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MODELING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FACEBOOK PERCEPTION, POLITICAL INTEREST AND ONLINE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH: DATA SCREENING AND MEASUREMENT MODEL APPROACH

Bashir Hadi Ashara
Department of Mass Communication, Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna
Nigeria
bashirashara@gmail.com

Che Su Bt Mustaffa
Department of Multi-Media and Communication, Universiti Utara
Malaysia

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Abstract

The main direction of this paper is only for presenting a primary data screening and analysis on the retrieve questionnaire data for the study of ad of the influence of Facebook perception and political interest of youth on online political participation with the purpose of structural equation modelling. In this study, 600 data gathering instrument were distributed to a number of respondent in Nigeria out of which 473 questionnaire were returned and utilized for the analysis, this provided a response rate of 79%.

The statistical test of nonresponse rate bias, common method variance(CMV) test, normality test and confirmatory factor analysis(CFA) were all conducted to find out the data's suitability for the conducting a multivariate analysis. Consequently, the findings led to conclusion that this study data is fit and suitable for PLS structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis
Keywords: Facebook perception, political interest, Online Political Participation.

1 INTRODUCTION

Prior to the embracing of social media for advancement of democratic process among citizens, political participation seem to be in a decline position, mostly among the youth (Yu, & Oh, 2018). Studies have shown that youth are not concerned about participating in political matters as well as engaging in democratic process (Cahill, & Dadvand, 2018). In addition, Aleyomi and Ajakaiye (2014) and Corrigall-Brown and Wilke (2014) observed that prior to the coming of social media, youth are not fascinated in political participation through traditional media such as radio and newspaper and they perceive the traditional media as controlled and expensive for them to express their political views. Similarly, they perceive politicians as well as representative institutions not trustworthy (Asongu, & Odhiambo, 2018; Blais & Loewen, 2009; Dahlgren, 2009). Similarly, more studies have indicated decline in youth political participation in developing nations as well as developed ones (Abdu, Mohamad, & Muda 2016; Andolina, & Jenkins, 2002; Delli Carpini, 2000; Harris *et al.*, 2010,).Yet, research findings have identified the position of youth as an important constituency in political participation (Harris, Wyn, & Younes 2010; Henn, Weinstein & Wring 2002; Towner,2013). Yoldaş (2015) also observed that young people in particular, always perceive politics as a difficult practice, which requires intense debates about democratic shortfalls, therefor without enhanced participation of youth in politics it is feared that, they would remain backward in the development of their nations. Also for the need of their presence in participating about decisions that are made which affect their lives (Steenkamp, & Hyde-Clarke, 2014). The concern is also because they are regarded as a treasured source that can be organized to overcome barriers to political development of the African region (Havlicek, Curry, & Villalpando, 2018), Hence, this concern of scholars over the years has made them to shift their attention to exploring the

reasons behind decline in youth participation in politics and what will motivate them to partake in political activities (Cammaerts, Bruter, Banaji, Harrison, & Anstead, 2014; Thun, 2014).

Evidently, the increase in growth of the social media and its platforms such as Facebook has ushered a new of wave of interest and perception of the site for participation among youth (Lee, Shin, & Hong, 2018), the platform of Facebook brought with it a new pattern and possibilities for political participation (Wyngarden, 2012), it also enables political interaction and political participation by creating two-way communication (Hofstra, Corten, & Van Tubergen, 2016) and it is serving as an added channel for accessing political interaction and communication outside of traditional channel (Seargeant, & Tagg, 2018). Hence, Facebook is now playing vital role which can be referred to as a "change platform" wherein the youth can change from traditional media to social media to participate in political activities (Waller, 2013). As a result, youth are now progressively using Facebook to effect political change (Chan & Guo, 2013) and it is now institutionalizing a new means of participating in politics among them (Dhaha & Igale, 2013). Therefore, understanding youth perception and interest about social media platforms such as Facebook is very imperative to researchers and political scientist who are trying to study the political activities of the youth in order to enhance their understanding on the use of these sites for political participation in democratic setting.

Consequently this new development made some researchers to suggest for the examination of the youth political interest and what perception the youth have on Facebook as a platform for political participation. Thus, the study aim to investigate the relationship of Facebook perception, political interest as an independent construct to examine online political participation among youth in Nigeria.

2 Literature Review

Researchers have identified that there are different forms of political activities which are executed by different individuals for various reasons and with divergent effects on political system of a given society, (Verba et al., 1995). Thus, the kinds of opportunities provided by the new ways of participation online, such as posting political comments on a political website, a political candidate posts, have not been available to citizens

previously (Conroy-Krutz, 2018). Certainly, Social media have afforded researchers an opportunity to examine development of the theories of political participation from the traditional offline modes to new online modes (Kim, & Chen 2016). These new practices of online political participation have prompted considerable researches in the area of political participation, with a number of key conclusions; such as increased in political choice and control on the part of the citizens (Bennett & Iyengar,2008), increased in decentralization of political information dissemination (Bimber & Davis,2003), bringing new citizens into the political folding (Papacharissi, 2004), helping persons in garnering resources such as links and information that can help in reaching political dacisions (Zivnuska, Carlson, Carlson, Harris, & Harris, 2018,; Safiullah, Pathak, Singh, & Anshul, 2017) and promoting political communication, discussion and expression (Vaccari, et al. 2015). Therefore, the ways citizens perceive these new environment in terms of their features, accessibility, privacy, and how they can be utilize for political participation has an important consequences for understanding politics in the current political climate.

Several empirical inquiries into peoples' perception of Facebook platform have indicated that people are largely satisfied with the ease of access obtainable in Facebook (De Vries & Kühne, 2015; Lampe, Ellison, & Steinfield 2008). This positive perception of Facebook is what Chou and Edge (2012) found in their study that Facebook is the easiest accessible platform among other social media platforms. Thus, the easy nature of Facebook accessibility has fascinated many social media users to switch from other social media platforms Facebook (Haque, Sarwar, & Yasmin, 2013) Also, the increased ease of communication was afforded in particular by the Facebook platform: for accessing educational materials (Pimmer et al, 2016), social relations and social influence (Arteaga Sánchez, Cortijo, & Javed 2014)and self expression and privacy (Shane-Simpson, Manago, Gaggi, & Gillespie-Lynch,2018). For example, Apuke and Apollos (2017) noted that the perception of Facebook by the public owed to its participating and resourceful nature, which turned it into a remarkable platform for political activities, they concluded that Facebook was enormously deployed in different elections in Nigeria.

Facebook users tend to perceive the applicability of Facebook features as a way of enhancing their use of Facebook for political participation (Eranti,

& Lonkila, 2015), this may be possible as the site possess a number of features that enables them with choice to exchange a variety of political posting within a fraction of second (Lee, Kim, & Ahn, 2014). Furthermore, Oeldorf-Hirsch, Birnholtz, & Hancock, (2017) noted that Facebook has distinguished itself from other social media platform by providing user with the ability to design the appearance of their profile wall in such a way that user can utilize the pages as a personal political page.

Furthermore, the use of Facebook entails that users encounters issues that deal with lots of users' privacy. This rest on the fact that social media platforms came with modern features that makes personal information vulnerable to all users. Findings of a study by Liu, Rui, & Cui (2017) show that social media platforms such as Facebook contain serious risks to the privacy of their users, despite the high level of gratification to their users. As a result, some studies found that users frequently perceive and cope with the tension between perceived risk of their privacy and perceived benefits of the platform (Buchanan et al. 2012; Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn & Hughes 2009; Ibrahim, 2008; Tufekci, 2008 Beer (2008). Previously, a study by Acquits and Gross (2006) found that most of users of Facebook disclose information about their actual identity in their pages. Of recent, Saling,Cohen, & Cooper (2019) found some trace that, Facebook users perceive the site as the preferred platform for disclosing their personal information to their Facebook friends. This shows that, Facebook users have a positive perception on the issues of privacy on Facebook that made Facebook to become the pinnacle of all social media platforms in terms trust about user's privacy(Kim, 2018; Marino, Gini, Vieno, & Spada, 2018) Thus. This indicates that users may also perceive Facebook as a platform for political participation.

Although, previous researches have investigated prevalent use of Facebook by youth, the situations under which they perceive the accessibility, features and privacy nature of Facebook platform (Debatin et, al. 2009; Wang et al, 2013; Smock, Ellison, Lampe, & Wohn 2011). Yet, few studies were conducted on how these perceptions, in turn, were related with patterns of youth political participation on Facebook. This study tested a model conceptualizing paths linking youth's perceptions about the Facebook features, privacy, and accessibility as well as sharing information to youth online political participation.

In another vein, several literature have found that political interest is a significant factor in political participation studies (Carlisle & Patton, 2013). Political interest is about the volume of attraction of politics to a person. Russo and statin (2017) noted that survival and growth of democracies lies in political interest of the citizen. That is why, Levy et al (2016) concluded that political interest is a regular predictor of political participation among youth. Therefore, an interested citizen interested in politics will pay much attention to issues that relate to issues of collective concern such as public policy, voting and many more. Thus, this affirmation suggest political interest ignite and inspire people specifically in seeking for political information about politics and in discussing politics as a means of conducting their political activities from offline mode to an online scenario (Whiteley, 2005). Furthermore, the widespread and accessibility of social networking sites of Information communication technologies (ICT) nowadays, such as social media, has delivered to the young people more avenues than ever, for finding out about how to discuss and partake in politics (Li and Chan, 2017). Currently, many researches are concerned about knowing the impact of social media on political participation among the younger people, an enquiry stirred by the decline in political interest and political participation among young individuals across developed and developing democratic nations (Bakker and de Vreese, 2011).

Consequently, drawing from the submission of the above literature, Political interest may exert a positive significant effect on youth participation in politics (Brady et al, 1995; Levy et al., 2016). As an attempt to further examined the influence of political interest on the political participation of youth, a study was undertaken to investigate the relationship between Facebook perception, political interest and online political participation among Nigerian youth. However, the main direction of this article is solely to introduce and show the results of the initial analysis of data that was gathered from the field survey to indicate the suitability of the data gathered for structural equation modeling analysis. The fundamental process or assessment of multivariate analysis is through an initial data screening and transformation (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014).The content of this paper is presented in the following order: Section 2 is the presentation of the methods employed in the study, Section 3 contained the finding of the basic screening required for multivariate data analysis and section 4 concludes the paper.

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3 Method

The research centered on online political participation of youth. Specially, the study surveyed the influence of predictors of Facebook perception and political interest on online political participation. The Facebook has renewed the political arena with a forceful revolution. particularly, in emancipating the politically disengaged youth to participate in the political activities such as expressing their unheard views regarding political and social issues of the youth (Rainie et al., 2012), The population of the study comprises undergraduate youth in Kaduna state university in Nigeria (KASU), with a total population of 7,023 (Kaduna State University, 2017). Based on Taro Yamanie's (1967) formula to calculate the sample size and sample size table developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), we arrived at the sample of the study is 378. The quantitative method of research was adopted, and SPSS statistical package was used in screening and cleaning the data. For the purpose of attaining an additional response rate, the sample size was increased by 50 % (Salkind, 1997). As such, 600 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in the five faculties of the university. We used 473 usable questionnaires (representing 79% of the total distributed questionnaires) for the analysis, out of the 529 returned questionnaires after conducting different cleaning process, the total response rate analysis is shown in table 3.1

Table 3.1

Response Rate of the Questionnaire

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Distributed questionnaires	600	100%
Retrieved questionnaires	529	88%
Questionnaire not retrieved	71	12%
Rejected questionnaires	56	9%
Usable questionnaires	473	79%

Thus, the sample adequate for the study and higher than the suggested 30% adequate sample for surveys by Sekaran(2011).

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4. Results and Discussions

This section explains the results of the preliminary findings:

4.1 Non-response Bias Test

A non-response bias test was carried out to examine the condition where a sample of respondents in a study does not respond to a research surveys. Okafor (2012) noted that non-response rate is the inability of researchers to get data from a sample element of the target population. This type of situation leads to occurrence of non-response bias in research. Non response bias problem is a normal experience among researchers (Greener, 2008). Likewise, when the respondents who fills the questionnaires varies substantially and meaningfully from those respondents who did not fill the questionnaire substantially, this also leads to nonresponse bias (Armstrong & Overton, 1977). They suggested for the researchers to employ the method of comparison between the early respondents and the late respondents to determine whether there is a similar ode of answers with non-respondents (Armstrong & Overton, 1977; Miller & Smith, 1983).Basically, the size of non-response rate may essentially display the consistency and quality of the collected data in a research (Okafor, 2012).

This study adopted Miller and Smith's (1983) approach and grouped the respondents into two. Those who responded to the questionnaire within 60 days are grouped as early respondents while those who did not respond until after 60 days are grouped as late respondents. Two hundred and seventy (270) respondents (57%) responded within 60 days while the remaining 203 respondents (43%) responded after 60 days. Also, notwithstanding the high response rate achieved in this study an analysis was conducted between the early and late respondents using the dependent constructs. The researcher then ran an independent samples t-test between the groups and the variable of Online Political Participation (OPP) i.e. the dependent variable to look at the mean statistic of the two groups through its significance level.

The result of independent samples test as shown in Table 2 show that the early respondents were 270 (57%) while the late respondents were the 203 (43%) whom responded to the questionnaire after 60 days from the

questionnaire distribution. From the test we discovered that for both groups (early and late), the mean was 3.19 for early respondents and 3.21 for late respondents. The test also show that the values indicted is insignificant (t= -.368, p>.001).

Table 4.2
T-test Results for Non-Responses Bias

Variable	Group	n	Mean	T	df	Sig
OPP	Early respondent	270	3.19	-.368	471	.713
	Late respondents	203	3.21			

p>.05

In the overall, the results from the table above suggest that participation there was no any significant difference between the two groups. Consequently, it shows that there is no presence of bias in the data collected.

Table 4.3
Missing Data Analysis

Latent Variable	**Total No of Missing Values**
Facebook Perception	7
Online Political Participation	12
Political Interest	3
Total	**22 out of 47773 data points**
Percentage	**0.04%**

4.2 Common Method Bias Test

The nature of empirical studies requires sometimes for the researcher to collect cross-sectional data were the study data consisting of the exogenous data and endogenous data were collected with a single instrument at the same time (Eichhorn, 2014), this same situation is what was applied in this study, the data for this study both the dependent and the independent variables were also obtained with a single instrument, at the same time. This approach is what usually create a common method variance problem. Common method variance (CMV) is a systematic error variance detected among variables through a single method and source (Richardson, Simmering, & Sturman, 2009).In most conditions, respondents found themselves in some form of prejudice as a result of the survey gathering

instrument. That is why scholars have conclude that CMV creates major issues in behavioral and social research, therefore they emphasize the need for examining CMV (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).In response to the suggestion, we also conducted a test to identify if there is variance in the observed value scores. We employed the suggestion of Podsakoff and Organ (1986) and the Harman's single factor (HSF) test was applied to identify if there is a presence of CMV among the variables of the study. This is done through subjecting the data to an exploratory factor analysis of using unrotated factor to fix the number of factors that are necessary to account for the variance in the study variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Researchers can identify the existence of CMV if a significant amount of CMV exists, this is detected when a single factor accounted for most of the covariance in the predictor (independent) and outcome (dependent) variables. In this study, HSF test was conducted on all the items of the variables of this study, the result of the CVM analysis of this study extracted five different factors with a cumulative variance explained of 31.95%. Consequently, this result has revealed that no single factor accounted for the shared covariance in the predictor and criterion variables. Therefore, this study has no problem of shared method bias and no relationships between variables measured could be inflated (Podsakoff et al., 2012)

4.3 Normality Test

The process of data screening in multivariate analysis essentially requires normality test (Hair et al., 2010). Although, Reinartz, Haenlein, and Henseler (2009) noted that researchers do not take data normality test as a fundamental issue in conducting data analysis. For example, an analysis in Smart PLS can be undertaken with non-normally distributed data. However, other researchers have recently emphasized that for achieving a better analysis in Smart PLS, the data should be screened to make it to be approximately normally distributed. In addition, Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle and Mena (2012) also emphasized that a highly skewed data can expand the bootstrapped standard error estimate of the analysis data. One of the recommended in performing normality test is by examining the skewness and kurtosis (Field, 2009; Pallant, 2011; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The examination of skewness and kurtosis is an efficient methods of detecting normality. Hair et al. (2014) recommend that in testing normality of data, the absolute value of skewness and kurtosis of greater than one is indicative of non-normal data. Additionally, Kline (2011) noted that when the value of skewness is greater than 3 and value of kurtosis is greater than ten it is an

indication of normality problem. Therefore, in this study, we used the statistical method of Kurtosis and Skewness test and the Kolmogorov and Shapiro method (Hair et al., 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) to test the normality of data. the results of skewness and kurtosis values are shown in Table 4

Table 4.4

Result of Skewness and Kurtosis Values

Construct	Skewness	Standard Error	Kurtosis	Standard Error
Political Interest	-.396	.112	.280.	.224
Facebook Perception	-.149	.112	-.233	.224
Online Political Participation	.103	.112	-.517	.224

As shown in the table, the skewness value is between -0.396 and 0.103; and the kurtosis value is between -0.517 and 0.-.233 respectively. This confirm that the study data does not violate the statistical assumption normality test.

Additionally, the result of the Kolmogorov- Smirnov and Shapiro -Wilk statistic test revealed that all variables are found to be significant as shown in table (Table 4.5). Pallant (2010) suggest that it is very infrequent to have Kolmogorov- Smirnov with large sample more than 200 which is non-normality. Thus, a significant test does not disclose any departure from normality in the study data (Field, 2009).

Table 4.5

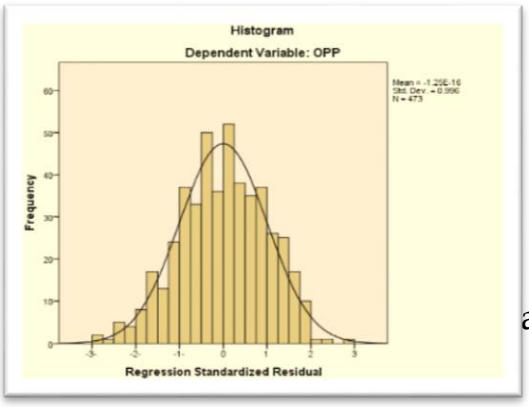
Result of Kolmogorov- Shapiro Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov(a)			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Political Interest	.194	73	.000	.935	73	,004
Facebook Perception	.144	73	.000	.953	73	.004

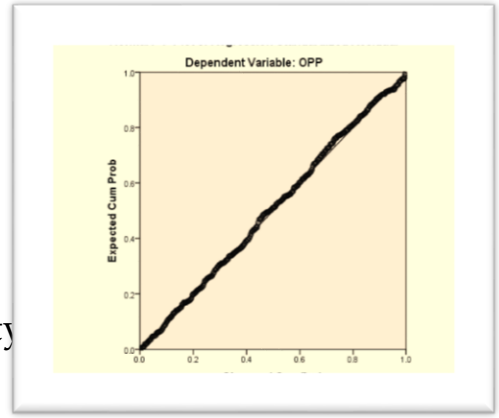
Online	.1		.		4	
Political Participation	19	73	000	.963	73	.000

Similarly, the graphical techniques was also used to assess the normality of the study data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). A histogram was plotted based on the frequency of values, the Standard deviation and the men. The histogram affords the researcher with a pictorial representation of the distribution of frequency that help in checking whether the distribution of the data is normal (Allen, Titsworth & Hunt, 2009). The results of the histogram (Figure 1) displayed a well distributed residual and that the residual fell within the normal curve and the tails also lied on the normal distribution line. This is a demonstration that the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis of all the items are less than one (Hair et al. 201

The following diagram clearly indicated that the data is approximately normally distributed as all the bars on the histogram indicate some level of symmetry



ability



4.4 Multicollinearity Test

The process of data screening in multivariate analysis also requires assessing multicollinearity, which denotes a relationship between more than one independent variable of sufficient magnitude that has the possibility of adversely affecting the regression parameters. The problem of multicollinearity normally arises when variables are too highly correlated in

the correlation matrix (i.e. 0.90 and above) (Pallant, 2011; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The presence of multicollinearity increases the standard error of regression estimates and makes the variables of interest insignificant. In addition, asserted that multicollinearity exists among variables when the variance inflation factor (VIF) is above 5. And the tolerance level is below 0.20 (Hair et al. 2014). Therefore, in this study, an examination of the tolerance and the VIF values for all the exogenous variables in the correlation matrix show that none of the exogenous variables are highly correlated.

Table 4.6
Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factors (VIF)

Constructs	Tolerance	VIF
Facebook Perception	0.952	1.051
Political Interest	0.951	1.051

4.5 Cross Loadings, Convergent Validity Internal Consistency Reliabilities

In PLS-SEM analysis, an assessment of the measurement model is the first step. This step is essentially meant to attest whether the indicators (items) are good and fit to measures the respective constructs. There are two prime criteria for assessing the measurement model (outer model) in PLS-SEM, reliability and validity (Hair et al., 2014; Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011) We, therefore, started with an initial analysis in Smart PLS 3.0 to determine the value of reliability and the value of validity of the model. Specifically, for assessing the internal consistency reliability of the model, we used composite reliability (CR). Conventionally, Cronbach's alpha is used in determining the reliability of measures based on the inter-correlations of the observed indicator variables. This is based on the assumption that the indicators have equal loadings on the construct. Although, the indicators are ranked in accordance with their distinct reliability in PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2014). Thus, this study used CR as a measure of internal reliability since it observes the loading of each indicator differently compared to the Cronbach's Alpha. The acceptable threshold value of composite reliability by researchers should not be below 0.6. (Henseler, Ringle, and Sinkovics 2009), although, composite reliability value of 0.7 and above is also accepted by researcher and even

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most preferred (Hair et al., 2012). In this study the CR value ranges 0.835 to 0.920.

Furthermore, for assessing the convergent validity of the model, we used average variance extracted (AVE). Conventionally, AVE is used in determining the extent to which indicators correlates positively with alternative measures of the same constructs. Again, for the indicators to achieve convergent validity, the AVE value of 0.5 and above is required. In this study, the AVE value ranges from 0.516 to 0.754. However, a number of items were deleted during the confirmatory factor analysis. Hence, analysis of the (outer model) measurement model confirms that the survey items of this study are valid and reliable.

Table 4.7

Cross Loadings, Convergent Validity Internal Consistency Reliabilities

Items	Loadings	Average Variance Extracted AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
OPPO1	0.749	**0.555**	**0.909**	**0.885**
OPPO2	0.746			
OPPO3	0.777			
OPPO4	0.778			
OPPO5	0.762			
OPPO7	0.696			
OPPO8	0.735			
OPPO9	0.712			
OPPP1	0.712	**0.539**	**0.920**	**0.902**
OPPP2	0.763			
OPPP3	0.838			
OPPP4	0.796			
OPPP5	0.791			
OPPP6	0.813			
OPPP7	0.740			
OPPP8	0.615			
OPPP12	0.604			
OPPP13	0.619			
FBPF1	0.681	0.741	0.838	0.565
FBPF2	0.826			
FBPF3	0.790			
FBPF4	0.701			
FBPA1	0.687	0.738	0.836	0.561
FBPA2	0.775			
FBPA3	0.790			

FBPA4	0.741			
FBPF1	0.681	0.741	0.838	0.565
FBPF2	0.826			
FBPF3	0.790			
FBPF4	0.701			
FBPP1	0.726	0.754	0.835	0.505
FBPP2	0.611			
FBPP3	0.734			
FBPP4	0.755			
FBPP5	0.718			
PI1	0.772	0.516	0.841	0.777
PI2	0.705			
PI3	0.743			
PI4	0.756			

5. Conclusion

The reliability and validity of the measures of an outer model are the fundamental statistical assessments needed for conclusion about the nature of the relationship among constructs in an (inner model).Thus, this paper concludes that the missing values and outliers of this study data were well examined to certify that they conform to the assumptions of parametric statistics. Series of tests that include test of nonresponse bias, normality test, test of common method variance (CMV), detecting multicollinearity, assessment of cross-loadings, assessment of convergent validity and internal consistency reliabilities have been conducted in PLS to establish and determine the suitability and fitness of the study data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Hence, the preliminary analysis carried out in this article has provided the opportunity for checking and fulfilling with the statistical assumptions required for running a structural equation modeling analysis. Therefore, it can be concluded that the data was suitable and fit for further multivariate analysis, specifically the assessment of the measurement and structural model as well as post hoc analysis.

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