

PERCEPTION ON THE ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION AND RECEIPTS OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS: BASIS FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE SYSTEM FOR BIDDERS

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine bidder's perception about the new system and determine the problems and challenges faced by bidders and use the findings in modifying and enhancing the system. This study used quantitative descriptive design. A questionnaire was designed and responses from 10 bidders of DPWH Bulacan 1st District Engineering Office were collected and analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings of the study indicated that general perception of the bidders about the system is somehow positive, however, the bidders were in a way uncertain about their assessment about the system process. Streamlining of the system process, information dissemination, and advertisement of the system were recommended to improve the utilization of the electronic submission of bidding documents system.

Keywords: Electronic Submission, Bidding, Enhancement.

Introduction

Going online now, at this time and age is a smart and strategic move not only as a pandemic response but also as a response to our changing world. The world now is turning digital and technology is widely using everywhere. Eventually, most of the daily processes will be done through online because going online is fast and efficient so it is fitting to adopt this practice.

On September 24, 2020, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) issued Department Order No. 87 Series 2020, pertaining to electronic submission and receipt of bids for the procurement of civil works. With this department order, bidders are encouraged to submit their bids online thru electronic mail (e-mail) to ensure safety, health, and welfare of bidders themselves, as well as the Department's officials and employees. However, in DPWH Bulacan 1st District Engineering Office, the system is hardly utilized by the bidders since the release of the said department order. This study aims to know the perception of the bidders about the new option in submitting bidding documents and the barriers and challenges that they are facing when using this new system so that the system can be modify and enhance accordingly.

The bidders are the user of this system so it is rightful to recognize their perception about the electronic submission of bidding documents, same with the barriers and challenges they are encountering.

According to PhilGEPS (Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System), the system has significant benefits to suppliers and contractors as (1) they have access to government bid opportunities 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, (2) can download electronic bid documents, (3) they receive automatic notification, through the user's email, of bid postings and supplements, (4) savings on newspaper costs, transportation and manhours, and (5) information on government bid projects is important in market research and in making business decisions for suppliers and contractors. However, in the assessment done by DICT (Department of Information and Communication Technology), full utilization of this e-government system remains to be a challenge and issues regarding technology obsolescence still exist.

Conceptual Model of The Study

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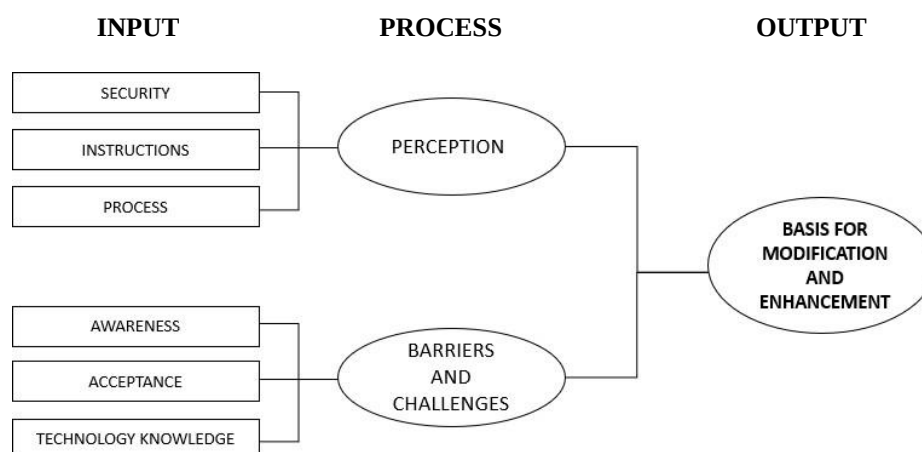


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of The Study

Figure 1 depicts the Conceptual Model of the Study, following the Input-Process-Output Model. The Input Phase illustrates the indicators of the electronic system of submission of bids, namely : security, instructions, processes, awareness, acceptance, and technology knowledge. The Process Phase consists of the Perception of Respondents and Barriers and Challenges of the implementation of the electronic system. Lastly, the Output Phase is an Enhanced and Modified Electronic System for Submission and Processing of Bids.

Methods and Techniques of The Study

This study is a quantitative research. It used a descriptive-survey method. It intended to describe the perception of the respondents about the electronic submission of bidding documents. Specifically, it aimed to explain the assessment of the respondents about the system in terms of security, instructions, process. Moreover, the research wanted to define the barriers and challenges that respondents faced when using the electronic submission of bidding documents system concerning awareness, acceptance, and technology knowledge.

A letter was submitted to the head of DPWH Bulacan 1st District Engineering Office BAC (Bids and Awards Committee) section to secure permission in administering the questionnaire to the bidders. The researcher also requested the list of bidders who joined bidding after the release of the Department Order No. 87 Series 2020 with their email address.

Electronic mails (e-mail) were sent to the bidders' email address as permission letter, seeking their approval to participate in the study. In the email, the purpose of the study was also explained. Once approvals were secured, the researcher sent an email containing the instructions on how to answer the survey questionnaire together with the link to access the said survey questionnaire.

The responses were collected through the online forms. The data gathered were tabulated, classified, and analyzed to answer the specific statement of the problem.

To interpret the collected responses, the five-point Likert scale was utilized.

SCALE	RANGE	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
5	4.3 to 5.0	Strongly Agree
4	3.5 to 4.29	Agree
3	2.7 to 3.49	Neutral
2	1.9 to 2.69	Disagree
1	1.0 to 1.89	Strongly Disagree

Permission letter for administering the questionnaire was obtained from the head of BAC section of DPWH Bulacan 1st District Engineering Office. Likewise, the research secured approval from the participants through email prior providing the link for the questionnaire access. To keep the

confidentiality of the respondents, providing name was optional.

Results

Table 1: Respondents Perception on Security

Indicators	N	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I feel that my data are secured when using the electronic submission and receipt of bidding document system.	10	4.20	Agree
I feel that the data security measures used is adequate.		4.10	Agree
I feel that the data security measures used is appropriate.		4.10	Agree
Grand Mean		4.133	Agree

Table 1 illustrates the respondents' perception on System Security. It indicates that the mean average is 4.13 which means that most of the respondents agree with statements or they felt that the system use a good security measure. The statement "I feel that

my data are secured when using the electronic submission and receipt of bidding document system" obtained the Highest Mean Score of 4.20, corresponding to a Verbal Description of Agree.

Table 2: Respondents Perception about Instructions of The System

Indicators	N	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The instructions on how to use the system are clear.	10	3.50	Agree
The instructions on how to use the system are complete.		3.70	Agree
I feel that when I read the instructions, I can perform the process properly.		3.30	Agree
Grand Mean		3.5	Agree

The next table shows the results indicating that the mean average is 3.5, corresponding to a Verbal Interpretation of Agree. This implies that generally, the respondents agree that the instructions of the system are clear, complete and that they can perform

the process properly when reading the instructions. It should be noted that the statement "The instructions on how to use the system are complete" obtained the highest Mean Score of 3.70, corresponding to Agree.

Table 3: Respondents' Perception About System Process

Indicators	N	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The process of submitting and receiving bidding documents electronically is not complicated.	10	3.10	Agree
The process of submitting and receiving bidding documents electronically is easy to use		2.70	Neutral
Electronic submission and receipt of bidding documents encourage me to join more bidding.		3.30	Agree
Grand Mean		3.03	Neutral

Table 3 depicts the respondents' perception about System Process. It could be gleaned that the respondents are Neutral when it come to this matter. However, it should be noted that when it comes to being encouraged to join more biddings, said indicator obtained a Mean Score of 3.30,

corresponding to Agree. This implies that with reference to the complexity, ease of use and encouragement to join other bidding schedules, the respondents have no concrete judgment on this matter.

Table 4: Barriers and Challenges: Awareness

Indicators	N	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I am aware about the electronic submission and receipts of bidding documents.	10	4.00	Agree
I am informed about the process instructions.		3.70	Agree
I am not aware on why this process is implemented.		2.50	Disagree
Grand Mean		3.40	Agree

Table 4 depicts the barriers and challenges as perceived by the respondents with reference to awareness of the electronic system of filing and processing of bidding documents. It could be gleaned this part obtained a Grand Mean of 3.40, for

a Verbal Interpretation of Agree. This implies in terms of awareness, the respondents are generally cognizant of the electronic submission and receipt of bidding documents and process instructions.

Table 5: Barriers and Challenges: Acceptance

Indicators	N	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I feel that manual/personal submission and receipt of bidding document is more acceptable than electronic means.	10	3.70	Agree
I find using electronic submission and receipts of bidding documents difficult and hard.		3.30	Agree
I consider using electronic submission and receipts of bidding documents more frequent.		2.70	Neutral
Grand Mean		3.23	Neutral

The next table depicts the barriers and challenges experienced by the respondents with reference to acceptance of the electronic system. It could be gleaned that the statement “I feel that manual/personal submission and receipt of bidding document is more acceptable than electronic means” obtained a Mean Score of 3.70, corresponding to Agree. This clearly shows that the bidders are a bit hesitant to submit their important documents via electronic means and are more confident in

submitting hard copies of their bidding documents. Moreover, respondents find electronic submission of bidding documents difficult as reflected in the Mean Score of 3.30, for a Verbal Interpretation of Agree. The Grand Mean of 3.23 corresponding to Neutral could be attributed to the fact that some of the respondents find the system easy to navigate while others find it difficult.

Table 6: Barriers and Challenges: Technology Knowledge

Indicators	N	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I prefer using manual/personal submission and receipt of bidding document than electronic means because technology is involved	10	3.60	Agree
I enjoy using electronic submission and receipts of bidding document system		3.30	Agree
I think using technology in submitting and receiving bidding documents takes up so much time		3.70	Agree
Grand Mean		3.53	Agree

Table 6 illustrates the barriers and challenges as perceived by the respondents with reference to technology knowledge. It should be noted that the statement “I think using technology in submitting and receiving bidding documents takes up so much time” obtained the Highest Mean Score of 3.70, corresponding to a Verbal Interpretation of “Agree”. This implies that for the respondents, attaching bidding documents electronically takes up so much time since one has to scan and attach these documents and send it electronically to the concerned party. In addition, the statement “I prefer manual/personal submission and receipt of bidding documents” obtained a Mean Score of 3.60, corresponding to Agree. This implies that the respondents still prefer the traditional method of submitting documents.

Conclusion

Perception about the Electronic Submission of Bidding Documents

The research study revealed that the general perception of the bidders was somehow positive about the electronic submission of bidding documents system. In the specific aspects assessed by bidders, they felt system security measures are adequate and the instructions are somehow clear and complete. However, they feel unsure about the system process.

Barriers and Challenges in Using the System

The respondents revealed that they find knowledge about technology as a challenge and somehow affect their intention to use and their usage behavior toward the electronic submission of bidding documents system. While, in terms of awareness and acceptance, respondents were somewhere in the middle if these two aspects can be considered as challenges and affect their intention and usage behavior.

Recommendations

1. Continuous familiarization and utilization of the electronic system.
2. Improvement of the system process by streamlining the specific processes involved, making the complicated steps into simple steps. This will also address the challenge of the bidders in terms of the knowledge about technology.
3. Information dissemination and advertisement of the electronic submission option should be done for increased awareness and acceptance

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest between the authors in this manuscript.

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