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How Biases Influence IT Affordances – A Qualitative Study

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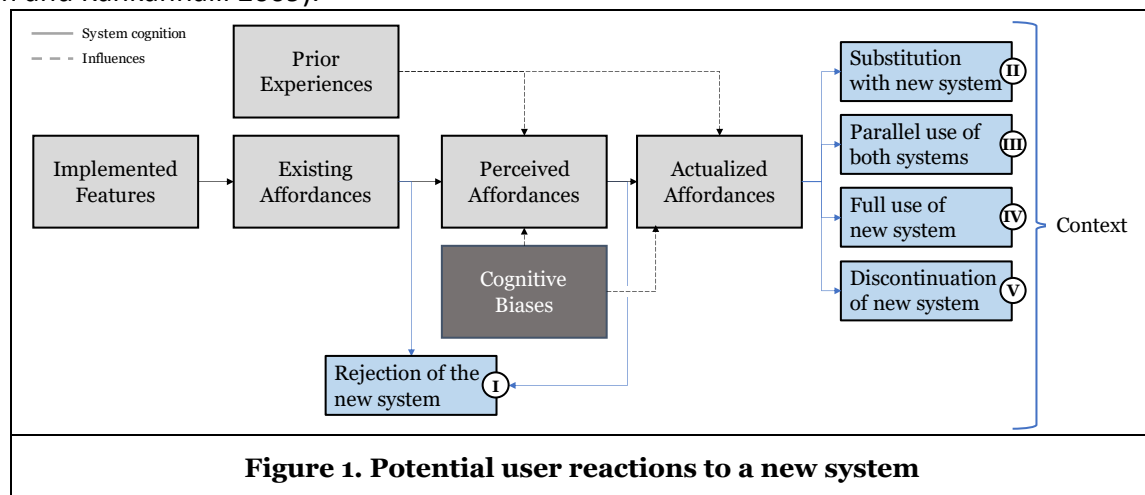
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How Biases Influence IT Affordances – A Qualitative Study

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When individuals start using new technologies – either because the technology solves a problem or enables them to do new things – they do so based on their perceived affordances. However, perceived affordances can vary between individuals. IT affordances refer to the possibilities of action that users perceive in IT artifacts based on their goal orientation and use environment (Markus and Silver 2008). Different pre-conditions could explain variances in how individuals use systems (actualize affordances) for the same purpose. As the actualization of affordances by individuals is based on their perception, different pre-conditions could lead to differences in perception and thus use.

Two effects that could explain these differences come from cognitive bias research: Both status quo bias and availability bias have been found to affect technology-related choices (Kim and Kankanhalli 2009; Hong et al. 2011). Availability bias is when individuals unduly place more weight on recent data or experiences, thus skewing their interpretation of the available information and their decisions (Hong et al. 2011). Status quo bias is a biased preference for the current way of doing things, thus impeding innovation as that would potentially mean change (Kim and Kankanhalli 2009).



In this talk we discuss first insights from qualitative data analysis on the effects of cognitive biases on the affordance actualization process

References

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