Do the Big Five Personality Factors affect Knowledge sharing behaviour? A study of Malaysian Universities

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to develop an integrative understanding of the Big Five Personality (BFP) factors supporting or inhibiting individuals' online entertainment knowledge sharing behaviours. Survey data are collected from 255 university students from two Malaysian universities. As hypothesised, structural equation modelling shows that extraversion and neuroticism are positively related to the attitude towards knowledge sharing. Openness to experience is found to have an inverse relationship with the attitude towards knowledge sharing. Subjective norm is positively related to the attitude towards knowledge sharing. Both attitude towards knowledge sharing and subjective norm are found to be independently and significantly related to the intention to share knowledge, which significantly influences the knowledge sharing behaviour. The research model proposed in the present study is useful to other researchers seeking to understand the personality factors that influence the knowledge sharing behaviour among the organisational communities. The results of this study provide empirical evidence for a new model that shows that the BFP factors are implicated in individuals' knowledge sharing behaviour. This study and its findings have filled the research gap in the literature of the BFP factors and knowledge sharing behaviours. Furthermore, the inclusion of the BFP factors in the Theory of Reasoned Action framework is an important distinction that other studies have not established.

Keywords: Big Five Personality; Knowledge sharing behaviour; Structural Equation Modelling; Online entertainment; Higher education; Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

The growth of Internet users worldwide has increased tremendously in this digital era. Within the Malaysian context, Internet users (16.9 millions) comprise 65.7 percent of its total population (25.7 million) (Internet World Statistics 2010). This figure is much higher than Internet penetration in other ASEAN countries, namely the Philippines (24.5%), Thailand (24.4%), Vietnam (20.1%), Indonesia (12.5%), Laos (7.7%), Cambodia (0.5%) and Myanmar (0.2%) (Internet World Statistics 2010). In fact, Malaysia is ranked No. 9 in the top 10 Asian countries of Internet users (Internet World Statistics 2010). The increase of Internet users in Malaysia could be attributed to the improved Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructures provided by the Malaysian government. Specifically, all the universities in Malaysia are equipped with Internet connectivity, and a progression of user-generated media such as YouTube and Facebook has gained