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DRIVING SOCIETAL DYNAMICS THROUGH DIGITALISATION

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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.

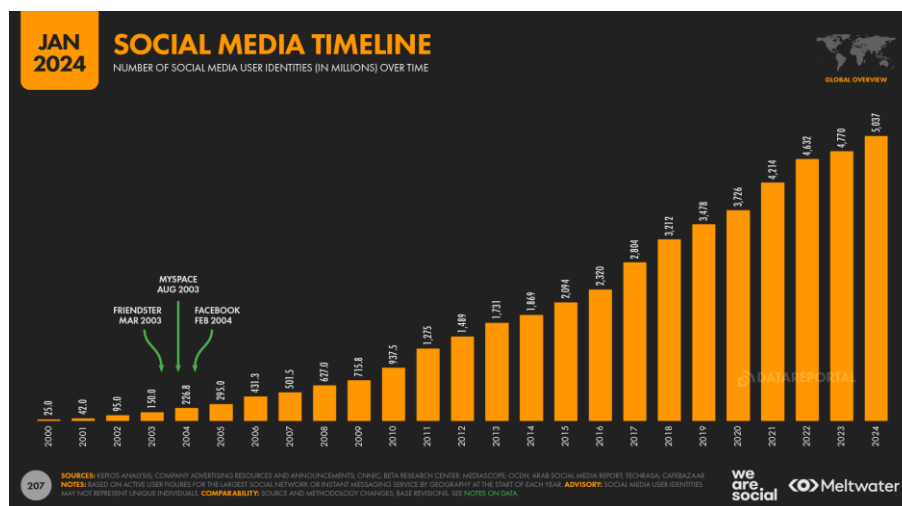


Figure 1: Social Media Timeline (Source: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-global-overview-report>)

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.

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