MEASURING THE PERSUASIVE INFLUENCE OF TALK SHOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA USERS: APPLYING HEURISTIC-SYSTEMATIC MODEL WITH SEM

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ABSTRACT

In today’s digital age, talk shows have a substantial presence on multiscreen platforms. However, in studying their influence on the viewers, studies rarely investigated how they affect individuals’ behavioral determinants, especially in addressing social issues. This present study aimed to fill this gap by exploring the persuasive influence of a talk show about social media usage on the viewers’ attitude towards responsible use of social media based on the heuristic systematic information processing model. For this purpose, a video-embedded online questionnaire was used to collect relevant data from the heavy users’ segment of social media in Bangladesh (i.e., the university student social media users). SmartPLS 4.0 was used for partial least square structural equation modeling based on the data gathered from 226 voluntary respondents. The results show that exposure to the talk show does not directly associate with attitudes but with heuristic and systematic information processing modes that, in turn, influence attitude formation. In contrast, the systematic information processing mode predominates the formation of attitudes more than the heuristic mode. The findings have implications to add insights into creating awareness and developing prevention and educational interventions toward promoting responsible use of social media.

Keywords: Talk Show; Heuristic-Systematic Model; Attitudes; Responsible Social Media Usage; Structural Equation Modeling

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Exposure to a talk show does not directly associate with attitudes but with heuristic and systematic information processing modes.

Heuristic and systematic information processing modes influence attitude formation.

Systematic information processing mode predominates the formation of attitudes more than the heuristic mode.

GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT

Fig. 1. The associations among information exposure, heuristic-systematic cues and attitudes.
Research Objectives

The objective of the study is to examine the associations between social media users’ exposure to a talk show on social media and their attitude to responsible use of social media. Social media abuse has become a common social problem (Hassan et al., 2020). Researchers are now turning to explore communicative strategies to influence social media users’ positive attitudes (Ferrara et al., 2020). However, talk shows have not been tested as a persuasive communication tool to influence viewers’ attitude to responsible use of social media. It is necessary to gain more knowledge and develop better policies for guiding and educating young people before they develop an obsession. The findings may provide insights to promote how appropriately someone should understand the social impact of media interactions, avoid problematic or addictive use, and abuse (harm), and instead actively engage in more prosocial behavior. The following hypotheses are tested:

H1: Exposure to a talk show is associated with heuristic information processing mode.
H2: Exposure to a talk show is associated with systematic information processing mode.
H3: Heuristic information processing is associated with attitude to the responsible use of social media.
H4: Systematic information processing is associated with attitude to the responsible use of social media.

Methodology

From the methodological perspective, the current study is based on a quantitative research approach, working from a positivist paradigm and acknowledging empiricism for theory testing. That refers to testing heuristic and systematic model through structural equation modeling (SEM) in the current context. Measurement items were adapted from previous studies on exposure (Yang et al., 2016), heuristic-systematic cues (Xiao, et al., 2018), and attitudes (Turel et al., 2015). The current study used a cross-sectional design, the most common design in social science disciplines, also known as one-shot or status studies. The current study required a sample of 90 calculated based on the G*power test. An online video-embedded survey was developed using Google Forms to survey university student social media users. Purposive sampling was used. One public university was chosen from Bangladesh. Offer of participation was posted in the Facebook Messenger groups of the Departments. That detailed the filtering questions. All the questions were compulsory, so missing data and data cleaning was not an issue. Collected data were analyzed using SPSS 25 for descriptive statistics, whereas SmartPLS 4 was used for structural equation modeling analysis (Hair et al., 2019).

Results

According to the participant profiles, most utilize Facebook as their primary social media platform. More than 50% of the students use social media for over two hours daily. The current study ensures the validity and reliability of the measurement model with the values of CA (0.838-0.894), CR (0.842-0.894), and AVE (0.567-0.627). The measurement model also
ensures discriminant validity based on the values of The Fronell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio >0.80 (i.e., 0.831). Also, the strength of association (i.e., $r$ and $Q^2$ effect size is medium to large for all the structural paths except for the direct relationships between EXTS and ARUS ($>0.25$). However, the strength of association between SIPM and ARUS (0.627) is almost three times that of HIPM and ARUS (0.264). The paths between EXTS $\rightarrow$ HIPM and EXTS $\rightarrow$ SIPM are significant at $p<.001$ with substantial $\beta$ (0.625 and 0.665), but EXTS $\rightarrow$ ARUS is not significant ($\beta$=-0.044, $t$=0.526 $p$=.229), whereas $\beta$ for SIPM$\rightarrow$ARUS much more substantial than HIPM $\rightarrow$ ARUS (0.619 and 0.358 respectively, $p<.05$). So, EXTS$\rightarrow$HIPM $\rightarrow$ ARUS and EXTS $\rightarrow$ SIPM$\rightarrow$ARUS paths are fully mediated ($\beta$= 0.224 and 0.412, $p<.05$). Thus, the hypotheses H1, H2, H3, and H4, are supported.

**Findings**

The current study finds that, while social media users are exposed to a talk show about social media usage, such exposure does not automatically change viewers’ attitudes directly, but exposure first associates with viewers’ information processing modes. The current findings contradict some of previous findings as the talk show exposure about social issue (responsible use of social media) is almost equally associated with both heuristic and systematic information processing with similar strength of association ($F$) and explanatory power ($R^2$). Although respondents associate both heuristic and systematic information processing when viewed, the strength of the association between systematic information processing and attitude is much more than between heuristic information processing and the formation of attitude toward the responsible use of social media. Therefore, the current study also contributes to the literature with a model of attitude formation through heuristic-systematic dual modes of information processing based on the persuasive influence of talk shows in an integrated discipline, including talk shows and social media studies.

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**References**


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