

Organizational Assimilation of Innovations as Defined in Literature

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Article	Assimilation Definition	Remarks
Meyer and Goes (<i>AMJ</i> , 1988)	“Assimilation is defined here as an organizational process that (1) is set in motion when individual members first hear of an innovation’s development, (2) can lead to the acquisition of the innovation, and (3) sometimes comes to fruition in the innovation’s full acceptance, utilization and institutionalization.” (p. 897)	Decision-making stages in assimilation of medical innovations include: knowledge-awareness (apprehension, consideration, discussion), evaluation-choice (acquisition proposal, medical-fiscal evaluation, political-strategic evaluation), adoption-implementation (trial, acceptance, expansion). The assimilation of 12 innovations by 25 hospitals is studied.
Agarwal, Tanniru, and Wilemon (<i>IEEE Trans. Engr. Mgmt.</i> , 1997)	“... <i>adoption</i> connotes the development of the ‘first’ successful system using a new information processing technology, while <i>diffusion</i> is concerned with a transfer of this success to other relevant applications, i.e., the spread of the innovation through the target system. The term <i>assimilation</i> is used to refer collectively to both the adoption and diffusion phases of innovation.” (p. 347)	“Generic” assimilation strategies include: support, advocacy, total commitment. Experiences of several organizations are described.
Fichman and Kemerer (<i>Mgmt. Science</i> , 1997)	“Following Meyer and Goes (1988), assimilation is defined as the process spanning from an organization’s first awareness of an innovation to, potentially, acquisition and widespread deployment.” (p. 1346)	Describes the assimilation of object-oriented programming languages (OOPLs) by 608 IT organizations. Employs a six-stage model of software process innovation: awareness, interest, evaluation/trial, commitment, limited deployment, general deployment. Theory draws from Attewell (1992).
Armstrong and Sambamurthy (<i>ISR</i> , 1999)	“...we define IT assimilation as the effective application of IT in supporting, shaping, and enabling firms’ business strategies and value-chain activities.” (p. 306)	Surveys business executives from 153 companies as to their self-rated performance in applying IT to logistics, marketing, and business strategies. IT infusion and routinization are presumed, rather than directly assessed.

Fichman and Kemerer (<i>ISR</i> , 1999)	“For this study we define the assimilation gap as <i>the difference between the pattern of cumulative acquisitions and cumulative deployments of an innovation across a population of potential adopters</i> . Although this definition is made in reference to two particular events- acquisition and deployment- in principle, any two assimilation events could be used to define an assimilation gap...” (p. 258)	Follows Fichman and Kemerer (1997). Compares assimilation gaps for three software process innovations: relational database management systems (RDBs), general purpose fourth generation languages (4GLs), and computer aided software engineering tools (CASE), finding a pronounced gap for CASE.
Fichman (<i>Framing the Domains of IT Mgmt. Research</i> , 2000)	“Diffusion is the process by which a technology spreads across a population of organizations, while assimilation refers to the process within organizations stretching from initial awareness of the innovation, to potentially, formal adoption and full scale deployment.” (p. ?)	Provides an overview of basic concepts, theories and research concerned with IT innovation diffusion and assimilation. See too Fichman and Kemerer (1997, 1999).
Gallivan (<i>Data Base</i> , 2001)	“Once secondary use occurs, it is meaningful to consider the organization’s assimilation stage. (This) describes how deeply the innovation penetrates the adopting unit (e.g., the company, division, or workgroup).” (p. 62)	Substantial review. Drawing from Cooper and Zmud (1990), assimilation includes: initiation, adoption, adaptation, acceptance, routinization, and infusion (extended use, integrative use, and emergent use).
Purvis, Sambamurthy, and Zmud (<i>Org. Science</i> , 2001)	“Assimilation is defined as the extent to which the use of the technology diffuses across the organizational projects or work processes and becomes routinized in the activities of those projects and processes.” (p. 121)	Surveys organizational assimilation of CASE tools. Examines effects of management championship and knowledge embeddedness within CASE platform. Routinization not directly assessed.
Cho and Kim (<i>JMIS</i> , 2001-2002)	“Assimilation of innovation is the process spanning from an organization’s first awareness of an innovation to its potential acquisition and widespread deployment. The process consists of awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, commitment, and finally, deployment of the new technology.” (p. 133)	Relies upon Fichman and Kemerer (1997). Surveys object-oriented programming language assimilation in 220 Korean firms.