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(IJEPC)<https://gaexcellence.com/ijepe>UTAUT IN ACTION: EXPLORING EDUCATIONAL
MONITORING INTENTIONS THROUGH PARENTAL
CONTROL SOFTWARE AMONG GENERATION Y
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Abstract:

Despite often having access to smart devices in their daily lives, Malaysian Generation Y parents reveal hesitation to use digital screening software to monitor their children's online behaviour for academic enrichment. This paper attempts to explain the motivating forces behind this deliberate pattern, based on the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model to test the structural effects of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, interpersonal social pressures and structural conditions available. A web-based questionnaire with a 7-point Likert configuration was employed in collecting the empirical data using a structured quantitative research design, with 310 mothers and fathers aged 29-44 as the subjects sampled in Malaysia. Structural results suggest that interpersonal social factors and infrastructural conditions with ease of access directly influence the intention to use supervision software, while internal factors (performance expectancy and effort expectancy) are not statistically significant. These observations highlight that for this group,

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external community reinforcement and environmental support frameworks can be more important than conventional evaluations of the utility of applications or ease of use. This inquiry, therefore, proposes important practical guidelines for application designers, government bodies and educational administrators who wish to promote responsible, secure usage of devices in line with educational objectives and on the basis of proactive family engagement.

Keyword:

Parental Control Software, Generation Y Parents, Educational Monitoring, Technology Adoption, Unified Theory Of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), Digital Parenting.



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Introduction

With the ubiquity of digital technologies, parenting has also been reinvented, especially among the generation of parents born between 1981 and 1996, who have grown up in the age of smart devices. The devices have come to be an indispensable part of education, communication and entertainment for children; however, they are directly exposing the little ones to great Internet dangers. For this reason, parental control software has become a viable solution to manage, monitor and limit children's access to the internet because it can block harmful websites, filter out inappropriate content, track internet use and even limit screen time (Bertrandias, Bernard, & Elgaaiad-Gambier, 2023; David, Iuga, & Miron, 2024).

Parental control software is frequently easy to use and can be installed on various devices. For instance, Microsoft Family Safety enables parents to set up appropriate screen time and control content for children without having to go through complicated installation procedures (Wang, Zhao, Van Kleek, & Shadbolt, 2021). The effectiveness of these tools can, however, differ depending on the type of device, with some tools working well on smartphones but not on tablets (Yıldız, Keşşafoglu, Altundal, Akel, & Uzundağ, 2025). This variation means that Generation Y parents must scrutinise software amenities to ensure they align with their family's online security and learning requirements.

Moreover, Yıldız et al. (2025) highlighted that adjustments in controls should be made according to the age and development level of children. Although privacy is an ethical issue, child welfare is of primary importance. In fact, parents are advised that they should make their

children aware of monitoring and should be transparent and agree to monitoring to build trust. This helps to foster responsible online behaviours and shift the conversation from a punitive model of digital parenting to a more supportive model via parental control software.

The need for proactive oversight apps has increased dramatically with the start of the international health crisis. The movement restrictions across Malaysia, which were announced on a national level, led to an urgent shift to virtual learning at home (PdPR) and an increase in the number of hours children spent in front of digital screens. Academic facts show that between 2016 and 2020, internet use among youth (aged 5 to 17) sped up an astonishing 155%, more than half of whom had their own personal internet devices (MCMC, 2020). Interestingly, over this same period, the number of people who actively schedule their homes' security technical measures for use fell from 62.4% to 53.4% (MCMC, 2020).

This digital dependence is not just a Malaysian issue; it is a universal 21st-century education challenge faced by all parents around the world in adapting to the use of educational technology (edtech) and mobile learning apps. Digital applications are promoted to develop critically important computational and technical skills in early childhood development worldwide but are also contributing to parental worry about screen time management and vulnerabilities (Papadakis, 2022). This puts today's digital parenting in a delicate balance as these devices, while incredibly beneficial for educational purposes, also bring with them a key systemic risk: digital addiction among students, which has been consistently associated with a decrease in academic performance and a shift in well-being (Karakose et al., 2022; Tülübaş et al., 2023). Therefore, studying parent adoption and implementation of monitoring software can be a crucial contribution toward international frameworks on digital mediation strategies from a cross-cultural perspective.

In Malaysia, Gen Y caregivers typically prefer an in-person approach and verbal directions over software-managed setups. The most popular household strategies involve providing verbal screen schedules (72.8%), being physically present during times when the device is connected (57.4%), starting conversations about social media vulnerabilities (50.0%) or manually checking open social media (47.7%) (MCMC, 2020). Although these behavioural methods are all supportive, they don't have the ongoing monitoring and comprehensive analysis of specialist tracking software. These monitoring systems can provide protection of a child's online space and, by analysing data from specific software, device usage metrics, and content selections, give insight into their educational progress. These monitoring systems can ensure the safety of a child's online activities and provide visibility into educational achievements, based on data from specific software, device engagement, and content choices (David et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2021; Yıldız et al., 2025). However, the limited use of these automated tools indicates a significant need to explore in depth the fundamental psychological metric that drives the decision of when and how to use specialised software for academic observation by the parents of Generation Y.

Hence, this study aims to explore the factors that affect the intention of Generation Y's parents to adopt parental control software in Malaysia. Specifically, the impact of these platforms on the learning growth of children in an ever-changing, digital learning environment is highlighted. Indeed, although Malaysian Generation Y parents are digitally literate, they are not yet willing to use such tools, which necessitates targeted empirical investigation.

Literature Review

Intention to Use Parental Control Software among Generation Y parents in Malaysia

The use of parental control software for educational purposes reflects parents' intentional and proactive use of technology tools to monitor, regulate, and guide their child's digital use in support of their learning (Sun, Li, Zou, Radesky, Brooks, & Schaub, 2024). Hence, it is a conscious and deliberate aim to nurture children's learning in a structured and safe online space, recognising the growing importance of digital devices in their education (Sun et al., 2024; Martín-Cárdaba, Martínez Díaz, Lafuente Pérez, & García Castro, 2024). In fact, as parents who are often digitally literate and value education, the digital generation's offspring are well suited to utilise such technologies to monitor their kids' content, screen time and app consumption, with the goal of learning in mind (Wolfers, 2021). It is therefore often the sense of responsibility to optimise the home learning environment so that the children's online presence reinforces rather than distracts from educational goals that constitutes the primary motivation (Wolfers, 2021).

In fact, parents who report being very interested in using such tools are not just following the trend; they are leveraging digital tools to make the most of their children's screen time, ensuring it supports learning and development at every stage (Sun et al., 2024; Martín-Cárdaba et al., 2024). This behavioural intention reflects a modern parenting attitude where monitoring children's learning through technology is seen more as an active parenting role than a passive one. With the increasingly eroding boundaries between education and technology, it is important to have a comprehensive knowledge about the factors that have an impact on a parent's decision to use these tools to develop interventions, awareness campaigns and user-friendly software that align with their parenting values and expectations to support their educational aspirations.

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) suggests that behavioural intention is a strong predictor of actual technology use (Venkatesh et al., 2003). In line with the context of the UTAUT model, the intention to use is a valid construct to study the likelihood of the use of Parental Control Software in supporting the education of children among Generation Y parents. In this study, intention to use is conceptualised as the willingness and readiness of parents to use digital monitoring mainly for educational oversight and is influenced by the following set of psychological and contextual factors: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions.

Performance Expectancy

Performance expectancy is a measure of how much an individual feels that using a specific technology will help him or her get a job done better (Venkatesh et al., 2003). It contains various constructs including perceived usefulness, extrinsic motivation, job-fit, relative advantage, outcome expectations and more. Furthermore, this performance expectancy was consistently identified as the most powerful predictor of intention to use technology, in the context of both voluntary and mandatory use (Tseng, Lin, Wang, & Liu, 2022; Sun et al., 2024). This study measures performance expectancy as the extent to which Malaysian Generation Y parents expect parental control software to lead to their child's educational development and progress. Parents' sense of the software's efficacy in supporting learning outcomes will tend to

encourage its use as a component of their digital parenting approach. Based on this, the following hypothesis is posed:

H1: There is a significant relationship between the expectation of performance and the intent to use parental control software among Malaysian Generation Y Parents.

Effort Expectancy

Effort expectancy is the ease with which one can use a system (Venkatesh et al., 2003). This construct is very similar to notions like perceived ease of use and complexity that are often studied in technology acceptance research. In UTAUT, effort expectancy reflects individuals' beliefs about how much effort it will take to use a particular technology successfully. While its impact decreases over time with continued use (Chauhan, Jaiswal, & Kar, 2018), it is an important factor in initial adoption.

For the purposes of this study, effort expectancy is defined as the degree to which Malaysian Generation Y parents feel that parental control software is easy to use and manage for the purposes of educating their children. If parents find the software easy to set up, easy to navigate, and easy to apply to their child's digital experiences, they will be more likely to want to use this. On the other hand, some parents might have high perceived complexity levels, which can impede adoption, particularly if they need to integrate it into their parenting practices effortlessly. As a result of this reasoning, the hypothesis is set forth:

H2: Effort expectancy significantly influences the intention to use parental control software among Generation Y parents in Malaysia.

Social Influence

Social influence reflects the extent to which a person perceives that important others think they should adopt a system (Venkatesh et al., 2003). This construct highlights the perceived social pressure which influences behavioural intention when a technology is expected or encouraged by peers, family and/or institutional authorities. In fact, social influence is quite similar to social impact, where people try to match their behaviour in line with what they think others expect of them. Social influence is particularly noticeable and relevant under mandatory conditions, where technology use may be more a result of others' expectations rather than self-motivation (Venkatesh et al., 2003). This can account for the mixed results that have been found in subsequent empirical studies of the UTAUT model (Stewart, Brodowsky, & Sciglimpaglia, 2022).

For Malaysian Generation Y parents, social influence is defined as the degree to which they are influenced by significant others (e.g., spouses, extended family and peer groups) to use parental control software. When these influential parties endorse or advocate the use of the software, especially for learning, parents might be more willing to adopt the software, even when they are uncertain. This external support can help aid in parenting norms of digital supervision and help build a culture of positive use of technology in children. Based on this, the following hypothesis is made:

H3: Social influence significantly influences the intention to use parental control software among Generation Y parents in Malaysia.

Facilitating Control

Facilitating conditions are the extent to which the person perceives the availability of organisational and technological resources for using a specific system (Venkatesh et al., 2003). This construct acknowledges that users will be more willing to utilise a technology if they believe they have the access, instruction and expertise required. The influence of facilitating conditions is demonstrated to be direct and significant in relation to system use but is likely to be more significant at the early stages of adoption in its relationship to intention. It could potentially decrease with time, as familiarity grows (Schmuck, Stevic, Matthes, & Karsay, 2023).

In this study, facilitating conditions refer to how confident Malaysian Generation Y parents are that they have the skills, knowledge and technical confidence to monitor their child's education-related digital activity using parental control software. Parents with higher self-efficacy, particularly in terms of technological skills and resources, are more likely to plan on using these tools as a part of their digital parenting strategy. These enabling factors lower the barriers to technology adoption and can make implementation more feasible and sustainable. With this rationale in mind, the following hypothesis is formed:

H4: Facilitating conditions have a significant effect on intention to use parental control software among Malaysian Generation Y parents.

Methodology

A structured, cross-sectional quantitative survey approach was used in this research to obtain data from Generation Y parents in Malaysia who were born between 1981 and 1996 with school-age children who use their own smart devices. Given the lack of a national demographic register for this particular family group, a non-probability convenience sampling approach was used to identify and sample matching survey participants. The sample achieved was composed of 310 valid participants who completed a self-administered Google Forms digital instrument; this was more than the necessary number of structural completions to ensure structural equation stability and reduce statistical error margins. The final data collection mechanism was divided into three main components: Section A measured basic demographic metrics (age, gender identity, economic earning and scholastic achievement) with standard categorical measurement metrics, while Sections B and C measured the structural latent constructs with interval measurement frameworks.

Specifically, items measuring performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions were adapted from Gao and Bai (2014), Pinochet, Lopes, Srulzon and Onusic (2018) and Dutot (2015), respectively, and a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree was used to determine the extent of respondents' agreement with each statement to ensure content validity in the context of parental control software. Four items, adapted from Gao and Bai (2014), were used to measure the dependent variable, namely, intention to use parental control software. In the analysis of data, SPSS version 22.0 was used for descriptive purposes, while SmartPLS version 4.0 was used for measurement and the evaluation of the structural model. The reliability and validity of all items were tested using the measurement model approach, and then structural model analysis was used to test hypothesised relationships. Therefore, this methodological rigour allowed the study to investigate the cognitive and social influences on technology acceptance of the Generation

Y parents concerning their intention to use parental control software in order to monitor their children's online use for educational purposes.

Sampling Strategy Rationale and Bias Control

The choice of the sampling method was a non-probability convenience sampling method because of the difficulties in obtaining a complete national register or sampling frame of Malaysian Generation Y parents who actively follow specific digital features. The survey instrument was disseminated on an extremely diversified grid of online channels, as a conscious attempt to fight against the common selection biases that are typical of convenience sampling. This comprised multi-ethnic community pages, as well as national digital parenting forums, and localised PTA social groups, with diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Furthermore, the study deliberately focused on the basic elements of the original UTAUT model to anchor the core technological and social elements before superposing the model with subjective additional variables such as user trust, privacy limits, or child autonomy.

Ethical Considerations and Data Anonymity

The ethical guidelines for conducting web-based social science research with human subjects were strictly followed. This survey was designed to be completely anonymous: no personally identifiable information was asked for or collected, and there was zero risk to the anonymity of the respondents. The study met institutional guidelines for low risk exempt status from formal Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, as it did not involve invasive procedures and involved consenting adults. An obligatory Digital Informed Consent statement was placed on the initial screen of the Google Form, thereby maintaining autonomy. To access the survey questions, participants were asked to actively check a confirmation box stating that they understood that the use of the platform is voluntary and that the data shall not be disclosed to third parties.

Data Finding

Demographic Profile

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of demographic characteristics of the 310 respondents in this study. A range of factors was analysed to give a detailed profile of the sample, including gender, age group, ethnicity, and educational background.

Table 1 Demographic Profile

Descriptions	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Gender</u>		
Male	97	31.2
Female	213	68.8
<u>Age</u>		
29 to 32	73	23.2
33 to 36	86	27.7
37 to 40	81	26.1
41 to 44	71	22.9
<u>Ethnicity</u>		

Malay	186	60.0
Chinese	62	20.0
Indian	43	13.9
Others	19	6.1
<u>Educational Background</u>		
Secondary School Certificate	36	11.6
Diploma Certificate	74	23.9
Bachelor Degree	158	51.0
Master Degree	42	13.5

The study involved 310 Malaysian parents of Generation Y, ranging in age from 1981 to 1996, in order to gain insight into their behavioural intentions of adopting parental control software for learning purposes. Gender distribution revealed that the majority of respondents were females (68.8%), with males being 31.2%, maybe due to mothers having a greater involvement in the educational monitoring of the families. Age was divided into four age bands to reflect the age diversity of the Y generation more clearly: 33 to 36 years (27.7%), 37 to 40 years (26.1%), 29 to 32 years (23.2%) and 41 to 44 years (22.9%). This distribution is relatively even and represents a wide age range of digitally savvy parents who are balancing work and parenting responsibilities in their children's critical developmental years.

Ethnicity-wise, the majority of participants in the sample were of Malay ethnicity (60.0%), followed by Chinese (20.0%), Indian (13.9%) and others (6.1%), representing a good cross-section of the multicultural Malaysian community. Meanwhile, the educational attainment of participants also reinforces the relevance of the study to digital adoption, with more than half (51.0%) holding a bachelor's degree, 23.9% having diplomas, 13.5% holding a master's degree and 11.6% holding secondary school certificates. A high proportion of educated respondents indicates a good base of digital literacy, which likely has an impact on the perceived usefulness and ease of use of parental control software. These demographic characteristics are important for understanding the factors which affect intentions to adopt educational monitoring technologies by Generation Y parents.

Measurement Model Analysis

The measurement model was thoroughly examined for the validation and reliability of the measurement constructs used in this study. This stage was to check the conceptual and statistical soundness of the survey instrument. Factor loadings, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE) and Cronbach's alpha were used to assess internal consistency, convergent validity and reliability of each construct. As shown in Table 2, the results showed that all constructs fulfilled all the recommended thresholds, which supported the validity of the scales used to measure performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions and intention to use parental control software for educational purposes among Generation Y parents in Malaysia.

Table 2 Measurement Model Analysis

Construct	Item	Loading	CR	AVE
Performance Expectancy	PER1	0.756	0.92	0.671
	PER2	0.792		
	PER3	0.840		
	PER4	0.851		
	PER5	0.823		
	PER6	0.849		
Effort Expectancy	EE1	0.850	0.949	0.726
	EE2	0.846		
	EE3	0.856		
	EE4	0.856		
	EE5	0.858		
	EE6	0.841		
	EE7	0.856		
Social Influence	SI1	0.868	0.920	0.697
	SI2	0.864		
	SI3	0.833		
	SI4	0.727		
	SI5	0.873		
Facilitating Control	FC1	0.845	0.943	0.735
	FC2	0.858		
	FC3	0.868		
	FC4	0.870		
	FC5	0.847		
	FC6	0.853		
Intention to use	INT1	0.883	0.931	0.771
	INT2	0.874		
	INT3	0.874		
	INT4	0.894		
		0.860		

All indicator loadings were above the threshold value of 0.70 according to Table 2, indicating that the items of all constructs had strong reliability. All constructs had CR values between 0.920 and 0.949, which exceeded the minimal value of 0.70, demonstrating high internal consistency of each construct. Furthermore, convergent validity for the constructs employed in the analysis was established since all the AVE values exceeded the suggested threshold of 0.50. In particular, Performance Expectancy obtained a CR of 0.920 and an AVE of 0.671, and Effort Expectancy had the highest CR (0.949) and AVE (0.726). The CR value of Social Influence was 0.920, and the AVE was 0.697, while Facilitating Control had a CR value of 0.943 and an AVE of 0.735. Finally, the Intention to Use parental control software presented the highest level of CR (0.931) and AVE (0.771), which demonstrated a strong measurement model fit. The results also collectively validate that these items used to represent the latent constructs in this study were statistically sound and valid, thus providing grounds for subsequent structural model analysis.

Discriminant Validity

To ascertain that each construct in the model was unique with only minimal overlap, a Discriminant Validity assessment was conducted using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio in line with the strict criteria suggested by Hair et al. (2016). This is a well-established method to identify potential multicollinearity and overlapping constructs in structural equation modelling.

Table 3 Discriminant Validity (HTMT Stringent Criterion)

	EE	FC	INT	PER	SI
EE					
FC	0.882				
INT	0.864	0.845			
PER	0.865	0.865	0.864		
SI	0.872	0.832	0.873	0.899	

(HTMT established at HTMT.90)

Note: PER: Performance Expectancy; EE: Effort Expectancy; SI: Social Influence; FC: Facilitating Control; INT: Intention to use

As seen in the results (Table 3), all the HTMT values were much lower than the recommended cut-off of 0.90. This validates the distinction between the constructs (Performance Expectancy, Effort Expectancy, Social Influence, Facilitating Control, and Intention to Use) on an empirical level. The results are important as the study highlights the technologically diverse parent generation of Malaysian Generation Y who exhibit a range of digital behaviours. Therefore, the results in Table 3 reflect the discriminant validity and enhance the confidence in the structural relationships investigated in this study, and indicate the unique role played by each construct in explaining parental intentions to use parental control software.

Path Coefficient

Table 4 Path Coefficient Result

Relationship	Hypothesis	Direct Effect (β)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Significant
PER > INT	H1	0.099	1.060	0.112	No
EE > INT	H2	0.043	0.521	0.322	No
SI > INT	H3	0.265	2.613	0.000	Yes
FC > INT	H4	0.510	4.576	0.000	Yes

Note: PER: Performance Expectancy; EE: Effort Expectancy; SI: Social Influence; FC: Facilitating Control; INT: Intention to use

The structural model was tested to determine the hypothesised relationships between the constructs and the intention to use parental control software among parents of Generation Y in Malaysia. Table 4 shows that two hypotheses were confirmed. Facilitating Control (FC) was found to have had the most positive impact on Intention to Use ($\beta = 0.510$, $t = 4.576$, $p < 0.001$), meaning that resources and technical support are major factors in the positive effects on parents' intention to use such tools. Furthermore, Social Influence (SI) also has a significant and

positive influence ($\beta = 0.265$, $t = 2.613$, $p < 0.001$), which indicates that peer, societal and family encouragement play a role in creating a positive influence on parents' intentions.

Performance Expectancy (PER) and Effort Expectancy (EE) did not, however, have statistically significant impacts on intention (p-values of 0.112 and 0.322, respectively). This indicates that a belief in the software's ability to positively affect monitoring outcomes or software use is not enough for Generation Y parents to adopt it. Rather, there are various practical enablers and external social validation that motivate their behavioural intention to use digital parental control solutions.

Discussion and Implications

The H1 and H2 were not supported, as both factors, Performance Expectancy ($\beta = 0.099$, $p = 0.112$) and Effort Expectancy ($\beta = 0.043$, $p = 0.322$), did not significantly influence the technological intent among Malaysian Generation Y parents. This result points to an alternative behavioural reality for digital native cohorts. Although the standard technology acceptance models assume that perceived utility and ease of handling determine user paths (Venkatesh et al., 2003), this result shows that it is not the case. Generation Y parents have an innate understanding of application ecosystems and touch interfaces. Hence, the criterion for “Easy to set up or navigate” (Effort Expectancy) is no longer considered a unique luxury or motivating factor, but a basic or transactional expectation of any digital tool.

Also, the lack of significance for Performance Expectancy suggests that while parents acknowledge the ability of these tools to mathematically track how long they spend on the internet or how long they spend in front of a screen, they are doubtful about whether the software translates into direct educational development or academic progress. This crucial gap aligns with global parenting literature, in which parenting participants focus on 'technoference' in the parent-child dynamics, positing that excessive parental monitoring can negatively affect children's self-esteem and trust (Schmuck et al., 2023; Yıldız et al., 2025). Thus, Generation Y parents will not prioritise inside software features and will not adopt the software tools merely for mechanical purposes unless these are driven by the social support structures around them.

On the other hand, social influence and facilitating control were found to be significant in predicting parental control software adoption among Malaysia's Generation Y parents. The social influence ($\beta = 0.265$; $t = 2.613$; $p < 0.001$) was found to have a meaningful positive influence, meaning that Generation Y parents are influenced by peer networks, online communities and family recommendations when they make decisions about using parental monitoring tools. This was consistent with previous studies demonstrating that this generation is more likely to place an emphasis on social validation and shared experiences when making decisions (Stewart et al., 2022). Facilitating control ($\beta = 0.510$; $t = 4.576$; $p < 0.001$) proved to be the most significant factor, highlighting the importance of technical support, clear tutorials, and structured guidance (Schmuck et al., 2023), particularly from reliable sources such as the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC). These findings indicate that parental empowerment through social encouragement and support mechanisms would be likely to increase the likelihood of using parental control software among Gen Y parents. This means that simply raising awareness about the advantages of digital literacy is not enough; there needs to be active promotion via awareness campaigns, peer recommendations and institutional support in order to push for adoption within this group.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations

Although this study contributes to the understanding of the factors that affect Generation Y parents in Malaysia in their decision to adopt parental control software, some limitations need to be noted. A convenience sampling method was used, which restricts the representativeness of the sample and may lead to some bias, as parents may be over-represented if they have more access to technology or the internet. The lack of representation of rural or underserved communities may limit the generalisability of the results. Moreover, the sample had a larger number of women (68.8%) as respondents, which may not represent the broader parental viewpoints, especially those of fathers, whose attitudes and approaches towards technology may be different. Moreover, the use of self-reported survey data adds other possible sources of social desirability bias and response bias that may overestimate intentions and limit the accuracy of behaviour predictions. The study being cross-sectional also means that it has only captured data on parental attitudes or behaviours at a single point in time.

Moreover, the themes generated from the Malaysian setting are contextual, which makes it difficult to generalise these findings to another culture or geographical setting. The perception and usage of parental control tools are influenced by cultural norms, parenting styles and regulations in the country, including regulations imposed by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC). Thus, the study adopted the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) framework that contains only the four factors, namely, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions for analysis. Other factors that might impact the outcome, like privacy, trust in children's ability, or moral issues, were not considered, which could have led to some important psychological or contextual variables being overlooked. Future research is needed to overcome these problems, using more representative sampling methods (e.g., random or stratified sampling), adopting longitudinal designs to observe behaviour over time, and including other constructs (e.g., privacy perceptions and family communication) in order to gain a deeper understanding of parental decision-making in the digital age.

Conclusion

Parental control software allows parents to control and monitor the online behaviour of their children, selectively permitting the use of applications, monitoring access to content and making sure devices are used in an appropriate way, especially for education. The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) has been actively encouraging parents to protect children against dangers online through the use of internet monitoring tools since 2014. This initiative came to be relevant during the Movement Control Order (MCO) when learning through the digital medium was a necessity. Yet, despite this move by the government, a lot of parents in Malaysia who are part of Generation Y are still not enthusiastic about using such tools, particularly in the educational supervision aspect. With reference to the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), the main factors affecting parental control software use intention were examined in this study. The results indicated that the constructs investigated included performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions. However, social influence and facilitating conditions proved to be the most influential in forming intentions towards adoption. The results indicate that social encouragement and supportive environments could help to increase acceptance.

The implications of the findings are multifaceted and provide practical recommendations for policymakers, developers and parents. The study suggests that policymakers need to boost awareness of parental control software, particularly its educational value, while targeting outreach to underserved communities. Access and structured integration can be improved through such initiatives as public education campaigns, subsidies, or school-based partnerships. Embedding learning progress monitoring and other monitoring features into user interfaces and simplifying the interfaces for software developers can help remove concerns about the usability of the software or assist with the perception of added value. Developers should also make good use of the influence of parental communities by setting up platforms to share their knowledge. From the parents' perspective, an increased awareness of digital literacy and the ability to adapt software to children's learning levels is important and facilitating discussions with their children about online safety and their behaviours using digital tools, as well as peer sharing of personal experiences, can help create a shared sense of ownership. To conclude, this study highlights the importance of contextual, social, and infrastructural factors that influence the adoption of parental control tools and offers actionable insights that can help create a safer and more educational digital environment for children in Malaysia.

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