

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BEHAVIOUR TOWARD AWARENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA MISUSE IN THE MALAYSIAN ARMY

Muhmad Zafferi Shari¹, Jessica Ong Hai Liaw^{2*}, Endry Nixon A.³, Fauzahani Pairan⁴ & Syarifah Bahiyah Rahayu⁵

¹Centre for Graduate Studies, National Defence University of Malaysia, zaf_7023@yahoo.com

^{2*}Department of Management, Faculty of Defence Studies and Management, National Defence University of Malaysia, jessica@upnm.edu.my

³Faculty of Defence and Management Studies, UPNM, Malaysia. nixonendry@yahoo.com

⁴Centre for Graduate Studies, National Defence University of Malaysia zaf_7023@yahoo.com

⁵Faculty of Defense Science & Technology, Cyber Security & Digital Industrial Revolution Centre, National Defense University of Malaysia SyarifahBahiyah@upnm.edu.my

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ABSTRACT

The extensive proliferation of social media is regarded as having an adverse effect on society. It fosters a deceptive perception within the community, especially among the most actively involved users, specifically the youth who often utilise diverse apps accessible on the market. The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) has been founded and recorded a fourfold rise in incidences of cyberbullying, disinformation, and hate speech. The utilisation of online social media has revolutionised the ways in which Malaysian Army (MA) personnel obtain and share information. The Internet and the prevalent use of social platforms such as blogs, microblogs, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and others have resulted in an augmented production and unconventional distribution of news and information. Consequently, an investigation of the impact of online social media on the reception and dissemination of information among MA staff is necessary. The apprehension over misinformation is valid, especially given the fast dissemination of the internet and the extensive use of social media platforms that facilitate false news, online gambling, cyberbullying, and fraudulent schemes. The purpose of this study is to measure the level of behaviour toward awareness of social media misuse and to identify the most significant factor of behaviour toward awareness of social media misuse. The findings indicate a moderate association, ranging from 0.4 to 0.6, regarding behaviour toward knowledge of social media usage. The regression study demonstrates that the most important factor influencing awareness of social media misuse is Attitude towards the behaviour ($t=15.975$, $P=0.000$), followed by Perceived Behaviour Control ($t=3.704$, $P=0.000$), and finally Subjective Norm ($t=-2.063$, $P=0.04$). Consequently, the Malaysian Army should prioritise cultivating behaviour by focussing on attitude development. In a military organisation, a positive attitude is essential to foster a culture of propriety while using social media.

Keywords: Attitude towards the behaviour, Subjective Norm, Perceived Behaviour Control and awareness of social media misuse

INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, the usage of the 'internet' has significantly changed people's lives, therefore it mostly impacts the social-reality component of people's lives. Hassan (2024) argued that the expansion of broadband connectivity enhances the ability of Malayan cyberspace inhabitants to access the World Wide Web. Undoubtedly, individuals may concur that the internet has substantially facilitated our lives and enhanced their convenience. Websites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and several more are made possible by this technology (Sörensen et. al., 2023). A facet of contemporary society is the capacity to forge connections and disseminate knowledge, which has rendered life more convenient and pleasurable. Individuals can utilise social media to communicate with people globally, conduct business, cultivate friendships, or acquire information, as previously mentioned. Consequently, individuals within the global community must accept this reality. Despite the potential benefits of social media, the detrimental applications of these platforms have been profoundly concerning.

Mahat et. al. (2023) also mention potential social media trends in Malaysia for 2024 are influenced by worldwide trends and may arise from increased consumer awareness in the nation. Presented below are many salient patterns. The community in Malaysia remains an active participant on social media sites, including WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

1National Defence University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. Email: zaf_7023@yahoo.com

2National Defence University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. Email: jessica@upnm.edu.my. orcid.org/0000-0003-1109-8915

3National Defence University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. Email

4National Defence University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. Email: fauza5328@gmail.com

5National Defence University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. Email: syarifahbahiyah@upnm.edu.my. /orcid.org/0000-0002-1996-5166

Moreover, the TikTok program continues to grow in popularity, with an increasing number of users, particularly among the younger population. This trend indicates that companies will pursue short-form videos in the most active applications. The final reason associated with social media usage in Malaysia is the specialisation aspect since online commerce is seeing growth. The click-to-buy strategy will boost the engagement of significant customers in marketing as social media becomes ubiquitous. With the increasing number of Malaysians engaging in online buying, marketers may include various social experiences into the purchase process as e-commerce applications are connected with social media platforms. This facilitates seamless transactions within applications such as Instagram or TikTok. Moreover, social media has gained prominence through engaging and immersive content.

The widespread introduction of social media is perceived as having a detrimental impact on society. It creates a misleading impression within the community, particularly among the most engaged active users, namely the young who regularly utilise various applications available in the market (Lalani et. al., 2023). The self-exploitation and misuse of social media are escalating, leading to a surge in hazardous and criminal behaviours. As a result, The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) has established and documented a fourfold increase in incidents encompassing cyberbullying, misinformation, and hate speech (Hassan, 2024). Dayak Daily (2024) mentions in Sarawak, there are more than 800 complaints about the misuse of social media by minors, namely concerning cyberbullying and cyber fraud activities. Government initiatives are underway to improve regulation, including collaboration with major businesses like Meta and TikTok to increase content filtering and removal requests. Moreover, there has been a proliferation of internet fraud and gambling advertising, particularly impacting the most vulnerable users. Furthermore, the proliferation of misinformation and racially or religiously inflammatory content adversely affects society. Certain aspects of the right adversely affect public welfare; nevertheless, MCMC has employed strategies to mitigate this by issuing takedown requests to enhance digital security. Moreover, the necessity for parody accounts has emerged as a prominent media issue in Malaysia. Given the increased prevalence of social media usage among Malaysians, many parodies employ brands or logos that closely resemble those of reputable entities or organisations. These accounts were then employed to disseminate false information, or to dissuade or even mock.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The utilisation of online social media has transformed the methods by which individuals acquire and disseminate information among Malaysian Army (MA) personnel. According to Shari & Liaw, (2022), the concern over misinformation is justified due to the proliferation of the Internet and the widespread use of social platforms such as blogs, microblogs, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and others, leading to an increased generation and atypical dissemination of news and information. Consequently, there is a significant impact on the accessibility of news via social networking services. This phenomenon has been a primary subject of worldwide discourse for an extended period. Kbaier et. al. (2021) asserts that rumours and misinformation on social media lead to mistrust and misunderstanding; yet, it is contentious to assert that audiences are exposed to false news, wrong behavior and misleading decisions. This is supported by a survey indicating that online news websites and platforms exhibited a moderate to significant prevalence of false news.

Therefore, research on how online social media has revolutionized the reception and dissemination of information among MA personnel is required. The concern surrounding fake news is legitimate, particularly due to the rapid proliferation of the internet and the widespread utilisation of social media platforms such as blogs, microblogs, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and others, which have significantly facilitated the exponential generation and unparalleled dissemination of news and information. Thus, it is significantly influencing the frequency of news access via social networks. Kristiansen & Jensen, (2023) mention the issue of false news, online gambling, cyberbullying and scammer fraud has been extensively debated globally for several years. Besides, rumours and misinformation engender mistrust and confusion, while it remains contentious whether audiences are genuinely exposed to false news.

OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study is to explore the behaviour of Malaysian Army personnel in the West Filed Command vicinity towards awareness of social media. Therefore, the objective of this study is to measure the level of behaviour toward awareness of social media misuse and to identify the most significant factor of behaviour toward awareness of social media misuse.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding of human dimension is an important part related to the behaviour of social media misuse. Philosophers like Jean-Paul Sartre and Martin Heidegger assert that the human dimension is defined by actions and choices, rather than innate characteristics or culturally and historically predetermined notions of human nature (Rascão, 2023). This perspective views life as a continuous endeavour, shaped by individuals, where meaning is perpetually redefined. This human dimension refers to how phenomena manifest in the experienced, perceptive, and emotive self (Burton, 1998). Humanism The Renaissance viewpoint, which influenced philosophical thought, posits the significance of human existence and the potential for human advancement (Monfasani, 2023). This may conflict with other compatible or mechanical perspectives of humanity; nonetheless, it might provide the most promising insight into our creativity, moral essence, and intrinsic value.

According to Bednar & Spiekermann (2024, most human dimensions in ethical philosophy pertain to ethical and moral considerations, primarily focusing on how individuals should conduct their lives and interact with others or society. Ogar & Bassey (2023) asserted that individuals behave in accordance with moral principles articulated by the concept of the categorical imperative, but Nwagbara & Orji (2024) posited that the standard of ethical correctness is the maximisation of pleasure or welfare for individuals. However, Knudsen (2023) mentions political philosophy seeks to comprehend the human dimension in relation to interactions within political systems and the dynamics of power and authority. Political scientists examine justice, freedom, and rights, emphasising human rights, and contemplate the optimal design of governance structures to ensure equitable power incentives for the populace. In the sixth and final perspective of current Continental philosophy, the ecological and anthropological human is 'conjoined' with both, animal and non-animal entities, deconstructing anthropocentric and dualistic frameworks.

In social media misuse, the human dimension is thus dedicated to the philosophy of technics, which pertains to the methods and viewpoints that exist to facilitate human enhancement, grounded in the study of life experiences, behaviours, and the relative behaviours of specific objects (Reitz et. al., 2023). This discipline encompasses issues such as awareness, autonomy, ethics, interpersonal relationships, and individual existence within a culture or

society. Existentialism is a significant philosophical movement that emphasises autonomy, choice, and accountability. In connection with that, this study refers to the human dimension the behaviour by exposing Threory of Planned Behaviour in evaluating the awareness of social media misuse.

THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR

Thus, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is pertinent for examining the behavior of social media misuse among personnel in the Malaysian Army. Wu & Chiang (2023) mention that TPB is extensively utilised across several domains, such as health psychology, marketing, and environmental studies, to elucidate the impact of attitudes and beliefs on decision-making and behavioural modification. TPB Concentration on Intentions: Although excellent intentions are significant indicators, they do not invariably translate into action. This behaviour cannot be executed owing to situational constraints, such as time limitations or unforeseen circumstances. Omission of Emotional and Behavioural Factors: The TPB has predicated on the premise that individuals engage in cognitive processes to govern their actions, failing to account for emotive, habitual, or impulsive behaviours. The hypothesis is most successful with fundamental or specific behaviours. In instances of intricate or prolonged behaviours, it may be essential to contemplate many phases of the decision-making process. The TPB has been utilised to elucidate and promote pro-environmental habits, such as promoting good behaviour in social media (Liao, 2024). Campaigns may be structured to alter individuals' attitudes toward environmental conservation, raise knowledge of relevant cultural norms associated with eco-friendly activity, and influence perceived behavioural control. Campaigns may seek to modify human activities based on perceived behavioural purpose; a psychological theory known as the TPB aims to elucidate human behaviour. The elements of TPB as follows (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977):

- a. **Attitude Towards the Behavior.** A person's favourable or unfavourable attitude towards the accomplishment of a particular behaviour is regulated by this concept. When an individual has the expectation that a particular behaviour will result in favourable outcomes, then that individual will continue to engage in the behaviour in the issue.
- b. **Subjective Norms.** The perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behaviour is captured in this component and regarding behaviour. According to the concept, when individuals think others of importance to them like friends, family, and other people find certain behaviour acceptable, the individuals will also adopt that behaviour.
- c. **Perceived Behavioral Control.** This particular element deals with attitude, which could be described as a perception with respect to actual or possible behaviour. With regard to this particular discussion, perceived control may be considered the dominant paradigm within the study of behaviour analysis. Research based on this theory holds that the likelihood of an individual engaging in a particular behaviour depends on the amount of perceived instrumentality that is the perceived resources, opportunities and ability of the individual to undertake the behaviour in question.

AWARENESS OF SOCIAL MISUSE

Awareness of social media misuse includes the development of digital competencies, which entail understanding the social media environment in which specific events transpire; recognising the perceived effects of the social media context on the observer; rationalising the processing of social media information; and having the confidence to interact with social media in an abusive manner (Muthuswamy & Varshika, 2023). Digital mediation represents advancements in context-aware computing and presents humans with new hurdles in retaining awareness of the digital context in all situations while traversing the extensive realm of online information. An additional facet of growing proficiency in social media context awareness is the new abilities individuals get concerning the importance they attribute to the specific environments of the social media platforms they utilise.

METHODOLOGY

This study mostly employs qualitative research methodologies to obtain its conclusions. Upon outlining the many types of qualitative research, it is clear that natural setting research allows researchers to immerse themselves more profoundly in authentic experiences. It involves the process of defining, explaining, and analysing the data gathered from the research participants. The researcher used thematic analysis to examine the collected data. Thematic analysis is a commonly utilised method of qualitative analysis. In thematic analysis, the researcher is

tasked with identifying a finite number of themes that correctly encapsulate the content of their textual material. Naeem et al. (2023) assert that thematic analysis relies on the researcher's discretion on further steps with the team following the study's findings.

The primary data employed in this study is a questionnaire including three sections: demographic information, abusive conduct, and awareness of social media usage. The sampling is derived from the MA West Field Command population. A total of 875 persons from MA West Field Command completed the randomly administered questionnaire via Google Form from May 22, 2024, to August 31, 2024. Ultimately, only 689 persons provided thoughts from the total sampled population, since they consented to the study and met the data analysis criteria.

DISCUSSION

a. Descriptive Analysis

The questionnaire findings revealed that the predominant age group of respondents was 23-30 years, with 41.9% (289 respondents). The bulk of responders, including 48.6% (335 individuals), were aged 11-21 years based on their period of employment. The bulk of respondents possess a Secondary education, comprising 87.5% (603 respondents), and earn between RM1,201.00 and RM2,500.00 monthly. The data indicates that the respondents exhibit a commendable and dependable degree of maturity in their questionnaire responses.

b. Reliability Analysis

This study examines the human dimension factors influencing behavior—specifically, attitude towards behaviour, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control—as independent variables affecting knowledge of social media abuse among MA personnel. The reliability test in Table 1 indicates that all items possess an alpha (α) value greater than 0.6 (Creswell, 2017).

Table 1 Cronbach Alpha (α) For Each Variable

Item	Cronbach Alpha (α)	Item
Attitude toward the behavior (ATT)	0.900	19
Subjective Norm (SN)	0.884	9
Perceived behavioral control (PBC)	0.914	11
Awareness of Social Media Misuse (ASM)	0.977	43

i. To Measure the Level of Behaviour Toward Awareness of Social Media Misuse

Table 2 presents the correlation data derived from Pearson Correlation analysis. A score between 0.4 and 0.7 signifies a moderate link, whereas a value below 0.4 indicates a weaker relationship between the variables (Ramlan & Adnan, 2016). The strongest association is between perceived behavioural control and subjective norm, with a value of 0.793, followed by the link between knowledge of social media misuse and attitude towards behaviour, which has a value of 0.640. The association among the variables is **MODERATE**.

Table 2 Correlations Test

	ATT	SN	PBC	ASM
ATT	1			
SN	.683**	1		
PBC	.640**	.793**	1	

ASM	.671**	.466**	.497**	1
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** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

ii. To Identify the Most Significant Factor of Behaviour Toward Awareness of Social Media Misuse.

Regression analysis was conducted to acknowledge the relationship between the contributing factors as a whole and the Awareness of social media misuse among the MA personnel. Table 3 shows the Significant F Change value of 0.000 (Less than 0.05) indicating that the model for Awareness of social media misuse is significant at the 72.9% percent significant level. The value $R=0.679$, indicated that the level of prediction to assess satisfaction was high. Adjusted R^2 value, (coefficient of the determination) 0.461 indicated that 46.1% of awareness of social media misuse could be explained by the 3 independent variables (df1). F- statistics are used for testing if the null hypothesis should be rejected or supported. The F-statistic results combined with the p-value indicated that the overall result obtained in the analyses was significant (Ramlan & Adnan, 2016). However, it is to be noted that it does not indicate that all the independent variables have a significant impact on MA personnel. The above Table 4.16 shows explanatory variables using ANOVA are statistically significant i.e. the model is a good fit of the data ($F=195.443$, p value=0.000). The P values (Sig.) illustrated that except the level of compassion every independent variable is statistically highly significant i.e. all independents variables have a significant impact on MA personnel.

Table 3 Model Summary^b

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change
0.679				.461	195.44	3	685	0.000
a	0.461	0.459	16.12833		3			

a. Predictors: (Constant), BEHAVIOUR, ATTITUDE, NORM

b. Dependent Variable: AWARENESS

A multivariate regression model was used to determine the relative importance of each of the independent variables with respect to the satisfaction among the MA personnel. The result is shown in Table 4. A multivariate regression model was used to determine the relative importance of each of the independent variables with respect to Personnel retention at the Royal Malay Regiment. The regression model was as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + X_1\beta_1 + X_2\beta_2 + X_3\beta_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y= Awareness of Social Media Misuse (ASM)

X1= Attitude (ATT)

X2= Subjective Norm (SN)

X3= Perceived Behaviour Control (PBC)

β_0 = constant (y intercept)

β = coefficient

ε = error term

Table 4 Coefficients

Variables	β	Beta	t	Sig.	VIF	Correlation
(Constant)	29.154		5.843	0.000		
ATT	1.658	0.629	15.975	0.000*	1.970	
SN	-0.479	-0.102	-2.063	0.040**	3.135	

PBC	0.688	0.175	3.704	0.000*	2.838
a.	Dependent Variable: AWARENESS				
b.	Significant at $p > 0.01^*$ and $p > 0.05^{**}$				

The standardized coefficients (β) estimated how strongly the explanatory variables influenced the dependent variable (Ramlan & Adnan, 2016). According to Table 4.1, where Constant = 29.154, shows that if Attitude, Subjective Norm and Perceived Behaviour Control are all rated as zero, Awareness of Social Media Misuse would be 5.843. $X1 = \beta = 1.658$, shows that one unit change in Attitude results in a 1.658 unit increase in Awareness of Social Media Misuse. $X2 = \beta = -0.479$, shows that one unit change in Subjective Norm, results in a -0.479 unit decrease in Awareness of Social Media Misuse. $X3 = \beta = 0.688$ shows that one unit change in Perceived Behaviour Control, results in 0.688 units increase in Awareness of Social Media Misuse. The magnitude of the coefficients of the independent variables also denoted the strength of the influence that they have on the dependent variable. The results indicate that Awareness of Social Media Misuse is strongly influenced by Attitude (coefficient $\beta = 1.658$), followed by Perceived Behaviour Control (coefficient $\beta = 0.688$) and lastly Subjective Norm (coefficient $\beta = -0.479$). The positive regression coefficient indicates a direct proportionality increase in the independent variables (Attitude and Perceived Behaviour Control) leading to an increase in dependent variables (Awareness of Social Media Misuse).

The estimated regression equation is shown in the Equation below:

$$Y = \beta_0 + X1\beta_1 + X2\beta_2 + X3\beta_3 + \varepsilon_{46}$$

$$= 1.152 + X1, 0.132 + X2, 0.089 + X3, 0.404$$

Table 4 also provides the value of t-statistics, significance value and collinearity statistics. Attitude and Perceived Behaviour Control, have a significant positive impact on Awareness of Social Media Misuse. The variation in Awareness of Social Media Misuse caused by Attitude and Perceived Behaviour Control is 165.8% and 68.8% respectively. According to the t value, identified Attitude and Perceived Behaviour Control have significance with $t = 15.975$, $P < 0.01$ and $t = 3.704$, $P < 0.01$ respectively; and Subjective Norm have significance with $t = -2.063$, $P < 0.05$. In other factors, the P values (Sig.) illustrated the level of independent variable is statistically highly significant with Attitude, Subjective Norm and Perceived Behaviour Control having a significant impact on Awareness of Social Media Misuse.

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is to determine the correlation of each independent variable towards the dependent variable which is highly collinear or else. The VIF value 1-2 indicates the correlation is weak; 3-4 indicates the correlation is moderate; and 5 and above indicates the correlation is strong (Akinwande et. al., 2015). According to VIF, only 1 out of 3 independent variables has a moderate correlation with Awareness of Social Media Misuse which is a Subjective Norm. The other independent variables (Attitude and Perceived Behaviour Control) have a weak correlation with Awareness of Social Media Misuse.

In overall, the correlation and regression analysis show the relationship between Awareness of Social Media Misuse and independent variables is MODERATE. The result from the correlation test value shows the data is below 0.8 (range between 0.2 and 0.7). The regression analysis shows a Significant F Change value of 0.000 explaining that all independent variables have a significant relationship with Satisfaction, but it does not indicate that all independent variables have a significant impact on MA personnel. The multicollinearity result shows that almost the VIF value is moderate. As a result, the relationship between the contributing factors and the Awareness of Social Media Misuse among MA personnel is **MODERATE**. The Most Significant Factor of Behaviour Toward Awareness of Social Media Misuse is Attitude ($t = 15.975$, $P = 0.000$); followed by Perceived Behaviour Control ($t = 3.704$, $P = 0.000$); and lastly Subjective Norm ($t = -2.063$, $P = 0.04$).

CONCLUSION

The study's conclusions indicate that the MA should prioritise the aspect of attitude towards behaviour to ensure its members recognise social media usage. As a cohesive entity, the development of attitudes is facilitated by enhancements in policy, law enforcement, and ongoing training. The social media policy requires enhancement and should be comprehensible to all member tiers. Furthermore, the policy must be promoted alongside the extent of law enforcement. An organisation must convey updated policies and rules to all individuals to ensure

comprehension and compliance with established regulations. Furthermore, the importance of training in attitude building must be underscored by MA. Training may be conducted formally or informally, including seminars or team study days that address the issue of social media usage among military personnel. The successful implementation of established regulations, thorough law enforcement, and credible self-development training by MA foster a culture of effective and efficient social media utilisation, aligned with the ongoing ICT development initiatives.

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