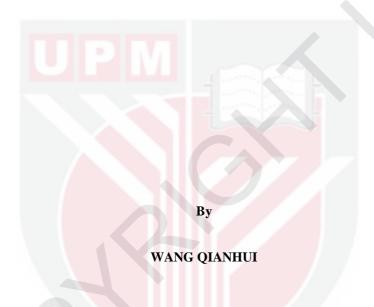


INTENTION TO USE BIG DATA TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION EDUCATORS IN YUNNAN, CHINA



Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science

July 2022

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of University Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

INTENTION TO USE BIG DATA TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION EDUCATORS IN YUNNAN, CHINA

By

WANG QIANHUI

July 2022

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Big data technology has brought a huge impact to the education field. Personalized learning analysis and intelligent decision support based on accurate learning diagnoses made possible with big data have greatly improved the quality of education, optimized educational management, and become vital support for realizing education modernization. However, there are still problems in teachers' use of big data technology in teaching practice, and there is a lack of in-depth theoretical analysis and practical research on exploring the factors influencing teachers' behavioural intentions to use big data technology in teaching. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the factors influencing behavioural intention to use big data technologies in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan based mainly on the UTAUT model and to investigate the main challenges currently perceived by higher education teachers in the field of big data in education.

This quantitative correlational study involved 193 higher education educators in Kunming, Yunnan Province, selected through simple random sampling. The survey questionnaire used in this study was adapted from past related studies. Its content validity was evaluated and confirmed by experts, and it was shown to have good structural validity through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The reliability values of the instrument ranged from 0.887 to 0.904. The study used IBM SPSS version 25.0 to analyse the data.

The results of the independent samples t-test showed that there were no significant differences in the behavioural intention of higher education educators to adopt big data technology in teaching based on gender. The results of the one-way ANOVA showed that there were no significant differences in the behavioural intentions of educators to adopt big data technology in teaching based on both age and teaching experience. In the correlation analysis, except for effort expectation (r (193) =0.134, p=0.063 >0.05),

which was not significantly related to intention to use big data technology in teaching, performance expectation, social influence, and facilitating conditions all had significant relationships with the intention to use.

The results of the multiple linear regression indicated that the combination of the four independent variables contributed significantly (39%; R^2 =0.357) to educators' intention to use big data technology, which implies that the four studied variables predicted the dependent variable. Performance expectancy (β =0.415, p=0.000) was found to be the most significant factor contributing to educators' intention to use big data technology. Therefore, universities should focus on increasing educators' awareness of the benefits as well as the outcomes of using big data technologies in teaching to encourage more educators to adopt big data technology in teaching. However, it is noteworthy that after controlling for other variables, effort expectancy and social influence became insignificant predictors. In addition, the survey revealed that the biggest obstacle to big data in education is the expensive cost.

In summary, this study contributes to the knowledge of big data technology and has major implications for educators' practice of big data technology. On the one hand, the predictive model obtained from this study is likely to be useful as a reference for future research in related fields. On the other hand, based on the factors that influence educators' intentions to use big data technology in teaching and the main barriers that big data mainly faces in the field of education, the study provides recommendations for university administrators and policy makers to motivate educators' intentions to use big data technology in teaching so that intentions can eventually be turned into actual usage behaviours.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

NIAT DAN UNTUK MENGGUNAKAN TEKNOLOGI DATA RAYA DALAM PENGAJARAN DALAM KALANGAN GURU DI INSTITUSI PENDIDIKAN TINGGI DI YUNNAN, CHINA

Oleh

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Teknologi data raya telah membawa impak yang besar kepada bidang pendidikan. Analisis pembelajaran yang diperibadikan dan sokongan keputusan pintar berasaskan diagnosis pembelajaran yang tepat dengan adanya data raya telah meningkatkan kualiti pendidikan, pengurusan pendidikan yang optimum dan menjadi sokongan penting untuk merealisasikan pendidikan moden. Walau bagaimanapun, masih terdapat masalah penggunaan teknologi data raya dalam kalangan guru dalam amalan pengajaran, dan terdapat kekurangan analisis teoritikal dan penyelidikan praktikal yang mendalam untuk meneroka faktor yang mempengaruhi niat tingkah laku guru untuk menggunakan teknologi data raya dalam pengajaran. Oleh itu, tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk meneroka faktor yang mempengaruhi niat tingkah laku untuk menggunakan teknologi data raya dalam pengajaran dalam kalangan pendidik pendidikan tinggi di Yunnan berdasarkan model UTAUT dan untuk menyiasat cabaran utama yang dihadapi pada masa ini oleh guru pendidikan tinggi dalam bidang data raya dalam pendidikan.

Kajian kuantitatif dan korelasi ini melibatkan 193 pendidik pendidikan tinggi di Kunming, Wilayah Yunnan yang dipilih melalui persampelan rawak mudah. Tinjauan melalui soal selidik yang digunakan diadaptasi daripada kajian-kajian lepas yang berkaitan. Kesahan kandungannya dinilai dan disahkan oleh pakar, dan ia terbukti mempunyai kesahan struktur yang baik melalui penerokaan dan pengesahan analisis faktor. Nilai kebolehpercayaan instrumen adalah antara 0.887 hingga 0.904. Kajian menggunakan IBM SPSS versi 25.0 untuk menganalisis data.

Keputusan ujian-t sampel bebas menunjukkan tidak terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan dalam niat tingkah laku pendidik pendidikan tinggi untuk mengguna pakai teknologi data raya dalam pengajaran berdasarkan jantina. Keputusan ANOVA sehala menunjukkan tidak terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan dalam niat tingkah laku pendidik untuk

mengguna pakai teknologi data raya dalam pengajaran berdasarkan kedua-dua factor umur dan pengalaman mengajar. Dalam analisis korelasi, kecuali dalam jangkaan usaha (r(193) = 0.134, p = 0.063 > 0.05), dimana tiada hubungan yang signifikan dengan niat untuk menggunakan teknologi data raya dalam pengajaran, jangkaan prestasi, pengaruh sosial, dan keadaan pemudah cara semuanya mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan niat untuk digunakan.

Keputusan regresi linear berganda menunjukkan bahawa gabungan empat pembolehubah tidak bersandar menyumbang secara signifikan (39%; R^2 = 0.357) kepada niat pendidik untuk menggunakan teknologi data raya, yang membayangkan bahawa empat pembolehubah yang dikaji meramalkan pembolehubah bersandar. Jangkaan prestasi (β = 0.415, p = 0.000) didapati merupakan faktor paling signifikan yang menyumbang kepada hasrat pendidik untuk menggunakan teknologi data raya. Oleh itu, universiti harus memberi tumpuan kepada meningkatkan kesedaran pendidik tentang faedah serta hasil penggunaan teknologi data raya dalam pengajaran untuk menggalakkan lebih ramai pendidik mengguna pakai teknologi data raya dalam pengajaran. Walau bagaimanapun, perlu diperhatikan bahawa selepas mengawal pembolehubah lain, jangkaan usaha dan pengaruh sosial menjadi peramal yang tidak penting. Di samping itu, tinjauan ini mendedahkan bahawa halangan terbesar kepada data raya dalam pendidikan ialah kos yang mahal.

Secara ringkasnya, kajian ini menyumbang kepada pengetahuan teknologi data raya dan mempunyai implikasi besar terhadap amalan teknologi data raya pendidikan. Di satu pihak, model ramalan yang diperoleh daripada kajian ini berkemungkinan berguna sebagai rujukan untuk penyelidikan masa depan dalam bidang berkaitan. Sebaliknya, berdasarkan faktor yang mempengaruhi niat pendidik untuk menggunakan teknologi data raya dalam pengajaran dan halangan utama yang dihadapi oleh data raya terutamanya dalam bidang pendidikan, kajian ini memberikan cadangan kepada pentadbir universiti dan pembuat dasar untuk memotivasikan pendidik, niat untuk menggunakan teknologi data raya dalam pengajaran supaya niat akhirnya boleh diubah menjadi tingkah laku penggunaan sebenar.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMOS Analysis of Moment Structure

AVE Average Extracted Variance

BI Behavioural Intention

CFA Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFI Comparative Fit Index

CR Combined Reliability

EDA Exploratory Data Analysis

EDM Educational Data Mining

EE Effort Expectancy

EFA Exploratory Factor Analysis

FC Facilitating Conditions

GFI Goodness of Fit Index

ICT Information and Communications Technology

IFI Incremental Fit Index

LA Learning Analytics

LAK Learning Analytics & Knowledge

MOOC Massive Open Online Courses

NFI Normed Fit Index

P Level of Significant

PCA Principal Component Analysis

PE Performance Expectancy

RMSEA Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

SI Social Influence

SPOC Small Private Online Course

SPSS Statistical Package for Social Science

TAM Technology Acceptance Model

TAM2 Technology Acceptance Extension Model

TF Tolerance Factor

TLI Tucker Lewis Index

TPB Theory of Planned Behavior

TRA Theory of Reasoned Action

UPM Universiti Putra Malaysia

UTAUT The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology

VIF Variance Inflation Factor

χ 2/df Chi Square/Degrees of Freedom

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The world is currently experiencing rapid advancement in internet technologies such as cloud computing and big data, which are becoming increasingly pervasive in the social and economic spheres of life, changing people's behavioural habits and thinking patterns. The advent of the big data era foreshadows a new technological revolution. Almost all sectors of society have felt big data's wave of influence, and the education field is no exception. The gradual expansion of big data into the education field has triggered reforms and innovations, including education management decision-making innovations, which have strongly encouraged the transformation of education and teaching from traditional empirical decision-making to new data-driven decision-making and greatly incentivised the education field to become data smart (Ru, 2022).

In March 2012, the US government implemented the "Big Data Research and Development Plan," asserting that "Big Data" is "the oil of the future" (Liu, 2022). The plan was meant to achieve the purpose of strengthening homeland security by reforming the educational learning model, accelerating the speed of innovation in the scientific fields, and improving the level of quality in the engineering field, thus bringing profound influence to the future development of science and education (Liu, 2022). In 2015, the State Council of China's "Outline of Action to Promote the Development of Big Data" emphasized exploring the impact of big data with regard to supporting educational changes, improving the quality of education, and promoting educational equity (State Council of China, 2015). On November 17–18, 2018, the 17th International Forum on Educational Technology was successfully held in Central China Normal University, China. Its theme was "Big Data and Educational Intelligence." The conference promoted learning analysis based on big data as an intelligent new educational method (Zhuo et al., 2019). From August 1–2, 2019, the "Big Data Summit on Artificial Intelligence and Education" was held at the National Convention Centre in Beijing, China. The summit was convened to discuss the in-depth application of artificial intelligence, big data, and other technologies in education and accelerated reform of the talent training and educational governance modes in the education sector. The summit emphasised big data technology as a means for talent educators to utilise intelligent teaching to drive personal development. These events have evidently taken place in response to the world's present interest in the application of big data in education as a means to achieve advancements in the modern education industry and as an essential measure to optimize education management and decision-making (Li, 2019).

Since the reform of economics and opening-up of policy in China, Yunnan Province has adhered to the path of development in line this new reality. In less than 20 years, Yunnan Province has become a rapidly developing province in the west (People's Government of Yunnan Province, 2021). In 2016, Yunnan's big data educational development and application centre was established. The Yunnan Provincial Department of Education and the China Mobile Yunnan telecommunications company signed a strategic cooperation

agreement on educational informatization in Yunnan Province. They formed this alliance for the development and application of big data in education and subsequently began steadily promoting educational informatization in Yunnan Province, which led to building the "Internet + Education" demonstration zone (The Yunnan Network of ICT in Education, 2016). In 2017, Yunnan Province supported educators' lesson preparation and student preview services on their cloud platform, synchronized interactive classes across geographical limits, and enabled children's education in remote and poor areas. They were able to receive lectures from excellent educators and experience the improvements made to the applications of the Public Service Platform of Educational Resources and Education Management (The Yunnan Network of ICT in Education, 2018).

In 2018, the Yunnan Educational Equipment Exhibition and Educational Informatization Forum was held in the provincial university centre. By September 30, 2018, Yunnan Telecom's Education Optical Network Project, a key project to build cloud network integration, had covered 90% of schools in Yunnan Province, providing a reliable, advanced, high-capacity, and high-quality basic network for realizing smart education in Yunnan Province (China (Kunming) South Asia Social Public Security Technology Exposition, 2018). In 2019, the educational informatization work conference of Yunnan Province was held in Cangyuan. The premise of "Yunnan Education Modernization 2035" was that Yunnan Province should firmly seize the opportunity of digital Yunnan construction, and the provincial education system should integrate information technology such as big data and artificial intelligence into the education process, build a new way of educating students, and innovate new forms of education service (Yunnan Province Education Department, 2019). Due to the explosion of COVID-19 in early 2020, all face-to-face education has been delayed and approximately 38 million higher education students have had to learn using online resources, mainly massive open online courses (MOOCs) and small online courses (SPOCs). It can be argued that this epidemic has facilitated the use of big data technology in higher education. Complex models can be built using big data technology to analyse data such as learning behaviours, assess learning effectiveness, and diagnose problems in a timely manner (Tian & Zheng, 2017). Educators can effectively identify students' weaknesses and strengths and make adjustments to the curriculum and further improve student performance with the help of big data technology. However, big data technology is still underutilized in the field of education in Yunnan Province (Zhang et al., 2020). Therefore, this study aims to examine the factors which affect the intention to use big data technology among higher education educators in Yunnan.

The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) combines multiple theories such as planned behaviour theory and multiple models such as the technology acceptance model to explore factors affecting user adoption of new technologies (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Venkatesh et al. (2003) proposed the following four main independent variables for inclusion into the UTAUT model: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. These are factors that affect user intentions to use technology and their usage behaviour. They are moderated by gender, age, experience, and voluntariness. Many previous studies have already found potential effects of these variables on the acceptance of new technologies (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Kay, 2006; Lau & Sim, 2008), while others have not found any potential effects of these variables (Oye et al., 2011; Al-Shawi & Al-Wabil, 2013; Alkhasawneh &

Alanazy, 2015). Therefore, the researcher examined statistical differences in higher education educators' intentions to use big data technology in teaching based on their age, gender, and experience. Currently, UTAUT is considered to be a powerful predictive model for technology use, and as a result, many researchers have used, validated, and extended the model (Gupta et al., 2008; Yoo et al., 2012).

1.2 Problem Statement

Compared to traditional teaching, the use of big data technology in teaching can achieve the goals of personalized education, improving teaching effectiveness, optimizing the teaching process, and improving teaching evaluation (Drigas & Leliopoulos, 2014). West (2012) argued that "big data make it possible to mine learning information for insights regarding student performance and learning approaches. Rather than rely on periodic test performance, instructors can analyse what students know and what techniques are most effective for each pupil" (p. 1). Sun (2021) claimed that the gradual integration of big data into the education field has significantly influenced the initiation of reforms and innovations, including developments in education management decisionmaking, which have significantly enhanced the transformation of education and teaching from traditional empirical decision-making to new data-driven decision-making and advanced the education field to become more data-smart. China's Education Modernization 2035 plan states that education reform in the information age should be accelerated and an integrated intelligent teaching, management and service platform should be planned and built in a coordinated manner (Zhou, 2019). Colleges and universities mainly use information technology to realize the collection, storage, integration and sharing of education and teaching data, realize the timeliness, convenience and authenticity of education effect feedback with the help of the platform, and promote the accuracy, science and rationality of education decision-making through data integration and analysis (Allen et al., 2021). In addition, universities should use modern technology to cultivate talent. Therefore, digital education resource sharing should be established and enhanced between colleges and universities (Zhou, 2019). The potential role of big data technology in education can lead to better learning outcomes. Therefore, the State Council of China has been encouraging all universities to adopt big data technologies in their teaching practices to achieve better results.

However, while big data provides opportunities for education, it also presents various challenges (Hanapiyah et al., 2018). Since the application of big data in education in China is still in its early stages of development (Zhang et al., 2020), educators in higher education lack awareness and comprehension of big data technologies in teaching, and they tend to use it incorrectly and insufficiently. For Yunnan Province, although big data has achieved some success in information education, it is still in its infancy and immature, with gaps in ideological understanding, low application levels, and uneven promotion of network security awareness and capabilities (Zhou, 2019). Some college and university administrators and personnel do not understand education informatization in the context of the overall educational situation and teaching needs and are still stuck in the old thinking that "informatization is to allocate a few computers and make some courseware" (Zhou, 2019). Faced with the advent of the big data era, teachers still rely on prior experience to make teaching decisions, which leads to an inability to fully grasp the changes taking place in learning conditions and the associated challenges of teaching

and learning, thus making it difficult for teachers to effectively manage the teaching of their subjects (Shi & Wu, 2022).

The reality of adopting big data technology in Chinese higher education has also encountered a number of barriers related to infrastructure, faculty training programs, institutional policies, technical support, and attitudes toward the use of technology in education. Multiple parties in higher education in Yunnan Province collect data, resulting in data conflicts, and data are not yet available to support educational teaching and learning decisions. Furthermore, the mechanism of dynamic management and declaration and verification of education data is not robust (Zhou, 2019). The lack of information infrastructure construction in Yunnan universities and the lack of multimedia teaching equipment in weak schools (Tian & Zheng, 2017) have led to the difficult task of digital transformation in education. In addition, teachers in Yunnan Province are basically able to apply technology, but the ability to innovate in information technology teaching is still insufficient, and the depth of technology integration in subject teaching is not adequate (Zhou, 2019). As a result, it is impossible to build a mechanism for the common construction and sharing of digital education resources to realize the organic combination of large-scale education and personalized training. As a frontier province, higher education in Yunnan Province suffers from low efficiency, high costs and low levels of achievement. To improve the level and quality of education and eliminate information silos, smart education is the best choice for Yunnan, and big data technology is the smart choice as a foundation for the construction of a smart education system (Tian & Zheng, 2017).

All these issues, in fact, inhibit learning outcomes. Therefore, it is essential to study the concept of technology integration in higher education in Yunnan Province, China, to highlight the factors that influence educators' intentions to use big data technology in teaching. Based on the results of this quantitative study, the researcher provides a suggested solution for higher education institutions in Yunnan Province to address each of the influencing factors that hinder the adoption of big data technology by educators.

It is important to note that research on the educational uses of big data in China currently focuses on basic theories concerning its concepts and characteristics such as its application value and prospects, opportunities, challenges. applications and the innovations supported by the technology. There is particular interest in ideological and political education for undergraduate students (Jiang et al., 2019), but this does not involve the intention of using big data technology in practice. Furthermore, previous big data research has primarily focused on technical attributes such as machine learning or technical algorithms with little consideration given to the intention to use big data technology in practice (Kwon et al., 2019). In addition, although a few studies have focused on intentions to adopt big data technology in organizations, mainly including the public sector and companies (Brünink, 2016; Demoulin & Coussement, 2020; Verma et al., 2018; Sahid et al., 2021; Akintola, 2019; Queiroz & Pereira, 2019; Cabrera-Sánchez & Villarejo-Ramos, 2019), identifying the factors that influence educators' intentions to use big data technology in teaching needs more research.

The previous studies which have focused on intentions to adopt big data technology mainly used the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model and Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The UTAUT model has a much higher ability to explain 70% of technology use intentions compared to TAM. Brünink (2016) also found that before the initial deployment of big data technology, decision makers can assess an organization's level of acceptability by using the UTAUT model, which is well suited to the context of big data technology. Therefore, this research sought to determine which factors impacting the intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education instructors in Yunnan based on UTAUT model. This study also sought to provide a reference for universities and colleges on adopting big data technology to help colleges better prepare for its adoption and encourage the growth of big data education in colleges and universities. Furthermore, this study sought to determine whether gender, age, and teaching experience influence educators' acceptance of big data technologies in Yunnan Province.

1.3 Objectives

This research explored factors that influence the intention of using big data technology among educators in Yunnan higher education. The research used the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) to examine these factors because UTAUT can be used to efficiently determine the factors that predict the intention to use new technology and the behaviour of users of new technology. While exploring these factors, the research considered the current challenges of big data in education for the development of suggestions on adoption of the technology and its effective integration into education by universities and colleges. Specifically, the research objectives were as follows:

- 1. To describe the types of big data applications used in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- 2. To describe the level of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, and intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- 3. To examine if there are statistical differences in higher education educators' intentions to use big data technology in teaching based on their age, gender, and experience.
- 4. To examine the relationship between independent variables (performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions) and the dependent variable (behavioural intention to use big data technology in teaching).

Concerning the fourth objective, there were four sub-objectives:

- a) To examine the relationship between performance expectancy towards behavioural intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- b) To examine the relationship between effort expectancy towards behavioural

- intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- c) To examine the relationship between social influence towards behavioural intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- d) To examine the relationship between facilitating conditions towards behavioural intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- 5. To investigate the factors contributing to the behavioural intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- 6. To investigate the main challenges of big data in education.

1.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study used quantitative methods to explore the factors influencing the intention of educators to use big data at Yunnan University. Based on the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT), four main independent variables were investigated: performance expectancy (PE), effort expectancy (EE), social influence (SI), and facilitating conditions (FC). These four factors helped determine whether the college and university educators could accept the use of big data technology, meaning that they had the intention to use the technology. In addition, variables such as age, experience, and gender were investigated to determine their impacts on the results. According to the above objectives, the study investigated the following research questions:

- 1. What are the types of big data applications used in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan?
- 2. What is the level of performance expectancy among higher education educators in Yunnan?
- 3. What is the level of effort expectancy among higher education educators in Yunnan?
- 4. What is the level of social influence among higher education educators in Yunnan?
- 5. What is the level of facilitating conditions among higher education educators in Yunnan?
- 6. What is the level of intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan?
- 7. Are there statistical differences in higher education educators' intentions to use big data technology in teaching based on their age, gender, and experience?
- 8. What is the relationship between the independent variables and behavioural intention?

- 9. How do performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions affect intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan?
- 10. What are the main challenges of big data in education?

Based on the seventh to the ninth research questions, the following hypotheses were proposed:

- H1o: There is no statistically significant difference in intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan based on gender.
- H1a: There is a statistically significant difference in intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan based on gender.
- H2o: There is no statistically significant difference in intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan based on age.
- H2a: There is a statistically significant difference in intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan based on age.
- H3o: There is no statistically significant difference in intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan based on experience.
- H3a: There is a statistically significant difference in intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan based on experience.
- H4o: There is no significant relationship between performance expectancy and intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- H4a: There is a significant relationship between performance expectancy and intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- H5o: There is no significant relationship between effort expectancy and intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- H5a: There is a significant relationship between effort expectancy and intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- H6o: There is no significant relationship between social influence and intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- H6a: There is a significant relationship between social influence and intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in

Yunnan.

- H7o: There is no significant relationship between facilitating conditions and intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- H7a: There is a significant relationship between facilitating conditions and intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- H8o: Performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions do not predict intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.
- H8a: Performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions predict intention to use big data technology in teaching among higher education educators in Yunnan.

1.5 Significance of Study

So far, few scholars have combed and empirically analysed the influencing factors that affect the intention of high education educators to adopt big data technology. With the advancement of the information age, the application of big data in education is also increasing, which has boosted educational innovation and development. To better integrate big data into higher education and serve higher education better, it is necessary to carry out an in-depth discussion on this. The purpose of this study was to deeply study the factors influencing the intention of university and college educators to adopt big data technology and to discuss the challenges faced by big data when it is applied to education. This study has important theoretical research value and practical significance.

From the perspective of users, this thesis explores the main influencing factors of the intention of educators to use big data technology in higher education, fills existing research gaps in the field of big data, and is of great significance for the theoretical research content of big data technology adoption in universities. Furthermore, based on the results from analyses of the study's survey questionnaire data, the acceptance of big data technology can be better understood. Through this empirical research, the main factors affecting the acceptance of big data technology by educators in higher education were determined and analysed to reach conclusions useful in providing guidance on the use of big data in colleges and universities to help promote the development of big data in the field of education.

1.6 Limitation of Study

The study required a significant amount of time to accomplish the requisite theoretical research, model selection, questionnaire design, and data analysis while striving to be rigorous and innovative. However, due to the limitations of research time and personal ability, there were still some shortcomings.

First, this study was limited by sampling. Because the research scope was limited to university educators and the data collection was restricted by the requirement that the participation of employees be on a voluntary basis, the number of valid samples was relatively small in the end. This may have weakened the representativeness of the sampled group of participants, affecting the accuracy of data analysis. Therefore, whether the research conclusions can be extended to other regions and other schools needs further verification.

The second limitation was the research method. This research mainly adopted the questionnaire survey method to collect research data. When filling out the questionnaire, the respondents could have been affected by many factors, such as emotions, time constraints, or lack of understanding of the meaning of the questions. Authenticity and reliability were thus difficult to control. Although the author conducted a long-term screening after the questionnaires were collected, there were still many questionnaires that were not answered carefully, which could have made the results of the study biased. Furthermore, the inability of positivism to explain how social reality is formed and maintained and how people explain their behaviour and that of others is a limitation of quantitative research (Blaikie, 2007). In this study, because the researcher did not interview educators, it was not possible to gain insight into why their levels of use and attitudes toward big data technology were the way they were. It is thus recommended to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in subsequent studies, which complement each other to improve the accuracy and reliability of the results.

1.7 Definition of Terms

To provide a clear understanding of the research context, some key definitions of terms relevant to the study are provided below:

Big Data

Big data is a high-volume, high-variety, and high-speed data set that requires new forms of processing for analyses to support and enhance decision-making mechanisms and optimize processes (Beyer & Laney, 2012). It is defined by the four dimensions of volume, diversity, accuracy, and speed (Mayer-Schönberger & Cukier, 2013).

Big Data Technology

Big data technology is a collective term for software tools created to extract, process, and analyse data from enormously complex big data sets that could not be handled by traditional data processing software (Osakwe et al., 2020). For this study, big data technology mainly refers to the educators' use of learning analytics and educational data mining technology to analyse massive amounts of data (e.g., behavioural data recording the learning process, evaluation data recording the learning results, etc.) generated on online education platforms (e.g., China University MOOC) to further understand the student learning process and predict student performance. Based on the analysis results of big data technology, educators can adjust and optimize teaching methods, and effectively intervene and personalize education for students.

Higher Education

Higher education is a type of professional talent education based on secondary education. It is a social activity aimed at training specialized talents. It has basic education functions and social functions, of which the core function is education (Zhang, 2000). For this study, higher education included academies, universities, and colleges.

Factor

A factor is a component that contributes to effects or achievements (Cleveland-Marwick, 2015). For this study, factors refer to a combination of various elements that affect the intention of college and university educators to adopt big data technology.

Performance Expectancy

Performance expectancy is the degree to which users perceive that new technology can help them work more efficiently (Venkatesh et al., 2003). For this study, the performance expectancy is inseparable from the belief of educators using big data technology at work in higher education and how big data technology can promote the work of educators.

Effort Expectancy

Effort expectancy refers to the ease with which users perceive the use of new technologies (Venkatesh et al., 2003). In relation to this research, effort expectancy refers to the fact that educators in higher education find it difficult or easy to use big data technology at work.

Social Influence

Social influence is the degree to which the perceptions of important people around the user will affect their use of a new technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003). For this study, social influence refers to people who are important to educators in higher education, such as colleagues and school leaders, who believe they can use big data technology in their work.

Facilitating Conditions

Facilitating conditions relate to the extent to which users perceive the infrastructure supports the use of new technologies (Venkatesh et al., 2003). For this study, facilitating conditions refer to resources such as technical support, technical tools, and related technical knowledge provided by schools to support educators in using big data technology.

Behavioural Intention

Behavioural intention is the degree to which users are willing to use new technologies (Venkatesh et al., 2003). For this study, behavioural intention is the dependent variable, which refers to the willingness of university educators to use big data technology in their work.

1.8 Summary

In sum, the first chapter provided an introduction and the basic background of the study in relation to big data in education from two perspectives: the global environment and Yunnan Province. This was followed by discussions to provide basic understanding of the problem statement, research objectives, research questions, and hypotheses. Finally, the implications, limitations, and definitions of the key terms related to the study were presented. The following chapter provides a review of the relevant literature in more depth.

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