



UNIVERSITI
TEKNOLOGI
MARA

FBM

Insights

eISSN 2716-599X



772716 599000

e-ISSN 2716-599X

VOLUME 10
BULLETIN

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

UiTM *di hatiku*

FBM INSIGHTS

Faculty of Business and Management

Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah

e-ISSN 2716-599X

The editorial board would like to express their heartfelt appreciation for the contributions made by the authors, co-authors and all who were involved in the publication of this bulletin.

Published by : Faculty of Business and Management,
Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah

Published date : 17 Oktober 2024

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, copied, stored in any retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission from the Rector, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah, Kampus Sungai Petani, 08400 Merbok, Kedah, Malaysia.

The views, opinions, and technical recommendations expressed by the contributors and authors are entirely their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, the publisher and the university.

FBM INSIGHTS EDITORIAL BOARD

Advisor

Dr. Yanti Aspha Ameira binti Mustapha, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah

Chief Editor

Dr. Zuraidah binti Mohamed Isa, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Dr. Norhidayah binti Ali, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah Managing

Managing Editor

Dr. Azyyati binti Anuar, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Nurfaznim binti Shuib, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Nurul Izzati binti Idrus, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah

Editors

Dr. Dahlia binti Ibrahim, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Dr. Roziyana binti Jafri, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Rosliza binti Md. Zani, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Najah binti Mokhtar, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Yong Azrina binti Ali Akbar, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Hanani binti Hussin, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Shakirah binti Mohd Saad, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Encik Mohd Radzi bin Mohd Khir, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Wan Shahrul Aziah binti Wan Mahamad, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Syukriah binti Ali, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Dr Rabitah binti Harun, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Fatihah Norazami binti Abdullah, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Jamilah binti Laidin, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah

Manuscript Editor

Dr. Siti Norfazlina binti Yusof, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Dr. Berlian Nur binti Morat, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Nor Asni Syahriza binti Abu Hassan, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah

Secretary

Puan Intan Nazrenee binti Ahmad, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
Puan Syahrul Nadwani binti Abdul Rahman, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah

Technical Board

Dr. Afida binti Ahmad, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah

Graphic Designer

Dr. Shafilla binti Subri, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Board.....	iii
1. CHALLENGES OF A HOME-BASED BUSINESS <i>Roseamilda Mansor</i>	1
2. NAVIGATING THE LANDSCAPE OF ONLINE LEARNING: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES <i>Abd Rasyid Ramli, Burhanuddin Haji Wahab & Ab Razak Mansor</i>	6
3. STRATEGISING FOR CULINARY TOURISM (CT) SUCCESS <i>Norhidayah Ali, Azni Syafena Andin Salamat & Suhaida Abu Bakar</i>	9
4. STRATEGIC FINANCE CHOICES: EMBRACING THE RELEVANCE OF EQUITY FINANCING OVER DEBT FINANCING <i>Fauziah Mohamad Yunus, Mohamad Hanif Abu Hassan & Muhammad Zarunnaim Haji Wahab</i>	12
5. DRIVING SOCIETAL DYNAMICS THROUGH DIGITALISATION <i>Shazwani Mohd Salleh & Norhafizah Abdul Halim</i>	17
6. LEAN 4.0: THE NEXT WAVE OF INNOVATION IN HOSPITALITY <i>Azyyati Anuar, Daing Maruak Sadek & Mohamad Azli Razali</i>	21
7. AN EFFICIENCY MEASUREMENT OF ISLAMIC CHARITABLE NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION: A DATA ENVELOPMENT ANALYSIS APPLICATION <i>Dahlia Ibrahim & Zuraidah Mohamed Isa</i>	24
8. THE IMPACTS OF COLLABORATIVE ROBOTS (COBOTS) ON EMPLOYEE ROLES AND SATISFACTION <i>Rosliza Md Zani, Shakirah Mohd Saad & Syukriah Ali</i>	26
9. UNIT TRUSTS: THE IDEAL INVESTMENT PLATFORM FOR YOUTH AND THE NEWLY EMPLOYED <i>Zuraidah Mohamed Isa, Dahlia Ibrahim & Zaiful Affendi Ahmad Zabib</i>	29
10. 'OUR ICEBERG IS MELTING': MANAGING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE <i>Azyyati Anuar, Bawani Selvaraj & Daing Maruak Sadek</i>	32
11. A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EBOOKS AND TRADITIONAL BOOKS IN MALAYSIA <i>Abd Rasyid Ramli, Shakirah Mohd Saad & Rosliza Md Zani</i>	35
12. PERSONALIZED COMMERCE IN THE ERA OF SOCIAL MEDIA <i>Fatihah Norazami Abdullah, Noriza Mohd Saad & Nor Edi Azhar Mohamed</i>	38
13. PERSONALISED RECOMMENDATIONS IN ONLINE SHOPPING: HOW IT INFLUENCE CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT AND SATISFACTION? <i>Wan Shahrul Aziah Wan Mahamad, Ramli Saad & Yong Azrina Ali Akbar</i>	41

14.	EXPLORING DRIVERS BEHIND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ASPIRATION TO BECOME SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS	43
	<i>Sarah Sabir Ahmad, Azfahanee Zakaria & Nurdiyana Nazihah Zainal</i>	
15.	A REVIEW ON WOMEN LEADERSHIPS IN PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	47
	<i>Khairul Azfar Adzahar, Mohd Fazil Jamaludin & Mohd Shafiz Saharan</i>	
16.	UNDERSTANDING HALAL SUPPLY CHAINS: ENSURING INTEGRITY IN THE GLOBAL HALAL FOOD MARKET	51
	<i>Musdiana Mohamad Salleh & Etty Harniza Harun</i>	
17.	SUSTAINABLE FINANCE THROUGH ESG IMPLEMENTATION IN THE MALAYSIAN FINANCIAL SECTOR	57
	<i>Anita Abu Hassan</i>	
18.	ISLAM PERSPECTIVE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (PWDS): WHAT DO YOU THINK?	60
	<i>Norhasyikin Rozali</i>	
19.	FROM CLICK TO COMPLIANCE: SHARIAH-COMPLIANT BUY NOW, PAY LATER	64
	<i>Hasmah Laili Jamalurus</i>	
20.	DOMINO EFFECT: WHAT IS IT? HOW IT CONNECTS TO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES	68
	<i>Jamilah Laidin, Nor Azira Ismail & Shahiszan Ismail</i>	
21.	APPROACHES TO PREVENTING CYBERBULLYING	71
	<i>Nurfaznim Shuib & Nurul Izzati Idrus</i>	
22.	“FROM MISSING OUT TO MISSING YOU”: TRANSFORMING NEGATIVE FOMO INTO LOYAL CUSTOMERS	74
	<i>Nurliyana Abas & Hanani Hussin</i>	

CHALLENGES OF A HOME-BASED BUSINESS

Roseamilda Mansor

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
rosea303@uitm.edu.my

ABSTRACT

Starting with RM60 as capital, today, a home-based entrepreneur has generated more than RM62,000 in sales per month. Known as Syira, she possesses entrepreneurial skills and has created a product called Lekor Bites to enter into the market, initially from home-based operations which later progressed to an online base. Initially unknown to consumers, the product's taste was unfamiliar. Syira accidentally created the product out of her love for keropok lekor, which she frequently consumes. "Lekor Bites" was introduced 6 years ago as a home-based venture and can now be purchased on Shopee, an e-commerce platform, as part of promotional efforts to boost sales. Al-Shibli, Al Kaabi, Al Risi, Al Shibli, and Khan (2022) highlighted that local businesses are crucial for community development, emphasizing the importance of focusing on business processes for sustainability. Additionally, the entrepreneur's limited use of technology has restricted operations to meeting consistent demand. This case study illustrates the success of a female entrepreneur and the challenges faced in scaling her company. Moreover, it encourages readers to critically evaluate strategies related to business development.

Keywords: Entrepreneurs, online strategy, home-based

INTRODUCTION

Keropok lekor is a popular Malaysian snack, particularly renowned in the Terengganu and Kelantan regions. Despite its popularity within the country, this product currently lacks significant commercial value. Hence, innovative strategies are necessary to appeal to other ethnic groups and foreign tourists, ensuring sustained market growth in the future. Syira, was the first had the idea to produce the 'lekor bites' when she saw a potential in the business especially in the food industry. She accidently created the product because she loves keropok lekor and eat them often. Traditionally, keropok lekor is precooked by boiling in water. The mixture is then being hand-rolled into a sausage form. The huge and long sausages are then cut into smaller pieces and thrown into the pan to be deep-fried until they turn crispy gold. The problem is it takes time to prepare the dishes. Therefore, she came out with the idea to produce the instant keropok lekor as a ready-to-eat dish under its own brand name 'Lekor Bites'.

Syira started her business with a small capital of RM60.00. She bought six keropok Lekor, wrapping papers, cooking oil and a few things needed to produce the product and sell them. For the first production, she only used a candle to do the packaging and make her own sticker to stick on the package. She did all the process alone starting from cutting- the keropok lekor into smaller pieces, frying, packaging and delivering. The profit that she got from the first sales is used to buy the hot sealer machine, keropok lekor and other raw materials such as oil, salt and the plastic for packaging. For the first five months, the demand for lekor bites was stable but Syira cannot fulfil the demand in the market due to the small and limited money to

pay for workers. The customers need to wait for the product since all processes are handled manually. Today, her company had 9 workers and a few equipment for the production process. Since that, the demand for lekor bites started to increase from time to time. Up till now, the company is operating its business based on its objectives which are as follows:

1. To increase the economy of Malay Entrepreneurs in Malaysia
2. To promote Malaysia traditional food as an instant food

NATURE OF BUSINESS

The first production was all done by herself for a few months before she registered her own business enterprise while in Kedah. During that time, she only used a candle to do the packaging and make her own sticker to stick on the package. She did all the process alone starts from cutting, frying, packaging and delivering. Then she started to make some money from her first sales and used it to buy a hot sealer machine. According to Anwar and Daniel (2017), a home-based business makes significant contribution to national economies in terms of both turnover and employment. After relocating to her hometown of Kelantan, Syira successfully assembled a team of nine workers to run the business. Among them, six work in the kitchen, cutting and frying the keropok lekor into smaller pieces, while two are involved in packaging and one handles transportation. As the business owner, Syira personally manages administration, finance, and marketing to reduce costs. She oversees administrative tasks such as record-keeping, filing, budgeting, forecasting, and product costing based on historical data.

The owner inspected the cleanliness of the kitchen and all equipment to prepare the product in order to control the quality of the product. She also used transparent frosted plastic for packaging to maintain the taste and aroma of product and refreshment chip to make sure this product is long lasting and anti-fungus since this product did not have any additional ingredients. The uniqueness of this product has attracted the customers from all range of ages to buy and taste it.

BUSINESS GROWTH

When she first started, she did everything on her own from production to marketing. In addition, she also placed her products at restaurants and sometimes grab an opportunity to sell the product at certain events by renting sales site. She distributed flyers to her neighbours around the house and did her marketing through WhatsApp. Syira believed that the word of mouth (WOM) marketing is the most valuable source of marketing because customers trust their friends. According to Nielsen (2012), 92% of consumers believe suggestions from friends and family more than they do advertising. This result presented the word of mouth use case. After nine years, this product had a wide range of customers from Malaysia and overseas. Starting with only one flavour that is original flavour, the company produced new flavours of their own to cater to the customer's demand on variety of flavours. To meet the demand of the expanding customers. the company has expanded the variety of their flavours to paprika and barbecue. She has managed to create a good product that suits all level of ages and customers.

In 2016, Syira started to promote her business using an online platform namely Facebook and Instagram. Thus, the target customers are the public and government servants, students (school and universities), individuals as well as online users. For the first five months, the demand for lekor bites are stable but she cannot fulfil the demand in the market due to the small and limited operation station. The customers need to queue up for the products since all the processes are manually conducted. However, this company's sales have increased from RM19,577.80 to RM39,814.00 for the first year of operation. The increment was 103 percent and the sales continue to increase year by year after that.

In 2018, the company's sales have declined 9 percent as it is the end of the year 2018, thus, Syira decided to invest in one of the e-commerce services which is "Shopee" to promote the product. Since this product is new, Syira can grab a large market share in the fast-growing industry. It is a well-known fact that food and beverages industry in Malaysia keep on growing from time to time. This is because Malaysia has been ranked first in terms of Halal economy, (The Star, 2019). There are 20 organizations and personalities being award for their outstanding contributions to the growth of the halal industry during its World Halal excellence Award 2022 (WHEA 2022) received in 2023. This has encouraged food producers to expand their business onwards.

Malaysia's expertise in halal certification, governance and best practices has positioned the country as a leader for others to look up" said Khairul Anwar Harun, Halal Development Corporation (HDC) chairman.

Source: New Straits Times, July 7, 2023

Using a platform of social media marketing become crucial for businesses to promote their product or services, engage either customers and build brand awareness, Khanom (2023). Syira finds this is the easier and fastest way to get customers at a very low cost. In addition, she also keeps a good relationship with her customers, maintaining the taste and quality thus getting good feedbacks from customers in order to improve the betterment of the product. To expand more, she created opportunity to her loyal customers to become a dropship for her product to those interested with certain condition and capital.

When Malaysia faced the economic recession, which had impacted the purchasing power of consumers. The two year's sales were deteriorated due to people have low purchasing power and only buy important goods to survive. Those two years were a tough time for a business since they focused on low profit margin and high quantity as a strategy in doing business. This situation getting worse due to pandemic COVID-19 attacked the world in early 2020 and give negative impact on all business sectors at the beginning of the pandemic.

However, the food industries only affected at the beginning of the situation. Then the strategies on selling online through Shoppee and Facebook work well and now expand to Instagram and TikTok. Syira can maintain the sales but the challenges are the operation due to restriction of movement for her employees as well as the space needed to grow up. Starting in the middle 2022 onwards, this company has improved a lot in term of their sales and marketing strategies but still can expand if she willing to invest.

CHALLENGE AHEAD

Like any other business, this company has experienced its share of ups and downs. The issues began with fluctuations in market demand. In a rapidly expanding market, Syira was able to generate cash, but she needed additional investment to sustain her position. The company faces constraints due to limited resources and capital to meet the growing market demand. The expected production of lekor bites per month is 1600kg however, the company only can produce an estimation of about 300 - 320kg per month because the process is done manually thus the company also lacks capital for the operation purpose. This business needed a machine to improve the production as well as the sales instead of using a traditional way. Or else, she only can fulfil the demand from the customers accordingly. Al-Shibli, Al Kaabi, Al Risi, Al Shibli, and Khan (2022) suggested that government should encourage home-based business as they are considered the legitimate form of home-based entrepreneurs for the sake of community development. This company has potential to grow but the limitation is the cost.

Currently, the primary challenge confronting the company is cost management. The rising prices of raw materials have significantly impacted its operations. Consequently, the company has had to increase the prices of its products to ensure that they cover these higher costs and maintain profitability. However, this price increase poses a significant dilemma, as pricing is crucial in retaining customers. Finding a balance between covering costs and retaining customer loyalty has become a major concern for the company. Other than that, this company also faced some internal problems such as cash flow where there is unexpected outgoing and pending payments. For this problem, she maintains the cash flow by planning and budgeting as much as possible to keep track of the record. On the hand, government also gives assistance for IKS and SME typed of business such as funding and equipment sponsored. Second is customer's feedback where they complain about the taste, the price and the shipping process. For this issue, as the owner of the company Syira keep listening to the feedback and explain to the customers why the problem arises until they are satisfied. Building networking and business relationship can be more challenging for home-based business

According to the business owner, despite the increase in sales, the production costs have also risen due to higher prices of raw materials and packaging. She passed these costs on to end-users and effectively communicated the reasons behind the price adjustments. Additionally, she suggested to customers that purchasing through 'Shopee' would result in lower transportation costs compared to ordering directly from her. Embracing and effectively implementing ICT solutions can help business stay competitive, adapt to changing market conditions and achieve long-term success in the digital age (Ibrahim, et al., 2023) . Besides that, entrepreneurs should attend seminars and workshop by other which can motivate them and help them on particular circumstances.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a home-based business play important role to our economy, community as well as entrepreneurs. They must face the challenge by planning the best strategy to deal with the problem in addition to the government asisstance given. A formal planning can help ease the transition for a person starting a home-based business. By being aware of the potential pitfalls and creating a plan such as a business plan to overcome them, a home-based business owner can significantly increase their chance for success, Paul and Sarah (2021).

REFERENCES

- Al Shibli, H. M., Al Kaabi, A. H., Al Risi, A. S., Al Shibli, B. H., & Khan, F. R. (2022). The determinants of entrepreneurial success of home-based entrepreneurs (HBE) in Oman. *International Journal of Research in Entrepreneurship & Business Studies*, 3(2), 01-14. <https://doi.org/10.47259/ijrebs.321>
- Anwar, M. N., & Daniel, E. (2016). The role of entrepreneur-venture fit in online home-based entrepreneurship: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Enterprising Culture*, 24(4), 419–451. <https://doi.org/10.1142/s0218495816500151>
- Birruntha, S. (2023, July 7). Malaysia leads halal economy. *NST Online*. <https://www.nst.com.my/business/2023/07/928411/malaysia-leads-halal-economy>
- Ibrahim, N., Bujang, A., Hj Bibi, Z., Sadikin, S., Bujang, N., & Ambi, S. (2023). The impact of ICT in empowering Sarawak women in home-based business communities. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 20(1), 374-383. <https://doi.org/10.17576/ebangi.2023.2004.33>
- Khanom, M. T. (2023). Using social media marketing in the digital era: A necessity or a choice. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science* (2147-4478), 12(3), 88–98. <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v12i3.2507>
- Nielsen. (2022, July 21). *Consumer trust in online, social and mobile advertising grows*. <https://www.nielsen.com/insights/2012/consumer-trust-in-online-social-and-mobile-advertising-grows/>
- Online, S. (2023, December 31). Malaysia retains top spot among Islamic economies. *The Star*. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2023/12/31/malaysia-retains-top-spot-among-islamic-economies>

NAVIGATING THE LANDSCAPE OF ONLINE LEARNING: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Abd Rasyid Ramli

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
arasyidr@uitm.edu.my

Burhanuddin Haji Wahab

Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
burhan053@uitm.edu.my

Ab Razak Mansor

Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
arazman@uitm.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

The growth of online education has presented opportunities as well as challenges. This paper examines the benefits and drawbacks of online learning, incorporating knowledge from current studies to offer a comprehensive picture of this ever-changing educational environment.

STRENGTHS OF ONLINE LEARNING

Online learning stands out as a bright spot in the constantly changing field of education, especially in helping facilitate teachers and learners around the world. Let's examine the key features of online learning, which make it an effective medium of gaining knowledge and honing individual skills:

Flexibility and Accessibility: Online learning comes with these advantages that allow learners to learn anywhere and anytime, making it one of the greatest advantages for users. A personalised learning experience is made possible by the flexibility with which students can access course materials (Dhawan, 2020).

Various Learning Formats: Videos, simulations, and interactive modules are just a few of the learning formats that are supported by online platforms. According to Adedoyin and Soykan (2020), diversity enhances engagement and comprehension by accommodating various learning styles.

Global Reach and Inclusivity: Online education reaches a worldwide audience by bridging geographic divides and providing educational opportunities. In the virtual classroom, this inclusivity promotes a range of viewpoints and cross-cultural communication (Keržič et al., 2021).

Data-Driven Personalisation: Teachers can now collect real-time data on student performance because of developments in learning analytics. According to Sharif Nia et al. (2023), this data makes it easier to provide individualised feedback and interventions, which improves the effectiveness of teaching methods.

WEAKNESSES OF ONLINE LEARNING

Although online learning has many benefits, the inevitable drawbacks still need to be aware of. It is important for the public to understand these shortcomings so they are aware of any risks that may arise in their academic endeavours. The following are some major drawbacks of online education:

Digital Disparities and Technological Challenges: One prominent shortcoming is the differences in digital literacy amongst students. Inequalities in schooling can be made worse by limited access to technology and the Internet (Basuony et al., 2020).

Absence of Social Engagement: The social component of education may be impacted by online learning since it may not have the same immediate impact as in-person interaction. In a virtual setting, group conversations and collaborative activities might not be as natural or productive (She et al., 2020).

Possibility of Academic Dishonesty: There are worries regarding academic integrity due to the remote nature of online exams. The digital environment can encourage cheating and plagiarism, thus requiring strong preventative measures (Sharif Nia et al., 2023).

Technological Dependency: Learning disruptions can occur because online learning is so dependent on technology. Technical problems such as internet connectivity issues or server failures can hinder the learning process (Keržič et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

Online learning is a powerful educational paradigm that also comes with weaknesses. Acknowledging these facets, there is a need to develop strategies that leverage strengths while addressing challenges. As technology continues to evolve, ongoing research is vital to refine online learning methodologies and ensure a balanced and inclusive educational experience.

REFERENCES

- Adedoyin, O. B., & Soykan, E. (2020). Covid-19 pandemic and online learning: the challenges and opportunities. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 31(2), 863-875. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2020.1813180>
- Basuony, M. A., EmadEldeen, R., Farghaly, M., El-Bassiouny, N., & Mohamed, E. K. (2020). The factors affecting student satisfaction with online education during the COVID-19 pandemic: An empirical study of an emerging Muslim country. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 12(3), 631-648. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jima-09-2020-0301>

- Dhawan, S. (2020). Online learning: A panacea in the time of COVID-19 crisis. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 49(1), 5-22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047239520934018>
- Keržič, D., Alex, J. K., Pamela Balbontín Alvarado, R., Bezerra, D. S., Cheraghi, M., Dobrowolska, B., ... & Aristovnik, A. (2021). Academic student satisfaction and perceived performance in the e-learning environment during the COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence across ten countries. *PLoS ONE*, 16(10), e0258807. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0258807>
- Sharif Nia, H., Marôco, J., She, L., Khoshnavay Fomani, F., Rahmatpour, P., Stepanovic Ilic, I., ... & Rahmatpour, P. (2023). Student satisfaction and academic efficacy during online learning with the mediating effect of student engagement: A multi-country study. *PLoS ONE*, 18(10), e0285315. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0285315>
- She, L., Ma, L., Jan, A., Sharif Nia, H., & Rahmatpour, P. (2020). Online learning satisfaction during COVID-19 pandemic among Chinese university students: The serial mediation model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 743936. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.743936>

STRATEGISING FOR CULINARY TOURISM (CT) SUCCESS

Norhidayah Ali

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
norhidayah@uitm.edu.my

Azni Syafena Andin Salam

Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan
Kedah
azni_syafena@uitm.edu.my

Suhaida Abu Bakar

Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
suhaida596@uitm.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

Culinary or food is inextricably linked with culture, as it contributes to the birth of numerous cuisines. When tourists travel to a new place, they often wish to be immersed in the local experience, and cuisine is an integral part of the experience. Sampling authentic local dishes allows visitors to be fully immersed in the destination's culture and traditions. For those embarking on a culinary tourism (CT) adventure, they look forward to experiencing a delicious fusion of flavours and cultures. As the world's demand for gastronomic adventures keeps growing, most businesses feel that success in this profession requires mastering the art of strategy. Culinary tourism, also known as food tourism or gastronomy tourism, is seen as a way of exploring a destination through its food and beverage offerings. This type of tourism focuses on authentic local foods, usually characterised by visits to markets, street food stalls, and traditional restaurants to experience regional specialities (Long, 2014). Culinary tourism offers a mouthwatering assortment of experiences, especially for tourists, from enjoying gourmet dining at high-star-rated restaurants to relishing unusual street delicacies in vibrant markets.

Culinary tourism has been extensively studied in neighbouring countries such as Thailand and Indonesia (Kattiyapornpong et al., 2021; Wijaya et al., 2021). However, this field of research remains limited in Malaysia. Therefore, studying local food attributes and contents is crucial to fill in the gaps in the marketing aspects and, simultaneously, aid the hospitality and tourism providers in understanding the needs and wants of the tourists regarding the local cuisine (Sanip et al., 2022). In this paper, we explore the crucial tactics or strategies that lead to the success of culinary tourism, revealing the fundamental components for a gratifying and rewarding culinary journey. Successful tactics or strategies can provide tourists with a memorable and authentic experience, considerably increasing destination appeal and visitor satisfaction. These tactics and strategies also encourage local culture and food, which can spill into economic growth and sustainability in the community.

SUCCESS STRATEGIES

These are some possible strategies for achieving success in culinary tourism:

i) Highlighting Local and Authentic Cuisine

Promoting local specialities and traditional cooking methods will enhance culinary tourism by offering authentic experiences. Examples of activities include tasting traditional dishes made with old recipes and immersing tourists in the region's culture, history, and heritage (Graham, 2020). Farm-to-table dining ensures fresh and high-quality ingredients, linking tourists with the local agricultural roots. Additionally, sharing stories and historical lessons about local dishes will add to the experience and significance of local dishes, and the personal stories of chefs and producers add depth to the culinary journey (Di-Clemente et al., 2020).

ii) Promotion Strategy

In today's digital age, online platforms and reviews significantly influence travel decisions. Thus, developing promotional tactics that include monitoring web presence, encouraging positive reviews, and communicating with travellers via social media can be a powerful move. Positive online buzz can greatly impact a destination's culinary tourism success, enticing additional visitors. To cultivate and sustain culinary tourism, promotion strategies such as destinations' official websites and social media play an overwhelmingly critical part in territorial rivalry, as they market their tangible and intangible resources to become appealing and competitive in culinary tourism (Scorrano et al., 2023).

iii) Enhancement of Tourism-Gastronomy-Agriculture Cooperation

To build a framework for diversification and commercial collaboration, a new strategy must be developed to link the three sectors of tourism, gastronomy, and agriculture successfully. This cooperation represents a new level of intersectoral cooperation between agriculture, gastronomy, and tourism. Through this approach, it views farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs as food suppliers to local hotels and restaurants. Rural regions are where food production is initiated and where local foods are elaborated (Di-Clemente et al., 2020). Culinary tourism has emerged as a new avenue for local producers to connect with diverse consumers (Fanelli, 2019), and this strategic collaboration can bring new perspectives and prospects for successful business expansion.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, implementing these tactics can dramatically increase the success of culinary tourism while promoting industry sustainability. By actively pursuing these techniques, places and businesses can effectively attract more visitors, improve their culinary experiences, and ultimately contribute to the long-term viability of culinary tourism. Furthermore, including sustainable practices in these initiatives guarantees that the industry flourishes commercially and respects and safeguards the cultural and environmental elements contributing to its appeal. Thus, by prioritising these activities, stakeholders may set the groundwork for a vibrant and resilient culinary tourism industry that benefits travellers and local communities.

REFERENCES

- Di-Clemente, E., Hernández-Mogollón, J. M., & López-Guzmán, T. (2020). Culinary tourism as an effective strategy for a profitable cooperation between agriculture and tourism. *Social Sciences*, 9(3), 25. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci9030025>
- Fanelli, R. M. (2019). Seeking gastronomic, healthy, and social experiences in Tuscan agritourism facilities. *Social Sciences*, 9(1), 2. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci9010002>
- Graham, S. C. (2020). Authentic culinary tourism experiences: The perspectives of locals. *Journal of Gastronomy and Tourism*, 5(2), 65-82. <https://doi.org/10.3727/216929720x15968961037926>
- Kattiyapornpong, U., Ditta-Apichai, M., & Chuntamara, C. (2021). Exploring gastronomic tourism experiences through online platforms: Evidence from Thai local communities. *Tourism Recreation Research/Tourism Recreation Research*, 47(3), 241–257. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2021.1963920>
- Long, L. M. (2014). Culinary tourism. In *Springer eBooks* (pp. 1–8). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-6167-4_416-1
- Mohd Sanip, M., Mustapha, R., & Mohamed, S. (2022). The role of Malaysian food attributes and contents in fostering Malaysian gastronomic tourism. *International Journal of Social Science Research*, 4(2), 195-203.
- Scorrano, P., Iaia, L., Cavallo, F., & Fait, M. (2023). The online role of culinary tourism for the sustainable development of tourist destinations. In *Routledge eBooks* (pp. 196–216). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003293187-14>
- Wijaya, T., Nurhadi, N., Kuncoro, A. M., & Rahmawaty, P. (2021). Qualitative study of Yogyakarta palace culinary gastronomic tourism. *Global Journal of Business Economics and Management Current Issues*, 11(1), 58–68. <https://doi.org/10.18844/gjbem.v11i1.5115>

STRATEGIC FINANCE CHOICES: EMBRACING THE RELEVANCE OF EQUITY FINANCING OVER DEBT FINANCING

Fauziah Mohamad Yunus
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
fauziahyunus@uitm.edu.my

Mohamad Hanif Abu Hassan
School of Business Management, College of Business, Universiti Utara Malaysia
hanifab@uum.edu.my

Muhammad Zarunnaim Haji Wahab
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
zarunnaim@uum.edu.my

ABSTRACT

This study examines the challenges inherent in debt financing and proposes equity financing as a strategic solution. Issues under debt financing, including financial strain, default risk, substantial interest costs, and restrictive covenants, are analysed. Equity financing is presented as a remedy, allowing businesses to raise capital without incurring debt, reducing financial strain, and eliminating interest costs. The study emphasises equity financing's capacity to enhance financial flexibility, share risks through ownership, foster strategic partnerships, and provide resilience in economic downturns. It concludes by underscoring the need for businesses to align their financial structures with specific needs, acknowledging the trade-offs between debt and equity financing. This exploration invites future research into industry-specific analyses, macroeconomic influences, and hybrid financing models to refine financial strategies. Overall, the study advocates for a nuanced understanding of financing mechanisms to foster sustainable and resilient business practices.

Keywords: Equity Financing; Debt Financing; Islamic Finance; Banking

INTRODUCTION

Equity financing plays a pivotal role in the financial ecosystem, serving as a cornerstone for businesses seeking sustainable growth and development. In the dynamic landscape of corporate finance and business, equity stands out as a powerful tool that allows businesses to access crucial capital without incurring debt (Gompers, & Lerner, 2010). Unlike traditional loans and other debt instruments, equity financing involves the issuance of company shares to external investors in exchange for funds, making these investors partial owners of the business (Mande et al., 2012).

The significance of equity financing lies in its ability to fuel innovation, expansion, and long-term viability for companies across various industries (Zhang et al., 2019). It is a strategic financial approach that not only injects essential capital into the business but also aligns the interests of investors with the success of the company. This alignment creates a symbiotic relationship, where investors benefit from the company's growth and profitability, while the

business gains access to the expertise, networks, and resources brought in by its equity partners.

In this era of rapid technological advancements and fierce global competition, the importance of equity financing becomes even more pronounced (Zhang et al., 2019). Startups and established enterprises alike leverage equity funding to navigate the challenges of scaling operations, conducting research and development, and staying ahead of industry trends (Kotey, 1999). Equity financing offers companies the flexibility to pursue ambitious goals and withstand economic downturns without the burden of high-interest debt payments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Debt financing and equity financing are fundamental components of corporate finance (Goh et al., 2017). Debt typically involves regular interest and principal payments (Dybvig, 2002), while equity represents ownership stakes in the company (Dybvig, 2002; Mande et al., 2012). Research has consistently demonstrated challenges associated with debt financing, including financial strain due to regular payments (Hassan & Yahya, 2020), increased default risk during economic downturns (Betz et al., 2018), substantial interest costs (Angbazo, 1997), and the impact of restrictive covenants on financial flexibility (Betz et al., 2018).

Scholars have highlighted the benefits of equity financing, emphasising its role in alleviating financial strain (Zhang et al., 2019), reducing default risk (Hassan et al., 2023; Kotey, 1999), eliminating interest costs (Angbazo, 1997), and providing greater flexibility by avoiding restrictive covenants (Berlin & Mester, 1992). Research indicates that equity financing enhances financial flexibility, allowing companies to adapt to changing market conditions and better manage risks (Mande et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2019).

Beyond capital infusion, equity financing facilitates strategic partnerships, with investors contributing valuable industry expertise, networks, and guidance (Gompers & Lerner, 2010). Comparative studies have evaluated the performance and sustainability of businesses based on their financing choices, with empirical evidence supporting outcomes related to debt- and equity-heavy financial structures (Sha'ari et al., 2023). Prior research also suggests that businesses with equity financing exhibit resilience during economic downturns, as the absence of fixed repayments positions them advantageously in challenging economic climates. In conclusion, the literature supports the relevance and significance of equity financing as a strategic solution in corporate finance, providing valuable insights for informed decision-making.

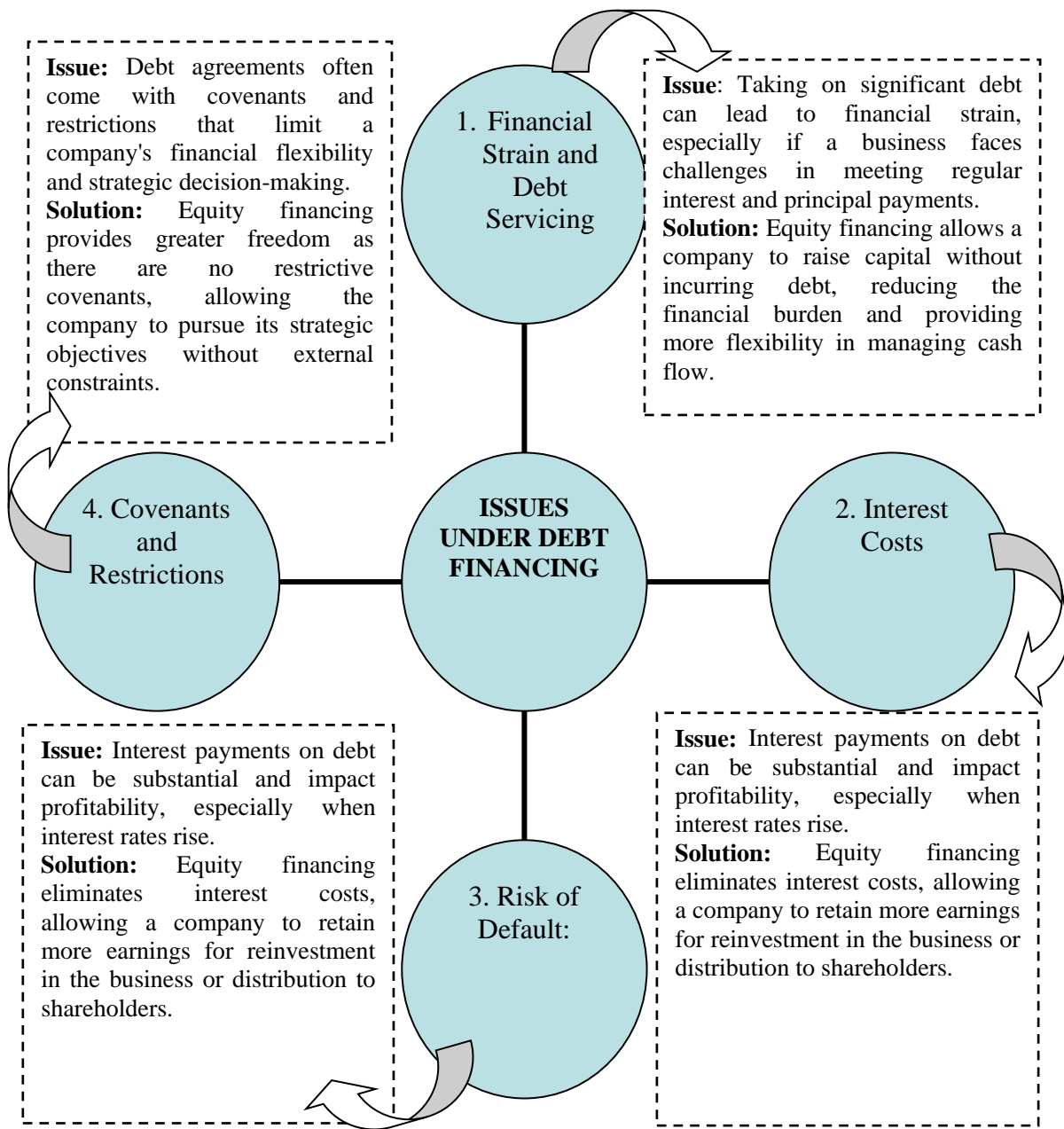


Figure 1. Issues, Challenge and Solution

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The exploration of issues under debt financing and the corresponding solutions through equity financing is important in the realm of corporate finance. Understanding the challenges inherent in debt financing and the mitigating factors associated with equity financing contributes to informed decision-making for businesses. This study sheds light on the complexities of financial structures, providing insights into the potential consequences of relying heavily on debt and the alternative avenues available for sustainable growth and resilience.

In conclusion, the study underscores the critical role of equity financing in addressing challenges posed by debt financing. The issues identified, such as financial strain, risk of default, interest costs, and restrictive covenants, illustrate the inherent vulnerabilities of debt-heavy financial strategies. The corresponding solutions presented highlight the merits of equity financing in offering businesses a more flexible, resilient, and strategic approach to capital acquisition. This dichotomy between debt and equity financing prompts a reconsideration of traditional financing paradigms, emphasising the importance of aligning financial structures with the unique needs and circumstances of individual companies.

Future research in this domain could delve deeper into specific industry contexts to discern how the dynamics of debt and equity financing vary across sectors. Exploring the impact of macroeconomic factors on the efficacy of these financing mechanisms during economic downturns could provide valuable insights for risk management strategies. Additionally, investigating the long-term performance and sustainability of businesses based on their financing choices may contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the implications of debt and equity financing. Further research could also explore innovative hybrid models that combine both debt and equity elements to optimise financial structures for different business scenarios. Overall, ongoing inquiry into the nuanced interplay between debt and equity financing remains crucial to refining financial strategies and fostering the resilience of businesses in a dynamic economic landscape.

REFERENCES

- Angbazo, L. (1997). Commercial bank net interest margins, default risk, interest-rate risk, and off-balance sheet banking. *Journal of Banking & Finance*, 21(1), 55-87. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0378-4266\(96\)00025-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0378-4266(96)00025-8)
- Berlin, M., & Mester, L. J. (1992). Debt covenants and renegotiation. *Journal of Financial Intermediation*, 2(2), 95–133. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1042-9573\(92\)90005-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/1042-9573(92)90005-x)
- Betz, J., Kellner, R., & Rösch, D. (2018). Systematic effects among loss given defaults and their implications on downturn estimation. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 271(3), 1113-1144. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejor.2018.05.059>
- Dybvig, P. H., & Wang, Y. (2002). *Debt and equity*. SSRN Electronic Journal. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.334921>
- Goh, B. W., Lim, C. Y., Lobo, G. J., & Tong, Y. H. (2017). Conditional conservatism and debt versus equity financing. *Contemporary Accounting Research*, 34(1), 216-251. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1911-3846.12237>
- Gompers & Lerner (2010). *Equity financing. Handbook of entrepreneurship research: An interdisciplinary survey and introduction*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Hassan, M. H. A., Yahya, S., & Shari, W. (2023). Factors affecting repayment behaviour in Islamic microfinance programs. *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting Finance and Management Sciences*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarafms/v13-i1/16553>

- Hassan, M. H. A., & Yahya, S. (2020). Determinants of repayment behaviour in Islamic microfinance programs: Case study of the rural economy funding scheme. *3rd UUM International Islamic Business Management Conference 2020 (IBMC 2020)*, 12–31.
- Kotey, B. (1999). Debt financing and factors internal to the business. *International Small Business Journal*, 17(3), 11–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242699173001>
- Mande, V., Park, Y. K., & Son, M. (2012). Equity or debt financing: Does good corporate governance matter? *Corporate Governance: An International Review*, 20(2), 195-211. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8683.2011.00897.x>
- Sha'ari, U. A. S., Hamzah, S. R. B., & Kamil, K. H. (2023). Financial sustainability of a firm: debt-based or equity-based financing to pursue? *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance*, 9(2), 199-224. <https://doi.org/10.21098/jimf.v9i2.1653>
- Zhang, L., Zhang, S., & Guo, Y. (2019). The effects of equity financing and debt financing on technological innovation: Evidence from developed countries. *Baltic Journal of Management*, 14(4), 698-715. <https://doi.org/10.1108/bjm-01-2019-0011>

DRIVING SOCIETAL DYNAMICS THROUGH DIGITALISATION

Shazwani Mohd Salleh

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
shazwani065@uitm.edu.my

Norhafizah Abdul Halim

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
hafizahhalim@uitm.edu.my

ABSTRACT

The broad adoption of digital technology into everyday life is what defines the digital age. This has resulted in a revolution in the ways in which people communicate, gain knowledge, participate in jobs, and socialise. The broad acceptance of digital technology has affected every facet of our day-to-day lives due to its widespread adoption. To successfully navigate and make the most of the opportunities that this widespread adoption presents, it is vital to have an understanding of the causes that are driving this widespread acceptance. The purpose of this paper is to determine the several reasons that have contributed to the widespread acceptance of digitalisation, with a specific focus on the consequences on society today. By performing a comprehensive review and document analysis of the current literature, this study is expected to improve our knowledge of the variables that drive the adoption of digital technology that impacts the society.

Keywords: Digitalization, Transforming, Influence, Social, Dynamics

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated digitalisation, compelling businesses, governments, and individuals to adapt to remote work, online learning, and virtual relationships. Social distance and lockdowns closed areas. Digital platforms were necessary to preserve education, trade, and social contact. Digitalisation is a complex combination of social, economic, and cultural factors. Digitisation has transformed trade, business, agriculture, industry, and government services. Digitising tiny Malaysian enterprises is not new. Since SMEs make up 98.5 percent (907,065) of all businesses in the country, their digital technology integration is vital. SME Corporation Malaysia is upping its efforts to help micro-enterprises in Malaysia adopt digitalisation within five years, up from 32% (The Star, 2019).

Digitalisation includes several digital technology potentials. This can include everything from using computers and the Internet to using cutting-edge technology like cloud computing and big data. It can also entail more complex tasks like adopting a digital business strategy or Industry 4.0 (Zimmermann, 2016). Digitalisation has changed practically every aspect of modern life, including business, communication, and society. Smartphones, the internet, and other digital platforms have transformed how people communicate, transact, and get information. In this age of interconnection, the question is how to navigate digitalisation and use its transformative power. Technical advances, socio-economic trends, and cultural imperatives drive digital technology adoption. Rapid and exponential processing power growth and

pervasive fast internet connections have made digital tools and resources available to everyone. This allows people and organisations to employ digital technology for many purposes. The increased use of mobile devices and cloud computing has also allowed people to access information and services at any time and from anywhere.

FACTORS AND AFFECT OF DRIVING DIGITAL ADOPTION

The global population has grown by 74 million people year-over-year, a 0.9 per cent increase. Starting in 2024, there will be 5.61 billion mobile phone subscribers. The latest GSMA Intelligence numbers show that 69.4% of the globe uses mobile devices. This equals 138 million (+2.5%) more people than in early 2023. The latest statistics show that 5.35 billion people use the internet, almost 66% of the world's population. Internet users have climbed by 1.8 per cent in the past year, with 97 million new users since 2023. Kepios found that over 5 billion people utilise social media, or 62.3% of the world population. This is crucial since these social media user IDs may not reflect unique people. The global total increased by 266 million last year, a 5.6 per cent annual growth rate.

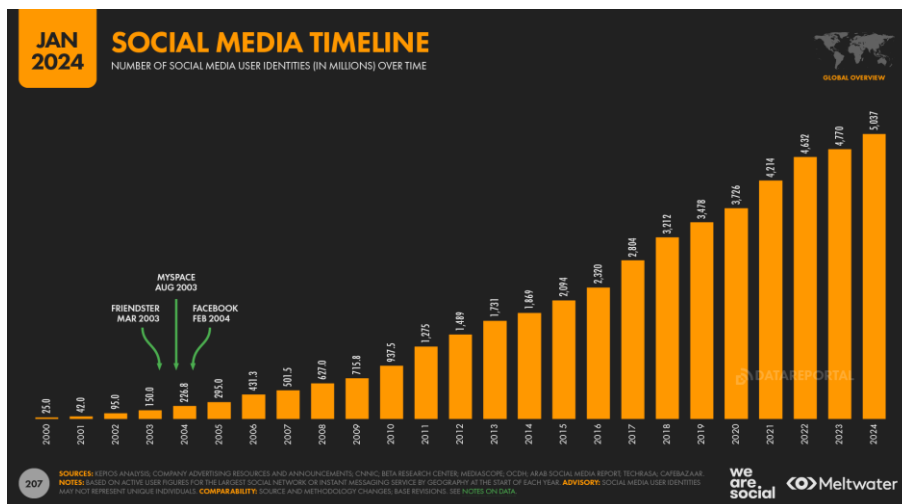


Figure 1: Social Media Timeline (Source: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-global-overview-report>)

This year's research's biggest discovery is over 5 billion active social media user IDs (Figure 1). Beginning in 2024, the worldwide total was 5.04 billion. This social media milestone comes before Facebook's 20th anniversary on February 4th. However, social media emerged long before Mark Zuckerberg launched TheFacebook.com from his Harvard dormitory in 2004. Almost 50 years ago, social media began its path to 5 billion people. 266 million new social media users joined in 2023, up 5.6% from the previous year. The globe gained 8.4 new social media users every second last year, a staggering number. This may explain why certain countries in the region have higher social media adoption rates than population and internet usage.

A. Communication Pattern Changes

- i. Communication techniques evolve throughout time. The change from in-person to digital communication has improved human connectivity. Email and instant messaging laid the groundwork for social media and mobile communication. This breakthrough has enabled quick global communication, encouraging global integration (Farid, 2022).
- ii. Digital communication technologies have revolutionised human interaction. WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and Zoom provide instant communication without time or location constraints. These technologies improve convenience and long-distance connectivity. However, digital weariness and the lack of in-person social skills are risks.

B. Impact of Digital Culture on Society

- i. Digital Identity and Culture. Digital culture affects identity formation and expression. Online accounts and social media allow people to build their public personas, expanding self-expression deliberately. However, these features raise concerns about authenticity, secrecy, and the constraints of digital personas.
- ii. Consumer Behavior Changes. Digital technology has changed customer behaviour, boosting e-commerce and digital marketing. Online shopping platforms, digital advertising, and influencer culture have revolutionised shopping. This transition has created a lively, adaptive market with targeted marketing.

According to the MOHE Guide to Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) 2021, Malaysian entrepreneurs and SMEs face the main difficulty of insufficient technology or digitalisation. Entrepreneurs should be able to communicate in several ways online. Modern kids need an innovative entrepreneurial curriculum due to their short schooling. Stimulating entrepreneurs' cognitive processes requires problem-based and tailored learning. Thus, using new technology to penetrate tech-dependent businesses is possible. The 2030 National Entrepreneurship Strategy claims that technology and innovation have improved the entrepreneurial climate. Also, contemporary understanding and technology use are lacking. Education must be proactive and adapt to digital and technological advances. The MOHE Guide to Entrepreneurship Integrated Education, 2021, outlines how technology and digitalisation have changed business.

Small companies and worldwide financial markets are being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many small and medium-sized enterprises are experiencing supply chain disruptions, delays in document-dependent business processes, limited resources to engage with stakeholders, restrictions on non-cash transactions, and difficulties managing a large workforce, according to the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (2020) report. Many SMEs and micro-enterprises may be unable to withstand the global COVID-19 pandemic, unlike big corporations. Automating sales tracking works well. Digitalisation is changing business operations. Unfortunately, 50% of Malaysian SMEs are still unprepared to digitise due to high costs, poor understanding, and skilled labour shortages (citation). Small and Medium-size enterprise (SME) adoption of new technology is also slow, which will hurt their performance. Mobile broadband has increased access to digital services and apps in Malaysia, connecting consumers and companies. Malaysian internet users rose from 24.5 million in 2016 to 28.7 million in 2017. By 2018, Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission claimed that 70.4% of internet users, including self-employed ones, are employed. A complete sales and customer monitoring

system for SMEs is now possible thanks to digital transformation. Innovations are opening new avenues for small and medium-sized businesses to grow sustainably.

CONCLUSION

Expansion of social media platforms has experienced exponential growth, becoming pivotal in facilitating social contact. These platforms facilitate users in sharing material, establishing connections with others, and engaging in digital communities. The emergence of platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok has radically transformed the manner in which individuals communicate and access information. Through responsible engagement, we can make use of the promise of digital change in the future to develop a society that is better educated, more connected, and more equitable. The potential of digital change in the future is really exciting.

REFERENCES

- Datereportal. (2024). Digital 2024 global overview report. Retrieved from <https://datereportal.com/reports/digital-2024-global-overview-report>
- Department of Statistics Malaysia. (2021). Department of Statistics Malaysia official portal. Retrieved August 31, 2021, from https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/cone&menu_id=bDA2VkxRSU40STcxdkZ4OGJ0c1ZVdz09
- Farid, M. (2022). Digital literacy vs flexing culture on YouTube. *Komunika: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi*, 16(1), 2548–9496.
- Giligan, J. (2020). Competencies for Educators in delivering digital accessibility in higher education. *In Lecture notes in computer science*, 184-199. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-49108-6_14
- Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation. (2020). MDEC's business continuity plan kicks in to deal with COVID-19 threat.
- Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2020). *MOHE guide to entrepreneurship integrated education (EIE)*. Ministry of Higher Education, Putrajaya.
- The Star. (2019). SME Corp targets the digitalisation of all SMEs by 2024. *The Star Digital Access*.
- Zimmermann, V. (2016). SMEs and digitalization: The current position, recent developments and challenges. *KfW Research Focus on Economics*, 138, 1-7.

LEAN 4.0: THE NEXT WAVE OF INNOVATION IN HOSPITALITY

Azyyati Anuar

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
azyyati@uitm.edu.my

Daing Maruak Sadek

Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
daing729@uitm.edu.my

Mohamad Azli Razali

Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Pulau
Pinang
mohamad080@uitm.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

The advent of Industry 4.0 has revolutionized various sectors, blending advanced digital technologies with traditional industrial processes (Moraes *et al.*, 2023). Among these, the hospitality industry stands to gain significantly from integrating Lean principles with Industry 4.0, often referred to as Lean 4.0 (Rauch *et al.*, 2020). This combination promises to enhance efficiency, reduce waste, and improve customer satisfaction by leveraging data analytics, IoT, and automation (Qureshi *et al.*, 2023). In this paper, we review how Lean 4.0 principles are being applied within the hospitality sector to drive operational excellence and sustainability. By examining case studies and empirical evidence, we aim to illustrate the transformative potential of Lean 4.0 in creating smarter, more responsive, and environmentally conscious hospitality businesses (Sapra, 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Lean Management in Hospitality

Lean management has been widely adopted in various industries to streamline processes and eliminate waste. In the hospitality industry, Lean practices focus on improving service delivery, reducing wait times, and optimizing resource utilization. However, there are challenges in implementing Lean due to the sector's unique characteristics, such as high variability in customer demand and the importance of human interaction (Verdecia *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, the intangibility of services and the complexity of service delivery processes present significant hurdles. Service variability and the need for high customization to meet individual guest preferences require a flexible Lean approach. Implementing Lean in hospitality also demands a cultural shift towards continuous improvement and employee engagement, which can be difficult to achieve in a sector with high staff turnover rates.

Industry 4.0 and Its Impact

Industry 4.0 encompasses a range of advanced technologies, including Internet of Things (IoT), big data analytics, artificial intelligence, and robotics. These technologies enable real-time data collection and analysis, predictive maintenance, and enhanced connectivity across systems. In manufacturing, Industry 4.0 has led to significant improvements in efficiency,

flexibility, and customization (Moraes *et al.*, 2023). Industry 4.0 also promotes flexibility by enabling manufacturers to quickly adapt to market changes and customize products to meet specific customer demands. The use of interconnected systems and smart sensors ensures that manufacturing assets are continuously monitored, providing real-time visibility and optimizing production workflows (IBM, 2022). These advancements collectively drive the digital transformation of industries, enhancing both operational efficiency and competitiveness.

Integration of Lean and Industry 4.0

Integrating Lean management with Industry 4.0 technologies, known as Lean 4.0, aims to combine the best of both approaches. Lean 4.0 leverages digital tools to enhance the effectiveness of Lean principles. For example, IoT sensors can provide real-time data on equipment performance, enabling predictive maintenance and reducing downtime. Big data analytics can identify patterns and inefficiencies that traditional Lean methods might overlook (Moraes *et al.*, 2023). Lean 4.0 not only enhances operational efficiency but also improves decision-making by providing real-time visibility into manufacturing processes. This integration facilitates more agile and responsive operations, allowing businesses to adapt to market changes and customer demands quickly. Furthermore, predictive maintenance supported by data analytics helps in the early detection of potential issues, thus preventing costly breakdowns and ensuring smooth operations (Tetteh-Caesar *et al.*, 2024).

Case Studies in Lean 4.0 Implementation in Hospitality

One notable case study that exemplifies Lean 4.0 in hospitality is the implementation of lean management principles in various hotels (Perdomo-Verdecia *et al.*, 2022). This study highlights how specific lean techniques, such as 5S, value stream mapping, and continuous improvement, have been successfully applied in hotel operations to streamline processes and enhance guest satisfaction. For example, by optimizing housekeeping operations and improving check-in/check-out processes, hotels could reduce waste and improve efficiency, leading to better service quality and increased customer satisfaction (Perdomo-Verdecia *et al.*, 2022).

Another compelling example is provided by Rahardjo (2023), who presents a case study on Lean manufacturing within Industry 4.0, specifically focusing on Smart Sustainable Manufacturing Systems (SSMS). This study illustrates how hotels can leverage advanced technologies such as IoT, artificial intelligence (AI), and data analytics to support lean initiatives. For instance, integrating IoT devices for real-time monitoring of hotel facilities can help in predictive maintenance, reducing downtime, and ensuring optimal equipment operation. This integration of technology not only supports lean principles of waste reduction and efficiency but also enhances the overall guest experience by maintaining high standards of service and facility management (Rahardjo, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The integration of Lean principles with Industry 4.0 technologies holds significant promise for the hospitality industry. Lean 4.0 can drive substantial improvements in operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and sustainability. By leveraging real-time data and advanced analytics, hospitality businesses can create more responsive and adaptive service environments. Future research and practical implementations will be crucial in realizing the full potential of Lean 4.0 in this dynamic and customer-centric industry.

REFERENCES

- IBM. (2022). What is Industry 4.0? Ibm; IBM. <https://www.ibm.com/topics/industry-4-0>
- Moraes, A., Carvalho, A. M., & Sampaio, P. (2023). Lean and Industry 4.0: a review of the relationship, its limitations, and the path ahead with Industry 5.0. *Machines*, 11(4), 443.
- Perdomo-Verdecia, V., Sacristán-Díaz, M., & Garrido-Vega, P. (2022). Lean management in hotels: Where we are and where we might go. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 104, 103250. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2022.103250>
- Rahardjo, B. (2023). Lean Manufacturing in Industry 4.0: A Smart and Sustainable Manufacturing System. *Machines*, 11(1), 72. <https://doi.org/10.3390/machines11010072>
- Rauch, E., Matt, D. T., & Linder, C. (2020). Lean management in hospitality: methods, applications and future directions. *International Journal of Services and Operations Management*, 36(3), 303-326.
- Qureshi, K. M., Mewada, B. G., Kaur, S., & Qureshi, M. R. N. M. (2023). Assessing lean 4.0 for Industry 4.0 readiness using PLS-SEM towards sustainable manufacturing supply chain. *Sustainability*, 15(5), 3950.
- Sapra, Y. (2023, August 14). Industry 4.0 and Lean Management – How to Manage the Chaos. <https://hashstudioz.com/blog/industry-4-0-and-lean-management/>
- Tetteh-Caesar, M. G., Gupta, S., Salonitis, K., & Jagtap, S. (2024). Implementing Lean 4.0: a review of case studies in pharmaceutical industry transformation. *Technological Sustainability*.
- Verdecia, V. P., Diarz, S. M., & Vega, P. G. (2022). Lean management in hotels: Where we are and where we might go.

AN EFFICIENCY MEASUREMENT OF ISLAMIC CHARITABLE NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION: A DATA ENVELOPMENT ANALYSIS APPLICATION

Dahlia Ibrahim
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
dahlia400@uitm.edu.my

Zuraidah Mohamed Isa
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
zuraidah588@uitm.edu.my

Giving is customary in the community, regardless of one's religious or secular motivations. Most donors take the non-profit organization (NPO)'s effectiveness in handling their money into account before making a contribution. To put it plainly, donors are curious about how well the nonprofit distributes their funds to the designated beneficiaries. An NPO is by definition a charity that raises funds and uses them to advance the welfare of society. Its major goal is to raise money and use it for social benefit, acting as a mediator between the donors and the community. On the other hand, an NPO functions in a manner akin to that of other charitable institutions. Its role is gathering public donations and allocating them for the ummah's benefit. Unlike other charitable organizations, the Islamic non-profit organization operates according to the shariah principle. Maqasid Al-shariah has a purpose that is briefly outlined in Table 1.

Objective	Explanation
Daruriyah	The people need to protect the five ingredients of living in peace. The five interests of living are religion, life, intellect, honor and property. The violation of these basic things will be considered as sinful and create life devoid of purpose.
Hajiyyah	The need to have the provision of necessities of facilities and space in order to lead a comfortable life in avoidance of human destruction.
Tahsiniyyah	To ensure peace in life, people need to keep their dignity by conducting life in good customs and moral.

Table 1: Maqasid Al-Shariah
Source: Abdul Rahim, Ismail and Awang (2006)

There are few empirical research on the effectiveness of Islamic non-profits organization. The researcher believes that not many previous empirical studies have looked at non-profit Islamic charities. Hasan and Ahmad (2014) looked at the effectiveness of the State Islamic Religious Councils (SIRCs) in Malaysia. Using a two-stage data envelopment analysis (DEA), the researchers concentrated on how well the fund collection and distribution processes

of the SIRCs reached the recipients. The waqf collection, information on the number of employees, banks serving as collection agents, and the total amount of RM expenditures incurred were the results of the initial stage of the study. The number of staff members and the distribution expenses in RM were the inputs and the outcome (waqf distribution) in the second stage of the study. Using DEA, they produced the efficiency scores for the waqf distribution from the two inputs and one output.

An earlier study by Maamor and Ismail (2010) also looked at the efficiency of banking Ar-Rahnu, cooperative, and state-affiliated organizations in Malaysia. Input-oriented DEA was used by these institutions to determine their relative efficiency in lowering inputs and generating high outputs. The researchers employed two inputs (total salary expenses and operating expenses) and one output (distributed loan) to calculate the efficiency ratings in this study.

A few years later, a research on Islamic charity non-profit organizations investigated the relative efficiency of Malaysia's zakat institutions (Abd Wahab & Abdul Rahman, 2013) . Additionally, DEA was used by both researchers in their study as an appropriate method for analyzing a limited sample size of 14 zakat institutions between 2003 and 2007. Abd Wahab and Abdul (2013), in contrast to Maamor and Ismail (2010), used three outputs—total collection, total distribution, and number of zakat payers—in addition to two inputs—the number of staff and total expenses—to estimate the efficiency scores.

Noteworthy, the analysis of earlier research mentioned above shows that there is no common framework to measure efficiency across of different sectors. The fact that every sector has distinct goals and methods of functioning serves as a compelling justification for this. As a result, selecting the factors that are used to analyze each sector is crucial since poorly selected variables might result in inaccurate estimates of the sector's efficiency level. However, every study mentioned above concurs that DEA is unquestionably one of the best instruments for measuring efficiency, particularly when a small sample size is involved.

REFERENCES

- Abd Wahab, N., & Abdul Rahman, A. R. (2013). Determinants of Efficiency of Zakat Institutions in Malaysia: A Non-parametric Approach. *Asian journal of Business and Accounting*, 6(2), 33-64.
- Abdul Rahim, R. A., Ismail, P., & Awang, I. (2006). Pendekatan Baru Maqasid Al-shariah dalam pengajian shariah di Malaysia: Satu analisis. *Jurnal Fiqh*, 3, 35–80.
- Hasan, H. & Ahmad, I. (2014). The Efficiency of Waqf Collection and Distribution of Malaysia State of Islamic Religion Councils (SIRCs): A Two -Stage Analysis. *Recent Development Analysis and its Applications. Proceedings of the 12th International Conference of DEA*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- Maamor, S., & Ismail, A. (2010). The Ar-Rahnu Efficiency and Its Determinants. *Journal of Islamic Economics, Banking and Finance*, 6(1), 105–125.

THE IMPACTS OF COLLABORATIVE ROBOTS (COBOTS) ON EMPLOYEE ROLES AND SATISFACTION

Rosliza Md Zani

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
rosliza568@uitm.edu.my

Shakirah Mohd Saad

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
shakirahmdsaad@uitm.edu.my

Syukriah Ali

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
syukriah@uitm.edu.my

ABSTRACT

In the Industry 5.0 era, collaborative robots, or cobots, which work alongside human employees, have dramatically changed the workplace. The paper addresses the impact of cobots on employee roles and satisfaction, using an analysis that looked into the recent developments and current research. Cobots have the potential to increase productivity and enrich the workforce, but they also create issues with job displacement and the requirement for new skill sets. Thus, understanding this relationship is vital for organizations looking to take advantage of the benefits of cobots while guaranteeing the well-being and satisfaction of their workforce.

Keywords: Collaborative Robots, Cobots, Employee Satisfaction, Industry 5.0

INTRODUCTION

In Industry 5.0, automation is becoming more human-centric, with cobots serving as essential tools to enhance human capabilities rather than taking their place. Cobots are made to collaborate with humans on jobs regarded as dangerous, repetitive, or requiring a high degree of precision. This collaboration aims to increase productivity and safety at work. However, the incorporation of cobots also raises concerns about how it might affect employee roles and satisfaction.

IMPACTS OF COBOTS ON EMPLOYEE ROLES AND SATISFACTION

Cobots have the power to drastically change the roles that employees play in organizations. Nowadays, cobots can be responsible for handling manual and repetitive jobs previously performed by humans, freeing up human workers to perform more sophisticated, innovative, and important tasks. The introduction of cobots in production settings has resulted in the reallocation of tasks, with employees taking on positions involving decision-making, problem-solving, and oversight of robotic operations (Villani et al.,2018). Additionally, by taking over physically demanding jobs, cobots improve workplace ergonomics by lowering the risk of

workplace injuries. According to a study by Kadir and Broberg (2020), cobots can increase workers' job satisfaction by lessening their physical strain, freeing them up, and allowing them to concentrate on mentally and physically demanding operations.

Cobots have a number of impacts on employees' levels of satisfaction. Firstly, cobots allow employees to perform higher-order operations, which can enrich their jobs. As their work becomes more significant and varied when they collaborate with cobots, employees report higher levels of job satisfaction, as seen in Eimontaite et al. (2019) and Gervasi et al. (2019). Their ability to learn new skills and work together with cutting-edge technology also enhances their professional development and sense of fulfillment at work. The creation of a human-robot collaboration scale that guarantees efficiency and safety is highlighted by Gervasi et al. (2019), who reported enhanced job satisfaction. Similar findings were made by Eimontaite et al. (2019), who discovered that efficient task allocation and open communication between humans and cobots can lower anxiety and boost general job satisfaction.

However, the integration of collaborative robots (cobots) in workplaces introduces significant challenges, particularly job displacement. Liu et al. (2023) found that robot adoption in China causes worker anxiety and stress due to job loss fears, negatively impacting job security and satisfaction. This study highlights that automation can negatively impact job security and satisfaction. Similarly, Acemoglu and Restrepo (2020) demonstrated that for every robot added per 1,000 workers in the U.S., a noticeable decline in wages by 0.42% was observed, and also a reduction in the employment-to-population ratio by 0.2 percentage points, translating to a loss of about 400,000 jobs. The impact is more pronounced in regions with high robot deployment, where one robot addition will reduce employment by six workers. Additionally, TechReport (2023) warned that automation might eliminate up to 73 million jobs globally by 2025, emphasizing the need for reskilling to mitigate workforce impacts.

These findings highlight the need for a balanced approach to cobot integration, maximizing productivity benefits while addressing displacement risks and ensuring worker well-being.

TECHNIQUES FOR INCREASING EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

In order to optimize cobot benefits and sustain increased employee satisfaction, organizations need to implement the following approaches:

1. Programs for Reskilling and Upskilling: Providing employees the tools needed for efficient collaboration with cobots may reduce worries about losing their jobs and, thus, increase their job satisfaction. Opportunities for continuous development will ensure employees remain valuable assets in an organization with advanced technology.
2. Inclusive Implementation Processes: Engaging employees during the cobot integration planning and execution phases can help them feel more accepted and in control of the process. Clear communication of the goals and benefits of cobot adoption can reduce anxiety and foster confidence.
3. Emphasis on Job Design: Redesigning jobs to include more meaningful and engaging duties can result in job enrichment. Employees can devote more time to areas needing human ingenuity and critical thought as ordinary activities have been delegated to the cobots.

4. Well-being Initiatives: Improving overall employee well-being can be achieved by addressing the ergonomic benefits of cobots, such as lowering physical strain. Programs that support both physical and emotional well-being can make employees happier and more productive.

CONCLUSION

One major development in Industry 5.0 is the introduction of collaborative robots in the workplace, which brings both benefits and challenges. By taking over dangerous and repetitive tasks, cobots can improve employee roles and job satisfaction. However, they also require careful management to address concerns about job displacement. Organizations can guarantee a favorable effect on employee satisfaction by engaging employees in the implementation process, investing in reskilling programs, and emphasizing job design and well-being.

REFERENCES

- Acemoglu, D., & Restrepo, P. (2020). Robots and jobs: Evidence from US labor markets. *Journal of Political Economy*, 128(6), 2188-2244. <https://doi.org/10.1086/705716>.
- Eimontaite, I., Gwilt, I., Cameron, D., Aitken, J. M., Rolph, J., Mokaram, S., & Law, J. (2019). Language-free graphical signage improves human performance and reduces anxiety when working collaboratively with robots. *The International Journal of Advanced Manufacturing Technology*, 100, 55-73. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00170-018-2625-2>
- Gervasi, R., Mastrogiacomo, L., & Franceschini, F. (2019). Towards the definition of a Human-Robot collaboration scale. In *Statistical Methods for Service Quality Evaluation* (pp. 75-80). Cuzzolin.
- Kadir, B. A., & Broberg, O. (2020). Human well-being and system performance in the transition to industry 4.0. *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*, 76, 102936.
- Liu, S., Luo, X., & Seamans, R. (2023). The impact of robot adoption on workers' health: Evidence from China. *Brookings*. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-impact-of-robot-adoption-on-workers-health-evidence-from-china>.
- TechReport. (2023). The future of work: Automation and job displacement. *Techreport*. <https://techreport.com/articles/the-future-of-work-automation-and-job-displacement/>
- Villani, V., Pini, F., Leali, F., & Secchi, C. (2018). Survey on human-robot collaboration in industrial settings: Safety, intuitive interfaces and applications. *Mechatronics*, 55, 248-266.

UNIT TRUSTS: THE IDEAL INVESTMENT PLATFORM FOR YOUTH AND THE NEWLY EMPLOYED

Zuraidah Mohamed Isa
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
zuraidah588@uitm.edu.my

Dahlia Ibrahim
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
dahlia400@uitm.edu.my

Zaiful Affendi Ahmad Zabib
Sekolah Kebangsaan Kem Lapangan Terbang, Sungai Petani, Kedah
zabaz0676@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Mutual funds, sometimes referred to as unit trusts, are a type of collective investment plan that pools the capital of several individuals to buy a variety of securities. As a simple and accessible way to begin investing, this investment vehicle has grown in popularity. Unit trusts have become a popular investment option in Malaysia, particularly among Malaysia's youth and fresh graduates. Early investing is essential for long-term financial stability due to the rising cost of living and the need for financial security. The advantages of unit trusts in the Malaysian setting and their suitability for young and newly employed investors are examined in this article. Future recommendations are also provided to improve the efficacy of investment options.

BENEFITS OF UNIT TRUSTS TO YOUTH AND THE NEWLY EMPLOYED

Unit trusts offer a number of advantages, one of which is diversification with comparatively small investments. A significant strategy for lessening the effects of a single investment's bad performance is diversification (Fama & French, 1992). Compared to buying individual equities, investing in a unit trust exposes investors to a greater variety of securities and reduces risk. Malaysian unit trusts offer a well-rounded approach to risk management by investing in a range of assets, such as equities, bonds, and real estate. Because Malaysia is still an emerging economy, it might be volatile, therefore diversification is essential (Thompson & Choi, 2001). Professional fund managers with the knowledge and resources to handle the intricacies of the market oversee unit trusts in Malaysia. This professional management is particularly advantageous for young and newly employed individuals who may lack the time and knowledge to manage their investments effectively (Alias & Tho, 2011).

Another significant advantage is the availability of unit trusts. Young and newly employed Malaysians sometimes have insufficient financial resources and investment knowledge. Unit trusts, therefore, offer a convenient and cost-effective way to get started in the investment sector. In Malaysia, the minimum initial investment for unit trusts is often as low as RM100. This low entry requirement encourages young investors to start investing early and get the benefits of compounding over time (Goh & Lim, 2013). Thus, Malaysian unit trusts enable

young and newly employed investors to make small, regular contributions, encouraging disciplined saving and investment habits. Unit trusts also have a major advantage in liquidity, and are generally easy to buy and sell, providing investors with the flexibility to access their funds when needed without significant delays or penalties (Bogle, 1999).

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Financial education is to be emphasized in order to further improve unit trusts' efficacy for youthful and newly employed investors. The information and abilities needed to make wise investment decisions can be acquired through financial literacy classes. Financial literacy initiatives that provide knowledge about unit trusts and other investment options can be a major contribution from employers and educational institutions (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2014; Zahri & Ariffin, 2017).

Unit trusts can also be made more approachable and user-friendly by utilising technology. Young people with an interest in technology may be drawn to mobile apps and web platforms that streamline the investing process. The development of user-friendly digital interfaces that satisfy the tastes of the younger generation need to be made the priority of financial institutions in Malaysia.

CONCLUSION

Unit trusts are an excellent choice for young Malaysians who are starting their careers to invest because of their liquidity, competent management, accessibility, and diversification. Young and newly employed investors can benefit from compounding and form disciplined saving habits by beginning early. However, the investor's ability to make wise decisions and level of financial literacy play a major role in these investments' performance. Therefore, utilising technology and providing financial education should come first to optimise the advantages of unit trusts. By taking these steps, young and recently hired Malaysian investors will be better equipped to achieve long-term financial growth and stability. Further research and educational courses have the potential to improve the accessibility and efficacy of unit trusts for novice investors.

REFERENCES

- Alias, M. H., & Tho, J. (2011). Determinants of investors' fund selection behaviour in Malaysia. *Journal of Business & Economics Research*, 9(2), 59-64.
- Bogle, J. C. (1999). *Common sense on mutual funds: New imperatives for the intelligent investor*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Fama, E. F., & French, K. R. (1992). The cross-section of expected stock returns. *The Journal of Finance*, 47(2), 427-465.
- Goh, C. L., & Lim, M. H. (2013). Factors influencing Malaysian investors' financial planning behavior. *Journal of Advanced Management Science*, 1(3), 264-269.

- Lusardi, A., & Mitchell, O. S. (2014). The economic importance of financial literacy: Theory and evidence. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 52(1), 5-44.
- Thompson, E. R., & Choi, L. C. (2001). Determinants of mutual fund flows: Evidence from Malaysia. *Journal of Multinational Financial Management*, 11(1), 23-42.
- Zahri, N. H., & Ariffin, A. M. (2017). Financial literacy among university students: Implications on investment planning behavior. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 8(10), 109-117.

‘OUR ICEBERG IS MELTING’: MANAGING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

Azyyati Anuar

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
azyyati@uitm.edu.my

Bawani Selvaraj

Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan
Kedah
wani190@uitm.edu.my

Daing Maruak Sadek

Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan
Kedah
daing729@uitm.edu.my

“Culture changes with as much difficulty in penguin colonies as in human colonies” - Kotter and Rathgeber

INTRODUCTION

John Kotter and Holger Rathgeber’s *Our Iceberg Is Melting: Changing and Succeeding Under Any Conditions* (2006) is a sought-after, award-winning book on leadership. The eight principles mainly revolve around managing change, initiating change, getting others to change, and creating a new culture in an organisation/workplace. The penguin colony in Antarctica is used as an analogy to show the challenges faced by employers and employees in the real world. The story and characters in this fable are like people that we know and recognise, including ourselves. It evokes powerful emotions where most people fear change, which is often associated with confusion and resistance. Thus, this article sets out to review the eight-step process required for change in any organisation.

The story

Louis led a colony that had a Leadership Council known as the Group of Ten. Two hundred and sixty penguins lived in the colony, and among them was Fred, the curious and observant one, who fished less and researched more about the iceberg and sea. He gathered information (based on his observation) that the iceberg they are currently inhabiting could collapse, which would be disastrous for the penguins. He approached Alice, one of the ten leaders who had a reputation for getting things done, alerting her about this phenomenon. When Alice contacted all the members of the Leadership Council, they were very sceptical.

Alice asked Louis to invite Fred to give a talk at the next Leadership Council meeting, and he agreed. Fred had discovered a huge hollow inside the iceberg filled with seawater. As winter approached, the water would freeze, expanding the ice and subsequently shattering the iceberg into pieces. Fred’s explanation was compelling – he constructed a model of the iceberg to show the hollow inside. Some of the other leaders resisted, saying Fred could not prove his theory, claiming that he was creating unwarranted anxiety and worry. Alice told Louis that the

colony would hold him and all the leaders responsible if Fred was right.

Louis knew that to survive this catastrophe, they needed to work together as a team. Despite all the challenges, discussions, arguments and setbacks, just before the winter, the penguins moved to their new home. It was different, unfamiliar, but somehow not as bad as what they thought. The next season, they moved again – the important lesson they learned was not to become complacent and contented. The second move was relatively easier to cope with than the first one. Now, they move like nomads, and most of the colonists have accepted it.

Alice then asked Louis to restructure the Leadership Council. It was not an easy task to 'preserve the dignity and respect' for penguins who worked hard to help and serve the colony. Nevertheless, Louis managed to do it and felt that the penguins were now open to changes and adjusting to new circumstances, especially the youngsters who worked for the betterment of the colony. Transformation is never easy, especially when dealing with changes. The following eight-step process was put into practice by the penguins that can be implemented in any workplace or organisation to cope with changes as well as challenges.

8-STEP PROCESS FOR SUCCESSFUL CHANGE IN ANY ORGANISATION

To successfully navigate the turbulent waters of organisational transformation, these eight pivotal steps are deemed crucial:

1. **Establishing a Sense of Urgency:** Communicate the need for change clearly so that everyone understands the importance of immediate action. In any organisation, including ours, this might mean highlighting competitive pressures or customer feedback that necessitate a rapid response. We must inspire people to act with passion and purpose.
2. **Forming a Strong Team:** Assemble a diverse team with the skills and authority to lead change. This includes individuals with leadership, communication, and analytical skills, as well as credibility within the organisation.
3. **Developing and Planning for a Better Future:** Craft a clear strategy through initiatives linked directly to the vision. Move away from past practices and outline a new direction. This helps align all members of the organisation towards common goals.
4. **Communication:** Ensure that everyone comprehends and accepts the vision and strategy through consistent and transparent communication. Use various channels to reach all employees and address their concerns.
5. **Tearing Down Walls and Empowering People:** Encourage and empower employees to take initiative and contribute towards the common objective. This may involve flattening hierarchies and promoting a culture of collaboration. Unity is central in achieving the goals together.
6. **Achieving Short-term Wins:** Identify and celebrate small victories that show progress and energise employees to persist. This helps maintain enthusiasm and demonstrate that the changes are working.

7. Remaining Tenacious and Persistent: Stay committed to the change process despite obstacles and setbacks that could be linked to structures and policies. Consistent effort and determination are critical for long-term success.
8. Creating a New Workplace Culture: Develop new norms, behaviours, and mindsets that align with the current realities, and every progress made is significant. This replaces outdated practices and sustains the change.

CONCLUSION

The transformation within the colony, including the restructuring of the Leadership Council and the adoption of an eight-step process for managing change, serves as a blueprint for organisations to navigate and embrace change effectively. This process includes establishing urgency, forming a competent team, planning for the future, effective communication, empowerment, achieving short-term wins, persistence, and creating a new culture aligned with current realities.

In summary, the story underscores that change, however difficult, is essential for survival and growth. Effective change management requires a clear vision, strong leadership, and a collaborative approach.

REFERENCE

Kotter, J. P., & Rathgeber, H. (2006). *Our iceberg is melting: Changing and succeeding under any conditions*. Pan Macmillan.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EBOOKS AND TRADITIONAL BOOKS IN MALAYSIA

Abd Rasyid Ramli

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
arasyidr@uitm.edu.my

Shakirah Mohd Saad

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
shakirahmdsaad@uitm.edu.my

Rosliza Md Zani

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
rosliza568@uitm.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

The debate between eBooks and traditional books continues to grow, especially in Malaysia where digital technology adoption is rapidly increasing. This comparative study examines the current trends, advantages, and disadvantages of both formats within the Malaysian context, considering consumer preferences, environmental impacts, and future trends. Research indicates a notable rise in the adoption of digital reading platforms among university students in Malaysia, driven by factors such as convenience and accessibility (Rahim et al., 2021). This trend highlights the broader digital transformation occurring within the country's educational sector.

MARKET TRENDS AND CONSUMER PREFERENCES

The eBook market is experiencing significant growth globally, with a projected worth of \$32.19 billion by 2032. This trend is also noticeable in Malaysia, where increased smartphone penetration and digital literacy have propelled eBook adoption. According to the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), 97.4% of Malaysians used the Internet in 2022, with many accessing digital reading platforms through their devices. However, traditional books remain popular, particularly among older generations and those who value the tactile experience of physical books (MCMC, 2022; Hoffman, 2023).

A study among university students in Malaysia found that while 74.6% preferred eBooks for their portability, while 66.7% favoured printed books for ease of studying and making notes (Lim & Mokhtar, 2017). This highlights the diverse preferences across different demographics.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

As the eBook market expands, it is essential to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of eBooks and traditional books. Understanding these pros and cons can help users make informed decisions based on their reading preferences and needs.

eBooks:

1. **Convenience and Portability:** eBooks offer unmatched convenience, where an e-reader can store thousands of books, making it an ideal space-saving solution ideal for avid readers and students (Hoffman, 2023).
2. **Customisation:** eBooks allow adjustments in font size, style, and layout, which can enhance the reading experience, particularly for individuals with visual impairments or dyslexia (Kitaboo, 2024).
3. **Cost-Effectiveness:** Generally, eBooks are cheaper than printed books as they eliminate printing and distribution costs. Additionally, there are numerous free eBooks available online (Kitaboo, 2024).
4. **Environmental Impact:** While eBooks eliminate the need for paper, the production and disposal of e-readers contribute to electronic waste. Environmental benefits depend on the reader's habits, one of which is that prolific readers might find eBooks more eco-friendly over time (Hoffman, 2023).

Traditional Books:

1. **Tactile Experience:** Many readers prefer to enjoy the physical feel of books, which includes the texture of the paper and the act of turning pages, and these are absent in the use of eBooks (Hoffman, 2023).
2. **Ease of Sharing:** Physical books can be easily shared, sold, or donated, enhancing their lifespan and accessibility for generations to come (Kitaboo, 2024).
3. **Eye Strain:** Printed books do not cause the same level of eye strain as eBooks, which require staring at a screen causing visual fatigue after prolonged reading periods (Kitaboo, 2024).
4. **Durability and Longevity:** Well-maintained printed books can last for decades and be enjoyed by multiple generations, whereas e-readers may have a shorter lifespan due to technological obsolescence (Hoffman, 2023).

THE FUTURE OF READING IN MALAYSIA

The future of reading in Malaysia will likely involve a hybrid approach, combining the benefits of both eBooks and traditional books. The ongoing digital transformation is expected to make eBooks more prevalent, especially among the younger and tech-savvy population. Enhanced features such as read-aloud options, multilingual support, and personalised recommendations are also set to further boost eBook adoption among the community (Oliver, 2024).

However, traditional books are not disappearing anytime soon. Their unique advantages, such as the tangible reading experience and lower long-term environmental impact for occasional readers, allow them to remain an integral part of the reading landscape.

CONCLUSION

In Malaysia, both eBooks and traditional books have their own distinct advantages and disadvantages. The choice between them depends on individual preferences, reading habits, and environmental considerations. As technology continues to evolve, so does the way Malaysians consume written content, which these patterns make the current writing and publishing industry attractive, especially for readers and publishers.

REFERENCES

- Hoffman, T. (2023, September 6). *Ebooks vs Printed books: Statistics, Sales, Facts, and trends for 2023*. Scanse. <https://scanse.io/blog/ebooks-vs-printed-books-statistics-sales-trends/>
- Kitaboo. (2024). *eBook or printed book: Which one is better for reading?* <https://www.kitaboo.com>
- Lim, C. S., & Mokhtar, M. (2017). Environmental impact of e-books and printed books in Malaysia. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 24(2), 201-212.
- Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC). (2022). *Internet Users Survey 2022*. <https://www.mcmc.gov.my>
- Oliver, J. (2024, April 29). *Swipe into the Future: eBooks & Digital Publishing in 2024*. MagicBox. <https://www.getmagicbox.com/blog/swipe-into-the-future-ebooks-digital-publishing-in-2024/>
- Rahim, F. A., Saad, S., & Ismail, M. (2021). Adoption of Digital Reading Platforms Among University Students in Malaysia. *Education and Information Technologies*, 26, 4581–4602.

PERSONALIZED COMMERCE IN THE ERA OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Fatihah Norazami Abdullah
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
fatih876@uitm.edu.my

Noriza Mohd Saad
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kelantan
noriza@uitm.edu.my

Nor Edi Azhar Mohamed
Accounting and Finance Department, University Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN)
noredi@uniten.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, personalized commerce has become a pivotal strategy for retailers looking to enhance customer engagement and drive sales. Social media platforms and influencers play a significant role in this transformation, offering unique opportunities to create highly tailored shopping experiences.

LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Pinterest have evolved beyond simple networking sites into powerful commerce tools. These platforms collect vast amounts of user data, including interests, behaviors, and preferences, which can be harnessed to offer personalized shopping experiences (Chu et al., 2023).

1. Targeted Advertising

Social media platforms utilize sophisticated algorithms to display advertisements tailored to individual users based on online behavior. For instance, a user who frequently engages with fitness content might see some advertisements for workout gear or health supplements (Yan, 2024).

2. Shoppable Posts and Stories

Instagram and Facebook offer shoppable posts and stories, allowing users to purchase products directly from their feeds. These posts are often personalized based on user interactions, making the shopping experience seamless and intuitive (Yan, 2024).

3. Social Shopping Features

Features like Instagram Shops and Facebook Marketplace provide personalized product recommendations, creating a tailored shopping environment within the social media ecosystem (Yan, 2024).

THE ROLE OF INFLUENCERS

Influencers, with their large and engaged followings, are key players in personalized commerce. They help brands reach specific target audiences in an authentic and relatable manner.

1. **Influencer Collaborations:**

Brands collaborate with influencers to create sponsored content that showcases their products. These collaborations often include discount codes or exclusive offers, personalized for the influencer's audience (Satpathy & Verma, 2023).

2. **Authentic Recommendations:**

Influencers are crucial in modern digital marketing by sharing personal experiences and product reviews with their followers. These stories are viewed as more authentic and relatable than traditional advertisements, providing a trusted source of information. Influencers' endorsements are trusted due to their perceived expertise, transparency, and personal connection with their audience. This trust greatly impacts purchasing decisions, as followers are more inclined to value and act on recommendations from influencers they admire and relate to.

The effects of this authenticity are two folds. First, it boosts the product's credibility, as followers see the influencer's positive experiences as social proof. Second, it creates emotional engagement, making followers feel that the product is recommended by a trusted friend rather than a distant corporation. This blend of credibility and emotional resonance often results in higher conversion rates, as consumers are more likely to purchase products personally recommended by someone they trust (Prakashlal, 2023).

3. **Interactive Content:**

Influencers strategically utilize interactive contents such as polls, Q&A sessions, and live streams to engage with their audience and provide personalized product recommendations. These interactive methods serve various purposes within digital marketing.

Polls allow influencers to assess their followers' preferences and opinions on different topics or products, gathering valuable data that can inform future content and recommendations. For example, an influencer might conduct a poll to identify which type of product their audience is most interested in, enabling them to highlight items that match their followers' preferences.

Q&A sessions facilitate direct interaction between influencers and their audience, allowing followers to ask questions and receive personalized responses. This format not only boosts engagement but also enables influencers to address specific concerns or interests, providing tailored advice and product recommendations. The real-time aspect of Q&A sessions helps to build a more personal connection and trust with the audience.

Live streams offer an even more dynamic and immediate form of interaction. During live broadcasts, influencers can demonstrate products, share their experiences, and respond to viewer comments and questions in real time. These aspects of immediacy and transparency significantly enhance the authenticity of the interaction, making product recommendations more compelling. Additionally, live streams often include spontaneous and unscripted content, further reinforcing the influencer's perceived authenticity and reliability.

CONCLUSION

The growth of personalized commerce is mostly due to social media influencers and platforms, which provide creative means of customizing consumer experiences to personal tastes. Brands can develop individualized and compelling experiences that appeal to consumers by utilizing user data and genuine follower-influencer relationships.

REFERENCES

- Chu, C. J., Chiang, I. P., Tsai, K. H., & Tung, Y. H. (2023). Exploring the effects of personalized advertising on social network sites. *Journal of Social Media Marketing*, 1(2), 38-54. <https://doi.org/10.33422/jsmm.v1i2.1051>
- Prakashlal, D. O. (2024). Impact of social media on e-commerce: A conceptual study. *Scitepress*. <https://www.scitepress.org/publishedPapers/2023/125038/pdf/index.html>
- Satpathy, A., & Verma, S. (2023). The impact of social media and e-commerce on consumer behavior and expectations. *Medium*. https://medium.com/@the_exploring_minds/the-impact-of-social-media-and-e-commerce-on-consumer-behavior-and-expectations-56241b50214a
- Yan, Y. (2024). The impact of e-commerce and social media personalized recommendations on consumer behavior in the digital era from the perspective of behavioral economics. *Advances in Economics, Management and Political Sciences*, 59, 300-305. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2754-1169/59/20231136>

PERSONALISED RECOMMENDATIONS IN ONLINE SHOPPING: HOW IT INFLUENCE CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT AND SATISFACTION?

Wan Shahrul Aziah Wan Mahamad

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
aziah436@uitm.edu.my

Ramli Saad

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
ramli107@uitm.edu.my

Yong Azrina Ali Akbar

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
yong198@uitm.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

E-commerce has evolved into a crucial component of global retail, as it has undergone significant transformations since the advent of the Internet. The increasing digitalisation of modern life has enabled consumers worldwide to benefit from the advantages of online activities. This shift has fundamentally changed how buyers and sellers interact and communicate in consumer behaviour (Odzic & Ates, 2023).

In the fast-paced digital landscape of today, personalised recommendations are essential for enhancing the customer experience (Mehta Jimit, 2023), and companies are increasingly offering them to customers, suggesting products that align with their specific needs and interests (Ma & Sun, 2020). Through the use of data and technology, businesses can deliver customised suggestions to their customers, resulting in higher levels of engagement and satisfaction.

HOW PERSONALIZED RECOMMENDATIONS INFLUENCE ON CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT AND SATISFACTION?

The significance of personalised product recommendations becomes apparent through an analysis of customer responses they generate. By suggesting items that align with customers' needs and interests, personalised recommendations help customers make informed product choices. It enhances the shopping experience by offering customers products and services tailored to their preferences, streamlining their search process and introducing them to new offerings they might not have found otherwise (Mehta Jimit, 2023). This, in turn, leads to better decision-making, thereby boosting customer engagement and fostering satisfaction, which is valuable to firms (Tsekouras et al., 2020).

Furthermore, these recommendations also provide personalisation to customers by predicting their individual interests and needs, guiding customers to engage in compelling actions (Rai, 2020). This technique aims to alleviate information overload by offering users highly relevant suggestions tailored to their interests, thereby streamlining their individual search

experiences (Lu et al., 2015). As a result, customer satisfaction with their choices increases, leading to greater loyalty and higher purchase intentions.

In addition, personalised recommendations are transforming how companies engage with customers. By offering insights into customer behaviour and preferences, these recommendations empower companies to enhance their marketing strategies and better target their audience. Odzic and Ates (2023) found that consumers are likely to continue shopping online if their past purchase experiences were positive, and they may hesitate to repeat it if the experience was negative. Thus, the capability of a company to provide suitable personalised recommendations can foster higher levels of customer engagement and satisfaction, thereby enhancing the overall customer experience.

CONCLUSION

In summary, personalised recommendations improve customer engagement and satisfaction by offering tailored suggestions, streamlining the shopping experience, and increasing conversions. It transforms how customers approach online shopping, making it more convenient, introducing them to new products and services, and enabling companies to better understand their customers. This overall enhancement in customer experience can revolutionise interactions with brands and companies.

REFERENCES

- Lu, J., Wu, D., Mao, M., Wang, W., & Zhang, G. (2015). Recommender system application developments: A survey. *Decision Support Systems*, 74, 12–32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2015.03.008>
- Ma, L., & Sun, B. (2020). Machine learning and AI in marketing – Connecting computing power to human insights. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 37(3), 481–504. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2020.04.005>
- Jimit Mehta (2023). *The impact of personalized recommendations on customer experience*. <https://abmatic.ai/blog/impact-of-personalized-recommendations-on-customer-experience>
- Odzic, S., & Ates, D. B. (2023). *The impact of personalization on consumer purchase intention in online shopping* [Master Thesis, School of Business, Society and Engineering, Mälardalen University]. <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2:1760914>
- Rai, A. (2020). Explainable AI: from black box to glass box. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(1), 137–141. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-019-00710-5>
- Tsekouras, D., Dellaert, B. G. C., Donkers, B., & Häubl, G. (2020). Product set granularity and consumer response to recommendations. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 48(2), 186–202. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-019-00682-6>

EXPLORING DRIVERS BEHIND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ASPIRATION TO BECOME SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

Sarah Sabir Ahmad

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
sarah342@uitm.edu.my

Azfahanee Zakaria

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
azfa292@uitm.edu.my

Nurdiyana Nazihah Zainal

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
nurdiyana20@uitm.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

Social media has become a significant part of daily life. Statista (2021) reports that YouTube has 1.86 billion global users, while Facebook videos attract over 500 million viewers. As social media usage grows, individuals increasingly encounter social media influencers (SMIs). According to Shabahang et al. (2022), SMIs are particularly admired by younger generations, who often aspire to become influencers themselves. An SMI is someone with a large following on social media platforms who can influence their audience's beliefs, actions, and purchasing decisions. In the realm of influencer marketing, Lou and Yuan (2019) found that SMIs, by producing content in their areas of expertise and targeting a large audience, serve as valuable marketing tools for brands. These influencers often specialize in fashion, beauty, fitness, travel, technology, or lifestyle, leveraging platforms like YouTube and Facebook to reach billions of users.

A study by Fetter et al. (2023) reveals that the most common reason for wanting to become an SMI is financial stability. Many people are drawn to social media careers as they seem more lucrative than traditional ones. Becoming an SMI can provide financial motivation through opportunities like paid endorsements, career advancement, and job opportunities (An & Haryanto, 2021). Another common reason is personal branding. In today's digital environment, social media is the fastest platform to achieve fame and influence, with success often based on establishing a brand identity consumable by audiences and commercial brands. Additionally, the entertainment factor drives young adults to become SMIs, as social media platforms offer intrinsic motivation and amusement (Audrezet et al., 2020).

This study investigates the factors driving students' desire to become SMIs at UiTM Kedah. Previous research suggests financial gain is a strong motivator (Bradley, 2022), potentially linked to materialistic values (Shabahang et al., 2022). However, the impact of financial stability on this aspiration remains underexplored. This study aims to bridge this gap. Beyond financial incentives, the strategic use of platforms for personal branding and crafting public personas also attracts potential SMIs (Croes & Bartels, 2021). Concerns about influencers relying on media and advertising for self-promotion and shifting audience relationships highlight the need for further research. Therefore, this study's primary objective is to identify the most significant factors contributing to students' desire to become SMIs, thus

shedding light on why this career path is attractive to the younger generation.

FINANCIAL STABILITY, PERSONAL BRANDING, AND ENTERTAINMENT

Financial motivation is a significant factor for aspiring SMIs. A professional portfolio on Instagram can lead to opportunities like paid endorsements, career advancement, and job opportunities (An & Haryanto, 2021). Bradley (2022) emphasizes that financial gain is a primary motivator for aspiring social influencers. Some influencers have earned substantial incomes, with examples of individuals earning over \$700,000 in six months through affiliate links, brand sponsorships, and pay-per-view income from YouTube (Droz-dit-Busset, 2022).

In the quest for social media fame, users seek validation through "likes," contributing to their quest for recognition and status (Sheldon & Newman, 2019). Creating a social media brand persona involves maintaining a distinct appearance and style aligned with the content topic to establish credibility for marketing purposes. Social influencers strategically promote themselves, developing unique public personas that resonate with specific demographics (Croes & Bartels, 2021). This strategic self-presentation helps influencers build brands by spreading positive word of mouth online, proving more effective than traditional forms of brand marketing (Kircaburun et al., 2020).

DATA COLLECTION, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study examined students from UiTM Kedah, selected through convenience sampling. A total of 208 students participated, with individual responses analyzed across six faculties on campus. Employing a descriptive research design and a quantitative approach, the study conducted a cross-sectional survey to evaluate the influence of financial stability, personal branding, and entertainment on the desirability of pursuing a career as a social media influencer (SMI). The questionnaire consisted of three sections: demographic information, questions regarding the independent variables, and questions related to the dependent variables.

Data were processed using SPSS statistical software, version 26.0. Reliability analysis, frequency analysis, and multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine relationships and gauge the impact of each independent variable on the desirability of becoming an SMI.

A total of 208 respondents participated in the study, with a sample predominantly composed of women (79.6%) compared to men (20.4%). The majority of respondents were 22 years old, representing 27.8% of the sample. Additionally, most participants (68.5%) were non-residents. The Faculty of Business and Management had the highest representation, accounting for 84.3% of respondents, while the Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Sciences had the lowest representation at 0.9%. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha indicated that all values exceeded 0.7, suggesting that the overall measure was acceptable.

For the Multiple Regression Analysis, the R^2 score of 35% indicated that independent variables moderately explained dependent variables. Financial stability and entertainment were the most significant independent variables influencing the desirability of becoming an SMI among UiTM Kedah students.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The primary motivation for aspiring SMIs is financial gain, aligning with Bradley (2022). Financial stability showed the strongest influence on the desirability of becoming an SMI among students in UiTM Kedah. Students are inclined to become SMIs due to the ability to generate income through social media activities. The hypothesis related to personal branding demonstrated an insignificant influence, possibly due to varied perceptions of personal branding among students. Some may view it as gaining fame, while others may prioritize authenticity or relatable content. On the other hand, entertainment was found to have a significant influence on the desirability of becoming SMIs. Students agreed that social media serves as a stress-relief mechanism and a means of distraction from academic pressures, aligning with Kircaburun et al. (2020).

In conclusion, two out of three hypotheses were identified to have a significant influence on the desirability of becoming SMIs among UiTM Kedah students. Universities and educators should offer courses or workshops on responsible content creation and collaborate with industry professionals to provide mentorship for students seeking to enter the influencer space. To sustain successful careers as social media influencers (SMIs), individuals must prioritize consistency in producing valuable content, building trust, and networking with key industry players. This research underscores the importance of responsible content creation and the cultivation of positive influencer communities, contributing to a deeper understanding of students' interests in pursuing careers as SMIs in the digital era.

REFERENCES

- An, C., & Haryanto, J. O. (2021). Exploring motivations of social media influencers as an emerging job market. *IDEAS: Journal of Management & Technology*, 1(1), 13-23.
- Audrezet, A., De Kerviler, G., & Moulard, J. G. (2020). Authenticity under threat: When social media influencers need to go beyond self-presentation. *Journal of business research*, 117, 557-569.
- Bradley, S. (2022, June 28). *How much money Instagram influencers make*. Business Insider. <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-much-money-instagram-influencers-earn-examples-2021-6>
- Croes, E., & Bartels, J. (2021). Young adults' motivations for following social influencers and their relationship to identification and buying behavior. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 124, 106910.
- Droz-dit-Busset, O. (2022). "so-called influencers": Stancetaking and (de)legitimation in mediatized discourse about social media influencers. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 49, 100629. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2022.100629>
- Fetter, S., Coyne, P., Monk, S., & Woodruff, S. J. (2023). An Exploration of Social Media Users' Desires to Become Social Media Influencers. *Media Watch*, 14(2), 200-216.
- Kircaburun, K., Alhabash, S., Tosuntaş, Ş. B., & Griffiths, M. D. (2020). Uses and gratifications of problematic social media use among University students: A simultaneous examination

of the Big Five of personality traits, social media platforms, and social media use motives. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 18(3), 525-547.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-018-9940-6>

Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer marketing: How message value and credibility affect consumer trust of branded content on social media. *Journal of interactive advertising*, 19(1), 58-73.

Shabahang, R., Aruguete, M. S., Shim, H., Koushali, F. G., & Zsila, Á. (2022). Desire to be a social media influencer: Desire for fame, materialism, perceived deprivation, and preference for immediate gratification as potential determinants. *Media Watch*, 13(3), 246-263.

Sheldon, P., & Newman, M. (2019). Instagram and american teens: understanding motives for its use and relationship to excessive reassurance-seeking and interpersonal rejection. *The Journal of Social Media in Society*, 8(1), 1-16.

Statista. (2021). *Number of YouTube users worldwide from 2016 to 2021 (in billions)*. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/805656/number-youtube-viewers-worldwide/>

A REVIEW ON WOMEN LEADERSHIPS IN PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Khairul Azfar Adzahar

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
azfar938@uitm.edu.my

Mohd Fazil Jamaludin

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
m.fazil@uitm.edu.my

Mohd Shafiz Saharan

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
shafizsaharan@uitm.edu.my

PREFACE

This article investigates the contradictory realities of female leadership in patriarchal cultures, delving into both the significant challenges and opportunities. Despite progress toward gender equality, women leaders confront persistent challenges, such as gender stereotypes, underrepresentation, work-life balance concerns, and systemic discrimination (Galsanjimed & Sekiguchi, 2023). These difficulties are worsened by the widespread biases that impede their professional growth. The article highlights the impact of female leaders on society despite the fact that women only hold 28.2% of managerial jobs globally (UN Women, 2023). With their unique perspectives and inclusive approach to leadership, they may promote gender equality, advance society, and inspire future generations. Through a balanced review of the opportunities and challenges, the article aims to present a nuanced representation of the environment for women leaders in a patriarchal society, highlighting the need for systemic change to truly achieve gender parity.

INTRODUCTION

Men have long occupied leadership roles in patriarchal societies, creating a system in which women face significant barriers to advancement. Male domination in positions of authority within the family, in politics, the economy, and religion is a hallmark of patriarchal societies (Omar & Muhammed, 2023). However, things are increasingly changing as more women overcome these challenges. According to a report by Singapore's Ministry of Social and Family Development, women are increasingly represented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professions and leadership roles that were previously dominated by men, an area in which Singapore has excelled (Ministry of Social and Family Development [MSF], 2024). Albeit many cultures have taken the initiatives toward gender equality inclination, patriarchal components may still exist in obscured or overt forms, shaping societal and personal practices. Women's leadership in patriarchal culture remains a challenge due to several factors, including stereotypes, a scarcity of flexible career opportunities, and women's frequent family duties (Patwardhan et al., 2016).

THE CHALLENGES

Gender bias is defined in patriarchal cultures as the systematic elevation of men to positions of power and authority while women are confined to submissive duties, hence maintaining gender norm-based imbalances. These cultural norms frequently result in women having less access to education, professional networks, and opportunities for advancement than their male counterparts (Westerman, 2021). Women aspiring to leadership posts in patriarchal settings frequently face a lack of mentorship and supportive networks, which serves as a significant barrier to their professional growth and advancement. Women can particularly benefit from early career exposure to mentoring programmes since they frequently lack the confidence needed to advance in their careers (McNeill, 2024). Lack of support and mentorship in the workplace and at home renders women's efforts to obtain leadership roles a difficult feat, as they must navigate a setting that frequently ignores or dismisses their capabilities, qualifications, and ability to thrive in positions of authority and influence (Mulawarman et al., 2021). Subordinates, peers, or superiors who are unfamiliar with women in leadership positions may resist female leaders. In addition, women in leadership roles may experience imposter syndrome and self-doubt as they must continually demonstrate their capacity to effectively lead the team due to the assumptions that they may lack the requisite competence (Quraishi, 2019). The lack of regulations, including quotas or affirmative action initiatives that support gender equality in leadership, compels the gap even wider in society (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2021).

THE OPPORTUNITIES

While patriarchal societies present numerous challenges for female leaders, they also offer unique opportunities to advance gender equality, personal development, and societal transformation. Gender stereotypes can be challenged and demolished by successful women leaders, demonstrating that women are just as capable of holding leadership positions and encouraging other generations of women to aspire to such positions (Natural HR, 2021). Women in leadership positions bring an array of perspectives and expertise that can result in more innovative and practical problem-solving resolutions. Collaboration and inclusivity are frequently emphasised in their leadership style, which can enhance corporate performance and culture (Cunningham et al., 2017). When employees believe that their concerns are treated seriously and that their contributions are appreciated in a caring environment, their dedication and engagement at work soar. This is made feasible by women's unique perspectives and styles of leadership. Women in political and academic leadership positions have the ability to influence and enact legislation and policies that promote gender equality (Chowdhury et al., 2013). They can also work to reform institutions to be more inclusive and supportive of women's participation and leadership. This will result in an equitable society where everyone, regardless of gender, has equal opportunity to grow and demonstrate their abilities, talents, and knowledge, ultimately advancing their organisations, communities, and society as a whole.

WAY FORWARD

Women leaders can succeed personally and advance the broader cause for social justice and gender equality in a patriarchal society by seizing the chances and growing from the setbacks. Although it may take some time to overcome long-standing cultural biases and stereotypes against women in leadership roles, consistently investing in women's professional

development, mentorship, and advancement into positions of power and influence is a critical and necessary step toward creating a more just and equitable society. Not only that, women's participation in business is hardly noticeable despite their undeniable contribution to politics, education, and the world labour force. The idea that leadership is a skill that can be developed and exhibited by people of all genders instead of being innate to any one gender has to be challenged by everyone in society, even if it takes a long time to manifest and requires concerted effort.

REFERENCES

- Chowdhury, F. D., Wilson, M., Morna, C. L., & Magarangom, M. M. (2013). *The impact of women's political leadership on democracy and development: Case studies from the Commonwealth*. The Commonwealth. <https://doi.org/10.14217/9781848591677-en>
- Cunningham, C. M., Crandall, H. M., & Dare, A. M. (Eds.). (2017). *Gender, communication, and the leadership gap*. Information Age Publishing (IAP). https://content.infoagepub.com/files/fm/p59bc7380acb7b/9781681239965_FM.pdf
- Galsanjigmed, E., & Sekiguchi, T. (2023). Challenges women experience in leadership careers: An integrative review. *Merits*, 3(2), 366-389. <https://doi.org/10.3390/merits3020021>
- McNeill, L. (2024). *The impact of mentorship and gender of CEOs on women's corporate success* [Master's thesis, Harvard University]. <https://nrs.harvard.edu/URN:3:HUL.INSTREPOS:37378583>
- Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF). (2024). *Progress on Singapore women's development*. Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), Singapore. <https://www.msf.gov.sg/docs/default-source/research-data/progressonsingaporewomensdevelopmentreport2024.pdf>
- Mulawarman, W. G., Komariyah, L., & Suryaningsi. (2021). Women and leadership style in school management: Study of gender perspective. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, 16(2), 594–611. <https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v16i2.5638>
- Natural HR. (2021, March 23). *10 reasons why the world needs more women in leadership roles*. Natural HR. <https://www.naturalhr.com/2021/03/23/10-reasons-why-the-world-needs-more-women-in-leadership-roles/>
- Omar, A. N., & Muhammed, R. Z. (2023). Male dominance and the social hierarchy of the patriarchal society in Delaney's A Taste of Honey. *Journal of Garmian University*, 10(4), 242-256. <https://doi.org/10.24271/garmian.2023.10422>
- Patwardhan, V., Mayya, S., & Joshi, H. G. (2016). Barriers to career advancement of women managers in Indian five star hotels: A gender perspective. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 6(2), 248. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijhrs.v6i2.9720>
- Quraishi, N. H. (2019). *Self-confident, inside and out: Exploring the antecedents of internal and external self-confidence in women leaders* (Master's thesis). Florida Institute of Technology. <https://repository.fit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1339&context=etd>

UN Women. (2023). *Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: The gender snapshot 2023*. UN Women. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/09/progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2023>

Westerman, K. (2021). Unpacking the perceived benefits and costs of integrating gender into conservation projects: Voices of conservation field practitioners. *Oryx*, 55(6), 853–859. <https://10.1017/S0030605320001295>

World Health Organisation (WHO). (2021, June). *Closing the leadership gap: Gender equity and leadership in the global health and care workforce* [Policy action paper]. World Health Organisation (WHO). <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240025905>

UNDERSTANDING HALAL SUPPLY CHAINS: ENSURING INTEGRITY IN THE GLOBAL HALAL FOOD MARKET

Musdiana Mohamad Salleh

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
diana001@uitm.edu.my

Etty Harniza Harun

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
etty@uitm.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

Halal, an Arabic term meaning "permissible" or "lawful," refers to products and practices permissible according to Islamic law. The global halal food market has grown significantly in recent years, driven by an increasing Muslim population and rising consumer awareness of Islamic dietary rules (Haleem et al., 2020). As a result, ensuring the integrity of halal products throughout the supply chain has become crucial as Muslim consumers are increasingly concerned about the authenticity of halal-certified products. This paper explores the critical role of halal supply chains in maintaining integrity within the global halal food market, focusing on the importance, problems, and methods for developing halal supply chains.

DEFINITION AND COMPONENTS OF HALAL SUPPLY CHAINS

The halal supply chain encompasses the entire process, from production to consumption. It requires a comprehensive and well-managed approach to ensure that all ingredients and methods of preparation, handling, and transportation comply with halal standards. The success of the halal supply chain depends on the commitment and dedication of all stakeholders, from manufacturers and distributors to retailers and consumers, to uphold the halal standards at all stages of the supply chain. Several critical aspects are required to ensure the integrity of the halal food supply chain. Some significant studies explore different aspects of this field:

1. **Halal Certification and Standards:** It is essential to understand the certification processes as well as the standards needed for halal food production. At the same time, researchers like to study numerous details on halal certification bodies, their criteria, and the global harmonization efforts (Haleem et al., 2019; Muhammad et al., 2020).
2. **Consumer Behavior:** Research in consumer behavior includes studies on attitudes towards halal food, factors influencing purchasing decisions such as religious beliefs, trust in certification, and perceptions of halal integrity (Ashraf, 2019; Bashir, 2019).
3. **Supply Chain Management:** This area examines the challenges and strategies in managing halal supply chains, including issues of traceability, transparency, and compliance with halal requirements throughout the supply chain (Haleem et al., 2021a; Rejeb, Rejeb, Zailani, et al., 2021).

4. **Logistics and Distribution Channel:** This aspect explores logistics practices specific to halal food, including transportation, storage, and distribution channels that ensure the integrity of halal products from production to consumption (Haleem et al., 2021b; Karia, 2019; Zailani et al., 2017).
5. **Quality and Safety Assurance:** Ensuring halal integrity involves maintaining quality and safety standards. Several studies have been conducted to investigate the methods for ensuring halal authenticity by preventing contamination throughout the supply chain (Ali & Suleiman, 2018; Kamisah et al., 2018; Ramli et al., 2020).
6. **Globalization:** As halal food markets expand globally, studies examine the implications of globalization on halal supply chains, including market access, regulatory challenges, and international trade agreements (Haleem et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2020).
7. **Sustainability and Ethical Considerations:** There is growing interest in sustainable practices within halal supply chains, including ethical sourcing, environmental impacts, and social responsibility initiatives (Haleem et al., 2021a; Salleh & Harun, 2022; Rejeb, Rejeb, & Zailani, 2021).
8. **Risk Management:** Identifying and managing risks specific to halal supply chains, such as fraud, adulteration, and regulatory compliance, are critical areas of research (Azmi et al., 2020; S. Khan et al., 2022).
9. **Technology Adoption:** Innovations in technology, such as blockchain for traceability, Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID), and Internet of Things (IoT), are explored for their application in enhancing halal supply chain transparency and efficiency (Rejeb, Rejeb, Zailani, et al., 2021).
10. **Legal Frameworks:** Research also focuses on the legal and regulatory aspects governing halal food production and distribution, including compliance with halal standards, labelling requirements, and legal frameworks across different jurisdictions (Haleem et al., 2019; Muhammad et al., 2020).

IMPORTANCE OF HALAL SUPPLY CHAINS

Addressing the importance of the halal supply chain enables businesses to achieve their full potential while meeting the diverse needs of Muslim consumers around the world. The significance of halal supply chains can be viewed through cultural, economic, and ethical dimensions:

1. **Cultural Dimension: Religious Obligation and Consumer Trust:** For Muslims, consuming halal food is a religious obligation. Halal supply chains ensure that products are free from non-permissible substances such as pork and alcohol and are prepared according to Islamic rituals, thereby maintaining religious integrity and consumer trust (Ashraf, 2019; Bashir, 2019; M. I. Khan & Haleem, 2016).
2. **Economic Dimension: Market Access and Global Growth:** The global halal food market is expanding rapidly, driven by increasing Muslim populations and growing consumer demand beyond traditional markets. Halal supply chains facilitate market access by ensuring

compliance with halal standards and certifications that are recognized internationally (Secinaro & Calandra, 2021).

3. Ethical Dimension: Ethical and Sustainability Considerations: Halal supply chains often focus on ethical sourcing, fair trade practices, and sustainability, reflecting broader consumer preferences for responsible consumption. These practices not only meet halal requirements but also contribute positively to environmental and social impacts (Rejeb, Rejeb, & Zailani, 2021).

CHALLENGES IN HALAL SUPPLY CHAINS

Despite their importance, halal supply chains face several challenges:

1. Complex Certification and Compliance: Obtaining and maintaining halal certification can be complex due to varying standards and regulations across countries and regions. Ensuring consistency and transparency in certification processes remains a critical challenge (M. I. Khan & Haleem, 2016).

2. Supply Chain Integrity: Maintaining the integrity of halal products throughout the supply chain, including sourcing, processing, and distribution, poses challenges related to traceability, authenticity, and prevention of contamination (Ali & Suleiman, 2018).

3. Technological and Infrastructure Limitations: Some businesses lack adequate technological infrastructure for implementing advanced traceability systems like blockchain or RFID technology, which are crucial for enhancing transparency in halal supply chains (Ali et al., 2021; Mohammed et al., 2023).

STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING HALAL SUPPLY CHAINS

Strengthening halal supply chains involves implementing robust strategies that ensure adherence to halal standards, enhance operational efficiency, and foster consumer trust.

1. Certification and Standardization: Halal certification is the foundation for halal supply networks. Establishing reliable certification processes requires collaboration with accredited certifying bodies, ensuring transparency in certification standards, and maintaining consistency among supply chain partners. Furthermore, standardizing halal practices across borders is crucial for ensuring uniformity in halal compliance. Developing international standards and guidelines facilitates market access and increases consumer confidence in halal products.

2. Logistics and Supply Chain Management Investing in halal-specific logistics infrastructure, including storage facilities and transportation systems, will help businesses prevent contamination and ensure the integrity of halal products throughout the supply chain (Zailani et al., 2017).

3. Technology Adoption Advanced technologies like blockchain, IoT, and RFID can improve transparency and traceability in halal supply chains. Blockchain, for example, offers a safe and irreversible platform for confirming halal certificates and monitoring product origins, thus enhancing consumer trust and facilitating regulatory compliance.

4. **Customer Awareness:** Educating supply chain stakeholders about halal principles and the value of compliance, as well as raising consumer knowledge of the significance of halal certification and ethical sourcing procedures, can increase demand for certified halal products.
5. **Sustainability Initiatives:** Integrating sustainable practices into halal supply chains, such as using eco-friendly packaging and lowering carbon footprints, can attract environmentally concerned customers while also improving long-term market viability. According to research, sustainability activities not only cater to customer tastes but also improve entire supply chain efficiency (Rejeb, Rejeb, & Zailani, 2021).
6. **Collaboration and Partnership:** Building strong partnerships and collaborations across the halal supply chain producers, distributors, and regulatory authorities is critical. Collaborative efforts can facilitate knowledge sharing, best practices implementation, and collective problem-solving.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, halal supply chains play a pivotal role in meeting market demands and upholding religious principles and ethical standards. To ensure the integrity and reliability of halal supply chains, it is crucial to implement effective strategies that address the various challenges in the global halal industry. The main aspect of strengthening halal supply chains is developing an integrated supply chain system encompassing the entire process, from production to consumption. By focusing on certification, logistics, technology adoption, and regulatory compliance, businesses can build resilient and trusted halal supply chains that contribute to sustainable economic growth.

REFERENCES

- Ali, M. H., & Suleiman, N. (2018). Eleven shades of food integrity: A halal supply chain perspective. *Trends in Food Science & Technology*, 71, 216-224.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tifs.2017.11.016>
- Ashraf, M. A. (2019). Islamic marketing and consumer behavior toward halal food purchase in Bangladesh: An analysis using SEM. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 10(3), 893-910.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-03-2018-0051>
- Azmi, F. R., Abdullah, A., Cahyadi, E. R., Musa, H., & Sa'ari, J. R. (2020). Type of risk in halal food supply chain: A review. *International Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 9(4), 36-42.
- Bashir, A. M. (2020). Awareness of purchasing halal food among non-Muslim consumers: An explorative study with reference to Cape Town of South Africa. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 11(6), 1295-1311.
- Haleem, A., Khan, M. I., & Khan, S. (2019). Halal certification, the inadequacy of its adoption, modelling and strategising the efforts. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 11(2), 384-404
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-05-2017-0062>

- Haleem, A., Khan, M. I., & Khan, S. (2021a). Conceptualising a framework linking halal supply chain management with sustainability: an India centric study. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 12(8), 1535-1552. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-07-2019-0149>
- Haleem, A., Khan, M. I., & Khan, S. (2021b). Understanding the adoption of halal logistics through critical success factors and stakeholder objectives. *Logistics*, 5(2), 38. <https://doi.org/10.3390/logistics5020038>
- Haleem, A., Khan, M. I., Khan, S., & Jami, A. R. (2020). Research status in Halal: a review and bibliometric analysis. *Modern Supply Chain Research and Applications*, 2(1), 23–41.
- Huang, C. H., Liu, S. M., & Hsu, N. Y. (2020). Understanding global food surplus and food waste to tackle economic and environmental sustainability. *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 12(7), 289.
- Kamisah, S., Mokhtar, A., & Hafisah, A. (2018). Halal practices integrity and halal supply chain trust in Malaysian halal food supply chain. *International Food Research Journal*, 25.
- Karia, N. (2019). Halal logistics: practices, integration and performance of logistics service providers. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 13(1), 100-118. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-08-2018-0132>
- Khan, M. I., & Haleem, A. (2016). Understanding "halal" and "halal certification & accreditation system" - a brief review. *Saudi Journal of Business and Management Studies*. 1(1), 32-42.
- Khan, S., Khan, M. I., Haleem, A., & Jami, A. R. (2022). Prioritising the risks in Halal food supply chain: an MCDM approach. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 13(1), 45-65 <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-10-2018-0206>
- Mohammed, A., Potdar, V., & Quaddus, M. (2023). Exploring factors and impact of blockchain technology in the food supply chains: an exploratory study. *Foods*, 12(10), 2052. <https://doi.org/10.3390/foods12102052>
- Muhammad, M. A., Elistina, A. B., & Ahmad, S. (2020). The challenges faced by halal certification authorities in managing the halal certification process in Malaysia. *Food Research*, 4(1), 170-178. [https://doi.org/10.26656/fr.2017.4\(S1\).S17](https://doi.org/10.26656/fr.2017.4(S1).S17)
- Ramli, M. H., Rosman, A. S., Sikin, A. M., Jamaludin, M. A., & Ajmain, M. T. (2020). Halal Assurance at Farm Level in the Poultry Supply Chain. *Journal of Islamic, Social, Economics and Development (JISED)*, 5(31), 1-11.
- Rejeb, A., Rejeb, K., & Zailani, S. (2021). Are halal food supply chains sustainable: a review and bibliometric analysis. *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, 24(5), 554-595. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15378020.2021.1883214>
- Rejeb, A., Rejeb, K., Zailani, S., Treiblmaier, H., & Hand, K. J. (2021). Integrating the Internet of Things in the halal food supply chain: A systematic literature review and research agenda. *Internet of Things*, 13, 100361. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iot.2021.100361>

- Salleh, M. M., & Harun, E. H. (2022). Halal food supply chain (HFSC) and sustainability concept. *Journal of Islamic, Social, Economics and Development*, 7(49), 26-34.
- Secinaro, S., & Calandra, D. (2020). Halal food: structured literature review and research agenda. *British Food Journal*, 123(1), 225-243. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-03-2020-0234>
- Zailani, S., Iranmanesh, M., Aziz, A. A., & Kanapathy, K. (2017). Halal logistics opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 8(1), 127-139. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-04-2015-0028>

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE THROUGH ESG IMPLEMENTATION IN THE MALAYSIAN FINANCIAL SECTOR

Anita Abu Hassan

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
anita397@uitm.edu.my

Sustainable finance is the term that is used to describe the financial activities that provide support for sustainable development objectives, with a particular emphasis on environmental conservation (E), social equity (S), and also good governance (G). In prior research, ESG integration has been demonstrated to benefit corporate reputation, risk management, and financial performance (Friede et al., 2015). In recent years, sustainable finance has emerged as a critical component of the global financial sector, including Malaysia. The promotion of long-term economic sustainability and resilience necessitates the integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria into investment decisions and banking practices. The financial sector in Malaysia has gradually adopted ESG principles, which are consistent with the global trend towards sustainability. The integration of ESG factors into the operations of local commercial institutions in Malaysia is crucial for the advancement of sustainable development (Bank Negara Malaysia, 2019). Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) has implemented local regulatory frameworks that have been instrumental in the advancement of sustainable finance.

In 2016, Bank Negara Malaysia issued the Corporate Governance guidelines to encourage good corporate governance in Malaysia's financial sector. These guidelines delineate specific requirements for solid corporate governance, broad principles, and minimum standards. By launching the Climate Change and Principle-based Taxonomy in 2021, BNM once again demonstrated its unwavering commitment to advancing sustainable finance. This framework serves as a standard for evaluating climate-related risk and directing banks in their sustainability initiatives. As Malaysia runs a dual financial system, BNM has implemented a "Value-Based Intermediation" (VBI) framework, aiming to encourage the adoption of practices that promote economic, social, and environmental sustainability by banks and specific institutions within Islamic finance (Bank Negara Malaysia, 2022). Even though ESG implementation is still in its early stages, there has been a growing awareness and commitment among financial institutions, particularly local commercial banks, to employ sustainable practices (Securities Commission Malaysia, 2020).

Among the primary endeavours are incorporating ESG metrics into credit risk assessments, actively participating in sustainability-related initiatives, and developing green financing products. For example, Maybank has implemented a Green Financing Framework to assist with environmentally sustainable initiatives, while CIMB Group has committed to eliminating coal financing and improving its green lending portfolio (Maybank, 2022; CIMB, 2024). Within the Malaysian financial sector, incorporating ESG factors, particularly by local commercial institutions, presents challenges and opportunities. One of the obstacles to the implementation of ESG in the financial sector is the use of data. ESG data that is comprehensive, accurate, and timely is frequently difficult to obtain for financial institutions to make informed decisions. It is challenging for banks, asset managers, and other financial entities to evaluate the ESG risks and opportunities that are associated with their investments or lending practices in the absence of reliable data. The decision-making process would be

impeded by the inability to ascertain the risk tolerance level due to incomplete or insufficient data from recognised sources. Consequently, the implemented mitigation strategy may not be effective and may not adequately safeguard the interests of the financing institution. To assist the financial sector in achieving sustainable finance, the Joint Committee on Climate Change (JC3) was established by BNM and the Securities Commission (SC). At the seventh meeting of the JC3 on 27th April 2022, several decisions were made to address the issue. These are the actions taken by JC3:

- Draft exposure of Climate Risk Management and Scenario Analysis,
- Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) Application Guide for Malaysian Financial Institutions,
- Climate Disclosure Guide for Malaysian Businesses,
- Specialised level training programmes for the financial sector,
- Development of a data catalogue,
- Published the Report on the Sustainable Finance Landscape in Malaysia

The decisions and actions above would establish a stable foundation for the financial sector's pursuit of sustainable finance.

Local commercial banks are exceptionally important due to their direct impact on a significant portion of the economy, such as SMEs and individual consumers. Lead by example, as evidenced by the 2023 annual report, all local commercial banks in Malaysia had proudly published their activities reports on corporate governance and sustainability. The adoption of ESG criteria in the Malaysian financial sector, especially by local financial institutions, is a promising step towards sustainable finance. Malaysia's financial sector would become one of the foremost sustainable finance markets due to its initiative and adherence to the regulations and guidelines established and regulated by the BNM and SC. Despite the substantial progress that has been achieved, the financial sector's dynamic nature necessitates additional endeavours to surmount current and future obstacles and fully realise the advantages of ESG integration towards sustainable finance.

REFERENCES

- Bank Negara Malaysia. (2019). *Bank Negara Malaysia annual report 2019*. <https://www.bnm.gov.my/o/annual-report/index.html>
- Bank Negara Malaysia. (2022). *Value-based intermediation financing and investment impact assessment framework - Guidance document*. <https://www.bnm.gov.my/-/value-based-intermediation-financing-and-investment-impact-assessment-framework-guidance-document>
- CIMB. (2024). Our path to net zero: Charting a course to decarbonisation. <https://www.cimb.com/content/dam/cimb/group/documents/cimb-net-zero-whitepaper-20240703.pdf>
- Friede, G., Busch, T., & Bassen, A. (2015). ESG and financial performance: Aggregated evidence from more than 2000 empirical studies. *Journal of Sustainable Finance & Investment*, 5(4), 210-233.

Joint Committee on Climate Change (JC3). (2022). *JC3 statement on accelerating the financial sector's response to climate risk (7th meeting)*. [https://www.jc3malaysia.com/news/jc3-statement-on-accelerating-the-financial-sector's-response-to-climate-risk-\(7th-meeting\)](https://www.jc3malaysia.com/news/jc3-statement-on-accelerating-the-financial-sector's-response-to-climate-risk-(7th-meeting))

Maybank. (2022). *Maybank group sustainable product framework*. <https://www.maybank.com/iwov-resources/documents/pdf/annual-report/2022/Maybank-Sustainable-Product-Framework.pdf>

Securities Commission Malaysia. (2020). *Sustainable and responsible investment roadmap for the Malaysian capital market*. <https://www.sc.com.my/api/documentms/download.ashx?id=89dea0ab-f671-4fce-b8e4-437a2606507c>

ISLAM PERSPECTIVE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (PWDS): WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Norhasyikin Rozali

Faculty Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
norhasyikin@uitm.edu.my

An ongoing debate centers on the use of the Malay terms "Orang Kurang Upaya" (OKU) or "Orang Kelainan Upaya" to describe this minority group. The goal is to make documentation procedures easier to ensure that all development plans and aids can be delivered efficiently and fully. The purpose of introducing this phrase is not to cast People with Disabilities (PWDs) in a negative light or to discredit their existence or rights.

A person is considered disabled under the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development if they have a long-term impairment in physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory abilities when confronted with different obstacles that can limit their full participation in society, as stated in Act 685, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT 2008 (2014). One definition of a disabled person is *"someone who is unable to determine for themselves to fully or partially obtain the normal needs of an individual and/or unable to fully live in society due to some form of physical or mental impairment, whether it occurs from birth or later"* (quoted from Zinaida, 2006). This definition is supplied by the World Health Organization (WHO).

According to Utusan Online (2009), the Minister of Youth and Sports, Ahmad Shabery Cheek, came up with the name "Orang Kelainan Upaya" to give this group a fresh outlook on their skills. Utusan Online (2012) stated that the word "Orang Kelainan Upaya" was defined by Dzulkifli Abdul Razak, who was the Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia at the time, as the proper way for society to regard this group. The capacity to do anything due to a natural process or an intentional event distinguishes one from another, not how they seem physically. This is why it is fair to evaluate them using criteria other than perfection (Utusan Online, 2009; Utusan Online, 2012).

The key question is how to assist this group to ensure they do not lag in all areas of life, regardless of the nomenclature used to describe them. They ought to be treated with the same level of competition as any other individual and not be shunned.

APPRECIATING PWDS

Just who are PWDs? PWDs are frequently stereotyped due to the obvious physical or sensory limitations that define them. However, many other kinds of impairments might make someone PWD. Were you aware that PWDs refer to people who suffer from a variety of medical conditions, including epilepsy, asthma, allergies, and stroke, (Asiah, 2012).

To diagnose PWDs, one can observe the patient, do a physical examination, and provide mental, psychological, and communicative tests. Mild, moderate, and severe impairments are used to classify their situations (Asiah, 2012).

Table 1: Classification of Disability Levels

Level of Disability	Description
Mild Classification	Typically, individuals with mild disabilities can perform various activities and follow daily life routines like others.
Moderate and Severe Classification	Requires intensive efforts to develop various basic skills if early intervention is not provided to them.

According to the Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat (JKM) Statistics Report (2014), there are several forms of impairments, including physical, visual, auditory, speech, learning, mental, and others. Finally, according to Asiah (2012), a person's "disability" might be defined as their inability to fully realize their goals due to their restricted skills.

PWDS FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

When opposed to the public, does Islam take a different stance on PWDs? The Quran, as the principal guide in Islam, is a great resource for explaining this.

As stated in Surah 'Abasa 1-16:

Allah's words: He (the Prophet) frowned and turned away. Because there came to him the blind man (interrupting), but what would make you perceive, (Muhammad), that perhaps he might be purified. Or be reminded, and the remembrance would benefit him? As for who thinks himself without need, to him, you give attention and not upon you (is any blame) if he will not be purified. But as for he who came to you striving (for knowledge) While he fears (Allah). From him, you are distracted. No! Indeed, they (i.e., these verses) are reminders. SO whoever will remember it. (It is recorded) in honored sheets, Exalted and purified, (Carried) by the hands of messenger-angles, Noble and dutiful. (Quran 80: 1-16)

Islamic scholars relate that the revelation of Surah 'Abasa was about Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum, a blind friend who sought Islamic instruction from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) but was first disregarded. He was blind, yet this Surah was presented to him as a sign to put him first. Above all else, the chiefs of the Quraysh were told that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) should prioritize Abdullah ibn Ummi Maktum. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) began to greet him with the following words of reverence and respect from that point on:

Meaning, "Welcome, the one for whom my Lord rebuked me," Muhammad (PBUH).

Islam regards PWDs with great respect and dignity, as we can observe from this Surah. All of God's creations are flawless, as we learned in the last narrative. People should not be made fun of due to their appearance or any other distinguishing feature; after all, individuals we denigrate may really have a greater position in the eyes of Allah SWT.

Islam clearly holds these unique people in the highest regard, and not out of any sentiment of pity, but rather due to the just equality that all of His creations enjoy in Islam. Consequently, should we treat this group differently? Do we realize that PWDs are capable of

things that regular people can do? (Mohamad et al., 2015; Caldwell, Harris, & Renko, 2012). PWDs' talents, when given the chance and room to grow, are in no way inferior to those of average people.

Islam especially never denied the right of PWDs to be preserved and protected under Islamic and Legal perspectives. Equal rights for all human beings as they are a part of Allah's creation. Today, the current atmosphere in Malaysia is changing how we look at these PWDs. More and more programs have been planned to take action to make this group never left behind. According to Mohd Naim, "the Malaysia Islamic Development Department (JAKIM) has developed the Muslim Person with Disabilities Action Plan to enhance their understanding and appreciation of Islam," *The Sun*, 2023.

OBSTACLES AND FACTS

Being an individual with PWDs is a challenging path to walk. Due to their constraints, they are compelled to look for ways out of poverty. To pay for necessities and not beg or borrow money from others, all PWD members must have jobs. However, it is hard for PWDs to find jobs (Ang, 2015; Falch, 2012). They are unable to move around freely or do jobs since the infrastructure is not PWD-friendly. Sanmargaraja, Shalini, and Wee (2011) discovered that PWD facilities still fall short of what this group needs to move about. This is only one of the obstacles that PWDs will have to overcome on their path to success.

This topic has not gotten the attention it deserves, even though Islam clearly emphasizes the equal rights of PWDs. Human rights are also practiced by other faiths.

There are initiatives underway in Malaysia to lessen prejudice and bigotry against this community. There is support to help PWDs stay up with regular people, even if it may not be 100% successful. As things are, PWDs are disproportionately likely to be extremely poor, uneducated, or to give up trying to improve their lot in life (WHO, 2011). As with PWDs, the nation loses out on a tremendous opportunity due to this (Norasmah, 2014).

SUMMARY

To ensure that they can "stand as tall, sit as low" as other normal individuals, society's perception of PWDs must be addressed via education and the total inclusion of PWDs in all parts of life. No one should find it odd or unusual that they are a part of society. A higher standard of living for the PWD people depends on everyone's efforts, notably those of the government. Understanding and respecting people who are known as PWDs need Islam as the finest basis.

REFERENCES

Akta 685, AKTA ORANG KURANG 2008 (2014).

Ang, M. C. H. (2015). *Work and disability: A Malaysian scenario*. Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia.

- Asiah, A. (2012). *Mengenal dan menangani orang kurang upaya*. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Caldwell, K., Harris, S. P., & Renko, M. (2012). The potential of social entrepreneurship: Conceptual tools for applying citizenship theory to policy and practice. *Intellectual and developmental disabilities*, 50(6), 505-518. <http://doi.org/10.1352/1934-9556-50.06.505>
- Falch, R., & Hernæs, U. J. V. (2012). *Disability, Social Identity, and Entrepreneurship: Evidence from a laboratory experiment in rural Uganda* (Master's thesis).
- Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat. (2014). *Buku Panduan JKM*. Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Malaysia. <https://www.jkm.gov.my/jkm/uploads/files/pdf/Buku%20JKM%202014.pdf>
- Mohamad, A., Abdullah, S., & Abu Bakar, L. J. (2015). Transformasi pemikiran keusahawanan bagi dimensi mengenal peluang keusahawanan dalam kalangan OKU. *Journal of Global Business and Social Entrepreneurship (GBSE)*, 1(1), 68-76.
- Norasmah, O. (2014). *Keusahawanan orang kurang upaya di Malaysia*. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Officer, A., & Posarac, A. (2011). *World report on disability*. World Health Organ: Geneva, Switzerland.
- Sanmargaraja, S., & Wee, S. T. (2011). *Kajian penyediaan fasiliti orang kurang upaya di institusi kerajaan di Nusajaya, Johor Bahru*. [\[PDF\] Kajian penyediaan fasiliti orang kurang upaya \(OKU\) di institusi kerajaan di Nusajaya, Johor Bahru | Semantic Scholar](#)
- The Sun. (2023, October 25). Mohd Naim: Muslim PwD action plan developed to enhance understanding in Islam. *The Sun Daily*. <https://thesun.my/local-news/mohd-naim-muslim-pwd-action-plan-developed-to-enhance-understanding-in-islam-NA11668498>
- Zinaida, A. (2006). *Kerjaya untuk orang kurang upaya*. PTS Professional.

FROM CLICK TO COMPLIANCE: SHARIAH-COMPLIANT BUY NOW, PAY LATER

Hasmah Laili Jamalurus
Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
hasmahlaili@uitm.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

The "Buy Now, Pay Later" (BNPL) service is an innovation in business transactions. It is a short-term financing facility for customers when purchasing goods or services. Recently, BNPL has been considered an alternative to credit cards with several key differences, such as in terms of the approval process, interest and fee charges, protections, rewards, flexibility, and acceptance by retailers (Smith, 2024). In Malaysia, BNPL is gaining popularity among customers, retailers, and online shopping platforms such as Shopee, Atome, and Grab (COOB, 2024). This is evidenced by the 52 million transactions in 2023, which were valued at RM4.3 billion. Furthermore, there are 2.9 million active BNPL users, with 47% primarily young and middle-aged adults ranging from 31-45 years old (COOB, 2024).

According to the most recent census by the Malaysian government in 2020, 63.5% of the population in Malaysia practices Islam (DOSM, 2020). In addition, a study by Ramli et al. (2022) has also evidenced that Islamic ethics significantly influenced the intention of Malaysian Muslims to purchase. This emphasises the significance of religious and ethical considerations in the buying behaviours of Muslim customers. Hence, it is an opportunity for BNPL operators to fulfil Malaysia's Muslim community's demand for Shariah-compliant BNPL services.

Therefore, BNPL services in online platforms require in-depth evaluation to ensure that they meet the demands of Muslim customers and comply with Shariah principles. According to Al-Mahbubah and Nurwakhidah (2021), BNPL service must be in line with the principle of Islamic finance, which strictly prohibits *riba'* (interest), *gharar* (uncertainty) and *maisir* (gambling). Concurrently, BNPL must be built on social justice, ethical conduct, and customer fairness. Therefore, ensuring compliance with these elements is crucial so all parties involved in the transactions are treated fairly, transparently, and equitably. Hence, this article examines the potential Shariah issues of BNPL services and discusses the possible BNPL framework in compliance with the Shariah principle.

ALIGNING BNPL SERVICES WITH SHARIAH PRINCIPLES

For the BNPL facility to be considered Shariah-compliant, the BNPL service provider must ensure the framework, contracts, and operations adhere to Islamic principles.

1. Structuring a Shariah Contract for BNPL

The main principle of any financial transaction in Islam lies in the Shariah contract structure, including the "Buy Now, Pay Later" (BNPL) facility. Based on the Shariah Advisory Council (SAC) of Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) rulings, the BNPL facility is permissible, provided it is structured based on the appropriate Shariah contracts. BNPL facility offered to

customers in Malaysia applies a sale-based contract, *Bai' Bithaman Ajil* (sale of deferred payment) and *Bai' Taqsith* (deferred payment with the fixed schedule). In addition, BNPL can also be structured using the contract of *Qard* (benevolent loan), *Murabahah* (cost plus financing), *Bai' al Tawarruq* (Cash financing), *Al Ijarah Thumma Al Bai'* (Islamic hire purchase), or *Musharakah Mutanaqisah* (diminishing partnership) (Wan Yusoff & Zulkefli, 2022). Thus, applying appropriate Shariah contracts ensures the preservation of the rights and obligations of the contracting parties in the BNPL transaction.

2. Processing Fees and Late Payment Charges

Among the disputable issues in BNPL is the charges imposed by the BNPL service provider. As we know, charging an interest (*riba'*) is strictly prohibited in any financial transaction. However, in BNPL, customers will be charged a processing fee and a late payment fee. Accordingly, charging a fixed processing or administrative fee can cover the actual transaction cost without excessive profit.

Regarding late payment charges, the BNPL service providers are not allowed to charge based on the total outstanding amount, which will lead to *riba'*. However, a fixed penalty, for example, RM10, will be imposed on the customer who fails to pay the deferred payments or instalments according to the payment schedule. The late payment charges should be reasonable and compensate for late payments rather than punitive measures against consumers (Oi, 2024). Consequently, the BNPL service provider will suspend the customer's access to the BNPL service until the settlement of the outstanding balance (including late penalty charges), restricting their purchasing ability. The late payment charges will be channelled to charities to ensure they do not directly benefit the lender (BNPL service provider). Notably, BNPL service providers in Malaysia have already applied this approach, such as Shopee (SPayLater), Atome, and Grab (Grab PayLater).

3. Transaction of Gold and Silver (*Ribawi Materials*)

"Gold for gold, silver for silver, wheat for wheat, barley for barley, dates for dates, and salt for salt - like for like, equal for equal, and hand-to-hand; if these goods differ, then you may sell as you wish, provided that the exchange is hand-to-hand." (Sahih Muslim)

Based on the hadith, the basic rules of exchanging the *ribawi* materials (buying and selling), such as gold and silver, must be performed on the spot, and the delivery of goods and payments cannot be delayed. Thus, any sale and purchase of gold and silver using the BNPL facility must be thoroughly scrutinised. The latest ruling of SAC stated that purchasing gold and silver through the BNPL platform is permissible (Bank Negara Malaysia, 2024). However, due to operational constraints and business customary practice (*'urf tijari*), a settlement period of up to T+2 is allowed for gold and silver transactions. The term 'T+2' refers to the payment and delivery of the goods, which must be settled within two business days after the trade date (T). In other words, the customer must physically (*haqiqi*) or constructively (*hukmi*) possess the gold and silver they purchased during the transaction.

Bai' al tawarruq, also known as commodity *murabahah*, is one of the appropriate contracts that can be carried out through BNPL facility for transactions involving the sale of gold and silver. To allow BNPL's customer to obtain cash, the customer, BNPL provider, and final buyer will execute a commodity sale contract. Subsequently, the customer will utilise the cash to fulfil the payment for acquiring gold or silver from the merchant. The implementation of the *bai' al tawarruq* contract through BNPL is illustrated in the following:-

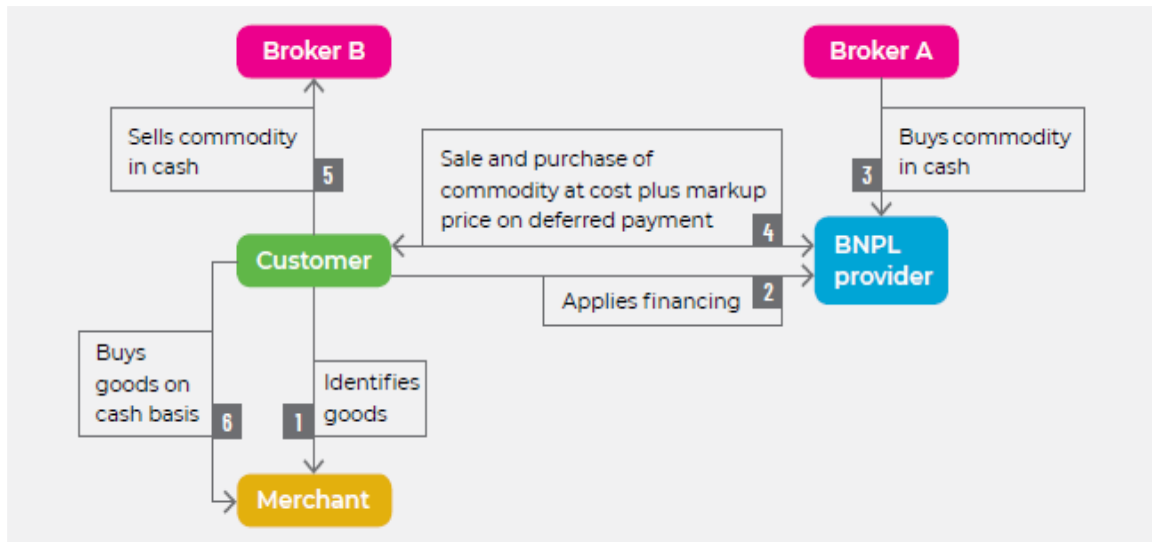


Figure 1.1: Illustration of Bai 'al Tawarruq Transaction

4. Restricting Shariah BNPL Transactions

In Islamic finance, the restrictions are not limited to *riba'*, *gharar*, and *maisir* activities. The restrictions also include transactions that involve non-permissible goods and services such as alcoholic beverages, non-halal foods, and gambling products. In general, Islam prohibits any business involving non-permissible items as it will harm society and the environment (Radzi et al., 2024). No matter whether the transactions are performed through cash, debt, or online, transactions using the BNPL facility should also be limited exclusively to Shariah-compliant goods and services. Therefore, merchants and BNPL providers are responsible for continuously monitoring and reviewing the Shariah-permissible goods and services offered to customers.

5. Ethical Considerations and Consumer Welfare

Islam emphasises ethics and consumer welfare. BNPL Syariah operators need to prioritise consumers' welfare and financial needs. Even though BNPL is an innovation that allows consumers to buy anything they need or want, it must be used wisely to avoid extravagant spending (Aryuandri & Bustami, 2024). To avoid customers falling into excessive debt, BNPL service providers must conduct a thorough credit assessment of the customers. This is crucial to ensure the customer can pay the debt within the specified period. Furthermore, Shariah BNPL service providers are also responsible for clearly and in a timely manner disclosing the terms and conditions to customers. Thus, clear disclosure of specific terms, conditions, charges, or fees will increase consumers' awareness and responsibility when using the BNPL facility.

CONCLUSION

Incorporating the concept of BNPL service in online shopping platforms offers flexibility and convenience to consumers. Whilst Muslim consumers' awareness of Shariah-compliant products and services is increasing, BNPL service providers must thoroughly scrutinise every aspect of the BNPL procedures and operations. Shariah-compliant BNPL focuses not only on the prohibited elements of *riba'*, *gharar*, and *maisir*. It also includes the aspects of the type of Shariah contracts applied for the BNPL service, charging fees, the permissibility of goods and

services offered to customers, and ethical considerations by the service providers and customers.

REFERENCES

- Al-Mahbubah, R. M., & Nurwakhidah, A. (2021). The frame of sharia economic on paylaterpayment system. *ISLAMICONOMIC: Jurnal Ekonomi Islam*, 12(1), 93-107. <https://doi.org/10.32678/ijej.v12i1.288>
- Aryuandri, I., & Bustami, A. W. (2024). Analysis of payment systems using shopee pay-laterreviewed from islamic economics. *Al Fiddhoh*, 5(1), 48-56.
- Bank Negara Malaysia. (2023). *Shariah advisory council ruling on buy now pay later (BNPL) facility (Issues 220, 228, and 231 SAC meetings)*. Bank Negara Malaysia. https://www.bnm.gov.my/documents/20124/13282254/SAC_Ruling_on_BNPL_220_228_231_SAC_Meeting.pdf
- COOB. (2024). *BNPL in Malaysia: A quick glance of the industry for Q1-Q3 2023*. Consumer Credit Oversight Board Task Force. <https://doi.org/10.4135/cgresrre1956021000>
- DOSM. (2020). *Population and housing census of malaysia 2020 (MyCensus 2020)*. Department of Statistics Malaysia. <https://open.dosm.gov.my/dashboard/kawasanku>
- Oi, R. (2024). Is BNPL shariah compliant in Malaysia? *FINTECH MALAYSIA*, 1-6. <https://fintechnews.my/41976/islamic-fintech/is-bnpl-shariah-compliant-in-malaysia/>
- Radzi, R. M., Ramli, W. N. W., Rahmawati, L., & Tantriana, D. (2024). E-wallet Transaction Framework in Malaysia: An Evaluation of Potential Shariah Issues. *International Journal of Religion*, 5(6), 986-996. <https://doi.org/10.61707/2c0bst96>
- Ramli, M. S., Ayob, N. H., Md Juperi, N. Z., Razali, N. H., Johari, N. R., & Zulkafli, M. S. Bin. (2022). The influences between customer behaviors, islamic ethics toward online purchase intention among muslim netizen in Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(10), 409-420. <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v12-i10/14839>
- Smith, A. (2024). *BNPL vs. credit cards: What's the difference?* NerdWallet Australia. <https://www.nerdwallet.com/au/credit-cards/bnpl-vs-credit-cards>
- Wan Yusoff, W. A., & Zulkefli, A. (2022). Buy now pay later: a brief shariah analysis. *IF HUB*, October(3), 9-14.

DOMINO EFFECT: WHAT IS IT? HOW IT CONNECTS TO ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Jamilah Laidin

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
jamil138@uitm.edu.my

Nor Azira Ismail

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
noraz788@uitm.edu.my

Shahiszan Ismail

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
shahiszan157@uitm.edu.my

The domino effect is the phenomenon whereby one incident starts a series of connected events. The term "domino effect" originates from the image of dominoes falling in sequence after the first one is tipped. According to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.), the Domino Effect is “the situation in which something, usually something bad, happens, causing other similar events to happen”. In terms of economics, it explains how a single change in one area of the economy can set off a chain reaction of changes in other sectors as well. This idea is commonly seen in economic activity, when modifications in one market or sector can have a ripple effect on others, resulting in broad economic effects (Kose & Claessens, 2013). Understanding the domino effect in economics can help policymakers, investors, and businesses make informed decisions. For example, the domino effect can be used to explain how an increase in diesel prices can impact other sectors of the economy by triggering a chain reaction of related events.

When discussing the impact of rising diesel prices on economic activity, it's essential to recognize the cascading effects across various sectors. Diesel fuel is a crucial input for many industries, especially those dependent on transportation and logistics. As the price of diesel increases, the cost of transporting goods rises, leading to higher prices for consumers and reduced profit margins for businesses. This escalation can slow down economic growth, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and retail, where transportation costs represent a significant portion of operating expenses. The following examples illustrate how increased diesel prices can affect economic activities across different industries.

1. **Transportation Costs:** Diesel fuels most of the transportation needs. Rising diesel prices immediately affect the cost of goods and services that transportation requires. Consumers typically absorb this rise in the form of more expensive delivered items, which influences everything such as building supplies and food (Chan, 2024).
2. **Supply Chain Impact:** Rising diesel prices translate into higher transportation and distribution costs. Higher expenses faced by suppliers and distributors could be passed on to stores and finally to customers, therefore causing a general increase in prices in many different fields (Wieteska, 2018).

3. **Inflationary Pressure:** The rising cost of transport and goods leads to overall inflation. As prices for essential commodities rise, customers' purchasing power declines, resulting in lower spending and slower economic growth (Kpodar & Liu, 2022).
4. **Sector-Specific Effects:** Various industries are affected in different ways. According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB, 2024), the increased material and transportation expenses in the building industry can cause projects to lag and drive up the cost of new developments. In a similar vein, increasing transportation costs for produce in the agriculture sector may result in higher food prices.
5. **Consumer Spending:** Higher fuel prices results in a decrease in the disposable income of households, potentially resulting in reduced spending on non-essential products and services. Sectors such as retail, leisure, and hospitality may be adversely affected by this decline in demand (Kpodar & Liu, 2022).

The domino effect shows how a rise in diesel prices can set off a chain reaction of economic consequences, including higher transportation costs, inflated prices for goods and services, increased inflation, and reduced consumer spending. This interconnected influence impacts various industries in distinct ways, including slowing down construction activities and increasing food prices. Understanding these effects is crucial for making informed decisions in economic planning and policy.

CONCLUSION

The concept of the domino effect is crucial for understanding the interconnectedness of the global economy. It illustrates how various economies, industries, and regions are interlinked and dependent on one another, where a change in one area can trigger a chain reaction across others. Recognizing the potential for such cascading effects allows policymakers, businesses, and investors to anticipate more effectively and respond to shifts in the economic landscape. By considering these dynamics, they can implement strategies that enhance stability and resilience, mitigating the risks of widespread disruptions and fostering a more robust economic system.

REFERENCES

- Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Domino effect. In *Cambridge Dictionary*. Retrieved July 8, 2024, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/domino-effect>
- Chan, B. K. (2024, June 11). Bus operators fear domino effect. *The Star*. <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2024/06/11/bus-operators-fear-domino-effect>
- Kose, A., & Claessens, S. (2013). Financial crises explanations, types, and implications. *IMF Working Paper*, 2013(028), 1. <https://doi.org/10.5089/9781475561005.001>
- Kpodar, K., & Liu, B. (2022). The distributional implications of the impact of fuel price increases on inflation. *Energy Economics*, 108, 105909. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eneco.2022.105909>

National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). (2024). Talking points: Addressing the supply chain crisis. *NAHB*. Retrieved August 11, 2024, from <https://www.nahb.org>

Wieteska, G. (2018). The domino effect - disruptions in supply chains. *LogForum* 14(4), 492-506. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17270/J.LOG.2018.302>

APPROACHES TO PREVENTING CYBERBULLYING

Nurfaznim Shuib

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
nurfaznim@uitm.edu.my

Nurul Izzati Idrus

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
n.izzati7328@uitm.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

In today's digitally interconnected world, cyberbullying has become a pervasive issue affecting individuals across the globe. Cyberbullying is an intentional and repeated act of harm against individuals using electronic devices (Gohal et al., 2023). It involves using digital platforms, such as social media, messaging apps, and online forums, to deliberately and repeatedly harass, threaten, or target an individual in a hostile or harmful manner. This can include actions like spreading false rumors, posting humiliating content, sending threatening messages, or other forms of online behavior intended to cause emotional distress or harm to the victim. The effects of cyberbullying can be severe, leading to psychological distress, damage to one's reputation, and even legal consequences in some cases (Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs [ASPA], 2023). The rise of social media and digital communication platforms has provided new avenues for bullies to target their victims, often anonymously. As online interactions continue to grow, addressing cyberbullying has become a critical priority for educators, policymakers, and communities worldwide. In Malaysia, cyberbullying is a growing concern, particularly among young adults. A recent study revealed that 38% of Malaysian parents are aware of the severity of cyberbullying, highlighting a significant gap in awareness and prevention measures (Mohammad, 2021). Furthermore, research conducted among Malaysian adolescents indicates a troubling prevalence of cyberbullying behaviors and their association with suicidal tendencies (Saman et al., 2021). These statistics underscore the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to combat this issue locally.

THE ISSUES OF CYBERBULLYING

In Malaysia, cyberbullying has become a significant issue, illustrated by several recent incidents. For instance, a local woman was detained in connection with threats made on TikTok, which were linked to the death of a social media influencer. This case highlights the severe consequences of online harassment and the legal actions taken to address such incidents. Additionally, the Malaysian government is considering enacting specific anti-cyberbullying laws due to the increasing severity of the issue. In 2023 alone, over 1,147 pieces of content involving cyberbullying and harassment were removed from various social media platforms, with TikTok accounting for the majority. Furthermore, according to a report by the Malay Mail (2022), Malaysia ranks second in Asia for cyberbullying among youths. Studies have shown that both youth and adults engage in cyberbullying as a projection of their own unhappiness or unmet needs, such as seeking attention or feeling a lack of belonging. These examples underscore the urgent need for continued efforts to combat cyberbullying through both legal measures and public awareness campaigns.

THE STRATEGIES TO PREVENT CYBERBULLYING

Preventing cyberbullying requires a multi-faceted approach that involves education, personal responsibility, and proactive measures. It is crucial to educate yourself and others about what constitutes cyberbullying and its impacts, ensuring everyone understands the seriousness of this issue (DeLench, n.d.). In addition, the efficiency of social media literacy initiatives in reducing cyberbullying and promoting internet safety is necessary (Polanco-Levicán & Salvo-Garrido, 2022; Taibi et al., 2023). Protecting personal information, such as passwords, is essential to prevent unauthorised access and potential misuse. Think carefully about what you post online and maintain a respectful tone in all digital interactions to avoid unintentionally contributing to cyberbullying (Public Safety Canada, 2023). Pausing before responding to any hurtful messages can help reduce the immediate emotional impact and prevent further escalation. It is also advisable to avoid opening unsolicited or unidentified messages, as these can often be sources of harmful content (Hinduja & Patchin, 2018). By implementing these strategies, individuals can better protect themselves and contribute to creating a safer online environment.

CONCLUSION

Cyberbullying is a pervasive issue with serious emotional, psychological, and social consequences. It involves the use of digital platforms to harass, threaten, or humiliate individuals, often leaving long-lasting effects on victims. Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive approach, including raising awareness, educating individuals on safe online practices, and promoting open communication to prevent and mitigate the harmful impacts of cyberbullying.

REFERENCES

- Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA). (2023, August 1). *What is cyberbullying*. StopBullying.gov. <https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it>
- DeLench, B. (n.d.). *10 tips for teens to prevent cyberbullying | MomsTeam*. <https://www.momsteam.com/health-safety/10-tips-teens-prevent-cyberbullying>
- Gohal, G., Alqassim, A., Eltyeb, E., Rayyani, A., Hakami, B., Faqih, A. A., Hakami, A., Qadri, A., & Mahfouz, M. (2023). Prevalence and related risks of cyberbullying and its effects on adolescent. *BMC Psychiatry*, 23(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-023-04542-0>
- Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J.W. (2018). Preventing cyberbullying: Top ten tips for teens. Cyberbullying Research Center. <https://cyberbullying.org/Top-Ten-Tips-Teens-Prevention.pdf>
- Malay Mail. (2022, January 14). Malaysia ranked second in Asia for cyberbullying among youth. *Malay Mail*. <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2022/01/14/malaysia-ranked-second-in-asia-for-cyberbullying-among-youth/2035100>
- Mohammad, N. (2021, July 21). *Let's put a stop to cyber bullying, the faceless beast*. BERNAMA. <https://www.bernama.com/en/thoughts/news.php?id=1979465>

- Polanco-Levicán, K., & Salvo-Garrido, S. (2022). Understanding social media literacy: A systematic review of the concept and its competences. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(14), 8807. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19148807>
- Public Safety Canada. (2023, May 19). *How to prevent cyberbullying*. Canada.ca. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/campaigns/cyberbullying/cyberbullying-youth/how-to-prevent-cyberbullying.html>
- Saman, Z. M., Siti-Azrin, A. H., Othman, A., & Kueh, Y. C. (2021). The validity and reliability of the malay version of the cyberbullying scale among secondary school adolescents in Malaysia. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health/International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(21), 11669. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182111669>
- Taibi, D., Scifo, L., Bruno, N., & Fulantelli, G. (2023). Social media literacy to support a conscious use of social media in adolescents and improve their psychological well-being: A pilot study. *Sustainability*, 15(17), 12726. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su151712726>

"FROM MISSING OUT TO MISSING YOU": TRANSFORMING NEGATIVE FOMO INTO LOYAL CUSTOMERS

Nurliyana Abas

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
liyana322@uitm.edu.my

Hanani Hussin

Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Kedah
hanani12@uitm.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

Modern technology introduced the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which has a significant impact on consumer behavior. Fear of missing out, defined as the fear of missing out on positive experiences, compels consumers to benefit from the brands and products frequently mentioned on social media platforms (Przybylski et al., 2013). Although regular FOMO is attributed to a feeling of losing out, this paper discusses how businesses can capitalize on negative FOMO to make it a positive experience to encourage customer retention and continual patronage. However, the general impact of FOMO, which includes anxiety, stress, and dissatisfaction, is a major challenge for brands, even if FOMO is featured more and more often in marketing communication strategies (Abel et al., 2016). Many brands use FOMO as a strategy to push people to purchase products. At the same time, this leads to more sales, and the resulting feeling is that customers are likely to be unhappy and disinterested in engaging with brands.

Businesses must change negative FOMO into positive outcomes because it contributes to loyal clients, better customer experiences, greater emotional connection, and business advantage. Negative FOMO that is linked to anxiety and dissatisfaction results in the formation of short-term purchase intentions (Hayran et al., 2020). By dealing with this fear while balancing the main goal of caring for the customer, companies will be able to gain trust, maintain frequent sales, and earn dedicated customers (Gartner et al., 2022). Such a shift makes it possible to increase satisfaction and retention levels due to improved sales of products that were adapted to customers' needs and expectations. Through the appeal of social proof and influencing, businesses therefore stay ahead of competitors who may not factor in these psychological attributes, enhancing the aspect of sustainable growth for the firm (Gartner et al., 2022; Larksuite, 2024). It is solely the creation of a strategic intention to transform negative feelings into positive customer interactions that result in large competitive gains and sustainable profitability (Larksuite, 2024).

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FOMO

FOMO is based on psychological theories such as social comparison theory and the fear of being rejected by others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). According to Przybylski et al. (2013), FOMO is defined as the fear of missing out on events and activities others are having fun at. According to different studies, FOMO may cause such feelings as anxiety, dissatisfaction, and even depression (Dossey, 2014). But at the same time, FOMO can be used as a lever for

engaging the target audience and stimulating activity. FOMO is heavily interconnected with social media, where the content users feed themselves makes matters worse (Baker et al., 2016). This fear is compounded by the number of hours spent going through other people's carefully selected lives on social media apps, further increasing the level of anxiety and making people feel the compulsion to be connected.

FOMO IN MARKETING

Today's brands have used FOMO to their advantage by using temporal offers, special events, and featuring other happy customers' samples (Hodkinson, 2019). These strategies work on the principle of FOMO—fear of missing out—which prompts consumers to make immediate purchases. But at the same time, FOMO can be used as a lever for engaging the target audience and stimulating activity. However, a major drawback is that when decision-making focuses heavily on FOMO, the emotional outcomes are generally negative, which means that customers will be dissatisfied (Alfina et al., 2023).

TRANSFORMING NEGATIVE FOMO—"MISSING YOU" APPROACH

Fredrickson (2001) revealed that studies done in the past have indicated that one of the techniques that have a positive impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty is changing the negative feelings of the customers to positive ones. More meaningful shopping experiences can be developed by addressing the main sources of negative FOMO—meanings of rejection and lack. Such causes may include generating community engagement and offering personalized services, which help consumers reduce negative feelings as they become more content (Smith & Anderson, 2018). The "Missing You" approach in marketing means a paradigm shift that helps turn negative FOMO into positive, leading to customer satisfaction and lifetime loyalty. It aligns with affirmation strategies based on commitment, customer value creation, and customer empathy, focusing on the long-term relationship rather than the standard deterioration strategy that relies on fear and scarcity (Hollebeek et al., 2014).

The main components of the "Missing You" strategy illustrate that the company should focus on being different, creating an unforgettable atmosphere, maintaining the authenticity of the community service, and constantly providing value to the users. Even when the community is large, brands ensure that the customer feels important, thus limiting negative FOMO, since they feel like they belong and are having positive experiences (Aaker, 2011). Experiential concepts are a way of selling that gives consumers emotional experiences beyond the mere exchange of products and services (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Establishing a real community enables brands to build relationships among the customers and the brand, the emotions and values that it shares with them (McAlexander et al., 2002). Customer satisfaction and loyalty can be maintained by offering constant value by providing educational content, employing recommendation tools, and offering loyalty programs (Kotler & Keller, 2016). That is why the elements of the "Missing You" approach developed in the article open the space for customer satisfaction and, therefore, provide business growth opportunities through permanent engagement. Customers who receive a good experience are likely to exhibit the appropriate behavior, which will help generate more revenues and support the brand image at cheaper costs (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The strategic marketing orientation has a broad perspective on not only the individual consumer but also society at large, making it a responsible marketing scheme.

CONCLUSION

The “Missing You” strategy of marketing aims at shifting the narrative from negative FOMO that companies create while customers engage in other businesses to making the customer miss the company and therefore come back. Concisely, it is possible to argue that by adopting values such as authenticity, empathy, and emphasis on long-term consumer relationships, brands can respond to the customers’ need to identify themselves by their underlying psychological needs and values (Fredrickson, 2001; Hollebeek et al., 2014). Besides, it helps to reduce the negative emotions associated with FOMO and works in line with sustainable and responsible marketing, which is rather important for the growth of a business based on the increased level of customer satisfaction and loyalty.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, D. A. (2011). *Building strong brands*. Simon and Schuster.
- Abel, J. P., Buff, C. L., & Burr, S. A. (2016). Social media and the fear of missing out: Scale development and assessment. *Journal of Business & Economics Research*, 14(1), 33-44. <https://doi.org/10.19030/jber.v14i1.9554>
- Alfina, N., Hartini, S., & Mardhiyah, D. (2023). FOMO related consumer behaviour in marketing context: A systematic literature review. *Cogent Business & Management*, 10(3). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2023.2250033>
- Baker, Z. G., Krieger, H., & LeRoy, A. S. (2016). Fear of missing out: Relationships with depression, mindfulness, and physical symptoms. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 35(10), 755-775. <https://awspntest.apa.org/doi/10.1037/tps0000075>
- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117(3), 497-529. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497>
- Dossey, L. (2014). FOMO, digital dementia, and our dangerous experiment. *Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing*, 10(2), 69-73. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.explore.2013.12.008>
- Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 218-226. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.56.3.218>
- Gartner, J., Fink, M., & Maresch, D. (2022). The role of fear of missing out and experience in the formation of SME decision makers’ intentions to adopt new manufacturing technologies. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 180, 121723. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2022.121723>

- Hayran, C., Anik, L., & Gürhan-Canli, Z. (2020). A threat to loyalty: Fear of missing out (FOMO) leads to reluctance to repeat current experiences. *PLoS ONE*, 15(4), e0232318. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0232318>
- Hodkinson, C. (2019). 'Fear of Missing Out' (FOMO) marketing appeals: A conceptual model. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 25(1), 65-88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2016.1234504>
- Hollebeek, L. D., Glynn, M. S., & Brodie, R. J. (2014). Consumer brand engagement in social Media: conceptualization, scale development and validation. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 28(2), 149-165. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2013.12.002>
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management*. Prentice Hall.
- Larksuite. (2024, January 15). *Fear of missing out (FOMO)*. https://www.larksuite.com/en_us/topics/retail-glossary/fear-of-missing-out-fomo
- McAlexander, J. H., Schouten, J. W., & Koenig, H. F. (2002). Building brand community. *Journal of Marketing*, 66(1), 38–54. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.66.1.38.18451>
- Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1999). *The experience economy: work is theatre & every business a stage*. Harvard Business School Press. <http://www.books24x7.com/marc.asp?bookid=8381>
- Przybylski, A. K., Murayama, K., DeHaan, C. R., & Gladwell, V. (2013). Motivational, emotional, and behavioral correlates of fear of missing out. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(4), 1841-1848. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2013.02.014>
- Smith, A., & Anderson, M. (2018). Social media use in 2018. *Pew Research Center*, 1-4. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/03/01/social-media-use-in-2018/>