



The influence of personal motivation on using social TV: A Uses and Gratifications Approach

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Abstract. The aim of this paper is to highlight the impact of viewers' personal motivation to watch online social TV in general by exploring 1) how different it is from the traditional motivation of television viewing, and 2) how viewers learn about the content. The researcher utilizes the Uses and Gratifications framework, the social ability, and usability factors to identify the personal motives that influence viewers' use of social TV and different channels, together with the sources and relationships that facilitate participation among the users of social TV. The researcher employed a comparative and experimental approach to measure the impact of personal motivations on using the social TV. The study indicated that the Uses and Gratifications framework plays a key role in promoting motivations such as relaxation, daily routine, access to information, learning, time, entertainment, escape from reality, and the search for new friends. In addition, sociability and usability are important factors that influence viewers' personal motivation to use social TV.

Keywords: Social TV, Uses and gratifications, Social media, Motivation, Sociability, and Usability.

1. Introduction

Social TV (STV) refers to television supported through social media. This type of content increases communication and social interaction associated with it (Shin, 2016). In addition, STV provides many features not available in traditional television such as voice communication, instant messaging, steering, direct echo, TV recommendations, viewing rates and content classification such as TV conferences (Bondad-Brown, Rice, & Pearce, 2012); thus, resulting in a deepening participation and interaction through STV due to the direct availability of media content. Along with this availability, the social communication features enhance interaction between viewers which add to their experience because of the ability of these features to help viewers find content that they want to watch and communicate and interact with others while watching programs directly (Habes et al., 2018). According to Shin (2016), most viewers communicate with their friends nowadays via chat and Twitter, and share content by posting or commenting. With the development of social TV systems via various social media channels such as YouTube, Amazon, Live Facebook, Twitter, and others, it has forced Internet broadcasters, traditional television stations, and advertisers to develop new models of social interaction among viewers according to their needs and personal motivations (Al-Emran & Salloum, 2017; Bondad-Brown et al., 2012; Mohammed Habes, Alghizzawi, Khalaf, Salloum, & Ghani, 2018; S. A. Salloum, Al-Emran, Monem, & Shaalan, 2017; S. A. Salloum, Al-Emran, & Shaalan, 2016, 2017a; S. A. Salloum, AlHamad, Al-Emran, & Shaalan, 2018).

Various studies show that the degree of interaction between people and a new medium (social media) comes from their experience with them - how they feel, think and interact with them - a strong indicator of the use and diversity of needs and motives (Bondad-Brown et al., 2012; Calder, Malthouse, & Schaedel, 2009; Mhamdi, Al-Emran, & Salloum, 2018; S. A. Salloum, Al-Emran, Abdallah, & Shaalan, 2017; S. A. Salloum, Al-Emran, Monem, & Shaalan, 2018; S. A. Salloum, Al-Emran, & Shaalan, 2017b; S. A. Salloum, Mhamdi, Al-Emran, & Shaalan, 2017). According to Shin, Hwang, and Choo (2013), there are encouraging factors in the evolution of the STV concept and increasing users' personal motivations such as ease of use

and social use. Ease of use is primarily related to the methods used by viewers to use STV as an auxiliary and alternative to traditional television.

2. Literature review

Reviewing the literature is an essential step in conducting research studies (Al-Emran, 2015; Al-Emran, Mezhuyev, & Kamaludin, 2018; Al-Emran, Zaza, & Shaalan, 2015; Al-Saedi, Al-Emran, Abusham, & El_Rahman, 2019; Malik & Al-Emran, 2018; S. A. Salloum & Al-Emran, 2018). An individual's need to belong is the main motivation for the formation and maintenance of relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The sense of belonging and meeting the needs of the individual through communication with others is the main motivation for the use of social networking sites such as Facebook and YouTube, and thus can be an effective means to deal with the feelings of individuals and their personal motives (Mohammed Habes, Alghizzawi, et al., 2018; Mohammed Habes, Salloum, et al., 2018; S. A. Salloum, Al-Emran, & Shaalan, 2018; S. A. Salloum & Shaalan, 2018a, 2018b; Seidman, 2013). When studying users' personal motivation to watch traditional television, these motivations are created and categorized in relation to television personalities or leisure time. But with the advent of STV within the social media revolution (Shin, 2016), these motivations have evolved among social media users and they have enhanced their social media drivers' motivation to share their experiences on social networking platforms (Al-Qaysi, Mohamad-Nordin, & Al-Emran, 2018; Bondad-Brown et al., 2012). As well as it does not affect the motives for the way Carte and active participation by which we seek to use the media, but also affect the need and gratifications potential media effects as people expect, as well as the composition of expectations about the content of STV (Calder et al., 2009).

Most studies related to the Use and Gratifications framework have rich stocks and extensive information on people's personal motives to use new media in STV (Phua, Jin, & Kim, 2017; Quinn, 2016; Shin et al., 2013). According to Papacharissi and Rubin (2000), there are five personal motives of viewers to use new media (news and chat, personal assistance, search for information, comfort, and entertainment). Some studies also noted that users use the social TV in order to gain the perceived benefits of self-interest and utility by the ease of communication via the Internet (Oh & Syn, 2015). Liao, Liu, and Pi (2011) used the expectancy theory to determine the main factors that stimulate users of modern media, including STV which found that the investment of time in the publication of articles and making friends were the main reasons to communicate with friends and acquaintances. For people who watch videos on YouTube and their participation, especially in traditional news and comedy, it was found that these people are mostly motivated by entertainment, expression of emotions, and the search for both information and friends (Alghizzawi, Salloum, & Habes, 2018; Beheshti-kashi & Makki, 2013; M. Habes, Alghizzawi, Salloum, & Ahmad, 2018; S. A. Salloum, Al-Emran, Shaalan, & Tarhini, 2019; S. A. S. Salloum & Shaalan, 2018). However, little is known about the motivations of personal viewers to watch online STV in general in terms of how different it is from the traditional motivations of television viewing and how these viewers learn about the online content. Thus, this study uses the Uses and Gratifications framework along with factors of social ability and usability to identify the personal motives that influence the use of STV, and how different channels, sources, and relationships facilitate participation among users of STV.

3. Uses and Gratifications with STV

Social TV is an emerging new technology mediator that supports social interaction, recommendations, and evaluations by reviewing interactive participation among the audience and incorporating them into text or voice chats, or even video conferences (Shin, 2016). According to Khalil (1995), the Uses and Gratification theory explains users' reasons for using media, where the media and public audience are active recipients of the media i.e. individuals are not passive recipients of the media, but actively consume the content based on their specific needs. Among the motives for users to use social media include searching for companions, relaxing, learning things, as a form of escape, out of habit, or for enjoyment (Khalil, 1995). Therefore, these elements are reviewed as measurement factors in this study. Galan, Lawley, and Clements (2015) added that the needs of users or the audience in using media content will determine the content consumed as each user has different needs. It has been found that leisure and relaxation are the foremost reasons for users to use STV (Bondad-Brown et al., 2012). The effects of gratification obtained through the personal use of social media technology were also investigated. It turns out that most studies merged individuals' needs as motivations to use STV. Mathew, Guru, Mahadevaswamy, and Devanoor (2018) classified the motivations of individuals in using social media technology into five major classes: the need for social interaction, to ease tension, to fulfill influential or emotional needs, to address cognitive needs, and achieve self-integration. This study determined that

users of social media have specific needs where the media message can be related to the STV channel. Gunter and Svennevig (1987) pointed out that the differences in motivations for using media are ritual or utilitarian. The motivation and gratification obtained from using social media are outlined in Figure 1. These gratifications are also as listed below:

- **Personal Identity:** for example, the promotion of values and the adoption of behavior.
- **Information:** obtaining knowledge and understanding from digital media.
- **Social Interaction:** where digital media is considered an effective means of expressing opinions and dialogue with people in this day and age.
- **Entertainment:** or what is known as self-entertainment, which is to escape the pressures of real life by living virtually in the search for self.

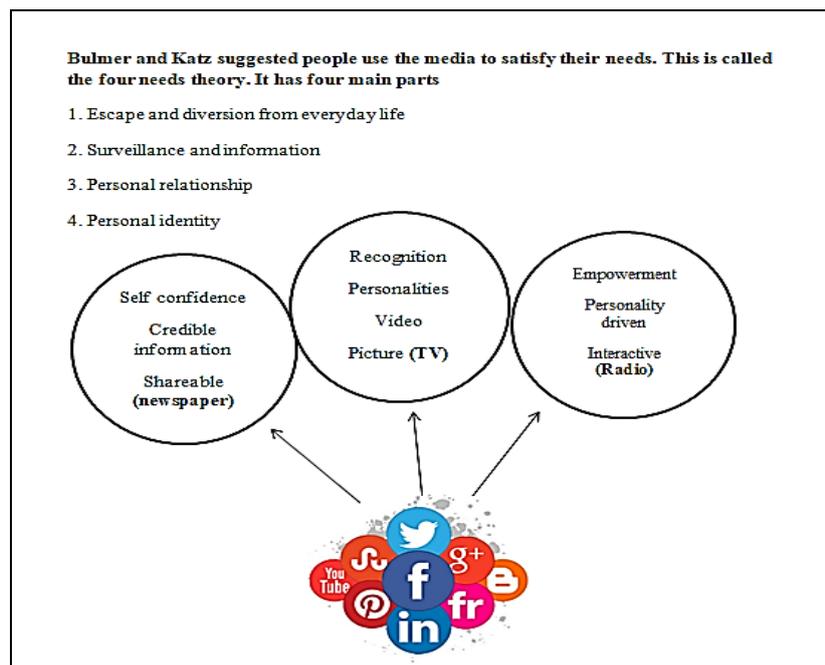


Figure 1. Uses and gratifications by digital media and its influence on audience (mmitcham-rowell, 2015)

Figure 1 shows the uses and gratifications that users get from social media (STV) and the influence of this media usage on the audience in replacing traditional media (mmitcham-rowell, 2015). Many of the assumptions lie in the Uses and Gratifications framework. People are considered active participants who choose the content of their media intentionally and are affected by personal media gratification and personal motivation. There are also social and psychological characteristics, construction and community groups, social and personal relations, and personal mediation in communication which affect users' behavior (Bondad-Brown et al., 2012; Wang, 2014). Social media competes with other channels for users' choice, attention, and use. Additionally, people's choices do impact the media and its influences. Thus, the two bases of the Uses and Gratifications framework are the motives and activity of the audience itself (Alghizzawi, Ghani, et al., 2018; Alghizzawi, Salloum, et al., 2018; Mohammed Habes, Salloum, et al., 2018; S. A. Salloum, Maqableh, Mhamdi, Al Kurdi, & Shaalan, 2018; S. A. Salloum, Mhamdi, Al Kurdi, & Shaalan, 2018; Shin, 2011).

4. Sociability and Usability

Users' social interaction and personal motivation in this technology-driven environment depend on their interaction with technology (i.e., sociability) of these (usability). Although the possibility of use is concerned primarily with how individuals learn to interact with these means, a set of definitions and scientific methods can also explain this phenomenon (Shin, 2016). Sociability is closely linked to the ability to use and can be considered as a new type of employment. It also varies considerably with ease of use (usability). Meanwhile, ease of use (usability) is fundamentally how users interact with modern technology (M. Habes, Alghizzawi, et al., 2018; Koh, Kim, Butler, & Bock, 2007; S. A. S. Salloum & Shaalan,

2018). By applying social ability and usability on STV, the term ‘use’ can be interpreted as the way STV is used as a television aid. Creating and sending messages and communicating with other users are examples of the use of STV, and serve as part of people’s personal motivations to use social television (Koh et al., 2007). An Increased number of researchers have studied the factors that influence people’s social interaction, such as their motivations to use social media in general and STV in particular (Shin, 2016). Many researchers have studied the factors influencing people’s motives for social interaction through STV using the factors of sociability and usability (Kang, Shin, & Gong, 2016; Shin, 2013, 2016). Some studies have examined the role of personal motivators in terms of users’ social behavior, its relationship to usability, and the way in which these factors affect the motives for use and the consequent needs of social TV users (Beheshti-kashi & Makki, 2013; Torrez-Riley, 2011; Wang, 2014). Therefore, sociability and usability are factors that influence the personal motivations behind the use of social television and social media in general.

5. Motivation

Most studies have pointed out that motivation not only affects the active and selective way in which audience seek to use social media, but also people’s Uses and Gratifications, expected potential media effects, as well as the public expectations of social media (STV) uses and gratifications (Beheshti-kashi & Makki, 2013; Khan, 2017; S. A. Salloum et al., 2017). Previous studies have identified a range of personal motivations for using modern media which include relaxation, daily routines, access to information, learning, time, entertainment, escape from reality, and the search for new friends (Bondad-Brown et al., 2012; Guo & Chan-Olmsted, 2015; S. A. Salloum, Al-Emran, & Shaalan, 2018; Wang, 2014). With regards to the drivers of social television usage, Lin (2001) found in his study on the relationship between usage of the Internet and user motivation that the entertainment factor is less important compared to the motives of learning and searching for information and interaction as well as the users’ motivation for activity and other specific forms of use, such as intent to watch (Bondad-Brown et al., 2012; Mohammed Habes, Alghizzawi, et al., 2018). Previous studies have shown that video platforms such as YouTube, live streaming, Twitter and traditional TV share most of the users’ motivations such as entertainment, information, personal communication and leisure time. However, because STV is connected to the Internet and its online applications, there are additional personal motives associated with platforms connected to the Internet such as convenience, accessibility, social interaction, and viewing options (Mohammed Habes, Alghizzawi, et al., 2018; Kim, Lee, Shin, & Yang, 2017; Shin, 2011). An international online report on Twitch users posited that motivational analyses help viewers discover interactions across live-streaming social platforms and serve users’ need for a sense of community, new people, entertainment, information search, social interaction, and the need for experience (Hilvert-Bruce, Neill, Sjöblom, & Hamari, 2018). The personal motivations obtained from using social media (live-stream) are depicted in Figure 2.

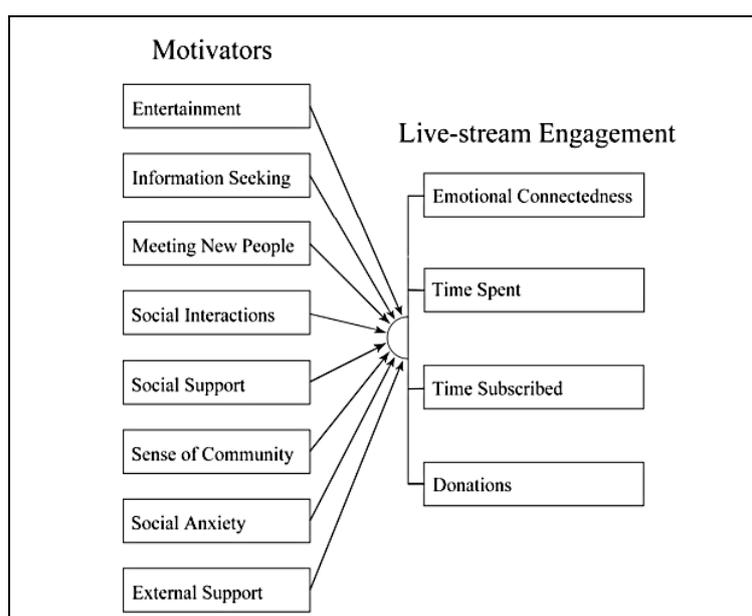


Figure2. Personal motivation obtained from using social media live-stream (Hilvert-Bruce et al., 2018)

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

Information technologies have become essential elements in facilitating our daily lives (Al-Emran, Alkhouday, Mezhuyev, & Al-Emran, 2019; Al-Emran, Mezhuyev, Kamaludin, & AlSinani, 2018; Al-Emran & Shaalan, 2017; Al Emran & Shaalan, 2014). Social media as one of such technologies has changed the way of interaction and communication (Al-Qaysi & Al-Emran, 2017; Alshurideh, Salloum, Al Kurdi, & Al-Emran, 2019). The personal motivations of users affect the use of social media in general and the use of social television (STV) directly (Beheshti-kashi & Makki, 2013; Bondad-Brown et al., 2012; Galan et al., 2015; Guo & Chan-Olmsted, 2015; M. Habes, Alghizzawi, et al., 2018; Mohammed Habes, Alghizzawi, et al., 2018; Hilvert-Bruce et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2017; Koh et al., 2007; Mathew et al., 2018; S. A. Salloum, Al-Emran, & Shaalan, 2018; S. A. S. Salloum & Shaalan, 2018; Shin, 2011; Shin et al., 2013; Torrez-Riley, 2011; Wang, 2014). The Uses and Gratifications theory plays a key role in promoting these motivations and their diversity. Some of the users' most important personal motives that affect the use of STV include relaxation, daily routine, access to information, learning, time, entertainment, escape from reality, and the search for new friends; thus, personal motives help viewers discover interactions across social live-streaming platforms and serve users' need for a sense of community, need to meet new people, entertainment, information search, social interaction, and experience. The sense of belonging needed by individuals that are met through communication with others is the main motivation for the use of STV. It does not only affect the motives for users' active participation in using the media but also affect the potential needs and gratifications expected by people as well as the composition of expectations about the content of STV. Additionally, the degree of interaction between people and a new medium (social media) comes from their experience with them - how they feel, think and interact with them - serves as a strong indicator of the use and diversity of needs and motives. Finally, sociability and usability are found to be factors that influence personal motivations to use social television and social media in general.

6.2 Study Recommendations

Most viewers nowadays communicate with their friends via chat, Twitter, and content sharing parallel to the development of social TV systems via social media means such as YouTube, Amazon, Live Facebook, Twitter, and others (Shin, 2016). Therefore, the researcher recommends the introduction of new motivations to help to shed light on how the public views social TV content. In addition to the motives of direct social relations through participation in the sharing of clips, links or content in general, a new strategy should be adopted to understand the recipe for social media success. The study should include analysis on users' and content providers' motivations for social media and the environment in which the technology is used to address the problems faced by users who do not have sufficient skills to search for social media content. In addition, the Uses and Gratifications framework should be highlighted in relation to users' demographic variables to achieve a balance in the classification of the audiences' personal motives. Future studies should also continue to study users' motivations to use social networks and social TV sites to share and view media especially as these sites allow users to download and access multiple types of content at once (e.g. videos, photos, music, chat). This may also have implications on their personal motivation to use social television.

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