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Meng-Hsiang Hsu Shih-Wei Tien Hsien-Cheng Lin Chun-Ming Chang

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# Understanding the roles of cultural differences and socio-economic status in social media continuance intention

Meng-Hsiang Hsu

*National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology,  
Kaohsiung, Taiwan, Republic of China*

Shih-Wei Tien

*College of Communication, National Cheng Chi University,  
Taipei city, Taiwan, Republic of China*

Hsien-Cheng Lin

*PhD Programs in Management, National Kaohsiung First University of  
Science and Technology, Kaohsiung City, Taiwan, Republic of China, and*

Chun-Ming Chang

*Department of Tourism Information, Aletheia University,  
New Taipei City, Taiwan, Republic of China*

## Abstract

**Purpose** – Drawing upon the literature of Uses and Gratifications (U&G) Theory, the purpose of this paper is to propose that entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation are the motivational factors affecting continuance intention of social media. This paper further investigates the moderating effects of cultural difference and socio-economic status on the link between these motivational factors and continuance intention.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Data collected from the 493 active users of Facebook in five countries (Australia, Austria, Japan, Taiwan, and the USA) were used to test the proposed model. Partial least squares method was used to assess the relationships in the model and the subgroup analysis method was employed as well to examine the moderating roles of cultural difference and socio-economic status.

**Findings** – Information seeking exerts stronger effect on continuance intention for users from individualistic cultures, while socialization, and self-presentation has stronger influence on continuance intention for users from collective cultures. Entertainment has stronger influence on continuance for high educated users, whereas self-presentation has stronger influence on continuance intention for users with lower level of education. Finally, the effect of entertainment, information seeking on continuance intention is stronger for users with higher level of income, while self-presentation has stronger influence on continuance intention for users with lower level of income.

**Originality/value** – This study is one of first studies to extend the research context of U&G Theory from adoption of social media to continuance intention of social media. This study is also the first to investigate the moderating roles of cultural difference and socio-economic statuses in social media usage behavior simultaneously.

**Keywords** Cross-cultural issues, Social networking (e.g. Facebook, second life), Cross-national study, Social network analysis

**Paper type** Research paper



## Introduction

Social media, as enabled by the widespread diffusion of high-speed internet, has become a popular method of communication that allows users to generate and exchange

information with others (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). According to a recent survey, Facebook, one of the most popular social media, has more than 500 million active users and about 30 billion pieces of content are posted on it each month (Glynn *et al.*, 2012). Despite the popularity of social media, researchers argue that the eventual success of an information system (IS) depends on its continuity of use (Bhattacharjee, 2011). Since the internet makes it easier for users to switch from a social media to another one providing similar services, it is then important to identify what may drive users' decision to use social media continuously, hereafter referred to as the "continuance intention for social media," or more simply the "continuance intention."

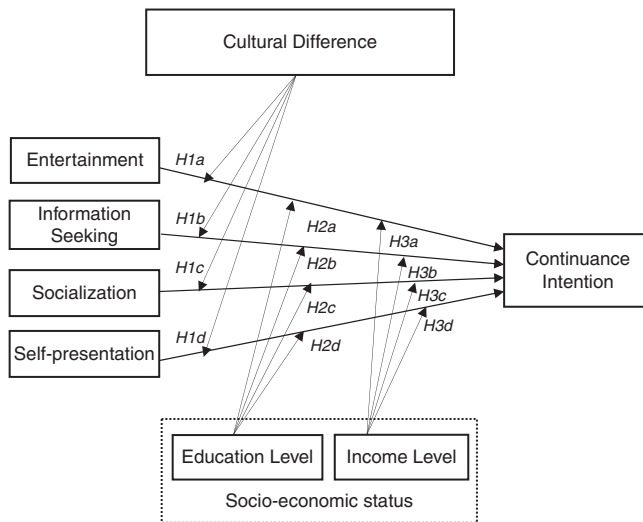
According to economic exchange theory, people are more likely to behave by rational self-interest (Constant *et al.*, 1994; Hsu *et al.*, 2007). Similarly, prior literature argues that users generally seek to fulfill their needs through media usage (Luo *et al.*, 2011). In this sense, the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) Theory is considered as a useful approach to understand the determinants of the continuance intention for social media, since it is widely used to explain user's motivations for media usage over the internet (e.g. Chiu and Huang, 2014; Luo *et al.*, 2011). Hence, U&G theory is used as the theoretical base to identify the antecedents of continuance intention. In this study, entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation are considered as the social media usage motivations, following Lee and Ma (2012) and Seidman (2013).

However, the theoretical models of user behavior are not universally applicable. This is because each country or region has its unique cultural characteristics (Wallace *et al.*, 2013; Srite and Karahanna, 2006; Kaye and Little, 1996). The cultural incongruence, in turn, will impact users' activities (Vasalou *et al.*, 2010). Similarly, Furner and George (2012) postulate that the cultural differences may influence the users' motivations for using social media. Additionally, socio-economic status is considered as an important factor that may moderate the relationship between the motivations and gratifications of users (Rosengren, 1974). Researchers have also found that socio-economic status plays a vital role in shaping IS usage (e.g. Hsieh *et al.*, 2008). Based on the above arguments, we consider that cultural difference and socio-economic status of the users may moderate the influences of motivations on behavioral intention. However, few studies utilizing the U&G theory have been conducted to test the moderating effects of cultural difference and socio-economic status simultaneously. In order fill this knowledge gap, we aim to test the moderating effects of cultural difference (collectivism and individualism) and socio-economic status (education and income) on the relationship between the continuance intention and its motivational factors (i.e. entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation).

This study is organized as follows. First, we review the existing literature of U&G theory, cultural difference and socio-economic status. Second, we present our conceptual model, research hypotheses, methodology, and data analysis. Finally, we discuss the implications of research findings for the management of social media.

### **Theoretical background and research model**

Figure 1 presents the research model for this study. In the model, entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation are treated as the determinants of the continuance intention for social media. The model also proposes that cultural difference and socio-economic status (education and income) will moderate the link between the continuance intention and its antecedents. The remainder of this section will define the constructs and develop the hypotheses presented in the model.



**Figure 1.**  
Research model

### *The determinants of the continuance intention*

U&G theory is a time-honored media use theory that is helpful in explaining users' motivations toward a specific social media use (Xu *et al.*, 2009). U&G theory asserts that users are motivated to select or continue to use a media based on their needs or use satisfaction or gratifications (Barton, 2009; Papacharissi and Rubin, 2000; Sangwan, 2005). U&G theory has been widely employed to understand the motivations in the contexts of traditional media (e.g. newspapers, radios, and telephones) (Luo *et al.*, 2011). Recently, U&G theory has been used to explain the motivations of interactive media usage (e.g. internet commutation technologies, and social media) (Luo *et al.*, 2011). For example, Jung *et al.* (2007) adopt U&G theory to explain individual's motivations and interpersonal self-presentation strategies about the social media. Building on U&G theory, Dunne *et al.* (2010) employ the qualitative approach to explore why young people tend to participate in social media. Likewise, several studies have used U&G theory to better understand the individuals' motivations for using social media (Coursaris *et al.*, 2013; Chiu and Huang, 2014). Thus, we believe that U&G theory provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding the determinants of the continuance intention for social media.

U&G theory proposes five categories of uses gratifications, including cognitive, affective, personal integrative, social integrative, and tension release needs (Katz *et al.*, 1973; Sangwan, 2005). Cognitive needs refer to the desire for information or knowledge acquisition, while affective needs are the desire for pleasure, entertainment, and aesthetics (Sangwan, 2005). Personal integrative needs refer to the desire to appear credible, to be perceived confident, and have high self-esteem, whereas social interactive needs are the desire that users want to be part of a group which is related to sense of belonging (Sangwan, 2005). Finally, tension release is related to the desire for escape from problems and routines (Sangwan, 2005). Based on the perspective of U&G theory, recent literature has found that users' motivations to use social media can be identified as entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation (e.g. Lee and Ma, 2012; Seidman, 2013). Thus, we

propose that entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation are the factors regarding users' motivations that may impact users' continuance intention for social media.

Entertainment refers to the extent to which users can obtain entertaining and escaping pressure through social media usage (Ko *et al.*, 2005; Lee and Ma, 2012; Luo *et al.*, 2011). This motivation can be attributed to the ability of social media to satisfy users' affective desire. Information seeking, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which users can access relevant and timely information in the social media (Lee and Ma, 2012). This value can be considered as users' cognitive needs. Socialization refers to users' desire to satisfy social integrative needs by using social media (Lee and Ma, 2012). That is, users tend to use social media to strengthen social ties with others. Finally, self-presentation is the desire that users tend to enhance their identity by disclosing their personal information, such as photographs and profile information, in social media (Seidman, 2013). This motivation is similar to personal integrative needs.

While past literature has found that entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation are the motivations guiding IS usage, including social media usage. Studies investigating the factors affecting users' intention to use social media continuously are far more uncommon. Hence, this study aims to test the relationships between these motivations and users' intention to use social media continuously. In addition, previous literature argues that cultural difference and socio-economic status may impact the link between perceived benefits and users' behavior (e.g. Kim *et al.*, 2011; Hsieh *et al.*, 2008). Thus, it is important to examine the roles of cultural difference and socio-economic status on the link between motivational factors and the continuance intention for social media.

#### *The moderating role of cultural difference*

Hofstede (1980) defines culture as the characteristics of a particular group of people who share common values, moral standards, a written and spoken language, customs, and lifestyles. In general, culture can be divided into two types based on people's perceptions of the relationship between individuals and society, including individualism and collectivism (Triandis, 1989; Shaaban and Conrad, 2013). The individualism emphasizes independence, individual goals, and self-reliance, while collectivism emphasizes collective achievement, group goals, and interdependence (Triandis, 1989). That is, people from individualistic cultures such as western countries prefer to act as individuals rather than as a member of a group, while people from collectivist cultures such as eastern countries generally consider themselves as a part of a group (Kim *et al.*, 2011). Thus, compared to the people from collective cultures, people from individualistic cultures will take their personal perspective in their actions and decisions (Hofstede, 1991; Kankanhallia *et al.*, 2004). Previous studies have highlighted that cultural difference is a vital factor that may influence a person's behavior in the online communication environment. (Gevorgyan and Manucharova, 2009; Pfeil *et al.*, 2006). Thus we believe that cultural difference will play a moderating role in the link between the motivational factors and the continuance intention.

Previous studies state that individualists can achieve greater relaxation through the release of emotion than collectivists, because they generally tend to increase self-stimulation and self-satisfaction (Lee and Wohn, 2012). In the study of Kim *et al.* (2011), the findings show that entertainment motivation was rated significantly higher for American students compared to Korean students. Hence, we may expect

that individualists will be more likely to view social media as a means for obtaining pleasure than collectivists:

*H1a.* Entertainment will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users from individualistic cultures than for users from collective cultures.

Information seeking is the action that people tend to seek information to resolve a specific problem. Generally speaking, collectivists tend to seek information based on collective interests rather than individual needs (Gevorgyan and Manucharova, 2009), while individualists usually express their opinions in order to interact with others (Pfeil *et al.*, 2006). Chau *et al.*'s (2002) study also finds that individualists are more likely to use social media to seek and obtain information than collectivists due to the greater level of self-awareness. Thus, we may propose the following hypothesis:

*H1b.* Information seeking will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users from individualistic cultures than for users from collective cultures.

Moreover, collectivists usually regard themselves as active participants in the community because they tend to build and maintain interpersonal relationships (Kim *et al.*, 2011). Conversely, individualists believe that their behaviors are independent (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Kim *et al.* (2011) provide some evidence that students in Korean use social media to obtain emotional support, while students in the USA use social media to seek information and entertainment. Therefore, we may expect socialization will exert higher effect on continuance intention in collective cultures:

*H1c.* Socialization will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users from collective cultures than for users from individualistic cultures.

In addition, people from collectivistic cultures tend to establish and maintain relationships with others and thus they are sensitive to in-group and out-group boundary (Yoon, 2009). In such societies, people will behave to main social harmony and will tend to protect themselves by not disclosing their personal information (Lowry *et al.*, 2011). However, people from individualistic cultures have a stronger self-awareness which is displayed through personal favors, needs, and rights (Triandis, 1989). In such societies, people are less concerned about the disclosure of private information (Lowry *et al.*, 2011). Previous studies also found that people in the collectivistic cultures tend to express information in implicit, abstract, and indirect way, while people in the individualistic cultures usually express information in direct and explicit way (Kim *et al.*, 2011). Thus, we may expect that social presentation will have higher effect on continuance intention in collectivistic cultures:

*H1d.* Self-representation will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users from individualistic cultures than for users from collective cultures.

#### *The moderating role of socio-economic status*

Socio-economic status is commonly conceptualized as the social standing or class of an individual or group (Adler *et al.*, 1994). Prior IS literature argue that social economic conditions, such as education and personal income, profoundly influence the use of communication technology (Hsieh *et al.*, 2008; Huffman *et al.*, 2013) and continued use of an IS (Jung *et al.*, 2007). For example, Hargittai (2008) finds that people who have college degree or above are more likely to use social media than those with a high school degree, indicating that education is a vital factor that will impact users' usage behavior of social media. On the other hand, a study by Lenhart *et al.* (2010) reports that

individuals with higher level of income have greater opportunities to use computer. This implies that personal income may affect users' access to social media usage and thus impacts the experience of social media use as well. According to the above arguments, we may propose that education and income are the two factors regarding socio-economic status that may moderate the relationship between motivational factors and the continuance intention for social media.

Braun (1993) argues that the people with a higher level of education and income are more likely to spend time and money on leisure activities than those with lower level of education and income. Similarly, Allen and Hatchett (1986) also find that people with higher level of education and income tend to have more access to entertainment media. Accordingly, we may propose that users with higher school education and income will tend to have more access to social media for entertaining and escaping pressure. Thus:

*H2a.* Entertainment will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users with higher level of education than for users with lower level of education.

*H3a.* Entertainment will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users with higher level of income than for users with lower level of income.

In general, people with higher socio-economic status are in an advantageous position to utilize an IS to seek and obtain information (Hsieh *et al.*, 2008). In other words, those individuals with higher socio-economic status can obtain richer and useful information than those with lower socio-economic status. Thus, we may expect that higher level of education and income will enable users to use social media to seek information:

*H2b.* Information seeking will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users with higher level of education than for users with lower level of education.

*H3b.* Information seeking will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users with higher level of income than for users with lower level of income.

As mentioned above, a major purpose for people to use social media is to build and main their social relationships. Prior literature argues that socio-economic status is a key factor determining the use of social media (Fehr and Gächter, 2000). In general, people who are characterized by socio-economic advantage are more familiar with communication technology such a social media related to socio-economic disadvantage (Hsieh *et al.*, 2008). This implies that socialization becomes a key motivation for users with higher level of socio-economic status to use social media. This leads to the following hypothesis:

*H2c.* Socialization will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users with higher level of education than for users with lower level of education.

*H3c.* Socialization will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users with higher level of income than for users with lower level of income.

Generally speaking, people would like to be seen as the ones with higher level of socio-economic status. When they are unable to reach such socio-economic level they expected, they will exhibit their best abilities to enable others to believe that they are the person possessing higher socio-economic status (Jones and Pittman, 1982). This implies that users with lower level of socio-economic status may tend to enable others to believe that they are important. Thus, they may enhance their personal

recognition by disclosing personal information. That is, self-presentation becomes a major motivation for users with lower level of socio-economic status to use social media. This leads to the following hypotheses:

*H2d.* Self-presentation will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users with lower level of education than for users with higher level of education.

*H3d.* Self-presentation will have a stronger influence on continuance intention for users with lower level of income than for users with higher level of income.

## Methodology

### *Measurement development*

The measures of this study were derived from previous published studies. Items for measuring entertainment were adapted from Lee and Ma (2012), while scales used to measure information seeking were adapted from Lu *et al.* (2010). Socialization measures were adapted from Lu *et al.* (2010), Lee and Ma (2012), and Smock *et al.* (2011), whereas self-presentation measures were adapted from Ko *et al.* (2005) and Smock *et al.* (2011). Finally, items for measuring continuance intention were adapted from Bhattacharjee (2001), Ko *et al.* (2005), and Mathieson (1991). In order to conduct the survey in both eastern countries (e.g. Japan and Taiwan) and western countries (e.g. Australia, Austria, and USA), the English items were translated into Japanese and Chinese. Then the professional translators and native speakers were invited to identify any ambiguously worded questions. The survey questionnaire were measured using a five-point Likert Scale with anchors ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The items of questionnaire are listed in Appendix.

### *Data collection*

The current research targets subjects are all active users of Facebook in Australia, Austria, Japan, Taiwan, and the USA. Facebook was selected because it is a well-known social media and prior literature has used the users of Facebook as their respondents (e.g. Lin and Lu, 2011). Based on above, this study believes that users of Facebook are suited to be the respondents of this study.

Online and printed questionnaires were used to gather data simultaneously. First, this study posted the messages about questionnaires on the web sites of Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Math.com, and a number of bulletin board systems in five countries (i.e. Australia, Austria, Japan, Taiwan, and USA). Active Facebook users were invited to support this survey. The returned questionnaires were initially screened for usability and reliability; 440 responses were found to be complete and valid. In addition, printed questionnaires were sent by post to 78 active Facebook users to request their participation as well. In total, 68 questionnaires were returned and 15 invalidated questionnaires were removed, resulting in a total of 53 complete questionnaires. In sum, 493 complete and valid questionnaires were collected for data analysis. Table I lists the demographic information for all the respondents.

### **Data analysis**

Based on Anderson and Gerbing (1988), this study used the two-step approach to conduct data analysis. The measurement model was first examined and then the structural model was assessed. In this study, partial least squares (PLS) was employed



Measure	Items	Frequency	%	Social media continuance intention
Gender	Male	267	54.2	
	Female	226	45.2	
Age	~19	106	21.5	
	20-29	274	55.5	
	30-39	56	11.3	
	> 39	57	11.7	
Education	Junior school or less	22	4.4	
	High school	110	22.3	
	Some College	42	8.5	
	Bachelor's degree	201	40.7	
	Graduate degree	118	23.9	
Personal annual income	~10,000 USD	303	61.4	
	10,000-24,999 USD	94	19.0	
	25,000-49,999 USD	57	11.6	
	> 50,000 USD	39	8.0	
Citizenship	Eastern/collectivism country (Japan, and Taiwan)	390	79.1	
	Western/individualism states (Australia, Austria, and the USA)	103	20.8	
Day of week of Facebook use	~1	29	5.9	
	2-4	68	13.7	
	5-6	56	11.5	
	Almost every day	340	68.9	
Hour of day of Facebook use	~1	172	34.8	
	2-7	256	51.9	
	8-15	27	5.5	
	> 15	38	7.8	
Month of using Facebook experiences	~6	56	11.3	
	7-12	81	16.4	
	13-24	170	34.4	
	25-36	115	23.4	
	> 37	71	14.5	

**Note:** The number of subjects = 493

**Table I.**  
Demographics

to carry out data analysis, because it place minimum restrictions on sample size, measurement scales, and residual distributions (Chin *et al.*, 2003). In this study, SmartPLS 2.0 M3 was employed to carry out the data analysis (Ringle *et al.*, 2005).

### *Measurement model*

We calculated convergent validity and discriminant validity to test the measurement model, following Zhang *et al.* (2009). Convergent validity is sufficient if composite reliability (CR) values are higher than 0.7 and average variance extracted (AVE) values are higher than 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Zhang *et al.*, 2009). The results show that CR values ranged from 0.842 to 0.903 and AVE values ranged from 0.516 to 0.757 (see Table II), indicating the adequate convergent validity. In addition, discriminant validity was tested using the criteria suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981): the square root of AVE is much greater than all other cross-correlations correlation shared between the construct and other constructs in the model. Table III shows that all the diagonal values exceed the inter-construct correlations coefficient, indicating that discriminate validity is acceptable.

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Construct	Items	Factor loading	Composite reliability	AVE
Entertainment (ET)	ET 1	0.812	0.845	0.527
	ET 2	0.815		
	ET 3	0.765		
	ET 4	0.638		
	ET 5	0.567		
Information Seeking (IS)	IS 1	0.654	0.863	0.558
	IS 2	0.718		
	IS 3	0.829		
	IS 4	0.778		
	IS 5	0.745		
Socialization (SI)	SI 1	0.899	0.903	0.757
	SI 2	0.912		
	SI 3	0.805		
	SI 4	0.704		
	SI 5	0.765		
Self-presentation (SP)	SP 1	0.770	0.842	0.520
	SP 2	0.750		
	SP 3	0.791		
Continuous intention (CI)	CI 1	0.638	0.881	0.516
	CI 2	0.767		
	CI 3	0.784		
	CI 4	0.689		
	CI 5	0.780		
	CI 6	0.727		
	CI 7	0.630		

**Table II.**  
Factor loadings,  
composite reliability,  
and AVE

	ET	IS	SI	SP	UG
Entertainment (ET)	0.726				
Information seeking (IS)	0.612***	0.747			
Socialization (SI)	0.577***	0.537***	0.721		
Self-presentation (SP)	0.578***	0.612***	0.465***	0.870	
Continuous intention (CI)	0.717***	0.652***	0.611***	0.620***	0.719

**Table III.**  
Correlation among  
constructs and  
the square root  
of the AVE

**Notes:** Diagonal elements in the correlation of constructs matrix are the square root of the average variance extracted. For adequate discriminant validity, diagonal elements should be greater than corresponding off-diagonal elements. \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

### Structure model

The proposed model and hypothesized relationships were estimated using 500 interactions of bootstrapping technique in SmartPLS. In addition, we adopted subgroup analysis method to test the moderating roles of cultural difference and socio-economic status, following Ahuja and Thatcher (2005). To further compare the results in depth between the subgroups, we calculated  $t$ -statistics to evaluate the differences in path coefficients based on the procedure proposed by Chin *et al.* (2003). The results of analysis are presented in Tables IV-VI.

As shown in Table IV, entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation exert positive influences on continuance intention for subgroups of individualism ( $\beta = 0.364, 0.384, 0.122, 0.102$ ;  $t = 6.476, 6.587, 3.002$ , respectively) and

collectivism ( $\beta = 0.352, 0.134, 0.303, 0.167$ ;  $t = 6.163, 2.482, 5.316, 3.321$ , respectively). Table IV also reveals that most path coefficients from the antecedents (information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation) to continuance intention for the two subgroups are significantly different ( $t = 8.087, -6.162, -2.294$ , respectively), with only one exception, the path coefficient from entertainment to continuance intention ( $t = 0.399$ ). Based on the above findings, we recognize that the relationship between information seeking and continuance was stronger for users from individualistic cultures, while socialization and self-presentation had stronger influence on continuance intention for users from collective cultures. Thus, *H1b* and *H1c* are supported, while *H1a* and *H1d* are not supported.

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Paths	Individualism		Collectivism		Statistical comparison of paths
	coefficient	<i>t</i> -value	coefficient	<i>t</i> -value	
Entertainment→Continuous intention	0.364***	6.476	0.352***	6.163	0.399
Information seeking→Continuous intention	0.384***	6.587	0.134*	2.482	8.087***
Socialization→Continuous intention	0.122**	3.002	0.303**	5.316	-6.162***
Self-presentation→Continuous intention	0.102*	2.326	0.167***	3.321	-2.294*

**Notes:** \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \* $p < 0.05$

**Table IV.**  
Statistical comparison of paths for subgroups of individualism and collectivism

Paths	High education		Low education		Statistical comparison of paths
	coefficient	<i>t</i> -value	coefficient	<i>t</i> -value	
Entertainment→Continuous intention	0.408***	7.348	0.316***	5.701	2.991*
Information seeking→Continuous intention	0.190**	3.235	0.219***	4.262	-0.936
Socialization→continuous intention	0.184***	3.574	0.215***	3.745	-1.022
Self-presentation→Continuous intention	0.147**	2.588	0.259***	5.267	-3.734***

**Notes:** \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \* $p < 0.05$

**Table V.**  
Statistical comparison of paths for subgroups of high and low education

Paths	High income		Low income		Statistical comparison of paths
	coefficient	<i>t</i> -value	coefficient	<i>t</i> -value	
Entertainment→Continuous intention	0.434***	8.826	0.344***	5.929	2.961**
Information seeking→Continuous intention	0.332***	6.442	0.166**	3.020	5.459***
Socialization→Continuous intention	0.166***	3.877	0.206***	3.625	-1.341
Self-presentation→Continuous intention	0.015	0.425	0.246***	4.591	-8.208***

**Notes:** \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$

**Table VI.**  
Statistical comparison of paths for subgroups of high and low income

On the other hand, Table V reports that entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation have positive influences on continuance intention for subgroups of high level of education ( $\beta = 0.408, 0.190, 0.184, 0.147$ ;  $t = 7.348, 3.235, 3.574, 2.588$ , respectively) and low level of education ( $\beta = 0.316, 0.219, 0.215, 0.259$ ;  $t = 5.701, 4.262, 3.745, 5.267$ , respectively). The results also show that the path coefficients from the entertainment and self-presentation to continuance intention, for the two subgroups are significantly different ( $t = 2.991, -3.734$ , respectively). Accordingly, we recognize that the relationship between entertainment and continuance was stronger for users with higher level of education, while self-presentation had stronger influence on continuance intention for users with lower level of education. Thus, *H2a* and *H2d* are supported. On the other hand, the path coefficient from information seeking and socialization to continuance intention are not significantly different ( $t = -0.936, -1.022$ ), meaning that *H2b* and *H2c* are not supported.

Finally, Table VI shows that entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation have positive influences on continuance intention for subgroups of low income ( $\beta = 0.344, 0.166, 0.206, 0.246$ ;  $t = 5.929, 3.020, 3.625, 4.591$ , respectively), while entertainment, information seeking, socialization exert significant influences on the subgroup of high income ( $\beta = 0.434, 0.332, 0.166$ ;  $t = 8.826, 6.442, 3.877$ , respectively). The results also show that the path coefficients from the entertainment, information seeking, and self-presentation to continuance intention for the two subgroups are significantly different ( $t = 2.961, 5.459, -8.208$  respectively), indicating that the effect of entertainment, information seeking on continuance intention was stronger for users with higher level of income, while self-presentation had stronger influence on continuance intention for users with lower level of income. Thus, *H3a*, *H3b*, and *H3d* are supported. On the other hand, the path coefficient from socialization to continuance intention is not significantly different ( $t = -1.341$ ), meaning that *H3c* is not supported.

## Discussion

The purpose of this study is to investigate the moderating influence of cultural difference on the relationships between motivations of social media use and the users' continuance intention. In this study, four motivations such as entertainment, information seeking, socialization, and self-presentation are identified as the primary determinants of continuance intention for social media. Overall, the results provide support for most hypothesized relationships in the model and offer several important findings.

First, the results show that information seeking exerts stronger effect on the continuance intention for users from individualistic cultures, while socialization has stronger influences on the continuance intention for users from collectivistic cultures. The findings provide additional evidences that individualists are more likely to use social media to seek and obtain information (Chau *et al.*, 2002; Kim *et al.*, 2011), while users from collectivistic cultures tend to use social media to obtain emotional support (Kim *et al.*, 2011). However, contrary to expectations, self-presentation has stronger influence on the continuance intention for users from collectivistic cultures. This finding is in line with the assertion of Lowry *et al.* (2011) that the research results about the influence of individualism on information privacy concern are mixed. This implies that some personal characteristics will motivate users of collectivistic cultures to disclose their personal information. Further studies should be conducted to explore what may drive stronger link between self-presentation and continuance intention in collectivistic cultures. In addition, the path coefficient from entertainment to continuance intention is not significant different in both subgroups of individualism and collectivism, although it has

significant effect on continuance for both subgroups. The finding means that social media are considered as a pleasure-oriented web site through which people can obtain enjoyment and pleasure (Lin and Lu, 2011). Thus, entertainment is an important predictor of continuance intention for users from the individualistic and collectivistic cultures.

Furthermore, the results also reveal that entertainment has stronger influence on continuance for educated users, while self-presentation has stronger influence on continuance intention for users with lower level of education. The findings are congruent with prior literature that people with higher level of education tend to have more access to entertainment media (Allen and Hatchett, 1986) and people who are socio-economic disadvantage may enable others to believe that they are the persons possessing higher socio-economic status (Jones and Pittman, 1982). Additionally, the path coefficients from information seeking and socialization to continuance intention do not exert significant differences in both subgroups of high and low education. Since information seeking and socialization have positive influences on continuance for both subgroups, we may recognize that information seeking and socialization are the vital predictors of continuance intention for user with high and low level of education.

Finally, the effects of entertainment, information seeking on the continuance intention was stronger for users with higher level of income, while self-presentation has stronger influence on continuance intention for users with lower level of income. The findings are in line with the perspectives of Allen and Hatchett (1986) and Hsieh *et al.* (2008) that users of socio-economic advantage will use social media to obtain hedonic benefits and to seek information they need. The findings are similar to the assertion of Jones and Pittman (1982) that users of socio-economic disadvantage may tend to enhance their personal reorganization by disclosing personal information to make others believe that they are important in this social media. In addition, path coefficient from socialization to continuance intention also does not exert significant differences for users of high and low level of income. This finding indicates that building and maintaining social relationships with others is an important motivation for users with high and low level of income.

### Implications for theory and practice

This study provides several important theoretical contributions and implications for research. First, although U&G theory has been used to understand the motivations of social media use (Kim *et al.*, 2011), little studies of U&G theory have been done to test the relationships between motivational factors and users' continuance intention. This study is one of earlier study extend the research context of U&G theory from the adoption of social media to the post-adoption of social media. This is a contribution of this study. Second, while past literature has begun to explore the role of cultural difference in motivations of social media use (Kim *et al.*, 2011), previous views are incomplete. In this study, we investigate the moderating roles of cultural difference and socio-economic status (education and income) on the link between motivations of social media continued use and users' continuance intention simultaneously. The findings could advance our understanding about the factors affecting users' intention to use social media continuously.

The results of this research also provide some implications for practitioners. First, although the path from entertainment to continuance intention is not significant difference between subgroups of individualism and collectivism, it still has a strong significant effect on the continuance intention for user from individualistic and collectivistic cultures. The findings show that entertainment is an important factor

affecting the behavior of social media usage in the individualistic and collectivistic cultures. Thus, more creative applications and games should be provided by social media to increase users' perception of pleasure and enjoyment. Second, the results show that information seeking exerts stronger influence on continuance intention for the users in the subgroups of individualism, high income, and low education. Therefore, management of social media should improve the technological features of web site to make interface of social media more easier to be used. Third, the results show that socialization is a stronger determinant of continuance intention of social media in the collectivistic cultures. Thus, management of social media should provide some useful strategies for people in the collectivistic cultures to interact with others frequently. For example, social media web site should incorporate features that facilitate the exchange of social support via existing social relationships (Kim *et al.*, 2011). Finally, the results reveal that self-presentation has stronger influence on continuance intention for users in the subgroups of socio-economic disadvantage (lower level of education and income) and collectivistic cultures. In order to improve self-presentation mechanisms, management of social media should provide some new functions for users to present themselves online. This is can be done by providing the avatar or second-life services for users to present themselves in another way.

### Limitations

Although this study provides some interesting findings, several limitations must be recognized. First, the data of this study were collected from users of a social media from five countries. Future research should test the findings of our study in the different social media in different countries to test the generalizability of this study. Second, while cultural difference and socio-economic status play a vital role in the continued use of social media, the motivations of continuance intention may be affected by other personal characteristics, such as age and occupations. Further studies should be conducted to test their influence on users' continuance intention. Third, the results may have been influenced by self-selection bias because our sample comprised only active users. Users who had already ceased to use social media might have different perceptions about the motivations of continuance.

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Construct	Items	Measure	Source
Entertainment (ET)	ET 1	Using Facebook makes me feel pleasure	Lee and Ma (2012)
	ET 2	Using Facebook makes me feel relaxed	
	ET 3	Using Facebook can let me escape life's unpleasantness	
	ET 4	Using Facebook can let me kill time	
	ET 5	Using Facebook makes me feel enjoyable while playing games or interacting with friends	
Information seeking (IS)	IS 1	Facebook allows me to effectively seek information which I am interested in	Lu <i>et al.</i> (2010)
	IS 2	I check Facebook friends' requests and messages very often	
	IS 3	I use Facebook to keep up with the latest news and events	
	IS 4	Facebook information can provide helpful advice to me	
	IS 5	Facebook information is up to date on the current information	
Socialization (SI)	SI 1	I have a friends' community on Facebook	Lu <i>et al.</i> (2010), Lee and Ma (2012), and Smock <i>et al.</i> (2011)
	SI 2	Facebook is a useful communication channel to connect with people	
	SI 3	Facebook provides a platform for me to contact people easily	
	SI 4	I have used Facebook to reconnect with friends who I had lost contact for long time	
	SI 5	Facebook makes it easier for me to keep in touch with my friends	
Self-presentation (SP)	SP 1	I usually update my profile on Facebook	Smock <i>et al.</i> (2011), Ko <i>et al.</i> (2005)
	SP 2	I could express my opinions through publishing articles on Facebook	
	SP 3	I share my personal information and living conditions on Facebook	
Continuous intention (CI)	CU 1	I will use Facebook when I am online every time	Ko <i>et al.</i> (2005), Mathieson (1991), and Bhattacharjee (2011)
	CU 2	I am very satisfied with services provided by Facebook	
	CU 3	I feel very comfortable when I use Facebook	
	CU 4	I am interested in continuing to use Facebook	
	CU 5	Compared with other online social sites, I have more interests in using Facebook	
	CU 6	I would like to spend more time on Facebook in the future	
	CU 7	Past experience makes me want to continue using Facebook	

**Table A1.**  
Questionnaire items

#### About the authors

Dr Meng-Hsiang Hsu holds a PhD Degree from the National Sun-Yat-Sen University, Taiwan. He is currently a Professor at the Department of Information Management, National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology. His research interests include knowledge management,

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information ethics, and electronic commerce. He has published articles in *Decision Support Systems*, *Information Systems journal*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Behaviour and Information Technology*, *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, and others. Dr Meng-Hsiang Hsu is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: mhhsu@nkfust.edu.tw

Shih-Wei Tien is currently a PhD Student in Communication from the National Cheng Chi University, Taiwan. Her research interests include cross-cultural studies and new media internet communication.

Associate Professor Hsien-Cheng Lin is a Doctoral Candidate, PhD Programs in Management, National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology, Taiwan. He is also an Assistant Professor at the Department of Health-Business and Administration, Fooyin University, Taiwan. His current research interests include knowledge management, and medical informatics. He has published articles in *Computers Informatics Nursing*, *Computers in Human Behaviour*, and others.

Chun-Ming Chang is currently an Associate Professor at the Department of Tourism Information, Aletheia University, Taiwan. He holds a PhD Degree in Management from the National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology, Taiwan. His current research interests include electronic commerce and knowledge management. He has published articles in *Decision Support systems*, *Information Systems Journal*, *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, *Behaviour and Information Technology*, and others.

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