argument in value proposition offering.

➢ *Willingness to Recommend the TAUSI Portal to Other Business Owners*

Willingness to recommend the portal to others is closely linked to the satisfaction rate and readiness to use it. In this case, 80.3% said they would recommend the portal to other business owners. This means that a considerable majority of applicants would be willing advocates for it, hence most must have found good reason to apply for it. Nevertheless, 10.0% disagree, presumably indicating that some business owners might not have been fully convinced by their own personal experience with it. Plus, 1.7% remain undecided, further showing that while the majority support sits well with the portal, there remain a few who are ambiguous.

An Officer from the Trade and Investment Division stated:

"Most clients who have tried the portal love it and tell their friends to use it. This is especially so with the youth and tech-oriented entrepreneurs". (ITI8, Personal Communication, 13 March 2025)

A Trade and Investment Division officer also noted:

"We hear positive feedback, especially when users get licences much quicker than they expected. Word of mouth is important for usability." (ITI2, Personal Communication, 17 March 2025)

This result implies usefulness, satisfaction of the user, and likely enhancement of opportunities for prolonged usage and promotion of the e-government platform (Mandari & Koloseni, 2023). Likewise, Sarie and Alfian (2023) found that satisfaction with the system directly relates to the effectiveness of the system, thereby accounting for the high recommendation indexes in this study. These dissenters may perhaps merely represent rare cases of negative experience or unmet expectations rather than indicating a systemic defect, and stress the aspect of refinement for keeping the positive word of mouth alive.

➤ *Belief in the Portal as a Reliable Method for Applying for Licences*

Reliability is the essence of any online service. The data indicate that 58.8% have agreed that the portal is a reliable method of applying for licences. A fair level of trust in the portal was created by this; however, 36/1% dissented, expressing concerns about the side of dependability of the portal. The 5% who were uncertain may also suggest there is some kind of ambivalence regarding the portal's reliability in the actual sense of application. Thus, a general positive feeling toward the portal shines through, but an uncertain number of business owners require greater confidence about its long-term reliability.

Kagoya and Mbamba (2021) assert that top management support and user participation influence reliability. Thus, if technical issues were solved and stakeholder engagement improved, then user perceptions would accordingly improve. The undecided could be shown some case studies and success stories presented to them, assisting the process of rebuilding their confidence in the reliability of the portal.

➤ *Satisfaction with the Experience Using the TAUSI Portal*

Perhaps most crucial of all in a usability process is satisfaction with user experience, yet such disconfirmation is in the responses, as established only by 16.1% of the respondents who stated that they were satisfied with their experience using the portal. It goes on to show that a few users had a positive experience. On the other hand, a huge proportion, that is, 77.3% of the respondents, were against it, showing that there is a high dissatisfaction level with the portal. The remaining 6.7% of undecided responses suggest that some users were probably having mixed feelings or neutral experiences. High disappointment could signify that technical flaws, ineffective interfaces, or some other barriers to user experience could have played a part in the overall usability of the portal and, hence, future success.

According to Heuberger and Schwab (2021), it is the gap between what young, tech-savvy users expect and what e-government services deliver that perhaps explains the general discontent in this case. Performance expectancy and effort expectancy indeed are the determinants of satisfaction, so that it indicates TAUSI Portal usability for improvement to meet and satisfy users' needs according to Benosa et al. (2023). In user-pandering feedback, the serious urgency for redesigning user-centred improvement reflecting longevity usability has been enunciated.

V. CONCLUSION

The outcomes show that generally, the TAUSI Portal had a positive acceptance in aspects such as cost reduction, security, and willingness to recommend the system. Nevertheless, mixed perceptions with regard to convenience, speed, and reliability, as well as overall low satisfaction, reflected significant usability challenges. These insights highlight the necessity of specific improvements and increasing awareness, and optimizing the system to improve user satisfaction and overall effectiveness of the TAUSI Portal. In finding remedies to these issues, wider consumption would be promoted, as well as the portal delivering its intended function in the process of business licence applications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Enhance User Training and Awareness: Conduct targeted training sessions and awareness campaigns to improve users' digital literacy and understanding of the TAUSI Portal. Clear guidance on security protocols and system features will increase trust and confidence among business owners.
- Enhancement of User Training and Awareness: Conducting targeted training and awareness campaigns on the TAUSI Portal use will contribute to the digital literacy and knowledge of users. Well-defined security protocols and system features will create the trust and confidence that business owners require.
- Improvement of Reliability and Performance of the System: Address reliability improvements by having continued system maintenance and prompt technical support. It is also necessary to continuously upgrade the infrastructure. Portal performance will be a catalyst for user satisfaction and prompt wider usage.
- Information Development Cost and Time Benefits: Communication campaigns that demonstrate the efficiency of the portal in reducing application costs, processing time required to process applications, may favour the majority of users who use traditional means to convert.
- Encouragement of Internalization of Feedback and Improvement: Build the channels of feedback collection from users at different time intervals. These will reveal suggestions from business owners and staff, which can be

used to make improvements on a continuous basis towards the usage of the portal as a whole.

- Leverage Peer Influence: Satisfied users, in particular tech-savvy entrepreneurs be encouraged to advocate for the use of the portal among their peers. Positive word-of-mouth can boost rates of adoption and cultivate a culture of compliance within the digital environment.

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