

Chapter 15

Social Media Literacy and COVID-19 Awareness for Faculty Resilience in a Moderated Mechanism: An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

The educational institutions face tremendous challenges due to the sudden transition from traditional brick and mortar to online or distance learning in this neo-normal pandemic situation. Meanwhile, the present study examines the influence of faculties' social media literacy and knowledge and awareness of COVID-19 on their resilience via persuasion and coping behavior. Following the essence of the deductive reasoning approach in a positivism paradigm, the study used the partial least square-based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) technique to analyze the data. The study collected data using a random sampling method, and results revealed that social media literacy and knowledge and awareness of COVID-19 positively influenced persuasion. Engaging persuasion also positively predicts faculties' resilience. Surprisingly, the study found no significant moderating influence coping behavior. The findings of this study imply beneficial insights for policymakers and educators for ensuring an educational environment. Limitations and directions for future research are also described.

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INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) shattered the world and attempted to transition to a society described as neo-normal life (Dwivedi et al., 2020). Besides, WHO (World Health Organization) is trying to slump the accelerating spread of COVID-19. Amidst the crisis, the global epidemic of misinformation—spreading rapidly through social media platforms and other outlets—poses a severe problem for public health (El Rayess et al., 2018; Flostrand, Pitt, & Kietzmann, 2019; Laato et al., 2020). The advent of this historic pandemic was so sudden and abrupt that it did not provide enough time to prepare for such a situation (Dawson & Golijani-Moghaddam, 2020; Garfin, 2020; Shechter et al., 2020).

This COVID-19 pandemic also enforced all forms of class paradigm to shift on-default to the online mode of classes (Quezada, Talbot, & Quezada-Parker, 2020). The world is witnessing a unique kind of situation where education for all study levels is being imparted through online classes using the Internet (Bao, 2020; Ferdig et al., 2020). Avoiding close contact, such as social distancing, leads to nearly total closure of schools, shops, malls, festivals, rituals, colleges, universities, etc. (Das et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2021). This outbreak gives rise to a sudden increase in a variety of educational technologies, such as YouTube, Learning Management Systems, Digital Databases, Internet Streaming Or Broadcasting, repositories such as the Open Educational Tools (RET), etc. that provide online classes as the only alternative to traditional ways of teaching (Alea et al., 2020). In a similar vein, educational institutions of Bangladesh, willingly or unwillingly, also have started teaching online (Hasan & Bao, 2020).

Immediate and widespread sharing of misleading information outside of expert circles before it has been thoroughly vetted (e.g., preprints) can be dangerous, especially in a pandemic (El Rayess et al., 2018; Flostrand et al., 2019). A pandemic is a rapidly evolving setting in which researchers and academics are always learning and contributing to government policy dynamic adjustments. Compounding this information vortex is that governments rarely make policy decisions solely based on empirical evidence where the political interest is vital, and the two are frequently at the crossroads. Even information given out by government agencies across the world has turned out to be inaccurate at times, leading to more confusion (Newton, 2020).

Faculty resilience has become more vibrant than ever since the inception of COVID-19 (Garfin, 2020; Zia, 2020). Like other businesses and industries, education and learning are also affected by the infodemics, and trying to find ways to mitigate the probable risks (Ferdig et al., 2020; Izumi et al., 2020). While universities are the key players in the education sector, few research studies are focused on addressing these challenges to faculty members' resilience (Alea et al., 2020; Hasan & Bao, 2020). Consequently, the increased use of computers and smartphones is responsible for the rapid dissemination of information through the internet and social media, but such data lacks sufficient quality guarantees (Xu et al., 2020). This situation is extremely concerning because it undermines the trust in educational institutions and their program.

This study intends to offer a collective insight into many of the key issues and underlying complexities affecting the faculty members' resilience in higher educational institutions arising from COVID-19 through social media literacy, knowledge and awareness of COVID, coping behavior, and engaging persuasion. Indeed, faculty members are also not immune to infodemics, and they, too, have been bombarded with information about COVID-19 from all sorts of official and unofficial sources. Notably, there is still little awareness in higher educational institutions about the influence of infodemic on faculty members' engaging persuasion and resilience. Nevertheless, numerous questions remain untouched in connection with what is happening, predominantly those related to practice and why. Therefore, more

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