

The Integration of Work Ethics and Technology Acceptance Towards Enhancing Online Learning Environment Among Lecturers

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Abstract: The adoption of online learning environment has become one of the major concerns in education industry due to the advancement of technology. Even though institutions and organizations had invested huge amount to ensure the online learning platform can be beneficial towards lecturers and other users, however, the progress in solving the issue remained sluggish. Nevertheless, the existing models and theory pertaining to intention and behavior towards adopting online learning is not sufficiently taken into account in the current studies. In this essence, work ethics are important as a guideline to proper everyday professional life which assists employees to grow professional codes of ethics that define professional standards for conduct. Hence, workers possessing a great work ethic have instilled principles that steer the way they behave at workplace. Considering this, this paper aims to form a model integration of work ethics acts as an antecedent of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions in the UTAUT model which can lead towards the intention of adopting online learning environment. The proposed concept would develop theoretical framework based on integration model. Hence, this study will produce a new theoretical framework model that integrate work ethics with UTAUT for enhancing online learning approach among lecturers using technology and will contribute towards preparing future learning environment that equip with technology advancement and crafting training and development of online learning environment in line Industrial Revolution 4.0 in Malaysia.

Keywords: Work ethics, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating condition

Introduction

In the current digital world, how information and knowledge are generated and absorbed has a massive effect on the community and economy, and education plays a vital role in making sure that people can correctly interpret whatever information they encounter. Information technology can be defined as an urging force for educational amelioration, and usually as ways of publicize shared knowledge in society. Education is among the major obstacles associated with the quality of life in the future. Besides education being the gateway to an improved quality of life, there are more other barriers to a sustainable future. A substantial boost in educational productivity can be observed by making fundamental systemic improvements that are supported by technologies rather than just “Evolutionary Tinkering” (He, 2011). According to Care (2017), the global education paradigm has moved to an absolute emphasis on “21st century skills” or in other words, transversal competencies. Education towards a sustainable growth, within this large context, assists individuals in studying and cerebrating on their professional obligations, skills, and personal drives (Mulàet et al., 2017). The demands of technology are radically altering the skills required in the employment market, shifting from accustomed skills to doing jobs where complicated and high-level capabilities are needed.

Literature Review

Plenty of the world's prestigious institutions have demonstrated exceptional initiatives in embracing this immersive learning environment by providing free teaching tools to their students and the wider community, as well as offering over 10,000 high-quality course materials (Wang et al., 2020). For instance, The Macau Higher Education Bureau has established online learning opportunities for Macanese students furthering their studies in Taiwan, allowing them to boost their professional skills without having to leave their homes, guaranteeing that their studies will not be jeopardized. Other Taiwanese universities have also offered transition facilities to the Macanese students that are studying in Taiwan (Higher Education Bureau of Macau 2020).

It appears that many institutions across the world have continued to make some investments on the implementation of virtual learning environment (VLE) in order to support teaching and learning and leverage education for all (Nwabude et al., 2020). However, online classes using a variety of information technology devices posed significant obstacles. Lecturers who are accustomed to conducting real-time classes will have to experiment with new approaches in order to attain productive teaching results, which can have an impact on the education quality in universities. Moreover, there appears a gap on a practical-based VLE framework that incorporates organizational preparedness, technology-mediated and pedagogically standardized VLE framework to manage aspects of teaching and learning particularly in the developing countries. Students that lives in

isolated and rustic regions probably would not have any access to network and lack of technology integration into practice, will lead to a result of which educational possibilities are squandered (Aziz et al., 2021). Furthermore, lecturers who offer lessons on a taped broadcast network could encounter copyright issues when distributing the content. An internet-based technology called the virtual classroom is implemented to facilitate the intercommunication between lecturers and students during online learning and teaching. Nevertheless, some of the students may not have the knowledge or ability to operate this virtual classroom technology (Aditya et al., 2019). Individual variables such as age, gender, past encounters when using computers, level of technology adoption, and many more could be the factors affecting students' expectations in the implementation of the online learning environment. Despite the progressive development of the e-learning industry, the behaviors of lecturers in the implementation and usefulness of the online learning platforms are not well discussed. As a result, it is critical to understand the level of adoption among the lecturers in the implementation of a virtual classroom for the educational activities.

The original unified theory of acceptance and the technology (UTAUT) model have been used as an adaptation for this study's extrinsic factors of adoption (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions are the four extrinsic drivers used in this research. Additionally, besides the extrinsic drivers, the original UTAUT model has also been extended by the researcher by including the construct of work ethics in order to determine its impact on behavioral purpose and usage. The effects of work ethics as employees on lecturers' productivity is a relatively recent idea. A good job ethics is the virtuous behavior of believing job as a pleasurable experience instead of a troublesome responsibility. Individuals with impressive work ethics are more devoted to their jobs and have greater job satisfaction compared to their colleagues. They value that they are being given the opportunity to work and put their best efforts and willing to work extra hours in order to make sure their works are done. Organizations these days have recognized the importance of work ethics and several organizations have begun some trainings and activities to help employees cultivate good work habits. This encourages the employees to be more creative, hardworking, dedicated, and competitive, leading to an improved performance. Lecturers are now focusing to develop strong work ethics to be instilled in their students in order to assist them to enhance their academic achievement and perform better in professional life (Abdus, & Ghulam, 2012).

Discussion and Conclusion

The researcher postulates that work ethics could influence performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions because job ethics place a strong focus on great deal of efforts, engagement, and devotion to work, as well as professional ingenuity, avoidance towards dishonest ways of wealth build-up, and workplace collaboration and competition (Yousef, 2001). When employees with high work ethics which embrace the importance of work ethics value, it will have an impact on how a person feels about his or her career (Robbins, 2005). In this manner, performance expectancy is among the most accurate predictors of behavioral purpose in the context of technology acceptance and its utilization (Wang et al., 2019). PE is comparable to TAM's supposed functionality (Martins & Oliveira, 2018). Lee and Shin (2019) mentioned that the level of consumer anticipation when applying a technology could result in many advantages is referred to as performance expectancy. Performance expectancy in the scope of IoT relates to the extent to which students believe that applying IoT technology can increase their outputs and efficiency. Thus, that is to say lecturers will tend to apply the technology when they believe it will enhance their quality of performance.

Moreover, the level of ease related with the implementation of technology is known as effort expectancy (EE), and past studies have shown that EE is an important indicator of intention to apply technologies (Dinev & Hu, 2007). Marr and Prendergast (1991) also mentioned that there is a higher probability that people will adopt technologies if they are simple to understand and user friendly. It is crucial to comprehend the relation between work ethics and effort in achieving work satisfaction to evaluate intervention approaches and techniques for alleviating determinants that can enhance job satisfaction (Aziz et al., 2020). Hence, in the context of online learning, lecturer with high work ethics will have the ability to implement technology in class attendance record when they realize such technique can be easily done and the system is understandable.

Furthermore, studies done by Yousef (2001), Kidron (1979) and Peterson (2003) has proved that work ethic is also connected to the organizational commitment in its correlations to varying situational attributes, viewpoints and behaviors of the staffs. Therefore, the researcher postulates that work ethics will give impact towards employee social influence in their work life due to the fact that social influence is the extent to which a person is aware the importance for him or her to take on the new system as believed by the others (Venkatesh, 2003). For the aim of this research, SI indicates the level to which the lecturer is aware of how important for the lecturer to implement latest technology as expected by other people. As mentioned by Yousef (2001) that work ethics is

also related to characteristics, attitudes and behaviors of employees, hence, when the employee embrace and implement the new technologies. Wang et al. (2015), Rahi and Abd. Ghani (2018) also made a statement that social influence plays a vital part to adopt in the industry of internet-based banking.

In addition, the researcher postulates that work ethics will influence employee facilitating condition to the extent to which an employee thinks that the system utilization is sustained by an organizational and technological facilities. It is validated that the facilitating condition has a major effect on the usage behavior of technology context according to the studies done by Venkatesh (2003), Handayani and Sudiana (2017). Wang et al. (2019) suggested that several technical aids like computers, internet speed, integration with other systems has a significant influence on the utilization and acknowledgement of the technology. Lee (2009) agreed with the expression of views regarding the internet banking factor and according to Lee (2009), the use of technology can also be affected by the understanding, capability, and resources of the users. When the employees have high work ethics which they will stress on work endurance, diligence, and enthusiasm (Yousef, 2001), Hence, this will improve their technology acceptance in online learning that associated with the need to have digital skills where the deficiency in digital skills will cause the lecturers to experience complications while using IoT (Bartau-Rojas et al., 2018).

Finally, this research postulates that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions will lead to employee intention (Venkatesh, 2003). The meaning of behavior intention is the keenness of a person to behave in a certain way. Alternatively, it can be stated that the behavior intention appears prior to usage behavior. The favourable connection between intention and behaviour of information technology has been discussed in the past information technology acceptance studies. Therefore, this study derive proposition as below:

Proposition 1: Work ethics has a direct effect on performance expectancy

Proposition 2: Work ethics has a direct effect on effort expectancy

Proposition 3: Work ethics has a direct effect on social influence

Proposition 4: Work ethics has a direct effect on facilitating condition

Proposition 5: Performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitation condition has a direct effect on behavioral intention

Therefore, it is fruitful to explore this particular area that can contribute towards online learning literature. Proposed model for this study as below:

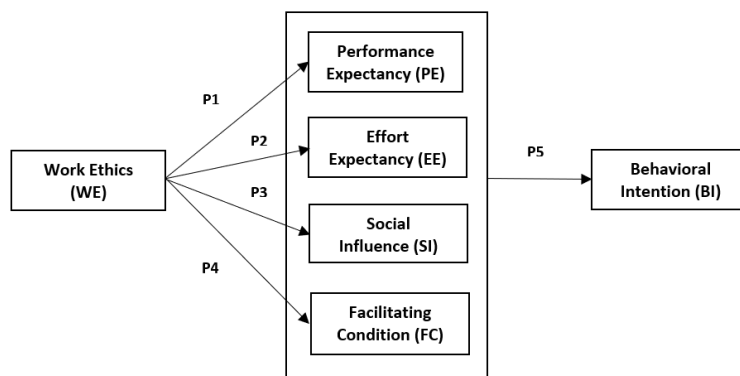


Figure 1. Proposed framework

In short, this study shows that work ethics can be the antecedence towards performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating condition in the UTAUT model. Employee possessing high ethical values will influence the 4 variables that lead towards their intention to enhance their online learning environment.

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