**User Experience and Artificial Intelligence Assignment7**

**Topic: TAM & Diffusion of Innovation**

**2025712707 Hong Seokjoo**

**Technology Doesn’t Spread on Its Own: Conditions for Adoption**

When I see how quickly AI chatbots or agent systems are spreading, I often think: “Is this really because the technology is that good—or just because people had no choice at the time?”Events like the pandemic create environments that force people to adopt new technologies. These aren’t just stories of technical superiority—they’re shaped by contextual necessity and social pressure.

Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory captures this well. A technology doesn't spread just because it’s useful. The speed of diffusion depends on several perceived attributes like relative advantage, compatibility, observability, trialability, and complexity—but crucially, how users perceive these traits.

Some people see chatbots as simple customer service tools, while others use them as emotional support or self-development aids. The reasons people adopt technology are deeply contextual and personal, shaped by their interpretation of what the technology means to them. That’s why the phrase “good technology spreads on its own” misses the point. It’s not the features—it’s how those features are framed and understood.

**What TAM Can’t Fully Explain: Usefulness is Relational**

TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) is one of the most widely cited frameworks when it comes to technology adoption. It argues that users base their decision to use a system on two key factors: Perceived Usefulnessand Perceived Ease of Use. The model is simple, clear, and has high practical utility.

But I often find TAM too focused on the individual and cognitive dimensionsof technology use. Take AI hiring systems, for example. Are people really adopting them just because they’re easy to use or useful? I don’t think so. People also care about how the system treats them, whether it aligns with their values, and how it affects their identity or reputation in a social context.

Moreover, usefulness is not an absolute concept. It is always relational and contextual.The same tool might be highly useful for one person in one setting, and irrelevant or even threatening to another. Especially in organizational AI adoption, perceptions of “usefulness” are often overridden by feelings like “Is this going to replace me?”—emotions that TAM doesn’t adequately account for.

That’s why I believe we need to see perceived usefulness not just as a rational evaluation but as something tied to identity, power dynamics, and emotional safety. In many cases, technology adoption isn’t about convenience—it’s about redefining how people relate to their work and to each other.

**Innovation is a Process of Resistance and Negotiation**

Many theories describe technology diffusion as a smooth, one-way process—but in reality, it’s a series of pushbacks and negotiations. Whenever a new AI tool is introduced in a workplace, there are people who welcome it and others who resist it. That resistance isn’t necessarily anti-technology—it often stems from a sense of threat to one’s social role or professional identity.

The third paper captures this complexity well. Factors like relative advantage, compatibility, and observabilityall play a role in shaping adoption attitudes—but so do perceived job threats, and these effects vary depending on the user's prior experience and mindset. In other words, technology is never received the same way by everyone. Effective diffusion requires tailored strategies, not blanket rollouts.

To me, this means that technology adoption isn’t a simple matter of exposure or functionality. It’s a process of reinterpretation—users must negotiate and reconstruct the meaning of the technology within their own lives. Sometimes that leads to resistance, other times to enthusiastic adoption. But in both cases, what’s happening is not passive acceptance—it’s active meaning-making.

That’s why I think of adoption less as flipping a switch and more as curating space in one’s life for something new to belong.Technologies don’t arrive fully formed—they get re-shaped in use, by users. And it’s that social shaping, not just technical design, that determines whether something truly takes hold.

**Final Thoughts: Adoption is About Making Technology Feel Understood**

In the end, technology adoption doesn’t happen just because a tool is powerful or efficient. It happens because people make sense of it, fit it into their routines, and assign value to it. Whether we use TAM, DOI, or other models, none can fully capture the lived, emotional complexity of why people accept or reject a new system.

I now see technology adoption not as a rational decision, but as a deeply social and personal negotiation—involving identity, values, and one’s place in a changing system. In that sense, what drives adoption isn’t just functionality, but a feeling that “this technology understands me—or at least respects me.”

Technology will always evolve. But adoption is always human. And adoption is not something that happens topeople—it’s something people do. TAM and DOI may help us draw the map, but the actual journey is always being rewritten in practice.

In that journey, understanding the human conditions for adoptionmay be just as important as developing the next breakthrough system. Because ultimately, we don’t just adopt technologies—we decide who we become by using them.