

**THE INTENTION TO USE TECHNOLOGY FOR  
SUSTAINABLE PERFORMANCE: A CASE  
STUDY OF MALAYSIAN EMPLOYERS  
FEDERATION**

**MOHD SYUKRI BIN AHMAD SUDARI**

**ASIA e UNIVERSITY  
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PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF MALAYSIAN EMPLOYERS  
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MOHD SYUKRI BIN AHMAD SUDARI

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## ABSTRACT

Technological changes have significantly become crucial for an organisation to remain relevant and competitive in the progressing world. This study investigates the relationship between Attitudes (ATT), Subjective Norms (SN), and Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC) on the Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) and the Intention to Use Technology (IUT) within the context of the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), two commonly used frameworks describing the factors influencing the federation's perceived ease and technology usage, were combined to analyse the data gathered. Meanwhile, the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) was a non-profit organisation that practised harmonious Industrial Relations (IR) or Human Resources (HR) audits that represented the interests of employers in Malaysia. Despite this, MEF needed to remain relevant, visible, progressing and maintain its future existence by engaging with the digital world competitively. It was necessary for MEF to create or upgrade an effective Management Technology System (MTS) that could assist its members by timely supplying them with updated information, expertise, research, guidance, and other pertinent activities. The data was collected through quantitative research approaches with random sampling, with 384 respondents from the members of MEF as the study's sample. Statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, reliability tests, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analyses were applied in this study. The results investigated the relationships between independent, mediating, and dependent variables using Baron and Kenny's (1986) method. In summary, all the hypotheses statistically had a positive and significant relationship between the variables. Interestingly, the analysis's findings indicated that the respondents showed positive feedback with an attitude that leads to higher intentions to utilise technology, resulting in trust with the current system.

**Keywords:** Intention, technology, employers, federation

## **APPROVAL**

This is to certify that this thesis conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, for the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration

The student has been supervised by: **Associate Professor Dr Frank Kiong**

The thesis has been examined and endorsed by:

**Associate Professor Dr Ahmad Sabri Bin Yusuff**  
**Associate Professor**  
**President University**  
Examiner 1

**Dr Abadan Jasmon**  
**Senior Lecturer**  
**Perdana University**  
Examiner 2

This thesis was submitted to Asia e University and is accepted as fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration



**Professor Juhary Bin Ali**  
Asia e University  
Chairman, Examination Committee  
[12 September 2023]

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted in fulfilment of the DBA degree is my own work and that all contributions from any other persons or sources are properly and duly cited. I further declare that the material has not been submitted either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. In making this declaration, I understand and acknowledge any breaches in this declaration constitute academic misconduct, which may result in my expulsion from the programme and/or exclusion from the award of the degree.

**Name: Mohd Syukri bin Ahmad Sudari**

**Signature of Candidate:**

**Date: 12 September 2023**



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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATION**

ACCCIM	Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia
ACE	ASEAN Confederation of Employers
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AHE	Associations of Hotel Employers
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIE	Association of Insurance Employers
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
ATT	Attitudes
BOD	Board of Directors
CAPE	Confederation of Asia Pacific Employers
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EPF	Employees Provident Fund Board
EPU	Economic Planning Unit
FMM	Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HRDC	Human Resource Development Corporation

HRM	Human Resource Management
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization Convention
IOE	International Organisation of Employers
IoS	Internet of Services
IoT	Internet of Things
IR	Industrial Relations
IR4.0	Fourth Industrial Revolution 4.0
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IT	Information Technology
IUT	Intention to Use Technology
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
MAPA	Malayan Agricultural Producer Association
MCBA	Malayan Commercial Banks' Association
MEF	Malaysian Employers Federation
MICCI	Malaysian International Chamber of Commerce and Industry
MITI	Ministry of International Trade & Industry
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education

MoHR	Ministry of Human Resources
MPC	Malaysian Productivity Corporation
MTS	Management Technology System
MTUC	Malaysian Trades Union of Congress
NCOSH	National Council for Occupational Safety & Health
NIOSH	National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health
NLAC	National Labour Advisory Council
NSDC	National Skills Development Council
NWCC	National Wages Consultative Council
PBC	Perceived Behavioural Control
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PEU	Perceived Ease of Use
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SECA	Sabah Employers' Consultative Association
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SM	Smart Manufacturing
SN	Subjective Norms
SNS	Social Network Sites



SOCSSO	Social Security Organisation Board
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TAM	Technology Adoption Model
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
TVET	Technical Vocational Education
UN	United Nations
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Background of the Study

This study seeks to determine the relationship between Attitudes (ATT), Subjective Norms (SN), and Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC) on the Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) and the Intention to Use Technology (IUT) in the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) context. In particular, it enabled the federation to address all the identified influences on the users' trust in the system and the intention of adopting technology within the organisation. The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) was founded in 1959 with the intention of aiding Malaysian businesses in increasing their production and efficiency (MEF, 2023). Since its establishment, MEF has been instrumental in assisting Malaysian employers and business organisations in making well-informed decisions on labour and corporate policy. MEF was selected as the study's focal point because it was and still is a major player in Malaysia's labour and business policy development. The federation is involved in various activities, such as assisting employers in comprehending labour laws and offering advice on issues pertaining to employee-employer relations, Human Resource Management (HRM), and other business-related topics (Ramasamy, 2017).

Additionally, MEF is frequently associated with negotiations with the government and trade unions to discuss employment and business issues in Malaysia. The establishment and role of MEF are consistent with the International Labour Organization Convention (ILO) 144 in 1976, which the Malaysian Government then has fully rectified on the requirement to establish tripartite mechanism to promote the implementation of labour standards. As far as the ILO is concerned, MEF is the only

recognised body in Malaysia representing Malaysian's Employers. Thus, MEF's role is paramount in Malaysia's labour policy and practice. In the growing digital era, many organisations and businesses in Malaysia seek to benefit from using more sophisticated and effective Management Technology System (MTS) in managing their business operation, including HRM. By creating a platform for its members to consult and discuss different HRM and Industrial Relations (IR) topics, MEF fulfils its function as a federation representing employers and business organisations in Malaysia. Thus, MEF needs to have an efficient MTS that provides services through the exchange and assistance of data, knowledge, research, guidance, and other applicable activities to its members in a timely matter for them to make the right business decision. By understanding the role of MEF, this study is expected to provide a more comprehensive view of how the management technology system can improve and sustain the position of MEF in Malaysia by providing the right input to organisations and businesses in making efficient decisions to improve their operational productivity. In essence, MEF also served as the primary setting of this research as it represents many employers in Malaysia.

## **1.1 Employers' Federation**

Generally, employers' organisations, associations, or federations were often the overlooked interest groups in IR and HRM (Benson et al., 2017). Within the context of IR, employers' federations play a vital role in fighting for or protecting employers' rights by defending, representing, or advising their association members (Devi & Latha, 2022). Traxler (2004) mentioned that one of the solid key functions of employers' federations is to provide advice on matters of IR and financial support (in terms of wage setting) in case of industrial disputes for the federation's registered members. These federations were also integral in most IR issues, such as wage and

dispute settlements, skill formation, and business representation, especially for smaller firms, and were often key participants in tripartite arrangements (Goods & Ellem, 2022; Benson et al., 2017).

In recent decades, there have been significant changes and discussions on IR regarding employers' federations or associations. The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic led the federation to transition into a digital strategy (Martinelli, 2001). As the world has evolved, employers' federations must focus on environmentally responsible business practices to ensure their existence and competitiveness in the digital transformation era through technology adoption within their organisation. It was a platform for businesses to collaborate, share best practices on sustainability, and advocate for sustainability-friendly policies and regulations (ILO, 2018). The federation was essential in fighting for employers' rights on collective bargaining agreements, training, and representation in global or local industries (Bryson & Willman, 2022; Martins, 2020).

Ultimately, it has paved the way for bringing employers to a broad spectrum of the industry, even though the role of employers differs from every nation depending on the specific needs of their members (Gooberman et al., 2020). There were other services offered by employers' federation, such as providing advocacy and representation on labor and employment issues, access to training and development programs, assistance with compliance with employment laws and regulations, and opportunities for networking and collaboration with other employers (Ibsen & Navrbjerg, 2017; Sheldon et al., 2016; Joungrakul, 2010). As Bryson and Willman (2022) mentioned, the purpose of employers' federations is to support the growth and success of member companies in a more sustainable manner by providing them with the resources and support they need to operate effectively in a competitive business

environment. It also seeks to enhance the reputation and credibility of businesses, support the development of sustainable enterprises, and contribute to building a more sustainable future for all (ILO, 2018).

In Malaysia, the earlier stages of employers' federations expanded rapidly during the 1950s, primarily engaging in labor relations (Kleinsorge, 1957). According to Ramasamy (2017), there were four categories of employers' federations classified as follows: first, employers' federations affiliated with the national federation, such as the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF); second, the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturer (FMM), which was the federation of trade-related federations; third, the federations that comprised some of the largest organisations in Malaysia and represented a diverse range of business interests, such as the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM), Malaysian International Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MICCI); and fourth, the employers' trade unions or umbrella federations, where employers from within the same industry or similar industries required a single national body with local branches. These branches included the Malayan Agricultural Producer Association (MAPA), Malayan Commercial Banks' Association (MCBA), Association of Hotel Employers (AHE), and Association of Insurance Employers (AIE). In the MEF context, implementing successful systems (i.e., MTS) required the federation's strong commitment to providing the necessary resources and further assistance for its members to use the systems adequately. It was crucial that the members embraced the system, were willing to use it appropriately, and contributed to the federation's success in implementing it. It was still necessary to look at the elements that contributed to the members' efforts to use the current system, even if MTS usage inside the federation was required of all members.

## **1.2 Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF)**

As a central organisation representing the interests of employers in Malaysia, the MEF is an important voice in the industry (MEF, 2022). MEF promotes and protects employers' rights and provides its members with support, information, and advocacy services. These associations aim to create a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient economy. Its vision is to promote the interests of employers in Malaysia, while its mission is to provide services and support to its members. The primary function of the MEF is to represent the interests of employers in Malaysia and to provide services and support to its members (MEF, 2020). As of December 2022, there were 6,517 memberships of Ordinary members, comprising individual companies from various industrial and commercial activities and sizes (MEF, 2022). Meanwhile, 28 companies were Association members, and 29 of these Association Members' companies represent the registered members of Employers' Organisations in Malaysia. These members cover the Northern, Perak, Central, Southern, East Coast, and East Malaysia regions (refer to Table 1.1.). Additionally, MEF is administered by its Board of Directors (BOD) and Secretariat, responsible for making decisions on behalf of its members and implementing its policies and programs (MEF, 2022). The BOD comprises representatives from various industries and sectors, while the Secretariat is the administrative arm of MEF that oversees its operations. The Management of MEF is vested in the Council, consisting of representatives from Ordinary Members elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and representatives from Association Members nominated by the individual Association Members (MEF, 2021).

**Table 1.1: MEF membership in Malaysia**

<b>Membership</b>	<b>No. of Companies</b>	<b>No. of Employees</b>
Ordinary members	6,517	1,561,958
Association members	28	1,323,705
Associations Member's Companies	29	9,505

*Source: MEF (2022)*

Furthermore, MEF offers its members a wide range of services, including legal and IR advice, training and development programs, research and consultancy services, and networking opportunities. MEF also organises events and conferences to promote the interests of employers in Malaysia. In recent years, the federation has undertaken various initiatives and programs to promote and safeguard the rights and interests of employers in Malaysia (MEF, 2022). For example, MEF offers multiple membership benefits to its members, including access to its services, networking opportunities, and discounts on training and development programs. Since its establishment, MEF has been responsible for safeguarding and promoting the rights and interests of private-sector employers in Malaysia (MEF, 2020). It is affiliated with the national federation and registered under the Societies Act of 1966 (Ramasamy, 2017). As the national employers' federation, MEF provides its members with consultation, guidance, and advice on matters of common interest, including disciplinary problems, retrenchment, hours of work and overtime, conditions of work, union recognition, and union claims on terms and conditions of employment, to practice harmonious IR or HRM audit, as well as to achieve national objectives (Ramasamy, 2017). In 2022, MEF handled 101 industrial court cases, seven (7) labor cases, and five (5) reconciliation cases handled

by the IR consultants and conducted 85 regional meetings with 5,345 attendees (MEF, 2022).

MEF has also collaborated with other stakeholders, such as governments, civil society organizations, and labour unions, to address sustainability challenges and find innovative solutions (Ramasamy, 2017). It operates as a platform for employers to engage with national entities (e.g., National Labour Advisory Council (NLAC), National Wages Consultative Council (NWCC), Employees Provident Fund Board (EPF), Malaysian Productivity Corporation (MPC), National Council for Occupational Safety & Health (NCOSH), National Vocational Training Council, National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH), Human Resources Development Corporation (HRDC), Malaysia Institute of Integrity, International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 26000 National Mirror Committee on Social Responsibility), regional bodies (e.g., ASEAN Confederation of Employers (ACE), Confederation of Asia Pacific Employers (CAPE)), and international agencies (e.g., ILO, and International Organisation of Employers (IOE)), International Labour Conference (ILC) (MEF, 2022).

MEF has also cooperated with other agencies such as the Social Security Organisation Board (SOCSO), SOCSO Appellate Board, Industrial Court Consultative Panel, Economic Planning Unit (EPU) on National Advisory Council on Education & Training, National Skills Development Council (NSDC), National Education Advisory Council Cleared Advisor on Technical Vocational Education (TVET), government agencies (e.g., Ministry of Human Resources (MoHR), Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), Malaysian Productivity Corporation (MPC)), other employer organizations (e.g., Association of Insurance Employers (AIE), Association of Hotel