

Readiness for Enterprise Social Media: A Multi-Country Investigation of User Cultural Values and Intention to Use

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Abstract

Enterprise Social Media (ESM) empowers connections throughout an organization in real-time. However, research reveals that enterprise-wide adoption is a challenge for businesses. Research indicates that culture is one of the impediments to enterprise-wide adoption. Thus, a deeper understanding of the cultural influence on organizational readiness will help organizations plan more effectively. Schwartz's cultural framework was used in a quantitative study to investigate the intention to use ESM at various levels in multiple countries. The participants' responses were analyzed using structural equation modeling, including multiple group analysis. The test results suggest significant effects of autonomy and egalitarianism on individuals' intention to adopt ESM. However, contrary to previous research, the effects of egalitarianism were found to be negative. This study emphasizes the importance of cultural values in shaping individuals' intentions to use ESM, which contributes to organizational readiness for ESM adoption. The findings of this study provide organizations with awareness of cultural influences on intention to use ESM and can help organizations identify potential barriers to ESM adoption readiness.

Keywords: Social Media, Organizational Readiness, Culture, Adoption, Hofstede, Schwartz

Introduction

Technologies, including social media, enable innovative processes and allow us to perform tasks in a way that was previously improbable (Mingers & Standing, 2018). Apart from their use by individuals, businesses have increasingly adopted social media and many distinct types of enterprise social media (ESM) have emerged that cater to different organizational needs (Schlagwein & Hu, 2017). Enterprise social media (ESM) is defined as platforms that offer utilitarian use of social media for members and stakeholders of businesses (Schlagwein & Prasarnphanich, 2011) through multi-dimensional web-based communication tools (Leonardi, Huysman, & Steinfield, 2013). Some examples of ESM include Asana, Yammer, Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Chatter. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020, many organizations have moved to online working. As a result, more organizations use ESM to communicate with employees and customers and to cooperate with business partners (Saleh, 2020). For example, Microsoft Teams increased its daily users from 20 million to 115 million in the six months from April 2020 to October 2020 (Windows Central, 2020). According to Obrenovic, Du, Godinic, Tsoy, Khan, and Jakhongirov (2020), organizations that utilize advanced digitalization and internet technologies, including social media, are capable of sustaining business operations in the event of a pandemic.

This continuation of business is mostly due to ESMs' ability to efficiently and orderly relay information across wide geographic areas, as well as to maintain real-time and asynchronous interactions between employees (Davison, Ou, Martinsons, Zhao, & Du, 2014). While researchers have been studying ESM adoption (Engler & Alpar, 2017; Jacobs, 2013), the current surge in ESM use, spurred in part by the COVID-19 outbreak and mass adoption of work-from-home practices, has led to an urgent need for more research into the salient factors affecting the

readiness for ESM adoption in an increasingly globalized work environment.

Despite the increase in adoption, organizations face challenges regarding ESM, such as the lack of voluntary use (Engler & Alpar, 2017), identifying benefits based on company-specific needs (Wehner, Ritter, & Leist, 2017), mixed effects on employee performance (Giermindl, 2019), lack of organizational commitment and strategy (Mingers & Standing, 2018), customizing structure of social media for nonprofit versus for-profit organizations (Namisango, Kang, & Beydoun, 2021), and organizational culture (Blackstock, 2020; Jacobs, 2013).

Previous studies (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Armenakis, Harris, & Mossholder, 1993; Kotter, 2012) suggest a level of preparedness and a proactive state helps organizations by reducing the likelihood of resistance and failure of technology adoption. From a social perspective, Armenakis et al. (1993) define readiness for change as the organizational members' beliefs, attitudes, and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and the organization's capacity to make those changes. The authors further state that the collective readiness of the organization is constantly being influenced by the readiness of the individuals through their shared meanings and interpretations associated with change. In other words, the level of readiness of organizations is established in the variations of the individuals' desire to change and intention to take action (i.e., adopt ESM).

Jacobs (2013) identified organizational readiness factors for ESM adoption in particular as resources (human, financial, and technical), organizational climate (culture and awareness), new processes, values, discrepancy, benefit, management support, and organizational controls. An important feature of ESM is its potential to create virtual global communities spanning geographical spaces connecting organization members. The prospect of global connectivity

highlights the cultural characteristics of ESM relative to other technology change initiatives. The cultural factors, which provide the basis for shared meanings and interpretations among individuals, were neglected in the research on engagement and organizational readiness for successful change management (Lokuge, Sedera, Grover, & Dongming, 2019; Mate-Sanchez-Val & Harris, 2014). Culture is a salient factor in ESM adoption (Chang and Lin, 2015; Blackstock, 2020) and it may have a significant impact on the effectiveness of knowledge transfer among employees using ESM (Blackstock, 2020).

Jacobs (2013) found that individuals in cultures with a small power distance, stronger individualism, weak uncertainty avoidance, and higher masculinity are more effective in implementing ESM; however, the findings also pointed to the need for deeper cultural research in this area. Schwartz's cultural dimensions provide a perspective to measure individual variation and preference while capturing and analyzing collective behaviors due to their nature as an individual-level value set. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to uncover key cultural determinants affecting ESM readiness and intention to use ESM by investigating how the dimensions of the Schwartz framework are associated with the readiness outcomes. These key determinants of culture unveil the desire to change leading to the intention to take action or not take action.

Given this purpose, we posit that the cultural dimensions of individual members of an organization provide the basis for their intention to adopt ESM in the organization in which they work and participate. The technological advantage of ESM to transcend geographical distance and culture segregation makes it a prevalent platform for organizational social development in an era following a global pandemic. This research contributes to this burgeoning literature by highlighting the cross-culture dimension in the adoption of ESM. In the following section, the

literature on ESM and organizational readiness is discussed, followed by a further focus on the relevant cultural factors. To verify our hypotheses, a survey incorporating individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and work experience was conducted.

Literature review

This section discusses the theoretical background for ESM, Organizational Readiness for Change, and the Cultural Factors employed in this research.

Enterprise Social Media

Despite the fact that social media has been around for a long time, a formal, concise, and widely accepted definition remains elusive (Effing, Hillegersberg, & Huibers, 2011). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 61) first defined social media as “*a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content*”. According to Carr and Hayes (2015), some of the previous definitions are problematic, because they are too broad and can be extended to other communication technologies that are not considered social media, such as emails. Therefore, they further argue that these definitions are missing the technological and social affordances that distinguish social media from other technologies. Consequently, Carr and Hayes (2015, p. 50) formally defined social media as, “*Internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others,*” which is the definition adopted for this research.

Hoffman and Bublitz (2017) stated that social media is an ambiguous concept because it broadly encompasses a wide range of platforms that may not perform identical functions. Social media provides its users with a wide range of practical applications. The key functionalities of social media can be defined as presence, relationship, reputation, identity, groups, sharing, and conversations (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011). Social media is dynamic,

interconnected, egalitarian, and interactive by its very nature (Peters, Chen, Kaplan, Ognibeni, & Pauwels, 2013), and as a result, it has shifted the way individuals and organizations interact with one another.

Drawing from social media research (Cook, 2008; Davison et al, 2014; Riemer & Richter, 2012), this paper defines Enterprise social media (ESM) as the consequence of organizations integrating familiar social technologies from the public internet into the work environment to facilitate business communication, cooperation, collaboration, and connections in real-time and asynchronously. Landert (2017) stated that at its core, social media relies on a network of people sharing information. The networks between people and the sites are categorized into three functions: participation, involvement, and interaction. The actions on the platform are referred to as *participation*. *Interaction* refers to direct communication between individuals via a platform. *Involvement* is when individuals interact with the platform's content. According to Carah and Louw (2015), these actions may have an impact on the organization and its processes. All three categories vary but may be used interchangeably, and many ESM technologies provide all three of these functions. As a result, a few distinct types of ESM have emerged in response to various business requirements (Schlagwein & Hu, 2017). Asana, Yammer, Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Chatter are some examples of ESM technologies that provide a social environment. An empirical study by Jacobs (2013) indicated that organizations are motivated to use ESM because (1) other organizations are using them, (2) humans have an intrinsic desire to connect, and (3) management believes that connecting internal organization members will help them work, and (4) there is an internal demand to use these tools.

While ESM has the potential to boost an organization's productivity, the advantage is realized by the successful implementation of the technology. Despite its popularity, the adoption of ESM

remains challenging for organizations (Wehner et al., 2017). Many important factors that influence ESM adoption have been discovered through research. Based on their exploratory case study, Kuikka and Akkinen (2011) distinguish between internal and external challenges to organizations adopting ESM. The authors describe external challenges as those related to a company's reputation, legal issues, and public/private network identity. The internal challenges were identified as resources, ownership, authorization, attitudes, and economic issues. Jacobs (2013) identified ESM readiness for adoption factors to be human, financial, technical resources, organizational climate (culture), processes, values, discrepancies, support of management, and organizational controls. Furthermore, extant literature (Khan, Saleh, & Quazi, 2021) indicates that perceived risk, quality of the content (misinformation and disinformation), perceived credibility, peer influence, supporting conditions (organizational resistance), confirmation of expectations, perceived cost, perceived usefulness, and usage behavior are all significant barriers to adoption.

Since ESM is fundamentally a workplace, organizational norms, such as company guidelines and policies, may have a significant impact on how the employees use ESM (Laitinen & Sivunen, 2020). Additional factors, such as communication of the purpose for ESM use prior to implementation and existing communication styles within the organization, may influence ESM adoption in an organization (Laitinen & Sivunen, 2020). The readiness of an organization to change has a significant impact on the success of technology implementation (Jones, Jimmieson, & Griffiths, 2005; Kwahk & Kim, 2008). Therefore, the next section will address organizational readiness for change.

Organizational Readiness for Change

Organizational readiness for change refers to the extent to which organization members are prepared and willing to execute change as a shared responsibility. Organizational readiness has evolved from change management theory (Armenakis et al., 1993) and behavioral science theory (Snyder-Halpern, 2001). Armenakis et al. (1993) established the difference between resistance and readiness for change. When a person is resistant to change, they are acting in a way that delays or slows the change process in an organization (Jansen, 2000). However, the resistance to change usually stems from organizational imbalances and contradictions rather than from the individuals (Burnes, 2015). An organization should prepare for the change prior to implementing any change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Armenakis et al., 1993; Kotter, 2012). In this way, Lewin's (1951) three-stage model of change, i.e., unfreezing, changing, and freezing provides the foundation of organizational readiness as the unfreezing stage requires an effective breakdown of previous patterns before convincing people to transition into new patterns.

In terms of the organizational changes spurred by the introduction of new technology, Snyder-Halpern (2001) defined the structural perspective for readiness as the degree of fit between the new technology and the organization. The fit between technology and an organization emphasizes the significance of the non-technological elements of an organization's readiness. Miake-Lye, Delevan, Ganz, Mittman, and Finley (2020) elaborated that organizational readiness for change is inherently linked to readiness for implementation, networks, and communications, implementation climate, structural characteristics, culture, and leadership qualities.

Readiness can be linked to reasoned action, and it is well established by technology acceptance and adoption models that attitudes and behaviors lead to intention to use. The Theory of

Reasonable Action (TRA) suggests that actual behavior is an outcome of behavioral intentions to perform the activities (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). ESM use, relative to previous technology change initiatives, has substantial social-cultural characteristics to consider; therefore, research focused on cultural factors that may be conducive to engagement levels required by ESM is relevant. More generally, culture has been recognized as a critical factor in assessing organizational readiness and ensuring successful change management (Lokuge et al., 2019; Mate-Sanchez-Val & Harris, 2014). The collective readiness of an organization is determined by the influence of shared meanings and interpretations among individuals (Armenakis et al., 1993). Given that intention to use is integral to readiness, individuals' intention to adopt ESM are collectivized and materialized in the readiness of their organizations. As a result, it is necessary to address the social aspect of organizational readiness. To accomplish this, the concept of culture and its various dimensions in the context of ESM will be explored.

Cultural Factors

Culture has been researched extensively, and yet, there is not a consensus on its definition. Early definitions describe culture as a complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by an individual as a member of society (Avruch, 1998). Schein (1991) further developed the concept to include organizations and delineated the concept of culture with artifacts, values, and assumptions. He defined culture as a learned pattern of problem-dealing behaviors that are taught to other members of the group. Since the inclusion of the organizational level of culture, a multitude of studies attempted to measure and define different cultures that exist in organizations across countries. Two of the most renowned researchers, Hofstede and Schwartz, also proposed their definitions of culture: Hofstede's (2001) definition of culture is "*the collective programming of the mind which*

distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.” Comparatively, Schwartz’s (1992, p. 324) definition is:

Culture consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves.

Schwartz (2012) suggested that human motivations may be universally organized, and values are used to characterize cultural groups, societies, and individuals to explain the motivations of attitude and behavioral changes. Additionally, people assign various levels of importance to these values based on their environments which can be measured to help understand and classify different cultures. Both qualitative (Ott, 1989; Schein, 1991) and quantitative methods have been applied to understand culture by researchers; however, qualitative methods are time-consuming (Lim, 1995). Hofstede (1980) and Schwartz (1992) are two researchers that have successfully created a framework to classify culture using a quantitative method. Hofstede and Schwartz have investigated the effects of culture across a multitude of countries through values.

Despite Schwartz's claim that his index incorporates Hofstede's dimensions, the theories differ by theoretical underpinnings, methods, respondents, and time period (Schwartz, 1992). Schwartz’s cultural value foundations are determined by an individual’s biological needs, societal needs for interaction, and a group’s subsistence. Hofstede’s (2001) cultural foundations stem from macroeconomics based on norms. Ng, Lee, and Soutar (2007) discovered that although there are overlaps, the two frameworks capture different aspects of cultural dimensions and suggested that Schwartz’s values may explain greater cultural variation. Although Hofstede and Schwartz are two of the most widely used frameworks for measuring culture, Guo, Warkentin, Luo, Gurung, and Shim (2020) found that information systems researchers have been focusing more on

Hofstede and overlooked other perspectives that have been heavily used by other disciplines, a limited approach that leads to a narrow view of a phenomenon. The researchers posit that having theoretical diversity is essential for gaining deeper knowledge and understanding of phenomena. As Warkentin, Charles-Pauvers, and Chau (2015) argued, novel approaches lead to new discoveries in the ongoing evolution of cross-cultural research. Additionally, there have been some criticisms of Hofstede's framework. For example, Hofstede's cultural dimensions may not accurately measure relationships as the national cultural distance scores are constricted within the four dimensions leading to fallacies in the measurements (Ng et al., 2007). Although originally applied to national cultures, it can be applicable to the organizational level as well as the occupational level (Helmreich & Merritt, 2001). Furthermore, the individual-level value origin of Schwartz's cultural dimensions provides a perspective to measure individual differences and preferences while catching and analyzing collective behaviors (Obrenovic et al., 2020). This research will, therefore, explore the Schwartz framework as a guide for understanding culture in organizational readiness for ESM adoption.

Schwartz Cultural Framework

Schwartz's Cultural Framework divides values into two levels: national and individual (Schwartz, 1992). At the individual level, values direct people's actions and how they evaluate others and events around them (Knafo, Roccas, & Sagiv, 2011; Schwartz, 1992). National values enable researchers to understand and compare across cultures through characterizations of individuals, groups, and organizations in a society (Hofstede, 2001). These national-level values are evident in the shared symbols, rituals, norms, and practices that are developed and reinforced (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2007). Consequently, cultural studies support the identification of different cultures as well as the individuals within and across different cultures. Schwartz's cultural

framework can be categorized by three-polar dimensions, namely embeddedness/autonomy, hierarchy/egalitarianism, and mastery/harmony, consisting of seven cultural value types (Sagiv, Schwartz, & Arieli, 2010). According to Schwartz (1992), the embeddedness/autonomy dimension is a continuum used to measure the extent to which a culture treats members as autonomous versus embedded. Embeddedness is considered a value that aims to preserve the status quo, where individuals avoid actions that could lead to the disruption of the current order of things. Organizations that prefer high embeddedness are likely to expect members to work towards the shared goals (Sagiv et al., 2010). Autonomy cultures encourage individuals to embrace their individuality and further develop their unique preferences, feelings, ideas, and abilities. The hierarchy/egalitarianism dimension measures the extent to which a culture manages its interdependencies to coordinate and produce shared goals. Hierarchical societies desire and accept unequal levels of power, roles, and resources to ensure the productive behavior of the members of a society. Organizations that value hierarchy tends to employ well-defined roles with authority and control over the other members. On the contrary, egalitarian societies embrace equality and tend to build on cooperative negotiation among employees and managers, and appeal to joint welfare (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000, 2007). The mastery/harmony dimension measures the extent to which a society regulates its consumption of human and natural resources. Harmonious cultures tend to preserve their social and natural worlds to maintain the status quo and avoid conflicts. Schwartz (1992) explains mastery societies as encouraging individuals to master, direct, and change the environment in the service of others in an effort to make progress through problem-solving. According to Sagiv et al. (2010), a mastery organization would embrace a dynamic, competitive, and achievement-oriented environment. This can include organizational goals being met with the use of technology to manipulate the environment.

Hypothesis Development

Research on the adoption of ESM has identified culture as a salient factor (Jacobs, 2013).

Schwartz's cultural framework is well established in the literature, including cross-cultural use of social networking sites (Guo et al., 2020). The following section develops the hypotheses of this research, building on the Schwartz framework and relevant previous studies.

Autonomy/Embeddedness

Laitinen and Sivunen (2020) found that a critical success factor of ESM adoption was users' willingness to exchange information within an organization through ESM platforms and to spread information and problem-solve in a collaborative manner. An individual's willingness to share information is influenced by the extent to which they intend to immerse or embed other individuals in the organization. Al Omoush, Yaseen, and Alma'Aitah (2012) found a significant relationship between the motivations of engagement and attitudes in social media and collectivism, which shares common elements with Schwartz's embeddedness dimension (Schwartz, 2012). Barron and Schneckenberg (2012), for example, stated that organizations exhibiting a sharing culture are more likely to adopt social media, arguing that members of an organization focused on self-emphasis might lead to poorly perceived usefulness for collaborative technologies. Wasko and Faraj (2005) indicated that an individual's connectedness inside the organization has a positive impact on their use of ESM. Furthermore, a critical mass of ESM users is vital for fostering active engagement and continued use of ESM within an organization.

Research to support the argument for autonomy is linked to an individual's identity creation. For example, Dunne, Lawlor, and Rowley (2010) linked social media use to gratification, including

an individual's desire for pleasure, escapism, and relief from boredom as well as a person boosting their self-esteem by portraying their ideal image. According to Quan-Haase and Young (2010), social media applications are utilized to meet a user's gratification through communication, sociability, and pleasure/stimulation. Liu and Bakici (2019) suggested that employees intend to derive gratifications from the entertainment value and self-documentation function of enterprise social media, such as browsing interesting content and documenting their daily activities, similar to their usage of public social media. Blogs, in particular, permit the development of literacies and identities, intercultural competence, learner autonomy, and audience awareness. Thus, autonomy is gained when individuals have control over the content they are producing (Reinhardt, 2018).

An interesting juxtaposition between autonomy and embeddedness has formed as the use of digital technology increases. Samuels (2008) has shown that individuals use digital automation in a manner that permits them to express and maintain their personal autonomy. The social construction of digital technologies is not rendering autonomy transitory but rather boosting an individual's perceived individual control and freedom. ESM provides a platform for employees to interactively construct, maintain and manage their identity, and their colleagues' perceptions, thus providing personal autonomy (Sun, Fang, & Zhang, 2021). Despite the social embeddedness and automation qualities of ESM where people freely share information and knowledge, using ESM actually increases individuals' sense of freedom and individual control (Samuels, 2008).

H1: An individual's tendency toward autonomy positively determines their **intention to use** enterprise social media.

Egalitarianism/Hierarchy

The adoption of Web 2.0 (Barron & Schneckenberg, 2012) and social media (Schlagwein & Prasarnphanich, 2011, Jacobs, Pan, & Jimenez, 2021) in an organization could be impacted by hierarchical distance. Hierarchical distance refers to the level of unequal or equal distribution of power, roles, and resources between members (Schwartz, 2012). The use of ESM helps build and facilitate a community over the virtual space of the internet connecting members across different parts of the organization in spite of geographic barriers (Liu & Bakici, 2019). Once ESM is adopted by members of an organization and its stakeholders, organizations can take the initiative to facilitate business communication, cooperation, collaboration, and connection activities (Cook, 2008).

In organizations with high power distance cultures where it is inappropriate for management to display emotions or seek feedback and participation from their subordinates (Taras, Kirkman, & Steel, 2010), the use of ESM is likely limited. Within high power distance cultures, there tends to be a predominantly top-down communication approach with limited two-way information flow (Hofstede, 1980). The individuals at the top of the hierarchy moderate the flow of information resulting in the individuals in the lower levels being less informed or misinformed. On the opposite end of the spectrum, in low power distance cultures mechanisms may evolve to reduce information asymmetry as people in these cultures tend to prefer openness and working in decentralized organizations (Morris & Pavett, 1992). Individuals in low power distance cultures prefer power equity and transparency and, therefore, take initiatives to pursue a less hierarchical, social structure (Han, Lalwani, & Duhachek, 2017).

The adoption of ESM may improve organizational communication as it diminishes the power

distance. Via ESM, decision-makers on the top level of corporate hierarchy may form and maintain human bonds with a large group of employees more efficiently (Huy & Shipilov, 2012). Organizations could benefit from the use of ESM to build emotional capital within their communities as it improves information flow and collaboration (Huy & Shiplow, 2012). Ordinary individuals appreciate transparency--the accessibility and openness of information--that enables a genuinely egalitarian organization. Social media has a sense of perceived leveling for individuals (Cook, 2008) and, as a result, has complementary qualities to egalitarianism.

H2: An individual's tendency toward egalitarianism positively determines their **intention to use** enterprise social media.

Mastery/Harmony

The cultural values of mastery and harmony may play a role in ESM adoption as it has with other Information and Communication Technologies (Choden, Bagchi, Udo, Kirs, & Frankwick, 2019). Information brokerage and networking via ESM allows individuals to build social capital in their professional network (Liu & Bakici, 2019). The belief that participation and networking boost their professional reputation (Wasko & Faraj, 2005) and consequently career progression (Stewart, 2003) is a powerful motivation for individuals to actively participate in ESM and leverage their network resources. Such characteristics are consistent with the characteristics of a mastery-oriented society, which promotes individuals to master, direct, and change the environment in the service of others. Furthermore, the level of assertiveness, which is a feature of mastery culture, has been found to be a positive indicator of ESM adoption (Schlagwein & Prasarnphanich, 2011).

Cai, Huang, Liu, and Wang (2018) indicated that socializing via ESM helps individuals create a

harmonious work environment. However, individuals in harmonious cultures tend to accommodate, instead of manipulate, their social environment (Choden et al, 2019). And, individuals who value harmony (interdependence and mutual concern) are expected to consider others' feelings before taking actions, which inevitably causes a delay in decision-making and performing actions (Cai et al, 2018), potentially negatively affecting the intention to use ESM.

Additionally, individuals with entrepreneurial traits such as ambition, success, and assertiveness align with Roger's (2003) relative advantage are also more likely to adopt ESM (Tripopsakul, 2018). The notion of relative advantage, therefore, relates to mastery characteristics. Societies that value mastery embrace actions that change the environment in order to succeed, although it could be at the expense of others.

Richter, Muhlestein, and Wilks (2014) found that organizations that are more accepting of ESM are likely to bolster their current mission rather than adopt a new perspective that circulates around ESM. These characteristics support Schwartz's ideology that civilizations that value mastery embrace activities that modify the environment in order to thrive.

H3: An individual's tendency toward mastery positively determines their **intention to use** enterprise social media.

Autonomy, egalitarianism, and mastery were recognized as salient cultural factors based on literature utilizing Schwartz's framework. The organization's collective readiness is influenced by the individuals' readiness, which is indicated by their intention to use. These factors were used to develop the hypotheses and the research model displayed in Figure 1.

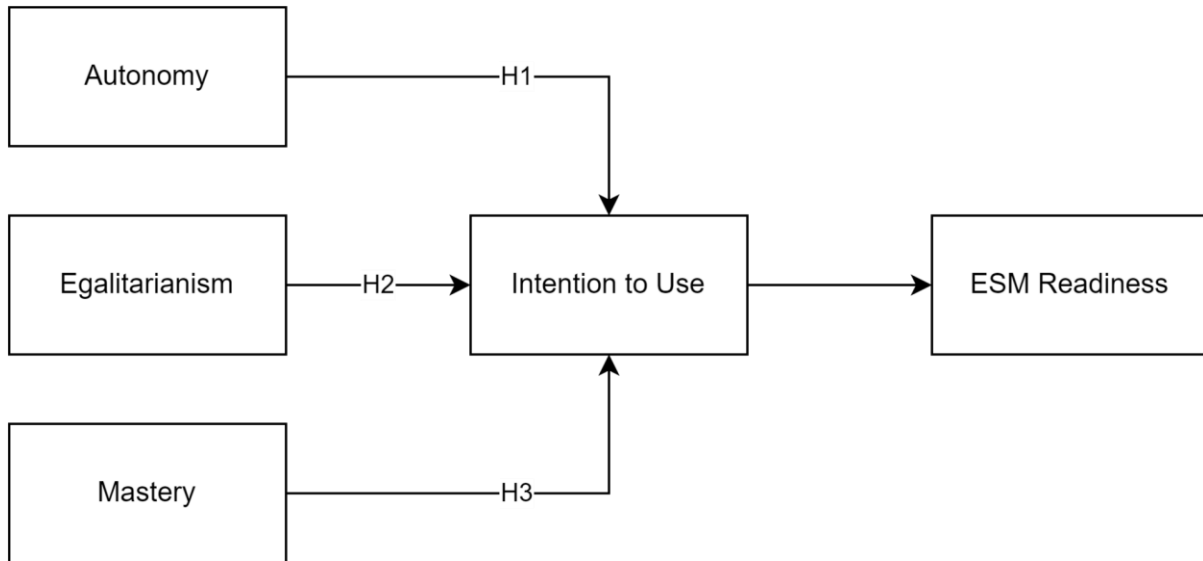


Figure 1. Conceptual Model for Understanding ESM Adoption.

Research Methodology

To evaluate the three hypotheses discussed in the previous sections, a survey was created to investigate individual respondents’ cultural values and their effects on intention to use as part of the collective readiness. The following sections present the data collection, measurement, and analysis.

Data Collection and Sample

The data were collected through an online survey to reach a broader audience from multiple countries to investigate the cultural differences that may influence the intention to use ESM. The survey was distributed via social media platforms, namely Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn for a period of ten weeks. The survey was administered across different platforms because they are used differently, or not permitted, in each country. Survey responses were solicited from across platforms to maximize access to people of different generations and cultural backgrounds

considering the popularity of these platforms in different populations.

The criteria for participant selection was for respondents to have work experience, which ensured they had a basic understanding of how an organization functions as well as some inter-worker social relations experience. The type of organization in which participants had worked was not a screening factor because organization type is not a focus of the research, nor was it expected to influence respondents' intention to use ESM. Respondents were provided a definition and examples of ESM to understand the concept of ESM in the research context prior to answering questions.

A total of 550 respondents submitted the survey, of which 413 were complete and valid. The majority of the respondents reside in Taiwan (36%), followed by the UK (27%), the USA (18%), and all other countries (19%). The self-reported ethnicity, based on Office of Management and Budget Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity, is shown in Table 1. The majority of respondents identified as Asian (53%), followed by White (39%), and Black or African (4%).

Table 1. Ethnicity of participants

| Ethnicity | No. of Participants | Percentage |
|--|---------------------|------------|
| Asian. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. | 221 | 53% |
| White. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. | 164 | 39% |
| Black or African. A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. | 15 | 4% |
| Hispanic or Latino. A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. | 10 | 2% |
| American Indian or Alaska Native. A person having origins in any | 2 | 1% |

| | | |
|---|-----|------|
| of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. | | |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. | 1 | 0% |
| Total | 413 | 100% |

Measurement

The survey consisted of a total of 24 items, including fifteen items on cultural values, four on ESM intention to use, a qualifying question (employment), and 4 on demography (birth country, country of residence, the length of residence, and ethnicity,). This research adopted construct measurement items based on Schwartz's cultural frameworks, which have been modified and validated in previous ESM research to investigate the cross-cultural use of ESM (Guo et al., 2020). The survey items were translated into different languages by the authors in their native language. This allowed us to avoid the comprehension biases that can occur if the language of a survey is not presented in the respondents' native language (Karahanna, Evaristo, & Srite, 2003).

Constructs were measured with a 6-point Likert scale which essentially forced non-neutral responses. The cultural construct questions measured autonomy, egalitarianism, and mastery. Participants were asked to rate how significant each value is to them as a guiding factor in their life for each construct. Autonomy questions consisted of three values, namely pleasure (gratification), stimulating experiences, and a stimulating lifestyle. Egalitarianism measurement items included authority, social power, wealth, and humility. It is expected that respondents that lean towards egalitarianism would place less value on authority, social power, and wealth and more value on humility. Mastery questions measured the respondent's propensity towards ambition, daring, competence, and success. There were four questions included to capture an individual's intention to use ESM. These questions measured the intention to use ESM for

socialization, the intention of future ESM use, use of ESM in the workplace, and willingness to provide information to be better served by ESM.

Data Analysis and Results

Multivariate assumptions and validity of constructs

The research model was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). SEM can assess the reliability and validity of multi-item construct measures and test relationships in the structural model. This approach permits empirical investigation of underlying theoretical constructs and their interrelationships. A two-stage modeling process was used as proposed by Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2013). The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted followed by the structural model testing. As part of the analysis process, indicator and construct validity was tested. A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using all of the latent variables: Autonomy, Egalitarianism, Mastery, and Intention to Use. In this step, the construct reliability and validity were conducted to test the internal reliability. The convergent validity was conducted to test whether constructs that should be related were related. The discriminant validity was conducted to test whether constructs that should be unrelated were unrelated.

The construct reliability and validity were tested using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted to demonstrate the reliability of the latent variables. Cronbach's coefficient alpha test was conducted to measure the reliability, or internal consistency, of the scale items. According to Hulin, Netemeyer, and Cudeck (2001), an alpha value between 0.60 and 0.70 is considered acceptable, and greater than 0.80 is considered good. However, values greater than 0.95 are not always desirable because they may indicate redundancy. The Cronbach's alpha measurements of the variables are above 0.648 and were all statistically

significant at $p < 0.01$. The results from the Cronbach's α results test (shown in Table 2) indicate a satisfactory correlation between the ranked values of the measurement item sets used in the survey.

Construct reliability was also evaluated using construct reliability and maximal reliability (Drewes, 2000; Raykov, 2004). This is the proportion of variance in the construct that can be explained by its indicator variables (Mueller & Hancock, 2001). The Indicator Reliability analysis (Table 2) includes the latent variable indicator reliability, composite reliability (CR), and construct maximal reliability (CMR). The squared standardized loadings of indicators are mostly above the minimum threshold for acceptable reliability (0.25). The CR coefficients range from 0.69 to 0.88, all greater than the 0.60 level that Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest is the minimum value for items to have internal consistency with the indicator variables. The CMR coefficients were at or above the threshold for all remaining variables. Auto 1 (0.23) was retained because it is close to the 0.25 minimum threshold and removal caused the CR and CMR to fall below the respective thresholds.

Table 2. Indicator reliability results

| Latent Variable | Cronbach's alpha | Composite Reliability | Construct Maximal Reliability | Manifest Variable | Indicator Reliability |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Autonomy | 0.6486 | 0.6904 | 0.7813 | Auto1 | 0.2328 |
| | | | | Auto2 | 0.7306 |
| | | | | Auto3 | 0.3576 |
| Egalitarianism | 0.7093 | 0.8763 | 0.8898 | Egal1 | 0.7625 |
| | | | | Egal2 | 0.3963 |
| Mastery | 0.6718 | 0.7052 | 0.7349 | Mast1 | 0.5752 |
| | | | | Mast2 | 0.2739 |
| | | | | Mast3 | 0.2708 |
| | | | | Mast4 | 0.4007 |
| Intention to Use | 0.8736 | 0.7286 | 0.7946 | Intent1 | 0.5565 |
| | | | | Intent2 | 0.5887 |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---------|--------|
| | | | | Intent3 | 0.7869 |
| | | | | Intent4 | 0.6289 |

Convergent validity is assessed by calculating the average variance extracted (AVE) from each construct using the outer loadings of the indicators (Hair, Celsi, Ortinau, & Bush, 2010). The AVE is a more conservative estimate of a model's validity as it reflects the amount of variance in the indicators that is accounted for by the latent constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). For adequate convergent validity, an AVE measurement greater than 0.50 is desirable indicating that the construct score accounts for more than half of the indicator variance (Hair, Matthews, Matthews, & Sarstedt, 2017). The AVE values for the latent variables are Auto (0.4461), Mastery (0.4498), Intention to Use (0.6403), and Egalitarianism (0.5890). The only variables greater than 0.50 are Egalitarianism and Intention to Use.

For discriminant validity, the squared factor correlations are above the AVEs as shown in the Construct Validity Matrix below (Table 3). The AVE (diagonal values) are higher than values in the upper diagonal, which suggests that the constructs account for more variance with their own indicators than those of others. The values in the lower diagonal show a moderate level of correlation between Autonomy and Mastery and between Mastery and Egalitarianism. However, these latent constructs are not substantially correlated with Intention to Use, the construct of interest. Despite the two lower coefficients, the squared factor correlations of the latent variables were below the AVE. Thus, the remaining variables were carried forward to the next steps of the analysis process.

Table 3. Construct validity matrix

| | Autonomy | Egalitarianism | Mastery | Intention to Use |
|----------|---------------|----------------|---------|------------------|
| Autonomy | 0.4461 | 0.0900 | 0.2763 | 0.0645 |

| | | | | |
|------------------|---------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Egalitarianism | -0.3000 | 0.5890 | 0.3012 | 0.1066 |
| Mastery | 0.5256 | -0.5489 | 0.4498 | 0.0301 |
| Intention to Use | 0.2539 | -0.3265 | 0.1735 | 0.6403 |

Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

The model estimation was conducted with SEM analysis using JMP 16.0 to test the effects of the latent variables—Autonomy, Egalitarianism, and Mastery—on Intention to Use. The coefficient estimates of the original structural model are presented in Table 4. The model specification is then refined to improve the model fit by incorporating the covariances between items and latent variables. Finally, the model is re-estimated in groups to investigate the difference in construct effects across countries and ethnicities on Intention to Use. The model fit was assessed using Goodness of Fit indicators through a comparison of standard thresholds determined by previous researchers (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008; Kline, 2015). The fit indices that are used for model evaluation are the Akaike information criterion (AIC), comparative fit index (CFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA).

Original SEM

The overall analysis includes all valid data, representing respondents of different ethnicities from various countries. The model comparison shows the outcome for the unrestricted (perfect fit model), the Independence (the baseline model), and the model fit to the data. The original SEM shows significant improvement over the independence model. The AIC for the original model was 17876.804 which is between the unrestricted model of 17703.159 and the independence model's AIC of 19357.938. The CFI for Model 1 was 0.8346 and the RMSEA was 0.1085. The

Unrestricted model had a CFI of 1 and RMSEA of 0. The independence model had a CFI of 0.0000 and RMSEA of 0.22286.

The test results of the path coefficient indicate the significant effect of Autonomy on Intention to Use (p -value $<.05$). Based on the results, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that (**H1**) an individual’s tendency toward Autonomy positively influences their Intention to use enterprise social media. The path coefficient between Egalitarianism and Intention to Use was also found to be significant (p -value $<.0001$) but in the negative direction. In other words, even though our hypothesis (**H2**) posits that an individual’s tendency toward Egalitarianism influences their Intention to use ESM, the finding was the exact opposite. Lastly, the path coefficient between Mastery and Intention to Use was not significant. Thus, there is not sufficient evidence to conclude (**H3**) that an individual’s tendency towards Mastery determines their Intention to Use ESM. Table 4 summarizes the test results.

Table 4. SEM Output: original model

| Path coefficient | Estimate | Std Error | Wald Z | p -value |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|------------|
| Autonomy → Intention to Use | 0.3521 | 0.1429 | 2.4635 | 0.0138 |
| Egalitarianism → Intention to Use | -0.3474 | 0.0770 | -4.5108 | $<.0001$ |
| Mastery → Intention to Use | 0.0029 | 0.0819 | 0.0350 | 0.9720 |

While this model passes as sufficient and falls between the Unrestricted and Independence model, the original SEM does not produce the best model fit. Therefore, a modified model was run adding additional covariances.

Modified SEM

Based on the modification indices from the original model, the model was refined by including additional covariances between the items and between Mastery and Egalitarianism. Moreover, the second item of Mastery was allowed cross-loading to Autonomy. The modified model shows significant improvement in model fit over the original model, achieving CFI of 0.9239 and RMSEA of 0.0761. The path coefficients of the modified model are shown in Figure 2. The outcome from this analysis indicates a statistically significant relationship between Autonomy and Intention to Use (p -value $<.01$), as well as between Egalitarianism and Intention to Use (p -value <0.001). However, the relationship between Mastery and Intention to Use was not found to be statistically significant.

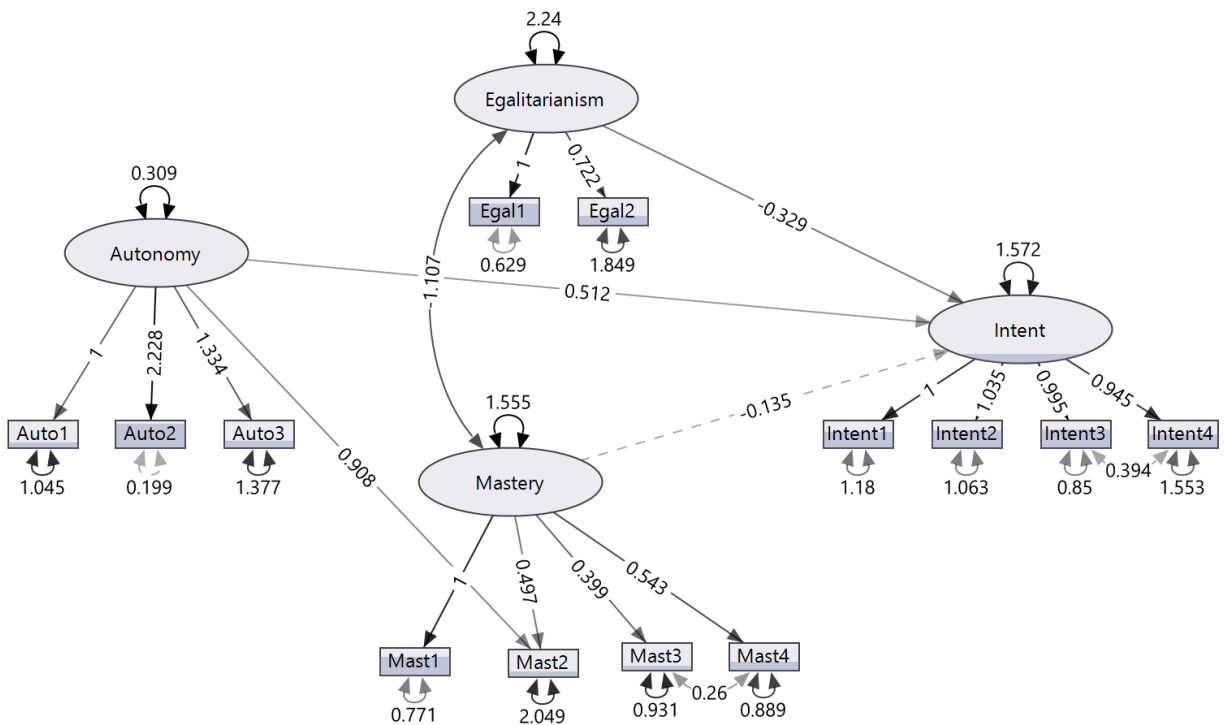


Figure 2. Modified SEM - Covariances

Specific Group Analysis

The modified model was then used to analyze the effects of culture. A local filter was applied to investigate how the model is impacted based on the different assigned countries followed by an analysis of effects based on ethnicities within each country. For participants who reside in a country different from their birth country for shorter than 10 years, this research categorizes them based on their birth country. For participants who reside in a country different from their birth country for longer than 10 years, this research categorizes them based on their country of residence. The three main clusters of respondents are selected, namely Taiwan (n=161), USA (n=76), and UK (n=96).

The modified model was used with a filter on the respondents' assigned countries for Taiwan, USA, and UK. The results for Taiwan show a statistically significant positive relationship between Autonomy and Intention to Use with a p -value = 0.0439. A negative coefficient between Egalitarianism and Intention to Use was marginally rejected with a p -value of 0.0824. The UK respondent results indicate a statistically significant negative relationship between Egalitarianism and Intention to Use with a p -value = 0.0227. The results for the USA respondents do not indicate any statistically significant relationships. However, a positive relationship between Autonomy and Intention to Use is close to being statistically significant with a p -value = 0.0831. The group test of model effects for each country is shown in Table 6 below.

Table 5. Country group test of model effects

| Country | Regressions | Estimate | Std Error | Wald Z | p -value |
|---------|-----------------------------|----------|-----------|--------|------------|
| Taiwan | Autonomy → Intention to Use | 0.4135 | 0.2051 | 2.0152 | 0.0439 |

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| | Egalitarianism → Intention to Use | -0.3360 | 0.1935 | -1.7367 | 0.0824 |
| | Mastery → Intention to Use | -0.0512 | 0.1638 | -0.3128 | 0.7544 |
| UK | Autonomy → Intention to Use | 0.4354 | 0.4443 | 0.9799 | 0.3272 |
| | Egalitarianism → Intention to Use | -0.3606 | 0.1582 | -2.2788 | 0.0227 |
| | Mastery → Intention to Use | 0.0675 | 0.1408 | 0.4794 | 0.6316 |
| US | Autonomy → Intention to Use | 0.5527 | 0.3189 | 1.7328 | 0.0831 |
| | Egalitarianism → Intention to Use | -0.0616 | 0.1229 | -0.5008 | 0.6165 |
| | Mastery → Intention to Use | -0.0045 | 0.2066 | -0.0220 | 0.9825 |

Discussion

The main objective of this study was to determine if culture impacts the intention to use ESM. SEM analysis on the cultural factors that may influence the acceptance and adoption of Enterprise Social Media was conducted. The data set was analyzed indiscriminately, which assumes coefficients are consistent across multi-groups, and then separately analyzed from the individually assigned countries' perspectives.

In the combined analysis (original model), there is sufficient evidence to conclude that **(H1)** an individual's tendency toward Autonomy positively influences their Intention to Use ESM. The findings suggest that the use of ESM permits individuals to express themselves in a way that bolsters an individual's perceived individual control over the content they are producing, supporting previous research (Reinhardt, 2018; Samuels, 2008). The path coefficient between Egalitarianism and Intention to Use was significant and negative (p -value $<.0001$) even though our hypothesis **(H2)** posits that an individual's tendency toward Egalitarianism influences their Intention to Use ESM, the finding was in the opposite direction. According to a study focusing

on culture and life choice (Masuda, 2018), an egalitarian society values public welfare and gender equality, and fair practices at home as well as in the workplace. Although that research was not based on ESM adoption, it is possible that, for individuals who value Egalitarianism, personal lives are the prioritized concern, and social media is meant for a social life outside of work, and therefore have lower intention to use ESM. Lastly, the path coefficient between Mastery and Intention to Use was not significant. Thus, there is not sufficient evidence to conclude (**H3**) that an individual's tendency toward Mastery determines their Intention to Use ESM. The decisions from the hypotheses tests are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Framework hypotheses results

| Hypothesis | Decision |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| H1. Autonomy → Intention to Use | Supported |
| H2. Egalitarianism → Intention to Use | Refuted |
| H3. Mastery → Intention to Use | Not supported |

Next, the assigned culture country of respondents from Taiwan, UK, and USA were investigated for tests on model effects. By analyzing the individual groups, the research uncovered notable differences in the effects of cultural values in individual countries that are not evident when examined indiscriminately. Therefore, it seems as if the country may be a good gauge for measuring culture and intention to use because this comparative analysis of the structural model of the individual groups establishes the existence of differences. The direct relationships between the indicator variables and Intention to Use vary between the countries. The relationship between

Egalitarianism and intention to use was the strongest in the UK and Taiwan, however, non-existent in the USA. The differences in relationships among countries were found between Autonomy and Intention to Use as the relationship was significant in Taiwan and the USA, however, not significant in the UK. The findings of multigroup analysis reveal non-negligible differences across countries. Also, the coefficients for these statistically significant relationships vary across countries. The highest coefficient was for Autonomy (0.5527) in the USA and the lowest coefficient was Egalitarianism (-0.3606) in the UK. Other aspects of the data were tested but not reported in this article, namely multi-group ethnicity and ethnicity by assigned country.

Conclusion

Cultural values have a significant influence on an individual's behaviors. With the growing popularity of Enterprise Social Media (ESM), it is imperative to investigate how culture influences the individual's intention to adopt ESM. This paper applied Schwartz's cultural dimensions to provide a framework for the relationship between cultural values and the intention to use ESM. An online survey was conducted to collect responses from 413 valid participants. The survey questions were based on previous social media research using the Schwartz cultural framework. The results show some inclination that Autonomy and Egalitarianism influence the intention to use; however, Mastery was not found to be influencing the intention to use. The results for the specific groupings revealed non-negligible differences across countries, indicating cultural differences among countries may influence the intention to use ESM.

While there has been a lot of research on social media, the understanding of social media might not be applicable to ESM. This research highlights the significance of cultural values in shaping an individual's intention to use ESM, which contributes to the overall organizational readiness

for ESM adoption. Social media research literature may not be universally applicable to the adoption of ESM, which imposes specific organizational contingencies and country-specific work cultures. The findings from this research on cultural influences may provide organizations with the necessary awareness to prepare for the implementation of ESM. The insights could assist organizations in identifying potential barriers to readiness development. For example, an organization may need to investigate the collective cultural background of their organization and understand and plan or adjust for the internal resistance to adopting ESM.

This research is not without limitations. First, while respondents had work experience, they were not screened further on potentially relevant factors like length of employment, rank, and industry sector. Since the primary purpose of this research was to investigate the general tendency of people from different cultural backgrounds to use ESM, this research did not assume specific work contexts. A second limitation of this paper is the sample size as the survey resulted in 550 responses, of which 413 were valid. Larger group sizes would be favorable when investigating subsets for multiple countries. Finally, this research explored only three countries (Taiwan, USA, and UK) with sufficiently large sample sizes. Future work should focus on specific countries and ethnicities with a more in-depth investigation into the influences on intention to use ESM that may be attributable to birth country, residency, length of residency, and ethnicity.

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