

Intention of Social Media Adoption among Undergraduate Students of Business Schools in Kathmandu Valley

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Abstract

This paper investigated the intention of social media adoption among undergraduate students in business schools during 2020. A purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from 200 undergraduate students in the Kathmandu Valley using self-administered questionnaires. Data were analyzed by applying Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). This research paper found a significant positive influence of resource sharing on behavior intention of social media adoption. The hypothesis showed that perceived ease of use partially mediated the relationship between collaboration and behavior of educational use of social media. However, the research found no significant influence of perceived ease of use, and perceived usefulness on behavior intention of social media adoption. Using the findings of this paper, the research paper discussed the theoretical and practical implications for researchers and educators. The paper incorporates resource sharing and collaboration variables to the existing TAM framework.

Keywords: TAM, resource sharing, collaboration, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, behavior intention, structural equation model

Introduction

Over the past few decades, social media has had a profound impact on nearly every aspect of our daily lives. There are 7.95 billion people in the world, and 4.95 billion of them use the internet (Internet Live Stats, 2022). Over 3.96 billion people use social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and LinkedIn, with 2.9 billion using Facebook, 396.5 million using Twitter, and 550 million using Google+ (Internet Live Stats, 2022). Approximately 11.51 million Nepalese use the internet, and 13.70 million use social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn (Datareportal, 2022). Originally created to facilitate communication and interaction, social media platforms are now preferred over traditional communication tools (e.g. university email) for their ease of use and ability to facilitate collaboration (Arshad & Akram, 2018; Berger, 2017). Social media platforms not only play an important role in everyday life, but also provide valuable tools for businesses to communicate. Joosten (2012) states social media is a technological system for collaboration and communication. Likewise, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) state social media is a tool for creating and exchanging user-generated content via internet-based applications.

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There have been debates over the pros and cons of social media; however, there is general agreement on the influence of social networking sites on today's students (Lederer, 2012; Lester & Perini, 2010). A rich social media presence has become essential in today's higher education in marketing as students use social media to connect with prospective schools (Hayes et al., 2009; Sandvig, 2016). According to Chugh and Ruhi (2018), Facebook offers many potential advantages, but little is known about how students use social media in the classroom (Rahman et al., 2020; Yadegaridehkordi et al., 2019). Therefore, it is logical to investigate social media adoption in an educational setting.

The adoption of social media in online education and other settings can be explained by several major theories, such as the reasoned action theory (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000), the innovation of diffusion theory (Rogers, 1983), the technology acceptance model (Davis 1989), the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000), the decomposed theory of planned behavior (Taylor & Todd, 1991), Social Cognitive Theory (Compeau & Higgins 1995), The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003). In spite of its many variations, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been extensively applied across a wide range of research fields due to its simplicity, adaptability, and parsimonious (Marangunić & Granić 2015; Rauniar et al. 2014). In addition, Boonsiritomachai and Pitchayadejanant (2017) affirm that TAM provides a robust explanation of IT adoption in a variety of organizational settings, cultural contexts, technological contexts, and competence levels. This research is in line with social media adoption in educational setting (Boonsiritomachai, & Pitchayadejanant, 2017; Kong et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2020; Yadegaridehkordi et al., 2019), and has attempted to investigate the mediated role of collaborative learning on behavior intention. It has also introduced resource sharing variable in the TAM for the study.

The remaining paper proceeds as follows. The second section provides a review of several constructs and the relationship between them. The following section discusses the research method, including measurement and structural model. The fourth section discusses our data analysis procedures and results. The final section presents our discussion, implications, and directional for the future study.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Technological Acceptance Model (TAM)

TAM assumes an individual's intent to use a newly developed system, or technology's influences on their actual behavior. The TAM was developed based on theories such as expectancy theory, self-efficacy theory, cost-benefit paradigm from perspective of behavior decision making, and diffusion of innovations theory (Davis, 1989). Davis and Venkatesh (1996) describe TAM as a model for predicting users' acceptance and behavior in information systems. Perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU) of social media have significant effects on adoption intentions.

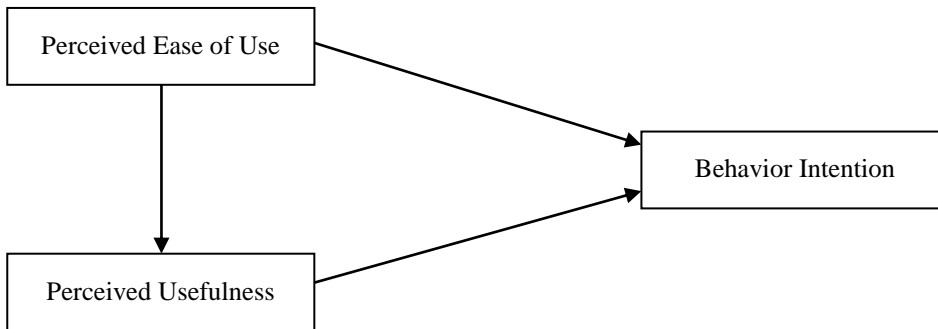


Figure 1. Technology Acceptance Model

Perceived Ease of Use

Perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort (Davis, 1989). In the social media context, perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which an individual believes that using Facebook for education purposes would be free of effort. Using the TAM, studies showed that perceived ease of use significantly impacted behavioral intention of technology acceptance (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Venkatesh et al., 2003). In an educational context, Zulfiqar et al. (2018) found a positive effect of perceived ease of use on social media adoption intentions. Yadegaridehkordi et al. (2019) found a significant impact of perceived usefulness on behavior intention in cloud technology. Likewise, Rahman et al. (2020) showed that perceived usefulness significantly affected behavior intention among undergraduates. Pokhrel, Mishra and Adhikari (2020) found that perceived usefulness has a significant positive effect on the behavior intention of mobile banking usage in Nepal. In social media context, Pokhrel (2021) showed positive influence of PEU on BI of social media adoption. Thus, this paper hypothesized that;

H1: Perceived ease of use positively influences behavior intention of social media adoption.

Perceived Usefulness

The perceived usefulness of a system is defined as the degree to which a person believes it will improve their job performance (Davis, 1989). In the social media context, perceived usefulness refers to the degree to which an individual believes that using Facebook for education purposes would enhance his or her job performance. In the TAM, studies showed that perceived usefulness has a significant positive effect on behavior intention of technology acceptance (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Zulfiqar et al. (2018) reported a significant effect of perceived usefulness on behavior intention related to social media use in an educational context. In cloud technology, Yadegaridehkordi et al. (2019) found that perceived usefulness was associated with behavioral intentions. In higher education, Rahman et al. (2020) found a significant effect of perceived usefulness on behavioral intentions. Pokhrel (2021) found a significant positive effect of perceived usefulness on the behavioral intention of social media in the Nepali context. Likewise, several studies have reported that perceived ease of use positively influences on the perceived usefulness (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Based on the stated findings, this research hypothesized that;

H2: Perceived usefulness positively influences behavior intention of social media adoption.

H3: Perceived ease of use positively influences on the perceived usefulness.

Resource Sharing

Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) describe resource sharing as academics' positive attitude towards exchanging educational material with each other and students via social media platforms. Teachers and students can use social media tools such as Facebook as a tool for exchanging resources and materials in educational settings (Premadasa et al., 2019). A recent study found that students and professors use Facebook to share study material to support traditional learning (Sharma et al., 2016). Similarly, social media helps to promote online learning resources by providing collaborative platforms for sharing resources (Forkosh-Baruch & Hershkovitz, 2012). Many studies have reported that resource sharing is positively associated with adoption intentions (e.g. Abrhim et al. 2019; Chen, Chen, & Kinshuk, 2009; Cheung & Vogel, 2013; Jarvenpaa & Staples, 2000; Liaw et al., 2008; Sharma et al. 2016). The purpose of this paper is to examine how students' intentions to use Facebook for academic purposes are influenced by resource sharing. Based on the findings of the researchers, this research hypothesized;

H4: Resource sharing positively influences behavioral intention of social media adoption.

Collaboration and Behavior Intention: Mediating Role of Perceived Ease of Use

Students participate in established and sustained teams or groups as part of a collaborative learning strategy (Korkmaz, 2012). People also learn and innovate when institutions are encouraged to think outside the box (Lytras et al., 2015). Collaboration allows students to interact with their course materials. Social media sites, such as Facebook, can be used by students to share their learning experiences with their classmates (Sharma et al., 2016). Students can collaborate on assignments by joining educational groups on Facebook and sharing assignments, according to Sharma et al. (2016). Yadegaridehkordi et al. (2019) found that collaboration learning affected perceived ease of use. Similarly, other studies have investigated the effects of collaborative learning on behavior intention in an educational context (Sharma et al., 2016; Zulfiqar et al., 2018, Pokhrel, 2021). Moreover, Arshad and Akram (2018) found that perceived ease of use was a significant determinant of behavior intention for academic purposes. Further, Arshad and Akram (2018) reported that perceived ease of use partially mediated collaboration and behavior intention for social media adoption.

However, there is inadequate research investigating the mediational mechanism of perceived ease of use relating collaboration to behavioral intention of educational use of social media. Whether it is collaboration or perceived ease of use that matters in determining the outcome of behavioral intention for technology adoption and learning. According to constructivist theory (Vygotsky, 1978), human learning is constructed and that learners build new knowledge upon the foundation of previous learning. Learners rely on one another to accomplish tasks they otherwise would not complete individually (Vygotsky, 1978). Arshad and Akram (2018) recommended study of the mediational relationship in other countries and contexts too. Based on the stated literature review and research gap, this paper has proposed the following hypothesis under the given conceptual framework.

H5: The perceived ease of use mediates the relationship between collaboration and behavior intention on educational use of social media.

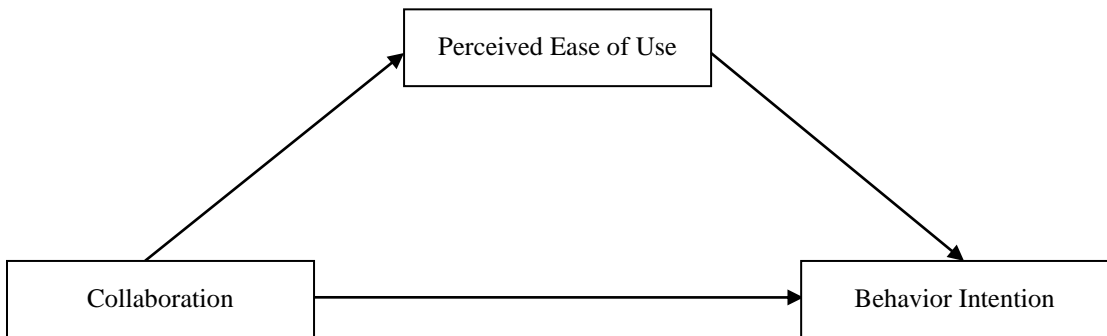


Figure 2: Proposed meditational conceptual framework for the study

Methods

Sample and Procedure

Participants were students from various universities in Kathmandu Valley. Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu University, Pokhara University, Purbanchal University and a number of foreign universities offer BBA degrees. Purposive sampling was applied (non-random sampling) due to the accessibility of students, the location of colleges, and the timeframe to complete the study. Hair et al. (2016) recommend that the sample size be ten times (at least five times) larger than the number of items used to perform methods. The research used 20 items to collect data on five variables. According to Hair et al. (2016), the sample size could range from 100 to 200. Therefore, a sample size of 200 was considered just above the required sample size.

Pilot test was conducted with 38 research students from Rajdhani Model College before the questionnaires were administered. In addition to filling out the questionnaire of 20 items, respondents were asked for feedback on the time taken and the ease of understanding the scale items. Cronbach's alpha coefficient should exceed 0.60 on a scale (Pallant, 2020). The researcher used the questionnaire for final data collection because all items were above the threshold level of 0.60.

Due to the possibility of non-response errors and missing entries from the respondents, the researcher distributed questionnaires to the coordinators and faculty members of seven BBA colleges in Kathmandu Valley. The responses have been coded appropriately. We corrected missing data, non-engaged responses, and incorrect entries after the manual screening. Two hundred of the 238 returned questionnaires were used for further analysis. SmartPLS 2.0 and SPSS 25 were used to analyze the data. Before testing direct and mediated hypotheses, the multi-collinearity assumption was tested.

Measures/Instruments

The research paper applied five constructs from different sources. Participants were asked to answer their responses from 1 to 5 (1 = "strongly agree", 5 = "strongly disagree") with higher scores representing the likelihood of BI, PE, PU, COL, and RS. *Behavior Intention* was measured with the Bock et al. (2005) scale. The questionnaire consists of 4 items. The sample item includes: "I intend to adopt social media for knowledge sharing." *Perceived usefulness* was used to assess perceived usefulness by Venkatesh and Davis (2000). The questionnaire comprises 4 items. The sample item

reads: "I find social media useful in my studies/research." *Perceived Ease of Use* adopted from Venkatesh and Davis (2000). The questionnaire comprised four items. The sample item includes: "My interaction with social media is clear and understandable." *Resource Sharing* was measured with the scale of Bock et al. (2005). The scale contains four items. The sample item states: "Sharing my knowledge with other members of social media is always good." *Collaboration/Collaborative Learning* was adapted from So and Brush (2008). The sample item includes: "I actively exchange my ideas with group members." The questionnaire comprised four items.

Results

The study involved 200 social media users. Demographic characteristics included gender, age, and amount of time spent on social media. The following table presents the details of respondents' profile.

Table 1
Demographics profile

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	76	38.0
Female	124	62.0
<i>Age(in Years)</i>		
Below 18	184	18.7
18-25	186	57.1
<i>Time Spent on Social Media (Daily)</i>		
Less than 1 hour	10	5.0
1-2 hours	56	28.0
Over 2 hours	134	67.0

In the above table 1, the majority of the respondents in the research were Female ($n = 124, 62.0\%$). The most frequent age group was 25 years ($n = 186, 57.1\%$). Finally, the most frequently reported amount of time spent on social media was over 2 hours per day ($n = 134, 67.0\%$).

Common Method Biases

To investigate the common method bias issue in the study, Herman's single factor test was used. Unrotated single factors explained only 30.54 % of the variance, which is lower than the recommended threshold of 50% (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Due to the structural equation model, the data are not influenced by common method biases.

Structural Equation Model

A structural equation model (SEM) is commonly used in marketing and management research to analyze the cause-effect relationship between latent constructs (Hair et al., 2016). The two types of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) are Covariance-Based (CB-SEM) and Variance-Based (PLS-SEM). A Structural Equation Model (SEM) based on PLS is used to examine the proposed hypotheses. CB-SEM is preferable for testing, validating, and comparing theory (Hair et al., 2017), whereas PLS-

SEM is better suited for exploratory research (Hair et al., 2016). The PLS-SEM, the combination of measurement and path model, seemed appropriate, since this paper sought to introduce a new variable into the TAM.

Measurement model

Ringle et al. (2015) suggest three major criteria for measurement model reliability and validity, such as reliability analysis, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. PU3 was dropped from the study before measurement specification due to low factor loading. Measurement model with path coefficients, after adjustment, is shown in Figure 3 below. The factor loadings are presented in Table 2.

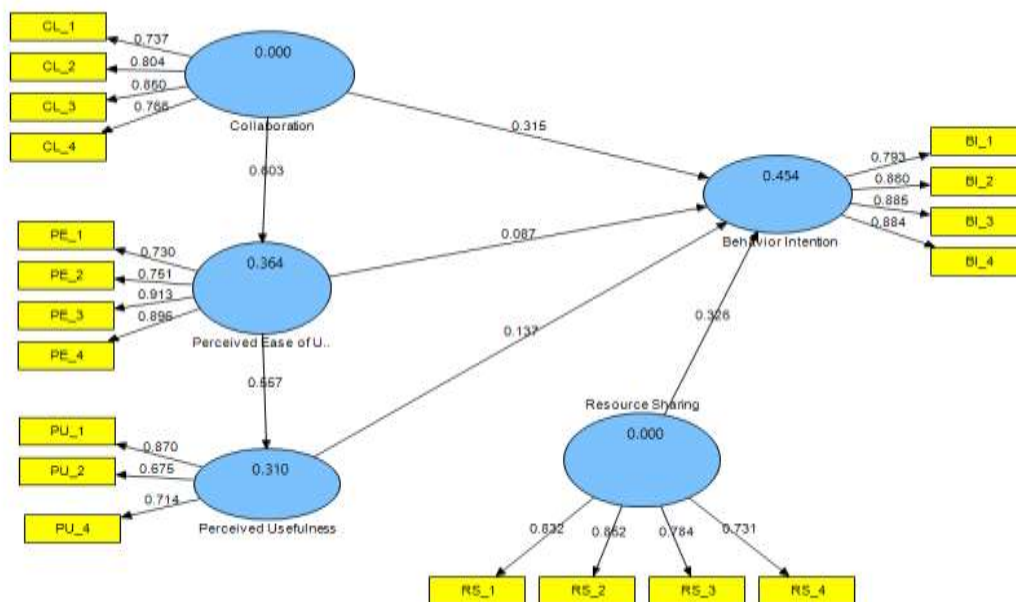


Figure 3. Structural model with path coefficients

Reliability Analysis

The composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha were measured using a cut-off value of 0.7. Since the CR value and Cronbach's alpha were both greater than 0.70 (Ringle et al., 2015), this supports the model's reliability.

Validity Analysis

Item loadings and AVE must exceed 0.7 (Hair et al., 2016) in order to achieve adequate convergent validity. As shown in Table 2, all factor loadings and AVEs were greater than 0.70 and 0.50, respectively except for loading on PU2 which is less than 0.70. The construct is retained.

Table 2
Constructs and measurement model

Constructs	Indicators	Loadings	AVE	CR	CA
Behavior Intention	BI_1	0.793	0.733	0.916	0.878
	BI_2	0.860			
	BI_3	0.885			
	BI_4	0.884			
Collaborative Learning	CL_1	0.737	0.624	0.869	0.798
	CL_2	0.804			
	CL_3	0.849			
	CL_4	0.766			
Perceived Ease of Use	PE_1	0.731	0.683	0.895	0.843
	PE_2	0.753			
	PE_3	0.912			
	PE_4	0.895			
Perceived Usefulness	PU_1	0.870	0.574	0.799	0.653
	PU_2	0.675			
	PU_4	0.714			
	RS_1	0.833			
Resource Sharing	RS_2	0.852	0.642	0.877	0.813
	RS_3	0.784			
	RS_4	0.731			

Note: AVE= Average Variance Explained, CR= Composite Reliability, CA= Cronbach Alpha

Discriminant Validity:

Discriminant validity refers to an assessment of the degree to which it differs from another concept's indicators (Bagozzi et al., 1991). To test for discriminant validity, Fornell and Larcker's criteria was used. As long as negative correlations are present between items within constructs, discriminant validity will be assured (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 3 shows that the values in the diagonal (square root of AVEs) are greater than the correlation coefficients, thus demonstrating adequate discriminate validity.

Table 3
Discrimination validity (Fornell and Larcker's Criteria)

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
1. Behavior Intention	0.8562				
2. Collaboration	0.5755	0.7901			
3. Perceived Ease of Use	0.4879	0.6034	0.8266		
4. Perceived Usefulness	0.3891	0.3958	0.5565	0.7575	
5. Resource Sharing	0.5437	0.4713	0.4123	0.2427	0.8011

Structural Model (Path Analysis):

Structural model was tested with five hypotheses. Before testing for the directed and mediated hypotheses, the paper checked for multicollinearity. The values of variance inflation factor (VIF) were lower than 3 in all cases. Figure 4 below presents t-ratios for the path coefficients presented in Figure 2.

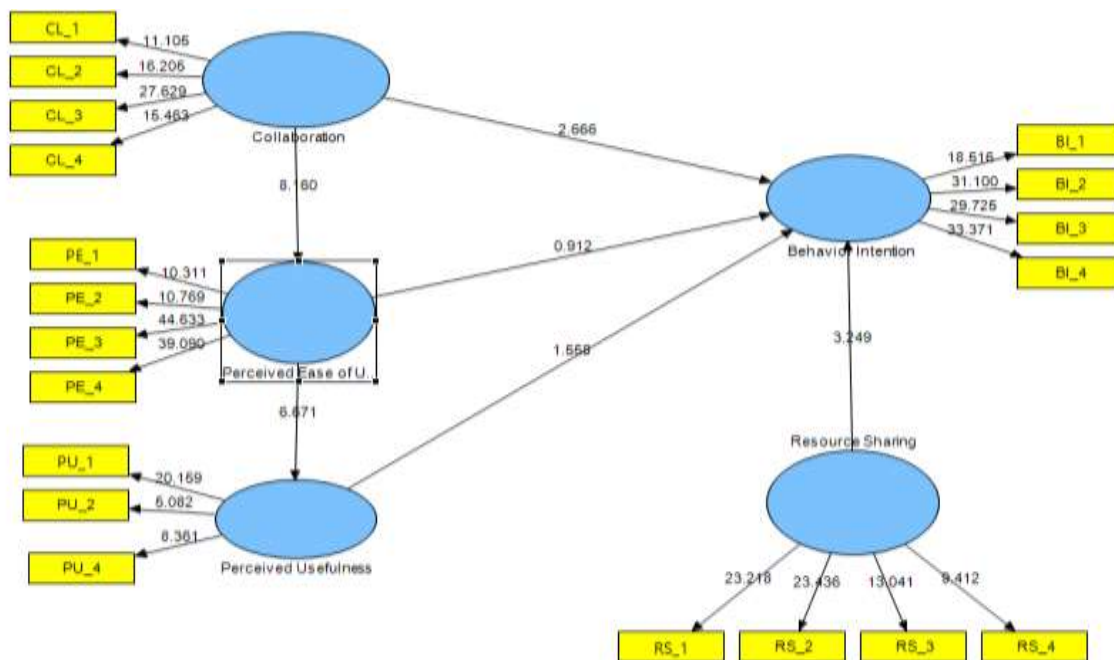


Figure 4. Structural model with t-ratios

The direct effects of the latent independent and mediating variables on Behavioral Intention were presented in Figure 3 and summarized in Table 4 with respective t-ratios.

Table 4
Direct Effect of Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Path Coefficient	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	T Statistics
1. PEU -> BI	0.087	0.093	0.093	0.912
2. PU -> BI	0.137	0.088	0.088	1.558
3. PEU -> PU	0.557	0.084	0.085	6.671
4. RS -> BI	0.326	0.099	0.099	3.249
5. COL -> BI	0.315	0.118	0.118	2.666

Note: BI=Behavior Intention, PEU= Perceived Ease of Use, PU= Perceived Usefulness, RS= Resource Sharing, COL = Collaborative Learning

Using the proposed models, the structural model displays the relationships (paths) between the constructs. H1 examines whether PEU is positively related to BI. The results showed that PEU has no significant effect (direct effect) on BI ($\beta = 0.0873$, $t = 0.912$, $p > 0.05$). Hence, H1 was not supported. H2 examines whether PU is positively related to BI. The results showed that PU has no significant effect (direct effect) on BI ($\beta = 0.137$, $t = 1.558$, $p > 0.05$). Hence, H2 was not supported. H3 examines whether PEU is positively related to PU. The results showed that PEU has a significant effect (direct effect) on PU ($\beta = 0.557$, $t = 6.671$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, H3 was supported. Finally, H4 examines whether RS is positively related to BI. There was a significant impact of RS (direct effect) on BI ($\beta = 0.3261$, $t = 3.249$, $p < 0.01$). Thus, H4 was supported.

Mediated Effect

5000 bootstrap resamples were used in the present study to estimate the indirect effect (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). The researcher also calculated variance accounted for (VAF) in order to confirm the extent of mediation (Nitzl et al., 2016).

H5 examined whether PEU mediates the relationship between COL and BI. Mediation analysis was performed to assess the mediating role of PU in relation to COL and BI. The direct relationship between COL and PEU ($\beta = 0.6059$, $t = 8.106$, $p < .01$), PEU and BI ($\beta = 0.2267$, $t = 2.47$, $p < .01$), and COL and BI ($\beta = 0.4398$, $t = 4.112$, $p < .01$). The total effect of COL and BI is ($\beta = 0.5772$, $t = 7.012$, $p < .01$). The variance Account for (VAF) is calculated the type of mediation. Variance Accounted for (VAF) is used Indirect Effect (0.1374)/Total Effect (0.5772) = 0.2380. The value of VAF is 23.80% which ranges between 20-80% of VAF. It implies there is partial mediation of PEU with COLL and BI.

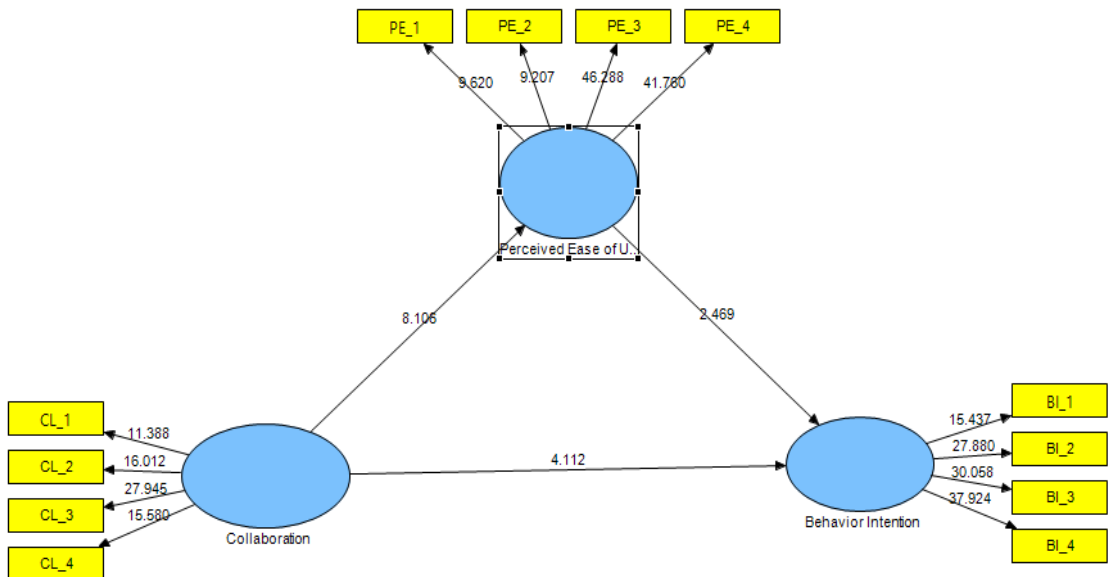


Figure 5. Structural model (Mediated Hypothesis)

Discussion

The purpose of this paper was to investigate adoption intentions of social media among undergraduate business students in Kathmandu Valley. Firstly, the study found that PEU has significant influence on PU, implying social media users are likely to use it for academic purposes if it is user-friendly. This conclusion aligns with the technology acceptance model, and is consistent with other studies (Davis, 1989; Pokhrel et al., 2020; Pokhrel, 2021). Secondly, the influence of resource sharing on the behavior intention of social media adoption was found to have significant influence on behavior intention. It implies that students' sharing of resources with each other improves intention to use social media. It conforms to other studies (e.g. Arshad & Akram, 2018, Mazman & Usluel, 2010; Sánchez et al., 2014), and is also consistent with the constructivist theory of Vygotsky (1978).

Thirdly, main objective was to investigate the mediating influence of perceived ease of use in relation to collaboration and behavior intention. This result agrees with previous studies (e.g. Arshad & Akram, 2018; Pokhrel, 2021), and suggests that impact of collaboration on behavior intention is partially mediated by perceived ease of use of social media. It appears that perceived ease of using social media and collaboration are related to behavior intention to use social media. That is, social media could be used by undergraduate students if they view it as easy to use and collaborative.

Finally, the research found that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness had no significant impact on social media adoption intentions. The results agree with previous studies (Setiawan et al., 2018), and suggest that the sample is using social media not for its usefulness or ease of use, but rather for its convenience. Instead, it is intended for resource sharing and collaboration in educational context. It stems from the fact that social media users could be using educational sites in social media

for sharing resources and collaborative learning. The outcome of the study could be applied to social media platforms for collaboration and sharing of resources between students and faculties in which basic modern collaboration and resource sharing are not available (Curtis et al., 2010; Sobaih et al., 2016).

Implications

The implications of this research paper are two folds. Theoretically, this research investigated TAM with collaboration and resource sharing variables. The research could provide an avenue for future researchers to examine the collaboration and resource sharing in other theoretical frameworks of technological acceptance model. Managerially, the research can be utilized to formulate educational policy to increase the engagement of students in teaching and learning. Likewise, the higher educational institution could apply social media as a source of collaboration and resource sharing to facilitate learning process in business schools.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The research provides an insight to the adoption of social media by the academic community. The findings should be interpreted with caution as this paper has a number of limitations. Due to the use of self-reported measures, self-report bias cannot be excluded. In addition, this paper sampled only undergraduate students, that too in business studies, issue of generalizability remains. Probability sampling could have been used to extract a better representative sample. Likewise, cross-sectional correlation research designs have been utilized in the research. In future, longitudinal studies and experimental research designs can be used to capture variables in meaningful ways. Additionally, the quantitative research method was employed to measure COL, ROS, PU, PE, and BOI among undergraduate students. These variables are all subjective, indicating that the use of such methods may not properly reflect the perception or view of employees. Therefore, qualitative or mixed methods could be used to explore the phenomena of interest in a more meaningful way.

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Appendix: Questionnaires or Instruments

Usefulness adapted from Davis (1989) and Venkatesh and Davis (2000)

- Using Social Media enables me to accomplish tasks more quickly.
- I find Social Media useful in my studies/research.
- If I use Social Media, it will increase my chances of getting a better position.
- Using Social Media increases my productivity.

Ease of Use adapted from Davis (1989) and Venkatesh and Davis (2000)

- It is easy for me to become skillful at using Social Media.
- My interaction with Social Media is clear and understandable.
- Learning to operate Social Media is easy for me.
- I find Social Media easy to use.

Collaborative learning adapted from So and Brush (2008)

- I can develop new skills and knowledge from other members of my group.
- I actively exchange my ideas with group members.
- Collaborative learning by using Social Media is effective.
- Overall, I am satisfied with my collaborative learning experience by using Social Media.

Social media adoption Intention adapted from Bock et al. (2005)

- I predict that I would adopt Social Media for knowledge sharing.
- I intend to adopt Social Media for knowledge sharing.
- I will continue using Social Media for knowledge sharing.
- I plan to continue using Social Media for knowledge sharing.

Resource sharing adapted from Bock et al. (2005)

- Sharing of my knowledge with other members of Social Media is always beneficial.
- Sharing of my knowledge with other members of Social Media is always good.
- Sharing of my knowledge with other members of Social Media is always a wise move.
- Sharing of my knowledge with other members of Social Media is always an enjoyable experience.

(Adopted from Arshad & Akram, 2018)