FACTORS INFLUENCING FACEBOOK USAGE AT THE WORKPLACE AMONG THE GOVERNMENT SERVANTS OF PUTRAJAYA

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ABSTRACT

The usage and utilization of particular social media such as social networking sites is growing rapidly in Malaysia and the recent trend shows that majority of Malaysians are using social media to communicate. Currently, Facebook is the most used social network among Malaysians with 22.7 million users in 2020, followed by Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram. The rising trend of Malaysian social media users is leading to an unavoidable increase in the number of office workers using social media at work. Employers are faced with a conundrum as they need to improve employee performance at work while controlling non-work-related Facebook usage during office hours. There are numerous studies on the effects of Facebook use in the workplace and its impact on job performance, but the results of Facebook use are mixed with positive and negative effects on the job performance. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the social Facebook use at work among government servants in Putrajaya. This study examines how the use of social media such as Facebook at work affects the individual job performance of government servants in Putrajaya. The main purpose of the study was to examine the impact of Facebook use at work on job performance and to identify the factors that influence its use at workplace. The findings may be of great significance to government agencies and ministries reviewing their policies on employee use of social media in the workplace.

Keywords: social media; social networking; job performance; employer; Facebook.

INTRODUCTION

The trends of active Facebook users in Malaysia is increasing, with 90.48 % of the Malaysian population using the platform as of January 2021 (Statista Research Department, 2021). The increase in the number of social media users leads to an inevitable increase in the number of office workers using social media at the workplace (Lee & Lee, 2020). The rising and increasing reputation of social media has led to extensive use of social media during business hours for non-work-related purposes (Charoensukmongkol, 2014). Some previous studies have shown that increasing use of social media affects individual performance at work. A few of the studies demonstrate that it increases the works performance of employee (Cao *et al.*, 2016; Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014), while others argue and claim that it affects their job performance (Brooks, 2015). According to (Daniel *et al.*, 2017) Facebook use during working hours brings a new set of challenges for employers as it has advantages and disadvantages to the organization. Although several authors have conducted studies on Facebook use, there are very few empirical studies on how social media use by workers affects employees individual job performance (Cao *et al.*, 2016; Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014). To address this gap this study examines the factors that influence the use of Facebook at the work among the government servants of Putrajaya. Using the UTAUT model, the main purpose of this study will examine how the use of social media such as Facebook at work affects the individual job performance of government servants of Putrajaya.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

Since its beginnings 2004, Facebook has become one of the most popular and widely used social media networks, with estimated more than two billion registered users worldwide. Every 500 million of Facebook users, about 50% of them use Facebook every day and spend approximately 700 billion minutes every month pursuing this activity (Chang, Liu, & Shen, 2017). According to Daniel *et al.*, (2017) within less than a decade since Facebook's inception in 2004, nearly one-seventh of all living people have regularly engaged with Facebook, and the number of Facebook users is still growing, although at a slower rate.

1.   FACEBOOK USAGE IN MALAYSIA

It is expected that the number of global Facebook users will reach 1.69 billion by 2020. In Malaysia, there are 22.7 million Facebook users or in other words, 77% of Malaysia's population use Facebook (Clement, 2020). This statement clearly shows that Facebook is the dominant social media in Malaysia as more than three quarters of the Malaysian populations use Facebook. In a study conducted by (Müller, 2021), it founds that in May 2021, almost 97.3% of Malaysians surveyed preferred Facebook as the favourite social media compared to other social network. The trend of Facebook users in Malaysia is gradually increasing from 2019 to 2021. In December 2020, 86.06% of Malaysians used Facebook and in April 2021, the numbers increased slightly to 91.18% (statcounter GlobalStats, 2021). Currently, Facebook use in the workplace is much debated as it could affect an employee's performance and sometimes violets workplace policies. Employees tend to spend more time on social media like Facebook and engaged in non-work-related activities. Daniel *et al.*, (2017) mentioned that Facebook use during working hours brought a new set of challenges for employers and Facebook use has become a banality in organizations and many have enacted policies regarding its use and misuse in the workplace.

2. FACEBOOK USE AMONG GOVERNMENT SERVANTS

Facebook is the favourite medium for the majority of social media users, including government servants in Malaysia. However, civil servants are now facing the issue of privacy management in Facebook is an increasing mix of organizational and personal information as well the intensity of use in the workplace (Ishak & Ghani, 2015). The result of MAMPU's monitoring of the ICT network in Putrajaya Campus Network (PCN) which was implement from 1-30 March 2011 found that a total of 19.96 million access transactions were made on social networking websites. This monitoring found that the 3 highest reach on social networking sites namely profile.ak.fbcdn.net, www.facebook.com and static.ak.fbcdn.net MAMPU (2011). This study clearly showed Facebook is among the most visited social media network among the government servants of Malaysia. The social media usage in the government sector can bring many benefits such as financial and administrative facilitation, information dissemination facilitation, and bilateral communication opportunities with the community and government services (Mustafa *et al*., 2020) There is no doubt that Facebook offers plenty of benefits and prospects to its users, including the government sector especially government organizations and ministries, but the study on the use of social media and its impact on the government sector is still under-researched (Mohd Sharif *et al*., 2016). Mustafa *et al*., (2020) agrees that the use of social media by government servants at workplace has positive effects on the work performance of civil servants and increases productivity. However, the use of social media in public service could expose users to various risks such as psychology, privacy, and technology. In addition, the use of Facebook in the workplace by government servants could also potentially increases the risk of sharing confidential information with people outside the organization and requires the user to practice self-monitoring to avoid it from happening (Ishak & Ghani, 2015).

3. FACEBOOK USE AT WORKPLACE

The design and the concept of Facebook itself permits users to connect with their friends and family through a free web-based service and online platform. The overwhelming majority of people tend to use social media sites to keep in touch with old friends or people they have recently met. In addition to simply connecting with friends and family, it is becoming more common to add colleagues as friends on Facebook (Hanna *et al*., 2017). Some companies have had positive experiences with social media use in the workplace (McAfee, 2009), while Daniel (2017) argues and highlights that some organization started to ban Facebook use in the workplace or even imposing stricter policies on Facebook use and misuse in the workplace. Positive communication when using social media in the workplace could lead to better engagement among members of an organization. "By engaging in dialogue with other members, sharing information, building public goods, and becoming engaged, individuals involve themselves substantively and symbolically in the sense-making activities of the organization and move closer together in the sense of a more common understanding and a greater sense of belonging to the organizational community" (Spreitzer & Cameron, 2012). When an employee deals with a heavy workload or performing an important task and needs to fully focused on their work, they are expected to stay away from social networking sites until their work is completed. In fact, if social networking sites are used along with a heavy workload, it may cause the employee to miss a deadline, or if it distracts them from important or urgent work and causes mistakes, they will be criticized by their supervisor or co-workers. (Lee & Lee, 2020). In recent years, communication technologies and especially social media have been increasingly into the workplace, leading to a redefinition of organizational structures, business processes and daily work routines (Bucher *et al.*, 2013). The use of social media in organizations has been associated with effective communication practices (Trimi and Galanxhi, 2014; Vitak *et al.*, 2012) and improved workplace performance (Sajilan *et al*., 2019).

4. FACEBOOK USAGE AND JOB PERFORMANCE

Job performance can be defined as the degree to which one meets the formal requirements of a job and adequately completes assigned duties (Shin & Hyun, 2019). Despite the various valuable benefits of using social media in the workplace such cooperating in problem solving among colleagues, organizations start to understand the harmful and negative effects of social media for the personal use during work hours (Brooks and Califf, 2017). Although several authors have conducted studies on Facebook use, nevertheless very few experimental and empirical studies on how social media use affects individual job performance (Cao *et al*., 2016; Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014). A few previous studies have shown that increased social media use affects individual job performance. Some of the studies show that it improved workers' job performance (Cao *et al*., 2016; Leftheriotis & Giannakos, 2014; (Sajilan *et al*., 2019) while other studies claim that it impairs their job performance (Brooks, 2015 and van Zoonen *et al*., 2014). A study by Warnakula & Manickam (2011) emphasized that the use of social networking by employees in different organizations poses many problems. The main problem is that employees tend to spend more time in the office on social networking sites, which leads to loss of productivity of organizations, identity theft and security issues on IT in network threats within the workplace. Given all these criticisms of Facebook and social networking sites, (Andreassen *et al*., 2014) argue that the social networking sites in the workplace impairs job performance as it distracts from work. Furthermore, the use of social networking sites is beneficial as it positively affects job performance by improving organizational commitment (Olfat *et al*., 2019). Since the previous studies show both positive and negative effects towards the job performance, this study examines how the use of social media such as Facebook at work affects the individual job performance of government servants in Putrajaya.

METHOD

Putrajaya was chosen as the study site because the planned city is the heart and center of Malaysian federal administration with more than 88, 300 government servants are employed in various government agencies and ministries in Putrajaya. A questionnaire was purposely design for this study to be distributed among the of 88, 300 government servants in Putrajaya using cluster sampling. Chua (2014) recommended cluster sampling when the sample size is too large and the list of subjects cannot be obtained.

UNDERPINNING THEORIES

1. UNIFIED THEORY OF ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY (UTAUT)

The UTAUT model which aims to explain technology acceptance, draws on eight theories or models of technology acceptance. Specially, the UTAUT model relies on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Motivational Model, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the combined TAM and TPB, the model of Personal Computer Utilization, the Innovation Diffusion Theory and the Social Cognitive Theory. At the core, the UTAUT model uses behavioural intention as a predictor of technology use behaviour. The included predictors of behavioural intention are based on the components of the eight technology use models examined. In addition to behavioural intention and usage behaviour, Venkatesh *et al*. (2003) explained the UTAUT model with four main variables:

- Performance Expectancy: the degree to which individuals believe that the use of technologies will contribute to improvement in performance. This can also be viewed as the perceived usefulness of the technologies.
- Effort Expectancy: the ease of use associated with the use of the technologies.
- Social Factors: the degree to which individuals believe that they should use the technologies due to others believing it is as important to use it.
- Facilitating Conditions: the perceived extent to which the organisational and technical infrastructure necessary is in place to support the technologies.

Figure 1: Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (Venkatesh *et al*., 2003).
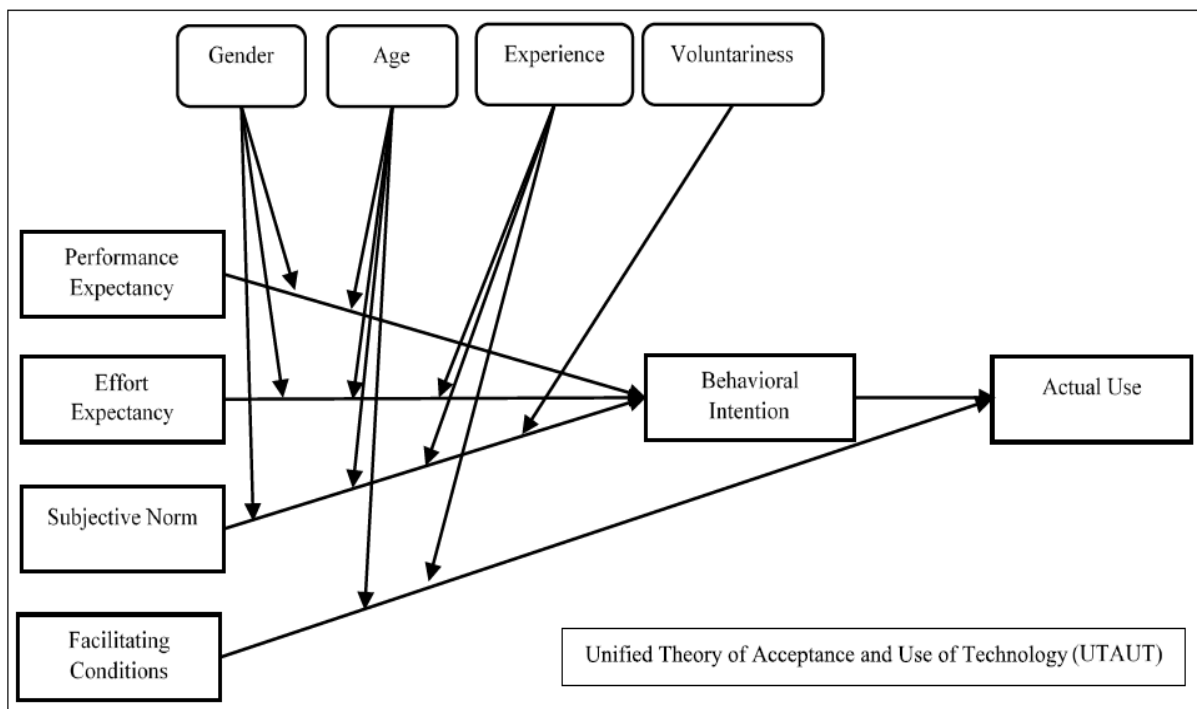
The model also includes four moderating variables, namely age, gender, education and voluntariness of use (Venkatesh *et al*., 2003). The earlier model of technology adoption such as Theory of Acceptance Model (TAM), proposed by Davis (1986), is one of the most well-known and widely cited and implemented models for studying the acceptance of new technologies in new media studies. The TAM was first presented by Davis *et al*. in 1986. TAM focuses on two main factors, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, which determine the intention to use a technology. The only criticism of this theory is that it neglects individual differences such as age, gender, education and voluntariness of use in technology acceptance. Therefore, UTAUT was developed based on TAM with individual characteristics, as well as gender and age (Venkatesh *et al*., 2003).

Previous empirical studies have shown that men and women have different concerns about the role of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and/or social influence in technology adoption (Alkhaldi, 2017 and Venkatesh *et al*., 2003). Al-Azawei (2018) has made it clear that UTAUT could show significant and direct ability to predict Facebook acceptance and Facebook usage. Therefore, this study will uncover the factor that influence the Facebook usage among Putrajaya government servants by providing empirical evidence of constructs that influence Facebook acceptance in a Malaysian context using the UTAUT model.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of the study was to understand the factors that influence social Facebook usage in the work among Putrajaya government servants. This study examines how the use of social media such as Facebook at work affects the individual job performance among the government servants in Putrajaya. Furthermore, this study helps to understand the extent to which UTAUT is able to determine Facebook usage among Putrajaya government servants. However, further future studies will hopefully utilise the findings of this study and attempt to provide further explanations as to why users accept the use of Facebook in the workplace with different context of the Malaysian population or explain the use of other social networks such as Twitter and Instagram.

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