

Review of: "The Future of Malaysian SMEs in the Digital Economy"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

General comments to the authors

1. **Abstract:** The abstract could benefit from explicitly stating the existing gap in the literature or the specific problem that this paper aims to address. By clearly articulating the research gap, readers will understand the unique contribution of this paper and its relevance in the field. Also, instead of simply mentioning "methodologies," provide a brief summary of the specific approaches or methods that will be discussed in the paper. This will give readers a clearer understanding of the practical aspects that will be explored.
2. **Introduction:** Provide context and relevance (the title and context don't really match): Start the introduction by providing a brief context on the increasing digitization of businesses and the growing importance of the digital economy. Highlight the relevance of the topic for Malaysian SMEs and their potential benefits from embracing digitalization. Instead of using general statements like "over half of the average company's workers utilize Internet-connected devices," provide specific statistics or examples to support the claims. This will add credibility to the statements and make them more impactful. Instead of referencing the OECD report from 2020, try to find more recent and relevant sources that highlight the current state of digital economy adoption by SMEs. This will ensure the information presented is up-to-date and reliable. Nonetheless, the objectives and research questions are clearly stated.
3. The research conducted in this study lacks a clear methodology that adheres to the standards of academic research. The absence of a robust methodology compromises the validity and reliability of the findings. Furthermore, the research fails to highlight the originality or novelty of the study, leaving the reader unaware of any unique contributions made by the research. Moreover, the study lacks an adequate explanation of the present and future situation of SMEs in Malaysia. The absence of a framework specific to Malaysia's context and the failure to utilize relevant literature pertaining to Malaysia's data limits the applicability and relevance of the research.
4. Connect the discussion to the objectives: Begin the section by summarizing the main findings and linking them back to the objectives stated in the introduction. This will provide a clear connection between the research conducted and the intended goals of the study.
5. Provide a comprehensive summary: Rather than simply mentioning several areas that SMEs need to master, provide a more comprehensive summary of the key areas that SMEs should focus on to modernize their businesses and leverage the digital economy. This could include knowledge transfer, technology adoption, innovation, networking, and intellectual capital development.

6. Support statements with specific examples or evidence: Throughout the discussion, include specific examples or evidence from the literature to support the statements being made. This will add credibility to the discussion and enhance the reader's understanding of the topic.