

# University Students' Intentions to Use Slack: An Integrated Approach of TAM and SDT

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## Abstract

This study examines university students' intentions to adopt Slack, a real-time communication platform, by integrating the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). The research focuses on how competence, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use influence students' attitudes and actual system usage. Data were collected from 185 university students at Universitas Negeri Jakarta who used Slack for academic purposes. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis revealed that competence significantly impacts perceived usefulness and ease of use, which in turn positively affect students' attitudes toward using Slack. Additionally, attitudes strongly predict actual system usage. The results indicate that students with higher competence and positive perceptions of Slack's utility and ease of use are more likely to integrate it into their academic activities. This study underscores the importance of intrinsic motivation and user-friendly design in promoting the adoption of digital tools for collaborative learning, offering actionable insights for educators and institutions aiming to enhance academic productivity through technology.

**Keyword:** slack; student; application; self-determination theory; technology acceptance model

## **1. Introduction**

In the context of education, students are vital assets contributing significantly to academic progress and national development. According to the Higher Education Data Center (PDDikti) report in September 2024, 9,690,424 active students were registered under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology (Kemendikisaintek) for the 2023/2024 academic year, marking a 23.06% increase from 7,875,281 students in 2021/2022. This growth underscores the need for enhanced competency development to prepare students for global challenges.

Despite the growing student population, educational institutions often focus on graduation targets, overlooking commitment, satisfaction, and learning quality. This, coupled with competition among institutions, creates challenges in retaining talented students who

seek better opportunities elsewhere. Addressing these issues requires innovative approaches, such as Connectivism, which highlights learning in the digital era through interconnected communities and networks.

Connectivism serves as a framework for leveraging modern communication tools like Slack to enhance student learning experiences. While widely used in team communication, Slack's educational potential remains underexplored in academic literature.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Attitude Toward Using**

According to Davis (1989), Attitude Toward Using is defined as the positive or negative feelings experienced by an individual when faced with a specific behavior. This aligns with Mathieson (1991), who described attitude toward behavior as a user's assessment of their level of interest in using a system (Singasatia et al., 2023).

Ajzen (1991) further emphasized that attitude toward a behavior, such as using a system, is shaped by beliefs about the consequences of that behavior, which subsequently influence an individual's intention to engage in it. Similarly, Taylor (1995) argued that attitude toward using information technology serves as a mediating factor between beliefs about the technology and actual usage behavior, highlighting the critical role of attitude in technology acceptance (Mohanty et al., 2011).

Supporting these perspectives, Agarwal (1998) stated that an individual's attitude toward adopting new technology is significantly influenced by innovation and personal characteristics (Weng et al., 2018). In summary, an individual's attitude toward using a system is shaped by the positive or negative feelings triggered by the behavior, influenced by beliefs about its consequences, and reflects the user's evaluation of the system's appeal, which, in turn, affects their intention to use it.

### **2.2 Competence**

According to Ryan (2000), competence is the feeling of mastery over one's activities, enabling individuals to achieve goals effectively and feel capable in their efforts. Similarly, Bartholomew (2011) stated that competence impacts workplace outcomes, where a supportive environment enhances job performance, reduces stress, and improves well-being.

Building on this perspective, Niemiec (2009) described competence as an individual's capacity to achieve desired results and mastery of tasks. Deci (1985) emphasized that conditions fostering a sense of competence, such as constructive feedback and freedom from negative evaluations, are essential for maintaining intrinsic motivation and promoting personal growth.

Competence plays a vital role in shaping an individual's ability to achieve goals effectively and feel capable in their activities. A supportive environment, characterized by constructive feedback and freedom from negative evaluations, not only boosts performance and workplace well-being but also sustains intrinsic motivation and facilitates personal development.

### **2.3 Perceived Ease of Use**

According to Davis (1989), ease of use refers to the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system will be effortless. This is supported by Hwang (2011), who emphasized that ease of use indicates how simple it is for users to operate and utilize a technology.

In line with this, Venkatesh (2003) stated that ease of use reflects how accessible and straightforward the process of user interaction with a technology is. Based on these expert perspectives, ease of use represents the level at which individuals believe a system can be used without significant effort. It highlights the simplicity and accessibility of user interactions with technology, playing a crucial role in enhancing user experience and influencing technology adoption.

### **2.4 Perceived Ease of Use**

According to Davis (1989), perceived usefulness is the extent to which an individual believes that using a particular system can enhance their job performance. This aligns with Igbaria (1990), who defined perceived usefulness as the degree to which a user believes that using a specific application will improve their productivity.

Reinforcing these views, Bagozzi (2002) described perceived usefulness as the level of confidence a user has that a particular technology will enhance their job performance. Similarly, Kumar (2014) stated that perceived usefulness reflects how strongly users believe that a technology will provide benefits for their tasks and improve overall performance.

Based on these perspectives, perceived usefulness refers to the belief that using a specific system or technology can boost work performance and productivity. These views underscore the significance of user confidence in the benefits of a technology, which greatly influences its effective use and the achievement of desired outcomes. This highlights the importance of perceived usefulness in driving technology adoption and effective utilization.

### **2.5 Actual System Use**

According to Davis (1989), actual system use is defined as the extent to which users employ an information system in their daily operations. This view aligns with Bhattacharjee (2001), who stated that actual system use refers to the frequency and duration of system utilization, reflecting users' behavioral intentions in practice.

Moore (2001) further emphasized that actual system use is characterized by the direct engagement of individuals with a system, representing their acceptance and satisfaction with the technology. Based on these perspectives, actual system use reflects how extensively users utilize an information system in their daily activities, demonstrated through the frequency and duration of use. It also illustrates users' behavioral intentions in practice and indicates their level of acceptance and satisfaction with the technology.

### **3. Material and Method**

This chapter describes the research methodology adopted to explore university students' intentions to use Slack as a digital communication platform. The study incorporates an integration of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to investigate the role of competence, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and their impact on actual system use. This section provides a detailed explanation of the research design, sample selection, data collection, instruments, procedures, and data analysis to ensure reproducibility and reliability of the findings.

#### **3.1 Design Study**

The study utilized a quantitative research design to examine the proposed hypotheses. This design was selected due to its ability to test theoretical constructs and analyze relationships among variables. The focus of the study is on university students at Universitas Negeri Jakarta (UNJ) who actively use Slack in their academic activities. The research investigates how key constructs, such as competence, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use, influence their attitudes and actual usage of the system.

The target population includes students from various faculties who have experience using Slack for academic collaboration, such as group discussions, task management, and project coordination. The inclusion criterion was the active use of Slack for at least one semester to ensure that participants had sufficient familiarity with the platform's features. The study specifically addressed millennial and Gen Z students, who are more likely to adopt and engage with digital platforms in their daily academic operations.

Data were collected via a structured online survey, consisting of questions designed to measure the constructs based on validated scales from previous studies. The survey was distributed through online channels, including university communication platforms and social media groups, to maximize outreach and participation.

#### **3.2 Population and Sample**

The population of this study consisted of all students enrolled at Universitas Negeri Jakarta (UNJ) who have used Slack for academic purposes. The sampling technique employed was simple random sampling, which ensures that each student within the target population had an equal probability of selection. This method was chosen to minimize selection bias and improve the generalizability of the findings.

A sample size of 185 respondents was determined, following the guidelines for SEM analysis, which recommend a minimum ratio of 10 respondents per variable. The sample was deemed sufficient to provide reliable statistical estimates and represent the larger student population. The demographic profile of the respondents was also recorded to capture variations across different academic disciplines and levels of study.

### **3.3 Procedure**

The study began with the development and validation of the questionnaire through a pilot test involving 30 students who met the inclusion criteria. Feedback from the pilot test was used to refine the clarity and reliability of the survey items.

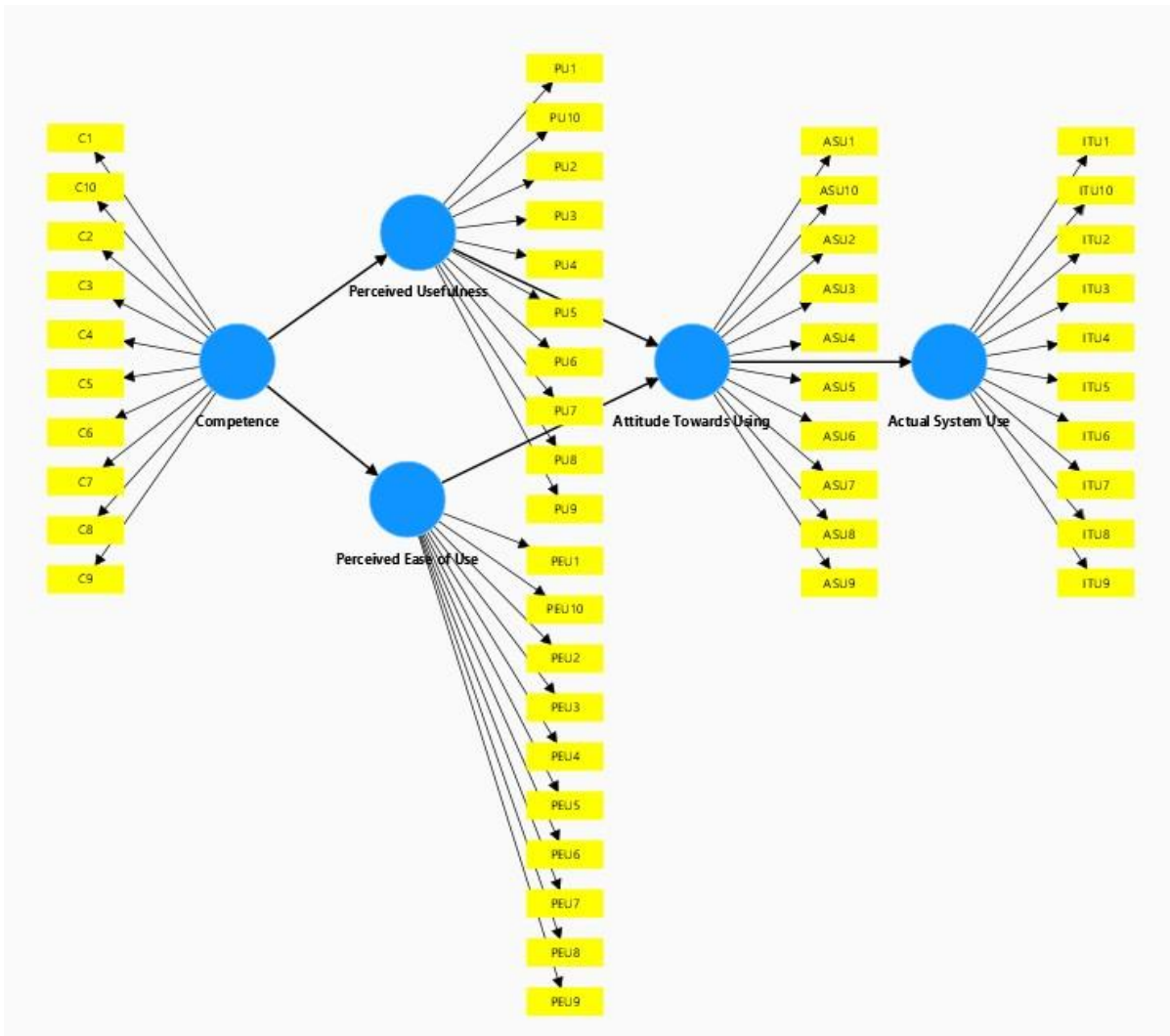
The main survey was distributed via digital platforms, including WhatsApp groups and email lists of student organizations. Participants were given a two-week window to complete the survey, ensuring flexibility and convenience for respondents. Data collection occurred during the academic semester to capture students' active engagement with Slack.

Ethical considerations were addressed by informing participants about the study's objectives, ensuring the confidentiality of their responses, and obtaining informed consent prior to participation.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The data collected from the survey were subjected to a rigorous analysis process using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 3.0 software. SEM was chosen for its capability to simultaneously examine multiple relationships among variables and test the proposed hypotheses.

The findings from the data analysis were interpreted to understand the factors influencing students' intentions to use Slack and their actual system usage. The results were also compared with previous studies to highlight consistencies and differences.



**Figure 1.** Research Model

**4. Result**

There are 3 stages in the measurement model, and the first is to analyze internal consistency. Second, evaluate the validity of the construct. Furthermore, the final step is to determine discriminant validity. The internal consistency value is obtained by assessing Cronbach alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) values, as shown in Table 2. The recommended value to meet good reliability is above 0.7.

**Table 1.** Outer Loading

	<b>Outer loadings</b>
<b>ASU1 &lt;- Actual System Use</b>	<b>0.791</b>
<b>ASU10 &lt;- Actual System Use</b>	<b>0.86</b>

<b>ASU2 &lt;- Actual System Use</b>	0.804
<b>ASU3 &lt;- Actual System Use</b>	0.853
<b>ASU4 &lt;- Actual System Use</b>	0.779
<b>ASU5 &lt;- Actual System Use</b>	0.733
<b>ASU6 &lt;- Actual System Use</b>	0.857
<b>ASU7 &lt;- Actual System Use</b>	0.88
<b>ASU8 &lt;- Actual System Use</b>	0.757
<b>ASU9 &lt;- Actual System Use</b>	0.764
<b>C1 &lt;- Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.766
<b>C10 &lt;- Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.784
<b>C2 &lt;- Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.898
<b>C3 &lt;- Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.803
<b>C4 &lt;- Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.747
<b>C5 &lt;- Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.832
<b>C6 &lt;- Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.723
<b>C7 &lt;- Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.766
<b>C8 &lt;- Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.756
<b>C9 &lt;- Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.777
<b>ATU1 &lt;- Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.808
<b>ATU10 &lt;- Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.837
<b>ATU2 &lt;- Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.81
<b>ATU3 &lt;- Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.806
<b>ATU4 &lt;- Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.771
<b>ATU5 &lt;- Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.764
<b>ATU6 &lt;- Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.838
<b>ATU7 &lt;- Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.861

<b>ATU8 &lt;- Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.808
<b>ATU9 &lt;- Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.77
<b>PEU1 &lt;- Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.796
<b>PEU10 &lt;- Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.793
<b>PEU2 &lt;- Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.824
<b>PEU3 &lt;- Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.812
<b>PEU4 &lt;- Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.79
<b>PEU5 &lt;- Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.762
<b>PEU6 &lt;- Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.805
<b>PEU7 &lt;- Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.835
<b>PEU8 &lt;- Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.81
<b>PEU9 &lt;- Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.784
<b>PU1 &lt;- Competence</b>	0.835
<b>PU10 &lt;- Competence</b>	0.841
<b>PU2 &lt;- Competence</b>	0.82
<b>PU3 &lt;- Competence</b>	0.815
<b>PU4 &lt;- Competence</b>	0.787
<b>PU5 &lt;- Competence</b>	0.794
<b>PU6 &lt;- Competence</b>	0.841
<b>PU7 &lt;- Competence</b>	0.821
<b>PU8 &lt;- Competence</b>	0.798
<b>PU9 &lt;- Competence</b>	0.831

**Table 2.** R Square

	<b>R-square</b>
<b>Actual System Use</b>	0.855
<b>Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.784

<b>Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.987
<b>Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.878

**Table 3.** Composite Reability

	<b>Composite reliability (rho_a)</b>	<b>Average variance extracted (AVE)</b>
<b>Actual System Use</b>	0.943	0.655
<b>Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.942	0.652
<b>Competence</b>	0.98	0.67
<b>Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.994	0.619
<b>Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.961	0.642

**Table 4.** Cronbach's Alpha

	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>
<b>Actual System Use</b>	0.941
<b>Attitude Towards Using</b>	0.941
<b>Competence</b>	0.946
<b>Perceived Ease of Use</b>	0.933
<b>Perceived Usefulness</b>	0.939

## 5. Discussion

This study demonstrates that the adoption of Slack as a digital communication platform for academic purposes among university students is influenced by several factors, aligning with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). The findings highlight the critical role of perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived usefulness (PU) in shaping students' attitudes and actual usage of the platform.

Previous research has consistently indicated that PEOU is one of the most influential constructs in technology acceptance, extending beyond the education sector to other fields, such as business and public administration. This study reaffirms that students are more likely to adopt Slack when they perceive it as intuitive, easy to navigate, and requiring minimal effort to operate. Moreover, the seamless functionality of Slack enhances students' ability to communicate, collaborate, and manage academic tasks effectively, thus reinforcing its perceived usefulness.

The integration of competence as a motivational factor, as suggested by Self-Determination Theory, provides additional insights. Competence significantly impacts students' perceptions of both usefulness and ease of use. Students who feel confident in their ability to use Slack are more likely to recognize its benefits and experience fewer barriers in utilizing its features. This aligns with earlier findings that intrinsic motivation, supported by a sense of mastery, plays a pivotal role in the adoption of digital tools.

The study also underscores the importance of fostering positive attitudes toward Slack to encourage its continued use. Attitude serves as a mediating factor between students' perceptions (PEOU and PU) and their actual usage behavior. A positive attitude, driven by favorable experiences and outcomes, translates into higher engagement with the platform for academic purposes.

In summary, this study provides robust evidence that the acceptance and usage of Slack are shaped by the interplay between ease of use, perceived usefulness, and competence. These findings highlight the necessity for educators and institutions to consider these factors when implementing digital tools to enhance learning experiences. By addressing usability concerns and supporting students' competence through training and constructive feedback, the likelihood of successful technology adoption can be significantly increased.

## **6. Conclusion, Implication, and Recommendation**

This study makes a significant theoretical contribution, particularly within the framework of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT), by exploring university students' intentions to adopt Slack for academic purposes. The findings demonstrate that perceived ease of use (PEOU) is the most influential factor in shaping students' attitudes and intentions to use the platform. Competence, as an intrinsic motivational factor, strongly affects perceptions of usefulness and ease of use, reinforcing the importance of intrinsic motivation in technology adoption. Notably, perceived usefulness (PU) positively impacts students' attitudes, which subsequently drive actual usage behavior. These findings emphasize the interconnected roles of usability, perceived benefits, and user confidence in adopting and using digital communication tools in academic contexts.

The results of this study have both theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical perspective, the integration of TAM and SDT provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing technology adoption, particularly in educational settings. By incorporating intrinsic motivational constructs like competence, this research expands the applicability of TAM in explaining students' technology acceptance behavior.

Practically, the findings suggest that institutions aiming to implement digital tools like Slack should prioritize user-friendly designs and ensure that students are adequately trained to use such platforms effectively. Providing supportive environments, including constructive feedback and intuitive interfaces, can foster a sense of competence and enhance students' positive perceptions, leading to higher engagement and sustained usage.

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be made for educational institutions and developers of digital platforms. Design platforms with simple, intuitive interfaces to minimize the effort required for students to learn and use the tools. Features

such as clear navigation, responsive performance, and compatibility with various devices should be prioritized. Offer training sessions and resources that enable students to become proficient in using digital tools. Providing accessible tutorials and on-demand technical support can bolster user confidence and competence. Highlight the tangible benefits of using digital platforms, such as improved productivity, better task management, and enhanced collaboration. Communicating these advantages through success stories or demonstrations can strengthen students' motivation to adopt and use the tools. Regularly collect feedback from students about their experiences with the platform to identify areas for improvement. Implementing updates based on user feedback will ensure the platform remains aligned with users' evolving needs. By addressing these recommendations, educational institutions and developers can foster greater acceptance and effective use of digital tools, ultimately enhancing the learning experience for students.

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## 8. Appendix (if any)

Variable	Indicator	Statement
Competence	User Experience	1. I feel confident using Slack for academic tasks. 2. I am capable of using all Slack features for collaboration.
	Technical Skills	1. I have adequate skills to manage tasks on Slack. 2. I feel comfortable with Slack's settings and configurations.
	Feature Usage	1. I know how to use all the necessary Slack features for collaboration. 2. I rely on Slack to manage various projects.
	Usage Effectiveness	1. Using Slack helps me save time in completing tasks. 2. Slack makes it easier for me to perform group assignments.
Perceived Usefulness	Skill Improvement	1. My skills in using Slack have improved after frequent use. 2. Slack enhances my collaboration abilities.
	Productivity Improvement	1. Slack increases my productivity in collaboration. 2. Using Slack helps me complete tasks faster.
	Project Management	1. Slack helps me manage projects and tasks more effectively. 2. I feel Slack makes my time management more organized.
	Ease of Communication	1. Slack simplifies communication with team members. 2. Using Slack speeds up information exchange within the team.
	Data Storage	1. Slack allows me to easily store and access important data. 2. I feel comfortable with Slack's file storage.
	Feature Accessibility	1. Slack provides features that can be accessed anytime. 2. I find Slack's features easy to access and use on various

		devices.
Perceived Ease of Use	Ease of Access	1. I find it easy to access Slack from my device. 2. Slack is easy to understand and use for new users.
	User Interface	1. Slack's interface is intuitive and easy to use. 2. I feel comfortable with Slack's layout and navigation.
	Feature Availability	1. All features I need are easily available on Slack. 2. I can access all Slack features with just a few clicks.
	User Experience	1. Using Slack is an enjoyable experience for me. 2. I experience no issues using Slack for collaboration.
	System Responsiveness	1. Slack works quickly without technical interruptions. 2. Slack provides a smooth experience without lag or technical problems.
Attitude Toward Using	Positive Attitude	1. I enjoy using Slack for academic activities. 2. I am happy using Slack as a tool for team collaboration.
	Suitability to Needs	1. Slack perfectly meets my needs for collaboration. 2. Slack fulfills all my communication needs for academic projects.
	Impact on Productivity	1. Using Slack improves my productivity within the team. 2. I feel more productive when using Slack to manage tasks.
	User Satisfaction	1. I am satisfied with my experience using Slack. 2. Slack makes it easier for me to interact with my team and lecturers.
	Preference for Slack	1. I prefer using Slack over other applications for group work. 2. I would recommend Slack to my friends.
Actual System Use	Frequency of Use	1. I use Slack daily for academic activities. 2. I often open Slack to

		communicate with my teammates.
	Usage Intensity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I spend more than 30 minutes daily on Slack.</li> <li>2. I frequently use Slack for discussions and file sharing in projects.</li> </ol>
	Duration of Use	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I use Slack for several hours weekly for various activities.</li> <li>2. My Slack usage sessions are quite long each time.</li> </ol>
	Variety of Use	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I use Slack for multiple activities, such as discussions, file sharing, and scheduling.</li> <li>2. I utilize Slack for different projects.</li> </ol>
	Consistency of Use	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I consistently use Slack whenever I work in a team.</li> <li>2. My Slack usage remains stable across collaborative activities.</li> </ol>