

ABSTRACT

Technology Adoption in Law Enforcement in a Developing Country: An Action Research Investigation of the Jamaica Constabulary Force

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This action research examined the role of Information Systems (IS) in improving policing. The project involved user-centred design to increase perceived ease of use and usefulness.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was used to specify functional and non-functional requirements. The IS was implemented for five years with problem diagnosis, action and evaluation in order to refine the IS. TAM instruments were used to determine the extent to which the IS was accepted and adopted. There were 209 users; 175 questionnaires were administered and 143 users responded. The user activity data that the system generated over the period was analysed to determine growth in use. Impact was assessed by documenting the change in effectiveness in specified areas of police work, such as correct identifications of wanted persons and the management of investigations of missing persons.

The study found a measurable improvement in IS user acceptance, and a significant improvement in use, as well as improvement in important aspects of policing in the JCF. It clearly demonstrated that an IS that could significantly enhance police effectiveness but would typically be too expensive for law enforcement organizations in small developing countries can be obtained by adopting an action research approach to the development and implementation of locally-customized solutions, so that they are designed to support rapid uptake and an equally rapid and marked impact on crime.

Keywords: Kevin Kenyon Allan Blake; information system; security environment; technology acceptance model; end-user development; individual entrepreneurship; user-centred design; law enforcement; crime; developing countries.