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EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF REVISED TAM IN DETERMINING THE ACTUAL USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

Abstract: *Technology is playing a crucial role in defining ways to perform various tasks in an efficient and effective way. Web technology, specifically social media networking is now a widely used and accepted phenomenon for social interaction. Organizational usage of social media (for official communication) has limited literature. This paper presents a conceptual framework which incorporates the usage of WhatsApp within organisations with the application of revised social media technology acceptance model.*

KeyWords: Revised TAM, Social Media, Social Networks, WhatsApp

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology is playing a crucial role in defining ways to perform various tasks in an efficient and effective way. Web technology, specifically social media networking is now a widely used and accepted phenomenon for social interaction. Social media are set of applications that are designed on the infrastructure of web 2.0 where interactions and exchanges take place using content generated by its users (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011). The term social media has its existence before the advent of web 2.0. Web 2.0 is an advanced version of World Wide Web where users are facilitated in an interactive way.

There are a bunch of social media applications available around the world. Social media is foremost associated with certain apps including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn that are available over the internet through world wide web and mobile applications (Baym, 2015). Some of the social media platforms are more targeted towards mobile applications like WhatsApp, Viber and Skype. Social media has laid its foundations on a simple principle of social interaction. Platform like Facebook allows its users to interact using photos, videos, hyperlinks and collaboration through pages and groups. Likewise, Instagram is based on the ideology of sharing pictures. LinkedIn has its focus on professional networking whereas Twitter has laid its foundation on the notion of micro-sharing. All these platforms are targeted to a specific set of audience based on sharing of content.

Social media penetration around the world has an upward trend. Out of the 7.5 billion people around the world, there are 4 billion active users that accounts of 7 percent increase on yearly basis. Moreover, there are 3.1 billion active social media users which are increased by 13% since early 2017 (Global Digital Report 2018, 2018). These and many other statistics urge the need to explore the factors triggering the usage and shift in modes of communication and marketing from conventional media to digital or more precisely to social media.

Although social media is widely used as a social interaction platform by general public but many a firms are also using social media to get benefitted from the ease of communication and interaction. Many organizations are adopting social media and a number of researches have been done to analyse the importance and role played by social media in various organizations (Tareem and Leonardi, 2013; DiStaso and McCorkindale, 2011; Curtis et al, 2010).

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aims at exploring the following avenues to get insights on social media acceptability precisely WhatsApp usage within organizations to analysis which newly

incorporated factor has a high significance to predict the usage:

To analyze the role of newly incorporated constructs in TAM to predict usage of a technology.

To analyze whether critical mass (CM) could be a strong antecedent of perceived usefulness.

To explore if perceived playfulness can predict perceived playfulness (PP) and must be incorporated for explaining the actual usage.

To see if intention to use (IU) is a critical predictor of actual usage (AU).

To conclude if extension of the model fits at all levels or some variables are superfluous.

To redesign the framework to predict the actual usage.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study will examine and answer the following questions for exploring and explaining the revised TAM:

Is there any significance contribution by the newly incorporated constructs in original TAM?

How and why critical mass (CM) is a strong predictor of actual usage of WhatsApp?

Whether perceived playfulness (PP) is significant to WhatsApp usage?

Is there any difference between the two segments in their actual usage of social media? This study is taking into consideration two different population segments. One is general public whose basic intention for social media usage is interaction and socializing. The other is firms/organizations that are adapting to social media platforms to improve their communication channel and productivity.

4. REVISED - TAM

Revised TAM is designed specifically for social media usage. It has incorporated factors that predicts the usage of social media through technology acceptance model (Raunair et al, 2014). A few researches taken into account TAM in different context based on the specific platform like mobile technology (Pan et al, 2018), internet banking (Hassan and Iqbal, 2018), E-Learning (Tarhini et al, 2017; Chang, Hajiyev and Su, 2017), social media Raunair et al, 2017; Ali et al, 2017).

TAM is being employed in majority of the segments where technology is playing a key role. Revised TAM is one of those technological aspects where social media

interactions are more critical to technology acceptance (Raunair et al, 2014).

The three newly introduced constructs are CM, CP and PP. Critical Mass (CM) is defined as the mass of users that effects the usage of a social media. Capability (CP), on the other hand, is the set of add-ons, tools and apps that support users in their social media usage. Perceived Playfulness (PP) is endorsed as the degree to which social media is engaging through its fun to use and enjoyable aspect. (Raunair et al, 2014).

5. PROPOSTIONS

Considering the impacts of the new constructs in the existing TAM, the following position on have been derived:

1. Perceived Ease of Use (EU) of WhatsApp has a significant effect on Perceived Usefulness (PU).
2. Critical Mass (CM) of WhatsApp is positively related to the Perceived Usefulness (PU) of WhatsApp.
3. Capability (CP) of WhatsApp has a positive relationship with Perceived Usefulness (PU).
4. Perceived Playfulness (PP) of WhatsApp significantly effects the Perceived Usefulness (PU).
5. Perceived Usefulness is directly related to Intention to Use (IU) of WhatsApp.
6. Intention to Use (IU) positively effects the Actual Usage (AU) of WhatsApp.
7. Trustworthiness (TW) significantly effects Intention to Use (IU).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The proposed framework is based on the critically designed revised TAM where relationships between existing and newly added constructs will be examined and the extent to which they are significant will be determined:
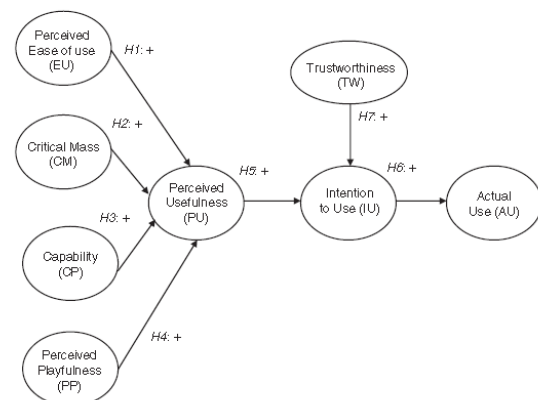
RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is aiming and further exploring the revised TAM to infer insights based on the output from the actual data collected. Therefore, quantitative technique of survery though questionnaire distribution is proposed. Already available constructs and items are proposed to be used for this research. Whereas, items will be required to revised and reliability and validity should be measured in context to WhatsApp rather than social media.

CONCLUSION:

The study aims at critically examining the revised TAM and its newly introduced constructs. Majority of the research in social media context is centered on the usage and impact of Facebook. Little research is carried out on the impact of other platforms specifically WhatsApp usage. Moreover, the impact of social media platforms is not only impacting the general public but is playing its positive role in reshaping the communication channels in corporate world. Organizations are adding social media in their communication channel to become more productive and effective. Therefore, this research proposed to bridge the gap on usage of WhatsApp in organizational context. Furthermore, there is a noticeable gap available in literature to test the revised TAM and how it is impacting organizations using different platforms. We are not only proposing WhatsApp as the impactful platforms, platforms like Workplace by Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter can also be explored.

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