Social Networking Sites for Success: A UTAUT-Based Investigation into University Employee Performance Enhancement

Wajiha Moughal (Corresponding author)

Management and Humanities Department, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, Malaysia

Shahrina Md Nordin

Management and Humanities Department, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, Malaysia

Rohani Salleh

Management and Humanities Department, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, Malaysia

Haider Ali Abbasi

Management and Humanities Department, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, Malaysia

Abstract

Social networking sites (SNS) have the potential to improve employee performance among university employees in Malaysia. This study delves into the potential of SNS as a means for enhancing employee performance, guided by the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). Leveraging targeted advertisements to augment performance, the research analyzes a sample of 299 university employee participants in Malaysia through a convenience sampling approach, employing SmartPLS analysis to explore the intricate relationships among technology adoption, advertisement effectiveness, and employee performance. The study reveals the significant impact of UTAUT constructs on technology acceptance and highlights the substantial influence of strategically placed advertisements on SNS engagement. The findings underscore the dynamic interplay between technological

acceptance, advertisement efficacy, and enhanced employee performance. The implications of this research are noteworthy, offering organizations actionable insights for leveraging SNS platforms and tailored advertisements to optimize workforce productivity and elevate overall performance outcomes. This study contributes to the understanding of how SNS technology adoption among university employees can be a potent tool in shaping organizational success through improved employee performance.

Keywords: social networking sites, UTAUT, performance, behavioral intention, university employees

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduce the Problem

The Global Digital Report estimates that 5.18 billion people used the internet and 4.8 billion people used social media globally in 2023. 26.80 million people use social media on their mobile devices in Malaysia, which accounts for 78.5% of all mobile users. While the worldwide average is 2 hours and 47 minutes hours per day (OOSGA, 2023). These statistics suggest that social media has great potential and strength for both personal and organizational uses. Social media benefits business owners by increasing their visibility and enabling them to tap into emerging markets. Nowadays, social media has evolved into a critical corporate strategy. Organizations can use social media technology as a crucial tool to build employee motivation and enhance performance by allowing them to use social networking sites, a more cost-effective form of communication to have interactions to compete with major organizations (Jafar et al., 2019). It can also be used as a less expensive tool for effective communication in contrast to face-to-face and delayed meetings among employees.

Improving employee performance is essential for organizational success, especially among universities. Employee competency and commitment have a direct impact on a university's overall effectiveness, output, and creativity, which may be achieved through a swift communication platform among employees (Baptista & Oliveira, 2015; Eliyana et al., 2020). In the professional view, social networking sites (SNS) play a significant part in workplace communication and collaboration. These online platforms, which have become a crucial component of today's society, provide organizations with a dynamic and effective means to communicate, share information, and cooperate across geographical barriers among employees. SNS allows for real-time engagement, making it faster to exchange ideas, make updates, and solicit comments, hence speeding up decision-making among employees (Hwang et al., 2019). According to Moqbel and Kock (2018), employees who use social networking sites while at work can have a direct impact on the university's performance as a whole. Furthermore, the availability of social networking platforms promotes a more relaxed and open approach to communication, which can enable open dialogue among university members at all levels which enhances employee performance (Hwang et al., 2019). University employees may impart knowledge, monitor economic conditions, and even interact with others through SNS, all of which improve the organization's reputation. To

retain competence, protect sensitive information, and avoid potential diversions, universities must create clear policies on how SNS should be used.

Information and communication technology (ICT) development has significantly impacted organization's lives. The influence of social media has increased among university employees as well during the recent few decades. Due to the low technical skills required in the usage of social media, it can be used by educational institutes as a platform for their operations (Dodokh & Al-Maaitah, 2019; Hajli, 2014; Moughal et al., 2023). Educational institutes can change their communication style by using social networking platforms from face-to-face to online with multiple groups to improve employee performance and save resources. To improve employees' performance, educational institutes should accommodate SNS usage among employees during office hours (Moqbel & Kock, 2018; Shin & Hall, 2011) as well.

Today social networking sites (SNS) adoption and their impact on employee performance positively or negatively are worldwide concerns (Sullivan & Koh, 2019). Due to the rise in the usage of social media, employee performance has been also affected significantly, where the SNS adoption leads to reduced employee performance (Moughal et al., 2023). SNS is considered a substantial contributor to plunging employee performance because of the maximum usage of social media apps. Past studies discuss the growing usage of SNS and which reduces employee performance (Jafar et al., 2019; Yu et al., 2018; Zivnuska et al., 2019) and increases stress, however, studies largely neglected to examine the social media affects which can combat the decreasing employee performance, so most required advancement in the social media usage is needed to improve performance.

Even though prior research examined the factors affecting social media acceptance (Husnain & Toor, 2017; S. Pavithra & K. V. Deepak, 2021), using SNS for business purposes in terms of increasing the level of stress among employees (Cao et al., 2019), to boost performance through the usage of SNS still needs empirical to better understand the behavioral use of SNS as a platform for business to improve performances and to add empirical findings to the SNS and social media acceptance literature. SNS technology advancement has been moving employees towards more stress and bringing down employees' output slowly (Majid et al., 2020; Moughal et al., 2023; Ngien & Jiang, 2022; Tarafdar et al., 2020). This study intends to focus on enhancing employee performance by UTAUT using social networking sites. The UTAUT paradigm serves as the framework for this research, which aims to investigate the prospective use of social networking sites as instruments for improving employee performance. We hope to offer a thorough knowledge of the variables that affect employees' embrace and utilization of SNSs for their professional development by examining the interaction of significant factors within this scenario. The knowledge gained from this endeavor has the promise of guiding organizational strategies and regulations targeted at utilizing the potential of digital networks to promote success in today's work environment, thus the following research questions emerged:

1. Does UTAUT is effective in enhancing university employee intent by SNS to improve job performance?

To answer the questions, this study employs a UTAUT framework to measure SNS usage at work.

2. Introduction

2.1 UTAUT

The UTAUT model used in this study explains the acceptance of technology based on eight different technology acceptance models and theories. These theories include the technology acceptance model (TAM), the theory of reasoned action (TRA), the motivation model (MM), the theory of planned behavior (TPB), combined TPB and TAM, the innovation diffusion theory, the model of personal computer utilization, and social cognitive theory (SCT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003). UTAUT model has a variance of about 70% towards intention. After combining eight theories, UTAUT postulated four constructs as behavioral intention elements (i) performance expectancy, (ii) effort expectancy, (iii) social influence, and (iv) facilitating conditions. This study expands the model by giving the concept of variables that have not been studied earlier. Variables included in the study are performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and perceived enjoyment.

2.2 UTAUT Model and Hypotheses

2.2.1 Performance Expectancy (PE)

Performance expectancy is described as the extent to which a user believes that utilizing a specific system will help him to achieve his aspirations in using innovative technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003). PE is found significant in influencing behavioral intention toward acceptance of new IT systems (Rahi & Abd.Ghani, 2019; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Another study also found using social networking sites will help employees to improve their performance (Rahi & Abd.Ghani, 2019) among universities' employees. PE significantly influences employee performance by using new technology (Liu et al., 2014; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Tran et al. (2019); Zhou et al. (2019) validated PE influences behavioral intentions toward new technology. It shows that PE can significantly influence users' intentions by adopting innovative technology to improve performance.

The acceptance behavior of employees may be influenced by their impression of how utilizing SNS would improve their performance at work (Virdyananto et al., 2016). Individuals are more inclined to utilize SNS if they consider it will improve teamwork, interaction, dissemination of knowledge, and access to pertinent information. Another research by Brown et al. (2010) examines the behavior of an employee toward acceptance of innovative technology and finds that PE substantially influences employee intention by using social media to improve performance. Thus, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: PE has a positive effect on employee behavioral intention to adopt SNS.

2.2.2 Effort Expectancy (EE)

Effort expectancy is identified as the extent of comfort associated with the use of specific

technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Zolfagharian et al., 2021). Brown et al. (2010) labeled EE as an extent to which users assume that using innovative technology systems will not require any effort is described as EE in the context of embracing new technology. Generally, the literature confirmed EE's effectiveness in predicting behavioral intentions (Chen et al., 2020; Madigan et al., 2016; Tran et al., 2019). Ali et al. (2019), also confirmed the positive influence of EE on public cloud technology adoption. Similarly, EE-positive effects were observed in automated transport acceptance in Europe (Madigan et al., 2016). It is expected that in this study, EE will have a positive influence on employee adoption.

Contrary to this, past research has shown that users are more inclined to accept technological advancements (Rahi & Abd.Ghani, 2019; Venkatesh et al., 2003) if using them requires less work. The direct impact of effort expectations on the behavioral intention of a university employee to use the technology has been confirmed by Brown et al. (2010). The perceived simplicity of utilizing SNS at work can influence the uptake of university employee performance. Users are more inclined to adopt SNS if they perceive it as easy to operate and intuitive. Platforms that are complicated or challenging to use may limit adoption. Thus, this study postulated the hypothesis:

 H2: EE has a positive effect on employee behavioral intention to adopt SNS.

2.2.3 Perceived Enjoyment (PEN)

Perceived enjoyment has been classified into two perspectives by researchers enjoying helping others and enjoying with friends while using social networking. Hsu and Lin (2008) defined enjoyment in which users of the internet participate in social networking sites to yield "enjoyment and fun" and suggested enjoyment as a factor that determines the users' intention to participate. Perceived enjoyment factor related to new technology has a crucial role in influencing employee intention to use new technology (Khazaei & Tareq, 2021; Liao et al., 2008). Schuitema (2013) concluded that individuals having more understanding and awareness about the hedonic and enjoyment qualities of innovative technology will have positive feelings to improve the performance of university employees. According to Liao et al. (2008); Venkatesh et al. (2012), perceived enjoyment is considered the best motivation source to encourage individuals towards the usage of new technology products in an organization. The literature has explored that users' behavior tilted toward product specialties, variety, and comfort are essential factors of the playfulness of new technology (Abbasi et al., 2022; Abbasi, Shaari, Moughal, et al., 2021; Liao et al., 2008), and with making awareness of this technology, features can enhance performance. The comfort and easiness of using SNS can impact individual intention to use it for increasing employee performance. Positive aspects of SNS effectively encourage employees to adopt and improve performance. Thus, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

H3: PEN has a positive effect on employee behavioral intention to adopt SNS.

2.2.4 Behavioral Intention (BI)

UTAUT emphasizes that a person's intention to utilize technology is a good indicator of how often they really use it (Brown et al., 2010; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Higher behavioral intention to use SNS for work activities is influenced by favorable views of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, perceived enjoyment, and favorable settings. The degree to which employees really use social media for work-related purposes can have an effect on how well they perform (Abbasi, Johl, et al., 2021; Abbasi, Shaari, & Moughal, 2021; Rahi & Abd.Ghani, 2019; Virdyananto et al., 2016). Employee performance can be enhanced by using SNS effectively for networking, information sharing, communication, and collaboration on workstations. Moreover, university employees' relationship with behavioral intention was also supported in accepting SNS to improve their performance (Madigan et al., 2016). Thus, this study assumed BI would positively enhance universities employee's performance by SNS. Therefore, this study proposed the following hypothesis:

H4: Employee intention to adopt SNS has a positive effect on employee job performance.

2.2.5 Employee Job Performance

According to Makokha and Ochieng (2014), employee job performance is defined as "the degree to which system use enhances the level of work by supporting to complete the job swiftly, enable management of work, enhance job performance, remove mistakes, and enhance efficiency on the job." Numerous studies examined how technology affects organizational operations using the intention to embrace technology as an indicator of improved outcomes (Brown et al., 2010; Eliyana et al., 2020; S. Pavithra & K. Deepak, 2021). In contrast to conventional studies, this study adds to the body of social media empirical knowledge by using employee intention as an outcome variable (Al-Qaysi et al., 2021; Alalwan, 2018; Cao & Sun, 2018; Husnain & Toor, 2017; Mesiranta et al., 2021). This research anticipated how employee job performance is anticipated by employee intention to embrace SNS among university employees. Earlier studies anticipated that individual's ambition to use technology affects their ability to execute their work (Ameen et al., 2018; Barrot & Acomular, 2022; Ben Arfi et al., 2021; Makokha & Ochieng, 2014; Tarafdar et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2018). Using SNS platforms (WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) enhances university employees' intention to exchange social and workplace information which influences job performance (Hawkins & Vel, 2013; Rathore et al., 2016; Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014; Zhu & Chen, 2015).

The conceptual model and the proposed hypothesis relationship are mentioned in Fig.1.
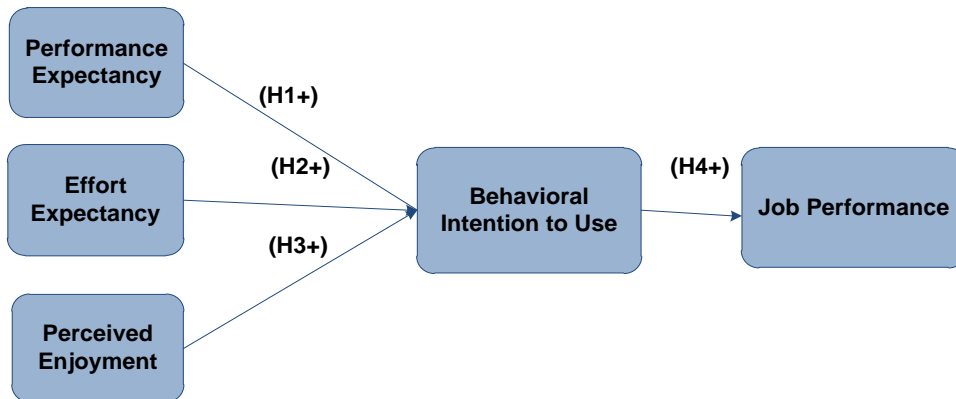
2.3 Theoretical Model

Figure 1. Model Adopted from Venkatesh et al, 2003

The conceptual model shown in Figure 1 describes the independent variables and dependent variables and the relationship among variables based on reviewed literature review.

3. Methodology

This study expanded the UTAUT model with perceived enjoyment to anticipate university employees' behavioral intentions by using SNS to boost university performance in Malaysia. The UTAUT model has four constructs PE, EE, SI, and facilitating condition (FC), this study just used the constructs that seem to be effective in the context of technology acceptance in literature, that's why SI and FC have been neglected (Duyck et al., 2010; Foon & Fah, 2011; Loo et al., 2009; Yeow & Loo, 2011). This study integrated perceived enjoyment in the model to a deeper understanding of enhancing employee intention towards using SNS to improve performance.

The data was gathered through an online survey questionnaire using the convenience sampling method. As we acknowledge, convenience sampling has the drawback of data generalization; however, it was considered appropriate due to cost and time constraints (Saunders, 2014). The sample of the study was 299 university employees' respondents. The questionnaire was distributed among university employees' respondents because the purpose of the study is to examine employees at the workplace. The job profile respondents have a deeper understanding and are likely to have balanced behavior to consider new technology (Chan, 2001).

3.1 Demographics

Table 1. Respondents' Demographic (n=299)

Demographic	Frequency Rate	Percentage
Male	186	62%
Female	113	38%
Age Group		
18-29	21	7%
30-39	88	29.4%
40-49	132	44.1%
50-59	48	16%
60 years and over	10	3.4%
Income (RM)		
5000 or less	40	13.3%
5001 - 10000	63	21.07%
10001 - 15000	100	33.4%
15001 - 20000	54	18%
20001 - 25000	31	10.3%
25001 above	11	3.6%

Source: Authors Estimations

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Structural Equation Model

Using the PE and EE scale by Venkatesh et al. (2003), to check validity and reliability, Cronbach alpha has been measured. Perceived enjoyment is assessed by Van der Heijden (2004) identified scale, and purchase intention is measured by Ajzen and Fishbein (1975); (Dodds, 1991). Cronbach alpha values for PE (0.669), EE (0.776), PEN (0.778), BI (0.859), and EJP (0.801). The constructs' average variance extracted (AVE) was assessed, where PE value (0.453) below 0.5 is also acceptable when the variable composite reliability value is ≥0.6 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), which is mentioned in Table 2. (See Fig 2).

Table 2. Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
BI	0.859	0.873	0.914	0.779
EE	0.776	0.810	0.845	0.524
EJP	0.801	0.864	0.878	0.707
PE	0.669	0.723	0.776	0.453
PEN	0.778	0.797	0.871	0.695

Above mentioned values show that there is no reliability and validity issue in the data.

Moreover, HTMT Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio was evaluated to assess the discriminant validity that is mentioned in Table 3.
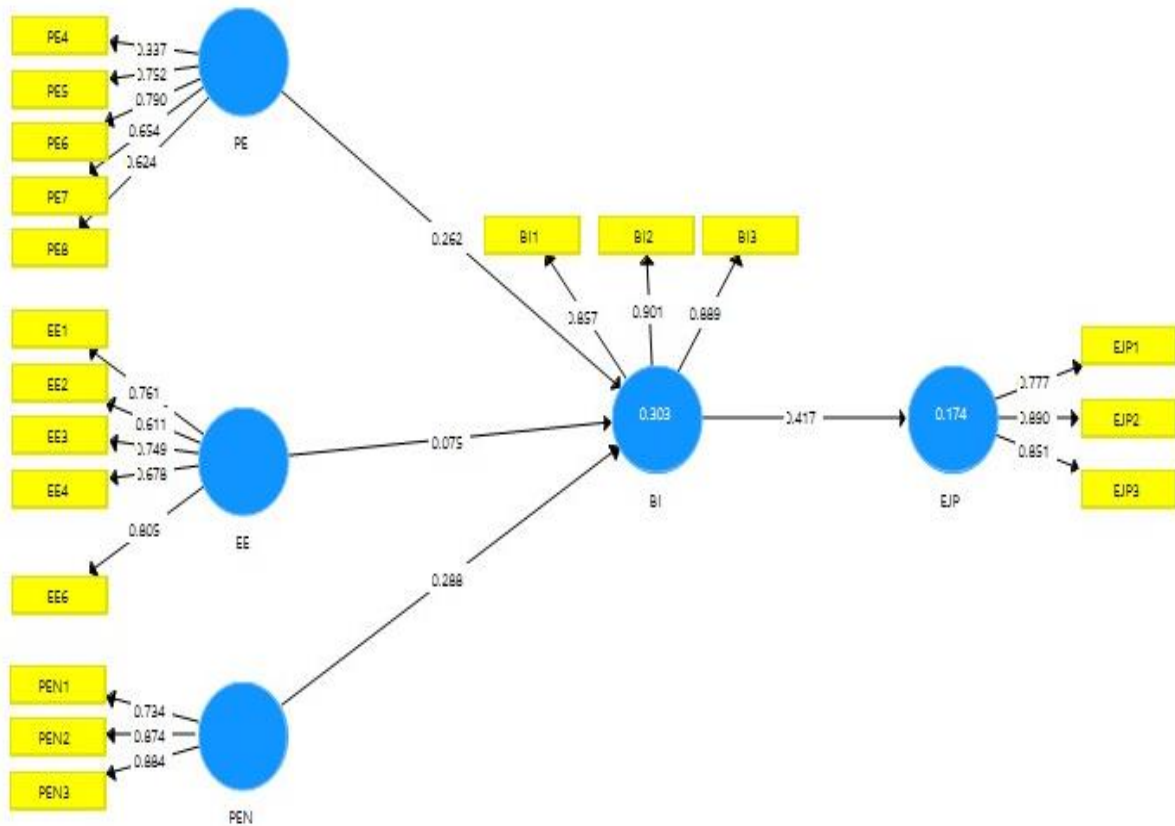

Figure 2. Measurement Model

To evaluate discriminant validity, HTMT test null hypothesis (H0: HTMT ≥ 1) versus the substitute hypothesis (H1: HTMT <1), where value 1 is contained by the confidence interval, then the issue of discriminant validity arises (Henseler et al., 2015). So, the value shows there is no issue in discriminant validity values (see Tab 2).

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

	BI	EE	EJP	PE	PEN
BI					
EE	0.510				
EJP	0.468	0.750			
PE	0.568	0.939	0.826		
PEN	0.593	0.806	0.992	0.796	

4.2 Structural Equation Model

Multiple regression has been utilized to assess the impact of PE, EE, PEN, and BI on job performance. The overall R2 value is 30.3% to predict the dependent variable.
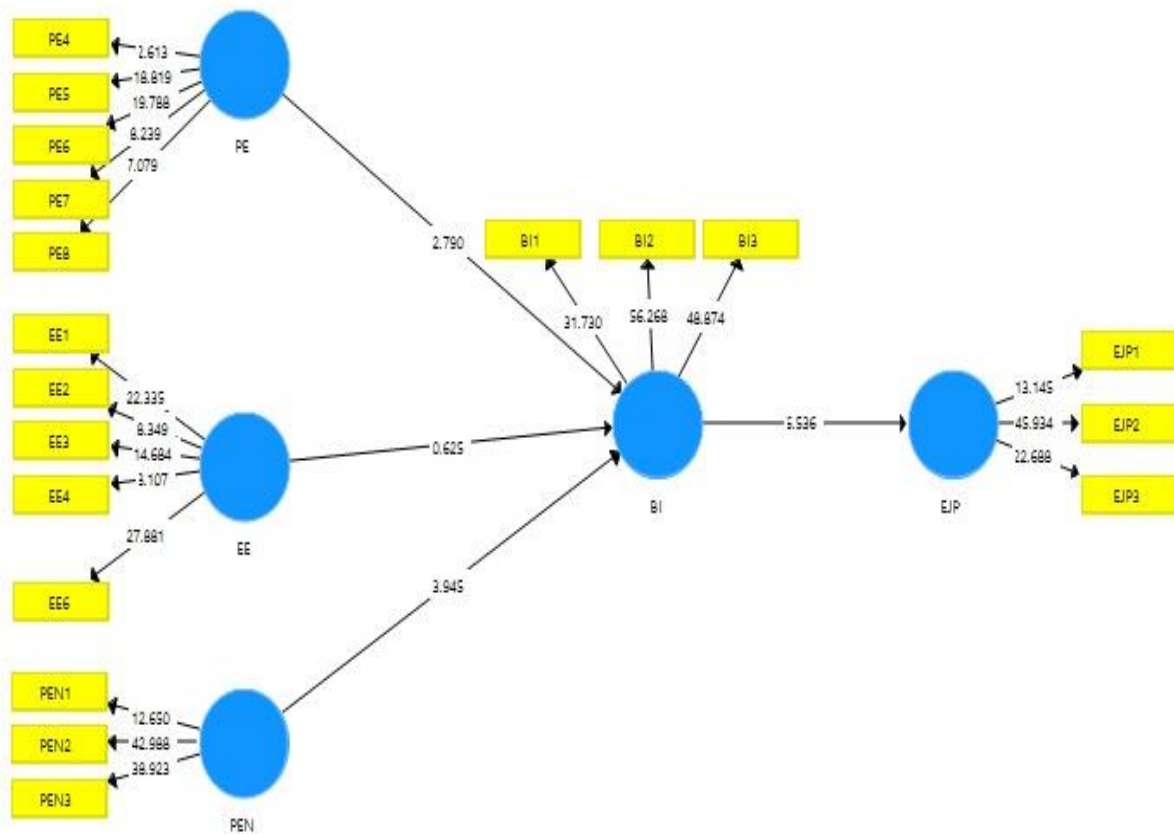
Figure 3. Structural Model

The outcome proposed a paradigm having 30.3% of the explanatory ability for behavioral intention with R2=30.3. Furthermore, it was found that the association between PE, PEN, with BI is positive, and found significant except for EE. A summarized overview of the results is mentioned in Table 4.

Table 4. Structural Model

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
BI -> EJP	0.417	0.424	0.064	6.536	0.000
EE -> BI	0.075	0.081	0.121	0.625	**0.266**
PE -> BI	0.262	0.272	0.094	2.790	0.003
PEN -> BI	0.288	0.281	0.073	3.945	0.000

4.3 Discussion and Hypothesis Testing

Specify Three hypotheses are developed as a direct relationship with a behavioral intention, and one hypothesis is developed between behavioral intention and job performance. The

bootstrapping technique was used to assess the path-coefficient significance of hypotheses (Henseler et al., 2015).

The effect of PE with BI has shown significant relationships (T=2.790, P=0.003), centered on the result, H1 is accepted. The effect of EE with BI has shown insignificance in the results (T=0.625, P=0.266), established on this, H2 is not supported. The impact of PEN with BI shows positive significance (T=3.945, P=0.000), and centered on the result, H3 is accepted. The last hypothesis relation BI and JP also shows significance and positive results (T=6.536, P=0.000), based on the result, H4 is also accepted. Based on the listed results in Tab3 all hypotheses except one, there is a significant and positive relationship. The impact of identified factors is to boost employees' intention to use SNS and improve job performance.

From the analysis, it has been examined that studies discussed the usage of SNS at the workplace which creates stress among employees and reduces their overall performance (Majid et al., 2020; Ngien & Jiang, 2022), however, studies neglected to focus on SNS positive effect which can significantly improve employee job performance. By enhancing their behavioral intention to use SNS at the workplace, employee performance can be effectively increased. This study focused on examining the usage of SNS by enhancing behavioral intention to improve employee job performance.

Employees were observed not using SNS very often at the workplace, which is why the performance of employees may be affected. Abubakar and Ahmad (2013); Chen et al. (2020); Cimperman et al. (2016); Kijsanayotin et al. (2009); Madigan et al. (2016); Yu (2012) studied that the UTAUT model has implications in various technology acceptance like mobile internet, social media acceptance, mobile banking, mobile technologies, health information technologies, and electric vehicles products. Among these, some researchers extended the model with new constructs to assess the consumer technology acceptance intention. This study's critical evaluation of the UTAUT model revealed that no study has yet investigated UTAUT along with perceived enjoyment in enhancing university employee performance with SNS. Therefore, this study applies the UTAUT model and further extends this model through the addition of perceived enjoyment. Such dimensions have the potential to examine the performance of university employees.

5. Implications

5.1 Practical Implications

The conclusions from this UTAUT-based study on the use of social networking sites (SNSs) in Malaysian universities to improve employee performance have real-world ramifications that can influence the institutions' approaches. Administrators and policymakers can design programs to fit with employees' objectives and concerns by identifying the elements driving SNS uptake among university personnel. The study's conclusions can be used to design instructional programs that are specifically aimed at addressing issues with effort expectation and giving teachers the tools, they need to fully utilize SNSs' educational potential. The report also provides advice on how to overcome obstacles like privacy worries or information

overload, allowing colleges to promote a culture of ethical and beneficial SNS use. Organizations can put strategies in place to solve these issues by having a clear understanding of the obstacles and difficulties preventing the adoption of SNS. This could entail dealing with privacy concerns, offering advice on how to handle excessive information, and encouraging the proper use of SNSs in the workplace.

Institutions can create specialized training programs that address SNS usage-related issues, improving staff members' comfort and effectiveness on these social media sites. Additionally, universities can modify existing frameworks for communication and cooperation to make use of SNS advantages, enhancing information exchange, research collaboration, improved problem-solving, and administrative effectiveness. This information can also help create techniques to get through obstacles like privacy worries and information overload, fostering a culture of effective SNS use in academic contexts. Organizations can create customized interventions that are in line with employees' goals and concerns by understanding the primary drivers that affect SNS adoption, promoting a community of enthusiastic integrating technology. In the end, these real-world ramifications offer Malaysian institutions a road map for maximizing the potential of SNSs for raising employee productivity and overall organizational performance.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

The theoretical significance of this work can be determined by the contribution it makes to the field of adopting technology theories as they expand, particularly within the context of Malaysian colleges and universities. By applying the UTAUT paradigm in a particular circumstance, the study broadens the theoretical frontiers of technological acceptance research. This study adds to the body of knowledge about how university employees perceive and use developing technologies in the workplace. A thorough investigation of elements that impact SNS adoption adds to the continuing debate about technology acceptability and usage. It offers perspectives on how interpersonal variables, personal motivations, and enabling conditions collaborate, revealing how all of these variables collectively impact worker attitudes about using SNSs for job-related tasks in a university environment. This work also contributes to more broad discussions about how social media technology integrates into educational institutions by addressing the gap between organizational research and the subject of education. The research not only shapes pedagogical practices, academic development, and administrative practices in Malaysian universities and elsewhere, but it also paves the path for further investigations into the challenges of educational technology acceptance by exposing unexplored SNS usage-related pathways.

The results of the study can be used to direct future research efforts by highlighting information gaps about SNS uptake, usage trends, and its effect on employee productivity. Scholars can use these findings to investigate issues such as the long-lasting effects of SNS acceptance in the workplace, the significance of leadership in promoting acceptance, and the evolving nature of workplace connections. It is crucial to highlight that effective SNS adoption and its effects on employee performance are also dependent on the overall

atmosphere of the university, the nature of the work, and the particular SNS platform being used. Employing UTAUT principles can help organizations build a positive atmosphere for SNS adoption and capitalize on the potential advantages to improve employee efficiency.

5.3 Conclusion

This research is anticipated to enrich current literature linked to technology acceptance among university employee in Malaysia, especially in the context of enhancing their performance. In a nutshell, this research explored the complex dynamics associated with the usage of SNSs in Malaysian institutions in order to improve employee performance. Researchers investigated the variables that affect employee intentions to employ SNSs to enhance job performance via the perspective of the UTAUT. Our research reveals critical insights that influence how technology is adopted and how it affects employee performance. The empirical investigation revealed important findings that advance our comprehension of this complex relationship. Notably, our study showed that PE and PEN have a significant effect on employees' intentions to utilize SNSs to boost performance at work. This highlights the crucial role that employees' opinions on the prospective benefits and enjoyment they gain from utilizing SNSs play in determining how ready they are to accept such networks in a professional environment. The effect of EE on employees' intention to use social networking sites for performance improvement, on the other hand, did not receive significant support from our study. This result demonstrates the complex interaction between perceived convenience and the larger environment of employee inspiration. The decision to use SNSs for job growth may not be driven primarily by ease of use; rather, it may be influenced more by other elements like perceived advantages and perceived enjoyment.

Our research also revealed a significant connection between employees' real improvements in job performance and their behavioral intention to use SNSs. This conclusion emphasizes the practical importance of employees' intent to use SNSs as a prelude to apparent improvements in their job-related performance. These results make it clear that Malaysian universities can greatly benefit from utilizing SNSs to improve employee performance. Our research recommends specialized approaches that highlight the potential advantages and pleasurable features associated with SNS use while making sure that obstacles linked to ease of access are effectively addressed. Universities can create an environment where SNSs can be effectively integrated into professional practices among employees by concentrating on these areas. This study has practical ramifications for the deliberate use of SNSs at Malaysian universities in addition to adding to the body of knowledge about the acceptance of technology and its effects. Insights from this research, we believe, will help universities find their way through the complex world of technology-enabled employee improvements and pave the way for long-term success.

In conclusion, our research on the use of SNSs to improve employee performance in academic contexts has shed light on important aspects of academic technology integration. However, it also reveals a broad range of potential areas for future study. First off, broadening the scope of the analysis to include a wider spectrum of universities in Malaysia would assist

in better comprehending the socioeconomic variables that influence the use of SNS. Second, examining the perspectives of particular academic jobs, such as professors, support personnel, and students, may reveal differences in SNS behavior and performance outcomes. A comparative study of several international contexts could also shed light on the ways that cultural and specific factors influence the uptake and use of SNSs in higher education.

Acknowledgement

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