

**Advances in
Digital Technology
and Data-Driven
Business Practices**

Unveiling Bleisure Travellers

**Exploring Novel Dimensions
for Enriching Social
Consumer Engagement
using Big Data Analytics**

Edited by

**Pooja Kansra
Tanveer Kajla
Nripendra Singh**

Unveiling Bleisure Travellers

ADVANCES IN DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND DATA-DRIVEN BUSINESS PRACTICES

Series Editor: Nripendra Singh, Pennsylvania Western University, USA

Digital technology in marketing is dynamic and continually evolving, providing marketers with innovative tools and strategies to connect with audiences in an increasingly digital-centric world. Adopting and adapting to these technologies is essential for staying competitive and effectively reaching target audiences. Businesses that leverage digital marketing effectively are better positioned to connect with their audience, drive business growth, and stay competitive in the digital age. Beyond the technical and ethical, *Advances in Digital Technology and Data-driven Business Practices* exhibits real-world applications of digital marketing and data-driven practices. Through compelling case studies, it demonstrates its efficacy in areas such as market research, competitor scrutiny, and gleaning customer insights, traversing various channels, encompassing the likes of social media, e-commerce, and email marketing.

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Unveiling Bleisure Travellers: Exploring Novel Dimensions for Enriching Social Consumer Engagement Using Big Data Analytics

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Contents

About the Editors	<i>ix</i>
About the Contributors	<i>xi</i>
Preface	<i>xxvii</i>
Chapter 1 From Work to Wanderlust: Delineating the Role of Emotional States in Bleisure Travel <i>Satinder Kumar, Dipti Malhotra and Garima Kathuria</i>	<i>1</i>
Chapter 2 Bleisure Tourism in Kazakhstan: Exploring the Motivations, Experiences, and Cultural Perceptions of Chinese and Russian Travellers <i>Liza Rybina, Tongxin Yu and Sahil Raj</i>	<i>19</i>
Chapter 3 Measuring the Suitability of India as a Bleisure Travel Destination: Understanding the Macroeconomic and Bleisure Traveller Experience Factors <i>Khyati Manchanda, Nidhi Bhatia and Biswajita Parida</i>	<i>31</i>
Chapter 4 Role of Social Media Information and Metrics in Bleisure Travellers' Decision-making for Travel and Hotels: An Analytical Perspective <i>Arjun Mittal, Arun Mittal, Deen Dayal Chaturvedi, Priyank Kumar Singh and Ravinder Rena</i>	<i>45</i>
Chapter 5 Killing Two Birds with One Stone: Systematic Review on Elevating Bleisure Travel Through Big Data Insights <i>Sugandh Arora and Anna Masłoń-Oracz</i>	<i>65</i>
Chapter 6 Optimising Destinations for the Bleisure Traveller: Challenges and Opportunities <i>S. V. Pradeepa, Bina Sarkar, Prabha Singh and Shiba Prasad Mohanty</i>	<i>83</i>

Chapter 7	Bleisure in Kerala: Merging Wellness, Medical Value Travel, and Tourism in God's Own Country	
	<i>Nabanita Choudhury, Riya Ghosh, Sumit Oberoi and Firdous Ahmad Malik</i>	97
Chapter 8	Enhancing the Bleisure Traveler Experiences Through Personalized and Innovative Services	
	<i>Vineeta Kumari, Amjad Imam Ansari, Amrik Singh and Vipin Singh</i>	115
Chapter 9	Leveraging Big Data for Tourism Management: Designing and Implementing an Integrated Information System	
	<i>Ravinder Kaur and Chandni Rani</i>	127
Chapter 10	The Recent Innovations in Technologies to Facilitate Bleisure Travel	
	<i>Narinder Kaur, Shamily Jaggi, Arvind Kumar and Shivani Arora</i>	147
Chapter 11	Adaptive Learning and Collaborative Opportunity: A Case Study Project of Hospitality and Tourism Students in a Sustainable Tourism Resort	
	<i>Ruth Sabina Francis, Sumitha Anantharajah, Tengku Murad Tengku Mokhtar, Amrik Singh and Kalpana Das Sawdesh Ranjan</i>	161
Chapter 12	From Business to Leisure: The Rise and Impact of Bleisure Tourism	
	<i>Parveen Kumar and Chandan Gupta</i>	177
Chapter 13	Harnessing Social Media Analytics for Bleisure Tourism: A Literature-based Exploration	
	<i>Chandrima Chatterjee</i>	191
Chapter 14	Blending Work and Fun: Extracting the Bleisure Experiences from Indian Heritage Hotels	
	<i>Vinay Chittiprolu and Sourya Rongala</i>	207
Chapter 15	The Bleisure Boom: Examining the Dynamics of Blended Travel Experiences in the Indian Context	
	<i>Yashodhan Karulkar, Ayush Trivedi, Himeet Agrawal, Jency Aya and Mahendra Parihar</i>	221

Chapter 16 Cultural and Social Dynamics in Bleisure: A Case Study <i>Shyam Sunder Agrawal, Chandni Keswani and Suraj Kumar Mukti</i>	239
Chapter 17 Leveraging the Applications of Value Co-creation in Bleisure Travel: Insights from Select Case Studies and Pedagogical Approach <i>Rashmita Sharma, Pawan Kumar and Vipin Nadda</i>	259
Chapter 18 Exploring Global Demand for Medical Tourism in India: The Intersection Between Bleisure and Wellness Tourism with Big Data Analytics <i>Amiya Abdul Khadar, Pooja Kansra and Ergunova Olga Titovna</i>	271
Chapter 19 Big Data and Bleisure: Transforming India's Tourism Landscape By 2047 <i>Pavneet Kaur and Binod Kumar Rajak</i>	283
Chapter 20 Exploring the Potential of Big Data Analytics in Enhancing Tourism in Ladakh: Perspectives of Tourism Business Operators <i>Stanzin Padma, Tawheed Nabi and Utkarsh Gupta</i>	293
Chapter 21 Safeguarding Women During Bleisure Travels: Content Analysis of Sexual Harassment Cases <i>Preety Anand and Abhishek Raj</i>	307
Chapter 22 Enhancing Bleisure Tourism: The Role of Social Customer Engagement and Big Data in Shaping Travel Trends <i>Tanusree Chakraborty, Daisy Gohain and V. S. Sharada</i>	321

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Preface

Dear Readers,

Travellers are not confined within the boundaries of work and leisure. Bleisure – the fusion of business and leisure travel – changed the perception of tourism, work–life balance, and customer engagement. Bleisure phenomenon was significant during the post-pandemic period, bringing flexibility in work and travel.

Bleisure travel changed the professional dynamics with technological advancements, such as big data and analytics. The tourism and hospitality sector began to experience change with the emergence of online travel platforms and harnessing big data to understand travel preferences for creating customized immersive experiences. This blend of analysing travel behaviour and tourism trends with technological advancements like big data and predictive analytics led us to compile this edited book, *Unveiling Bleisure Travellers: Exploring Novel Dimensions for Enriching Social Consumer Engagement Using Big Data Analytics*.

As academicians, we felt a sense of responsibility to contribute to the existing literature on tourism analytics through the lens of bleisure tourism. This edited book brought researchers and scholars from the academic community and industry practitioners dealing with bleisure travel through big data to understand the engagement of modern travellers with data-driven practices. The intent was to present a wide array of conceptual, empirical, and application-oriented perspectives to highlight both the opportunities and challenges in this emerging field.

This book is intended for professionals in the tourism and hospitality industry, data scientists, researchers, and students. We have attempted to bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and practical applications by providing relevant insights and tools. We hope it is a valuable resource for academic and industry purposes, encouraging further dialogue and exploration in this field.

We acknowledge with deep gratitude the efforts of all contributors whose diverse perspectives and scholarly work form the backbone of this book. We also thank the reviewers, publisher, and colleagues who supported us at every project stage. Special thanks to our students and mentors, whose curiosity and engagement continually inspired the shaping of this work.

We sincerely hope this book will stimulate meaningful discussion and contribute to future research, policy-making, and innovation in tourism, big data, and consumer engagement.

xxviii *Preface*

We invite you to explore this volume with an open mind and join us in envisioning the exciting possibilities at the intersection of business, leisure, and data intelligence.

We wish you success and hope you enjoy reading the book.

Chapter 1

From Work to Wanderlust: Delineating the Role of Emotional States in Bleisure Travel

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Abstract

Bleisure travel is an emerging form of travel where travelers combine leisure activities with their business trips. Adopting the viewpoint of this transformative travel, the purpose of the study is to examine the impact of bleisure (business and leisure) travel on job performance, particularly focusing on the mediating roles of pleasure, arousal, and dominance (PAD). A theoretical framework based on the PAD theory is used in this study to check job performance. Data from 400 respondents were gathered using a survey approach. SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 24.0 were employed to analyze the responses given. Job performance has been found to be influenced by bleisure travel experiences through PAD approach. More specifically, arousal's mediating role has a stronger impact on job performance. By extending the PAD theory to employee performance, this study illustrates the PAD model's adaptability and applicability in organizational contexts, enhancing its theoretical foundation. Also, the study offers practical insights for marketing and human resource (HR) professionals to develop strategies that improve the work environment. The study introduces the PAD model as a mediator to investigate the influence of bleisure travel (business and leisure) on work performance in a novel way. The integration of tourism, psychology, and organizational behavior principles offers a comprehensive perspective on how leisure activities during business travel contribute to the performance of employees.

Keywords: Bleisure travel experience; job performance; pleasure, arousal, dominance

1. Introduction

The modern era has seen a rise in the globalization of business, and international business travel has become a developing segment of the travel and tourism industry (Cazanova et al., 2014; Ongsakul et al., 2022; Walia et al., 2021). The term “bleisure” was initially introduced by the Future Laboratory (2008) to highlight the blurring lines separating travel for both work and leisure. Bleisure is a new form of travel where individuals combine a leisure journey with their professional trip (*The Economist*, 2019; Tsaui & Tsaui, 2023). Bleisure travel is becoming a popular drift in the post-pandemic period. Likewise, more than half of workers (56%) in organizations with remote work practices are willing to take bleisure trips. This indicates a steady growth in the bleisure market (Expedia, 2022). It involves incorporating sightseeing or leisure activities into business trips, whether before, during, or after work-related engagements (Lichy & McLeay, 2018). In line with Walia et al. (2021), bleisure tourism refers to business travelers who prolong their vacations by engaging in leisure activities whenever possible. Moreover, bleisure includes the following characteristics: (1) it incorporates leisure activities throughout the prolonged period and increases business travel by arriving early or leaving late, and (2) it also entails engaging in social events in between meetings. Business travelers want to learn, challenge themselves, and get away from their problems in addition to performing business. They are also prepared to recompense for leisure activities while on corporate travel (Expedia, 2018).

The bleisure travel industry is expected to develop at a compound annual growth rate of 12.1% between 2023 and 2030, from an estimated USD 933.31 billion in 2022. Blackshaw (2017) discussed the emerging trend of workplaces offering leisure opportunities, highlighting that leisure has turned out to be an essential aspect of employment in modern society. Business travel has different goals and activities from leisure travel. It involves travel for pleasure but has certain commercial objectives, such as broadening a company’s reach, publicizing it, enabling business transactions, and generating chances to boost sales (Walia et al., 2021). Bleisure travelers can acquire resources and advantages, including social connections, social skills, and knowledge, through travel. Traveling allows people to grow personally, enjoy pleasures, build their social network, reduce stress from work or other obligations, and feel happier overall (Ongsakul et al., 2021; Raj & Kajla, 2018; Ye & Xu, 2020).

According to a trend report by Forbes (2022), to better balance work–life, 55% of business travelers intend to extend their business trips. Moreover, bleisure contributes to enhancing employees’ work efficiency (Future Market Insights, 2022). A growing number of professionals are choosing to integrate leisure activities on their business visits, partly due to the expansion of flexible working practices and technological improvements (Morgan, 2022). Since bleisure travel has grown in popularity recently, more consideration is given to serve the demands of business travelers who wish to engage in leisure activities while away from their destination (Ezeuduji, 2024). In a survey conducted by North American business travelers, 84% of participants said that their business traveling affected how well they performed at work (GBTA, 2022). Henceforth, bleisure is seen as an approach to

boost employee enthusiasm (Chen et al., 2016). By increasing the percentage of employees who are ready to travel for business, leisure travel may help a firm by enhancing morale and productivity (Ezeuduji, 2024).

Descriptive studies on bleisure travelers have been conducted by various reputable corporations and journals, including Forbes, Bridgestreet Global Hospitality, Global Business Travel Association, Consumer Trends Report, and Travel Weekly. These studies offer insights into the characteristics, benefits, and economic potential of bleisure travel (Batala & Slevitch, 2024). As indicated by Chung et al. (2020), there is still a dearth of empirical research that focuses specifically on the bleisure travel experience. Business travelers from overseas represent a growing segment within the tourism and travel sector as companies continue to expand internationally in pursuit of novel opportunities (Lichy & McLeay, 2018). Traveling for several purposes, including business, pleasure, entertainment, and education, is preferred by modern tourists, who also want to alter their itinerary while traveling. Adopting the viewpoint of this transformative travel, the research intends to find out how the bleisure (business and leisure) travel impacts job performance, particularly focusing on the mediating roles of PAD. By examining how leisure activities during business trips affect employees, the study aims to uncover new insights into improving job performance.

Although previous studies suggest that bleisure travel positively impacts job performance, it is uncertain whether this effect persists when the mediating roles of PAD are considered. To close this gap, the present study looks into whether the positive relationship between bleisure travel experiences and job performance remains consistent when PAD factors are considered as mediators. By extending the PAD model to employee performance, this study illustrates the PAD model's adaptability and applicability in organizational contexts, enhancing its theoretical foundation. Also, employers can develop strategies to increase employee engagement and productivity by understanding how PAD are the ways in which bleisure travel affects their job performance. Also, the study offers practical insights for marketing and HR professionals to develop strategies that improve the work environment. For example, marketing teams can highlight the advantages of bleisure in their employee value propositions, while HR can design support programs that incorporate bleisure travel, aligning with this innovative concept to boost employee satisfaction and engagement.

2. Theoretical Background and Conceptual Framework

2.1. PAD Theory

The PAD model was first introduced by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). It emphasized the idea that social and facial signals from the environment directly influence an individual's behavior. According to prior study, the three components of the PAD model can help researchers better understand the emotional state of their respondents (Mehrabian, 1996). Pleasure is an emotion that can range from intense pain or suffering to immense happiness or delight (Yang et al., 2020). The other is arousal, a state of mind strongly associated with motivation and passion (Huang

et al., 2017), and the ability to control one's emotions and limit one's behavior, which is characterized as persuasive, independent, and in control, is known as dominance (Hall et al., 2017). The theory of PAD has found applicability in various domains, including travel recommendations (Purwandari et al., 2022), online fashion's emotional branding (Yang et al., 2020), and revisit intention (Kumar et al., 2021).

For two reasons, the PAD theory was incorporated into the bleisure travel framework of this study. First, evaluating how an employee's bleisure travel experiences impact their emotional responses is an appropriate application for the PAD framework. Second, a worker's performance on the job may be impacted by their bleisure travel experiences due to their emotional feelings during those trips.

2.2. Development of Research Hypothesis

2.2.1. The Mediating Role of Pleasure Between Bleisure Travel Experience and Job Performance

The "job-related learning experience" involves participating in leisure activities that promote the acquisition of new skills, such as attending exhibitions or joining community festivals (Huang et al., 2022), and people who truly experience excited feelings during their jobs will experience a sense of satisfaction from being a part of such significant processes and events, which will make them feel pleased, happy, and accomplished (Golparvar & Abedini, 2014). Furthermore, one's social surroundings influence control of one's emotions, especially through interactions with close people (Huang et al., 2017; Kajla et al., 2024). Social experiences are associated with specific relationships, such as those with family, friends, and lovers; individuals in these interactions have the power to influence one another's feelings, and increasing social assistance is necessary to improve job performance since it encourages an individual to work more with pleasure (Alsakarneh et al., 2023; Dixon-Gordon et al., 2015). The primary focus of entertainment is enjoying experience, and it involves pleasure-seeking (Zillmann & Bryant, 1994). When the person understands that they have gained a new understanding or meaning, the entertaining parts could appear as an immediate source of pleasure (Bhate & Hannam, 2014; Savolainen, 2022). Pleasure is a positive emotion that can positively influence job performance (Warholm, 2010). High levels of pleasure inside an organization have a positive effect on job performance, and it is influenced by motivation and a supportive work environment (Bell & Sheridan, 2020; Zaffar, 2018). Research suggests that engaging in leisure activities can reduce stress, increase pleasure, and improve job performance (Wang et al., 2022; Zhao et al., 2020).

H1a. Pleasure acts as a mediator between job-related learning experience and job performance.

H1b. Pleasure acts as a mediator between sociocultural learning experience and job performance.

H1c. Pleasure acts as a mediator between entertainment experience and job performance.

2.2.2. Mediating Role of Arousal Between Bleisure Travel Experience and Job Performance

Arousal is the term used to describe how someone feels when they are experiencing increased stimulation, excitement, or attentiveness (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Individuals' positive emotional sentiments with arousal enhance the learning experience (Kibat et al., 2023), and arousal can influence job performance as personality characteristics can affect a worker's arousal levels, which in turn can affect how well they perform at a job (Maharani, 2023). Employees can remain in the middle-arousal zone, where excellent performance at a job is achieved, by having an increased degree of independence and more interaction with others (Fernet et al., 2013; Johannsen & Zak, 2020). Moreover, a "sociocultural experience" entails engaging with locals while gaining knowledge regarding their traditions and cuisines (Expedia, 2018). The individuals perceive emotions as sociocultural phenomena that are influenced not only by their personality attributes but also by interactions and social contexts (Richards, 2022) and individuals typically perform in groups and inspire one another, which in turn arouses shared feelings or experiences (Raj & Kajla, 2015; Sanchez et al., 2012). The emotional arousal levels of individuals might be influenced by their entertainment experiences (Ji et al., 2013), as these experiences may generate positive and negative emotions, leading to arousal (Hofer & Rieger, 2019). Enjoyable pursuits like sporting events, food exploration, and cultural interaction are all part of the entertainment experience (Batala & Slevitch, 2024; Kajla et al., 2022).

H2a. Arousal acts as a mediating role between job-related learning experience and job performance.

H2b. Arousal acts as a mediating role between sociocultural learning experience and job performance.

H2c. Arousal acts as a mediating role between entertainment experience and job performance.

2.2.3. Dominance as a Mediator Between Bleisure Travel Experience and Job Performance

Dominance reflects a person's sense of control or lack thereof over their surroundings (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). It directly and favorably impacts arousal and pleasure (Ward & Barnes, 2001). Cook et al. (2014) explain the presence of a social dominance paradox that socially dominant people place a high value on private knowledge when asked to make explicit decisions. It affects performance in social learning situations (Pongrácz et al., 2008). An individual's level of dominance might vary depending on the circumstances (Jenks & Ginsburg, 1987); also, people need specialized knowledge and abilities to carry out their job. Therefore, learning relevant to one's profession is essential for success in the workplace (Loon et al., 2012). The dominance effect extends to information learned from any indirect source (Cook et al., 2014). Moreover, Oliver (2008) made an effort

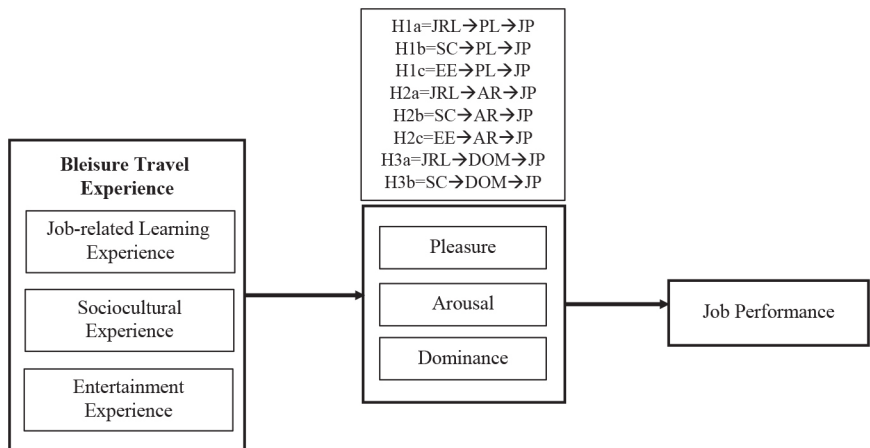


Fig. 1.1. Conceptual Framework.

to expand entertainment by proposing that, in addition to providing people with pleasure, people occasionally use entertainment as a way to reflect on important life issues and control human poignancies. So, it is important to comprehend how entertainment venues affect people’s emotional states (De Nisco & Napolitano, 2006) and there are a group of gratifying factors that can co-occur in entertainment experiences (Oliver & Bartsch, 2010). As per [Elmashhara and Soares \(2019\)](#), there are positive relationships that exist between dominance and entertainment. So, it is theorized that dominance mediates the association between various bleisure travel experiences and performance at job.

H3a. Dominance acts as a mediator between job-related learning experience and job performance.

H3b. Dominance acts as a mediator between sociocultural learning experience and job performance.

H3c. Dominance acts as a mediator between entertainment experience and job performance.

Fig. 1.1 indicates the conceptual model of the study.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data Collection

In compliance with the study objectives, descriptive research was carried out, and the survey method was used to gather primary data. To calculate the sample size, we employed G*Power 3.0. We set the effect size as 0.10 and the necessary power as 0.95 because the model includes a maximum of six predictors pertaining to job performance. A sample size of 146 was determined. The information obtained

by using the snowball sampling approach, the employees in the multinational corporations that hold various roles, comprise our target demographic for this study. Based on previously developed standardized measures, the study questionnaire has been modified, taking into account recommendations from academics and experts in the field. The period of time for gathering the data was November 2023–April 2024. Initially, the study involved 520 employees. Respondents were selected at random from those who previously engaged in bleisure travel for work. In total, 444 questionnaires (response rate: 85.4%) were returned by external mail to the researchers (Table 1.1). An effective response rate of 76.9% ($n = 400$) was achieved by discarding 44 questionnaires due to incomplete responses.

3.2. Measurements

The measurements used in the questionnaire were adapted from well-established scales from earlier research that had good internal consistency. Likert scale was employed to evaluate the bleisure traveller's experience. The measurement items, which included job-related learning experiences, sociocultural experiences, and entertainment experiences, were adapted from previous research. These studies included adaptations of arousal and dominance from Mazaheri et al. (2011),

Table 1.1. Respondents' Basic Information ($N = 400$).

	Variables	N	%
Age	23–32 years old	147	36.8
	33–42 years old	153	38.3
	43–52 years old	78	19.5
	Above 52 years old	22	5.5
Gender	Male	282	71.0
	Female	118	29.0
Job positions	Top managers	254	63.5
	Other lower positions	146	36.5
Education level	Bachelor's degree	186	46.5
	Master's degree	202	50.5
	Doctoral degree	12	3.0
Monthly income	50,000–100,000	305	76.2
	100,000–200,000	119	30.5
	Above 2,00,000	33	8.3
Industry	Hospitality	220	55.0
	Financial service	88	22.0
	Airline	92	23.0

Source: Authors' own creation/work.

pleasure from [Mehrabian and Russell \(1974\)](#), and job performance from [Chen et al. \(2020\)](#).

3.3. Analysis Method

The current study used AMOS 24.0 and structural equation modeling (SEM) to evaluate the recommended research model. SEM is a multivariate analytical technique that allows researchers to simultaneously examine interactions between a variety of latent components ([Hair et al., 2010](#)). Additionally, the mediating role of PAD theory was examined.

4. Results

4.1. Validity and Reliability

The variable's reliability and validity indices are shown in [Table 1.2](#). To assess the dependability of the indicator, we looked at the factor loadings. Second, to ascertain the internal consistency reliability, the composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha were evaluated. Each of the items' factor loadings are more than or equal to the deemed acceptable threshold (0.6), as indicated in [Table 1.2](#) ([Hulland, 1999](#)). Additionally, all of the reliability CR values are higher than 0.7, which indicates that the reliability of internal consistency is sufficient ([Hair et al., 2019](#)). Cronbach's alpha scores for each construct range from 0.794 to 0.919, all of which are higher than test's acceptable cut-off ([Nunnally & Bernstein, 1978](#)). By evaluating AVE (average variance extracted), this study further examined convergent validity. [Fornell and Larcker \(1981\)](#), state that the value of AVE should be 0.50 or greater. The AVE value was discovered to be more than the threshold value of 0.50, ranging from 0.505 to 0.733. As a result, we may say that the scale's validity was convergent. The good fit indices of the measurement model ($\chi^2/df = 3.117$, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.918, goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.846, adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = 0.809, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = 0.905, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.073) were well within the cut-off level of [Hair et al. \(2010\)](#).

4.2. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity between the constructs was validated by analyzing every construct's AVE and comparing it to the squared correlations between the two relevant components. The computation of the discriminant validity for every pair of constructs is shown in [Table 1.3](#). Also, using heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) analysis, we confirmed discriminant validity, shown in [Table 1.4](#).