Abstract

As the uses of information technology (IT) in organisations increase in both variety and complexity, practitioners and researchers are searching for ways to better understand how various information system (IS) stakeholders (users, managers, IS professionals) make sense of IT in their organizations. Sensemaking in organisations begins with the personal constructs individuals use to understand and interpret events that occur around them. A technique suitable to the elicitation of personal constructs that individuals use to understand IT and its role in organisations is the repertory grid (RepGrid). It is a structured interview technique that facilitates the elicitation of responses from participants in a non-intrusive manner. The RepGrid has been widely used in psychology, management, marketing and more recently in IS fields. It offers the potential to significantly enhance our understanding of how users, managers and IS professionals make sense of IT in their organizations. This tutorial introduces the RepGrid to researchers and practitioners. It presents an overview of the RepGrid and discusses how the technique has been employed in IS research, including a including a program of research using the RepGrid undertaken by the presenter.

About the Presenter

Scope of the Tutorial

At the end of the tutorial, participants should be able to:

- demonstrate a basic understanding of the RepGrid,
- demonstrate a clear understanding of issues to be considered when using the RepGrid,
- apply the RepGrid in their own research.

The tutorial provides an overview of the repertory grid technique and discusses how the technique has been used in IS research. It expounds on the potential of this technique to IS researchers by considering the variety of ways the technique may be employed – for both qualitative and quantitative investigations. The flexibility of the RepGrid is further illustrated by considering a program of research using the RepGrid undertaken by the presenter.

Dr. Tan has employed the RepGrid in several research projects which have since been published:


Background of the Attendees

The likely audience will be researchers and practitioners interested in a technique that helps them better understand how various stakeholders (users, managers, IS professionals) make sense of IT in their organizations.

Material Provided to Attendees

- Examples illustrating the variety of ways the RepGrid has been employed in IS research
- A copy of the tutorial slides will be made available to all attendees after the session
Timetable / Structure

The proposed tutorial will run for 1h 30 mins. The structure of the tutorial is outlined below:

- Personal Construct Theory
- The Repertory Grid
- Element Generation
- Construct Elicitation
- Completing the Grid
- Data Analysis
- Program of Research
  - Skill Archetypes of IS Project Managers
  - Website Usability