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Abstract

As social media become more pervasive and widespread in the workplace, there is an increasing need to study and understand the factors driving working professionals to use social media for work related purposes. Yet, knowledge about the factors influencing the use of social media technologies at work remains limited. Drawing from the uses and gratifications (U&G) theory, the objective of this study is to uncover the motivational factors driving the use of social media in the workplace. The U&G framework can help to understand the needs and wants of working professionals with regards to the use of social media for work related purposes. In addition, this study also investigates the influence of prior social media experience to complement the U&G theory. A survey was designed and administered to 157 working professionals. Results from the hierarchical regression analysis revealed that respondents with prior social media experiences were more likely to use social media at work. In addition, we also found that factors such as gratifications obtained from socializing and tasks accomplishment were also significant in influencing the use social media for work related purposes. Implications and directions for future work are discussed.

Keywords: Social Media, Workplace, Gratifications

1 INTRODUCTION

Social media such as blogs, social networking sites, wikis and microblogs are technologies for sharing and discussing information that place an emphasis on collaboration and user-generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). From connecting directly with end customers and engaging with employees to collaborating with partners, social media are causing organizations to rethink the way they conduct businesses, connect with their employees, customers and stakeholders (Huy & Shipilov, 2012).

As a genre of emerging enterprise platforms, social media have yet to attract sufficient research attention focusing on the factors driving the use of social media technologies in the workplace. Hence, research is needed to shed light on the motivating factors driving working professionals to use such technologies to meet their needs. Such understanding can help organizations to effectively integrate social technologies with the entire organization communication media ecosystem where employees as well as customers can discuss, participate or even debate about product or services related issues.

The objectives of the present paper are hence two-fold. The first is to extend current research on the use of social media in the workplace. Given the increasing popularity of social media use in the workplace, there is a need to understand why working professionals use social media in the workplace. Our first objective is thus to uncover the motivational factors driving the use of social media at the work. To do so, we draw from the uses and gratifications (U&G) paradigm (Katz et al., 1974), which essentially examines how and why people select specific media to meet their needs. This paradigm will be used to explain the psychological gratifications associated with the potential use of social media in the workplace (Ruggiero, 2000; Lin, 2002). Our study integrates and extends findings of past research by identifying appropriate gratification dimensions for social media use in organizations. However, U&G theory itself may not be sufficient to explain working professionals' motivations entirely because it assumes that they are constantly actively participating in media selection and use. At times, such participation may simply be borne out of prior experience (LaRose & Eastin, 2004). Hence, our second objective extends from the first and aims to investigate the influence of prior social media experience. Thus, the present study aims to explore the following research question: *What are the gratifications and experiential factors influencing the use of social media in the workplace?*

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media is defined "as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, pg 61). Social media that are used within an enterprise are sometimes referred to as Enterprise 2.0 (McAfee, 2006). Social media technologies are popular because these technologies facilitate participation, conversation openness, creation and socialization among a community of users (Panahi, et al., 2012). There are various types of social media including blogs, microblogs, social networking sites, wikis, virtual worlds, social bookmarking, tagging and video sharing sites. In addition, there are many well-known sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Blogger, Wikipedia, Del.icio.us, Digg, Reddit providing these services. Over the last few years, there has been an explosive growth in the research examining the

uses, effects and impacts of various social media technologies outside the workplace (e.g. Nardi et al., 2004; Hargittai, 2007; Ellison et al., 2007) but research on social media used in the workplace is still limited. Since successful implementation of technologies in the consumer environment does not always translate to successful implementation in the enterprise environment, it is thus important for research to pay attention to factors influencing the use of social media in the workplace. Such understanding can help organizations better understand how working professionals are relying on these technologies to meet their needs for work related purposes.

2.1 Use of Social Media in the Workplace

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) identified six types of social media that can be used in the workplace (e.g. blogs, social networking sites, virtual social worlds, collaborative projects, content communities and virtual game worlds). Despite their increasing popularities among certain online communities, virtual social worlds and virtual game worlds are excluded in this study because they are considered to be relatively less pervasive especially in the workplace than the other four types of social media. Specifically, the social media phenomenon has only been receiving attention in the workplace recently due the time lag required for enterprise acceptance of any new technology. This is in line with past adoption of communication technologies in the workplace. For instance, email took a while to be accepted in the workplace as a formal communication tool despite its popularity outside the work environment. Hence, this study focused on the first four types of social media (i.e. blogs/microblogs, collaborative projects, social networking sites and content communities) which are ubiquitously available in the workplace. The impacts of these four types of social media in the workplace will be reviewed in the following section.

First, blogs are websites that typically present information as form of reverse chronological order entries. They provide individuals with a virtual space to express themselves (Chung & Kim, 2008). In the context of the external communication in the workplace, blogs provide the organization an opportunity to broadcast a message to the world in the way it desires (Baehr & Alex-Brown, 2010). In addition, internal blogs facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing in an enterprise. Like blogs which afford broadcasting, microblogs, allow short messages to be broadcasted to subscribers are also increasingly used in the workplace. Microblog lowers the threshold to share updates, information and links within the enterprise or outside the enterprise (e.g. customers). People use microblog at work to update and keep up with the latest organization happenings as well as to share and exchange information (Zhao & Rosson, 2008). Second, collaborative projects enable the joint and simultaneous creation of content by many individuals (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). From a corporate perspective, collaborative projects may become sources of information for employees and customers. Wikis are the most common collaborative tool in the workplace and have been effective in supporting different business processes and activities (Hepp et al., 2007; Mansour et al., 2011). Essentially, wikis are sites created with a Web application that allows organizational users to collaboratively create content and edit online documents.

Third, the use of social networking sites in organizations has been gaining popularity especially with the younger generation of working professionals. Technically, social networking sites function as a mean for users to establish social connections. It has been shown that SNS can be an effective platform to support organization functions such as employees recruitment, sales and marketing and customer support (Kluemper & Rosen, 2009; Qualman, 2011). Specifically, since socialization is an important component of collaboration, social networking sites are used increasingly in the workplace as a socialization platform to

facilitate group collaboration. Fourth, content communities are essentially online databases of multimedia content. The purpose of content communities is to facilitate the users to share media contents with one another. Examples of major content communities are Flickr, YouTube and other social bookmarking sites. Organizations use such communities for a variety of purposes such as to share contents (e.g. speeches and press announcements) with their staff and shareholders as well as for advertising and marketing purposes (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

In sum, the use of social media in organizations has introduced novel ways of communication and collaboration in the workplace by empowering users to create, share and seek content. To investigate the use of social media in the workplace, we extend prior works by drawing from the U&G theory to explain users' motivations as well as to examine the effects of prior social media experience.

2.2 Uses and Gratifications

Given the increasing significance of social media initiatives in the workplace, the present study intends to explore the underlying motivating factors driving the use of social media at work. With the pervasiveness of social media, working professionals are relying on different types of social media for different work related purposes. Hence, understanding the gratifications working professionals seek from the use of these technologies will be insightful in understanding why they choose to use certain social technologies at work.

The uses and gratifications (U&G) approach attempts to explain the gratifications or benefits which attract people to various media channels and media content to satisfy their social and psychological needs (Ruggiero, 2000). Hence, U&G refer to the motivations of specific uses, and the satisfaction people gain from such use (Stafford, 2004). In apply this concept to social media, scholars argued that people use social media for a variety of reasons from staying connected with friends and family in their social network, expressing themselves on a particular topic or a subject of discussion, coordinating and scheduling events to simply finding entertainment. Indeed, understanding the usage of social media through the lens of uses and gratifications is useful to shed light on how and why new media are used (Ruggiero, 2000). Additionally, research has provided evidence that social media have transformed people's media behavior from a personal activity to an interpersonal one, which help people to attain different types of gratifications (Park et al., 2009). More importantly, the U&G framework is useful to shed light on the motives driving the use of organization communication tools as the framework also helps to understand the needs and wants of organizational users (Gallant et al., 2003).

One of the most comprehensive lists of motives for media use was identified by Blumler and McQuail (1968). According to them, media use is motivated by the following gratifications such as surveillance, guidance, anticipated communication, excitement and reinforcement and others. Over the years, research on online media have proposed other motives such as entertainment (e.g. Leung & Wei, 2000), self-expression (e.g. Papacharisse, 2002), status seeking (e.g. Lee et al., 2010) as well as information learning and seeking (e.g. Ko et al., 2005). From this list of motives, scholars have further attempted to group the gratifications. Three categories of gratifications were proposed and they include: content, process and social gratifications (Stafford et al, 2004) Content gratifications refer to gratifications based on media content (Joinson, 2008) and are mostly derived from informational needs (e.g., information learning). Put differently, content gratifications are obtained from the messages

for their direct, substantive intrinsic value for the receiver (Cutler & Danoswki, 1980). Process gratifications refer to the gratifications attained from the actual experience of using the media (Joinson, 2008). This means that user receives gratification mainly from being involved in the process of behavior, rather than from message content (Cutler & Danowski 1980). Hence, process gratifications are also known as ritualized gratifications which are related to habitual use of media for consuming time and diversion, contributing to a high level of attachment and affinity with the medium (e.g., entertainment, enjoyment, escapism) (Lee et al., 2010). The recent proliferation of Internet and social media platforms to support online social interactions led researchers to propose a third category of gratifications known as social gratifications (Stafford, 2004). Specifically, social gratifications refer to gratifications arise from the social environment which centers on the gratifications obtained from interactions and social connections (Dunne, et al., 2010; Lee & Ma, 2012) with other members in the online community.

In sum, this study asserts that these three major categories of gratifications (i.e. content, process and social) are relevant in understanding social media use at work. More specifically, in applying the concept of U&G in the workplace, we argued that the use of social media at work is also driven by motivational factors related to content, process and social gratifications.

2.3 Prior Social Media Experience

Despite that the U&G approach has been widely used to identify motivations underlying media use, critics of the U&G approach have argued the U&G approach may not be able to explain social media usage adequately (LaRose & Eastin, 2004). Specifically, U&G theory by itself may not be enough to explain users' motivations because it assumes that users are constantly actively participating in media selection and use. Past research, however, has indicated that media usage may sometimes be simply related to one's prior experience and is not as goal-directed as suggested by the U&G approach (LaRose 2009, Lee & Ma, 2012). In relating prior experience with media technology, research has indicated that prior experience can help to establish trustworthy relationships between individuals and media use (Hsu et al., 2007). This is because the more experience an individual had accumulated, the more familiar he or she would be with the technology which would lead to increased self efficacy and confidence in using the technology for other purposes (Hsu, et al., 2007; Chen et al., 2011).

As for the effects of experience with technology use, multiple studies have indicated that when users are more familiar with the technology, their anxiety decreases and their perceptions of self-efficacy related to the use of the technology increases (Todman & Managhan, 1994; Bohlin & Hunt, 1995). In particular, Lee et al. (2009) found that familiarity with different searching features have significant influences on the effectiveness of tags created in social tagging systems. In addition, studies on technology also reported that familiarity is an important factor in determining one' s attitudes toward technology as such attitudes will consequently influence one's technology adoption decision (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Finally, Lee and Ma (2012) further found that prior social media experience has a significant influence on news sharing in social media. They found that people who had experiences with blogs or micro-blogs tended to develop habitual use of social media to contribute and share news content in other social media platforms.

3   METHODOLOGY

3.1   Data Collection

A survey instrument was developed and administered to working professionals who were doing a a part-time Master program at a large local university. The respondents must be full-time working professionals who have used social media at work for work related purposes. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. We collected a total 159 responses. Two responses were incomplete and were discarded and hence we have a total sample of 157 valid responses.   The demographic profiles of the respondents are summarized in Table 1. The median age of our sample was in the category 25-36. Around 44% of the respondents had less than five years experience and more than 50% of the respondents worked in the information technology department. The rest was from other departments (e.g. marketing, operations) in their respective organizations. The respondents were from different types of organizations.

Gender	Male	Female	Missing		
	52.22% (N=82)	28.03% (N=44)	19.75% (N=31)		
Age	18-24 year	25-36 year	37-48 year		
	14.01% (N=22)	75.80% (N=119)	16% (N=16)		
Educational Background	High School	Polytechnic	Bachelor	Master	Doctorate
	0.64% (N=1)	1.27% (N=2)	85.99% (N=135)	10.83% (N=17)	1.27% (N=2)
Working Experience	<5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	>20 years
	43.95% (N=69)	38.85% (N=61)	13.38% (N=21)	3.18% (N=5)	0.64% (N=1)
Department	IT	Research	Operations	Marketing	Others
	52.87% (N=83)	8.91% (N=14)	6.37% (N=10)	5.1% (N=8)	26.75% (N=42)
Organization	IT	Government	Manufacturing	Research & Education	Others
	20.38% (N=32)	15.28% (N=24)	12.74% (N=20)	12.10% (N=19)	39.5% (N=62)

Table 1. Demographic Profiles of Respondents (N=157)

3.2   Measures

The measurements assessing gratifications were adapted from prior uses and gratifications research related to social media use (Lee, et al., 2010; Lin, 2002; Park, et al., 2009). In addition, since the current study focuses on social media use in the workplace, past studies on technology use in the organizations were also reviewed and factors such as knowledge sharing, perceived ease of use and usefulness of the technology were also incorporated in the questionnaire to examine factors driving organizational users to use social media at work (Venkatesh et al., 2003). A total of 27 question items were used to assess their motivations for using social media at work, and were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Social media use is operationalized by asking

respondents to indicate the extent to which they would use social media to share or retrieve information for work related purposes. Prior social media experience is measured by asking the respondents to indicate their past experience (i.e. work and non- work purposes) with different types of social media platforms consisting of blogs, microblogs, social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), content communities (e.g. YouTube) (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010).

4   DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Prior to statistical testing, principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was used to test the validity of our constructs and measures. The reliability constructs were assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. The results exhibited acceptable alpha values for the given sample size (see Tables 2 and 3). Hierarchical regression was conducted to assess the influence of the independent variables consisting of motivational and experiential factors on the use of social media in the workplace (dependent variable). The block of motivational factors was entered first, followed by the block consisting of social media experiential factors.

4.1   Factor Analyses

As mentioned, the entire set of 27 motivational items was analyzed by a principal component factor analysis using Varimax rotation. According to our analysis, 10 items were dropped due to high cross factor loadings and low factor loadings (i.e. less than 0.5). The remaining 17 items fell into seven groups representing three categories of gratifications – process, content and social. To test measurement reliability, Cronbach's alpha was employed and this yielded acceptable values (more than 0.6) for the three factors (see Table 2). We also conducted factor analysis on the experiential factors and found two factors (see Table 3).

For process and content gratifications, our factor analysis results indicate that there were 2 sub-dimensions related to process gratifications, 3 sub-dimensions related to content gratifications. As for social gratifications, our results show that the items on social gratifications loaded onto the same factor. In sum, our factor analysis results indicate that there are 7 motivational factors underlying the use of social media for work purposes. These factors are discussed as follows.

- "Process Gratifications 1 – task accomplishment" refers to the gratifications associated with the accomplishment of tasks at work.
- "Process Gratifications 2 - emotional" refers to the emotional gratifications derived from the process of using social media.
- "Content Gratifications 1 – general content" refers to gratifications users sought from consuming social media content at work.
- "Content Gratifications 2 – specific content for problem solving and training" refers to the use of social media content for specific work related purposes such as problem solving and training.
- "Content Gratifications 3 – specific content for recruitment and feedback" refers to the use of social media content for specific work related purposes such as recruitment and providing feedback.
- "Social gratifications – social connections" refers to the extent that users are using social media to build and establish professional social connections.

N=157	Factors						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Alpha
Process gratifications 1 *Task accomplishment*							0.84
because it's quick	**0.90**	0.05	0.06	0.13	0.04	0.07	
because it is easy to use	**0.81**	0.08	0.30	0.15	-0.02	0.14	
to support collaboration and communication	**0.80**	0.14	0.10	0.14	0.25	-0.02	
Process gratitifications2 *Emotional*							0.79
because the company gives incentives to use it	0.09	**0.78**	-0.12	0.03	0.14	0.27	
because it motivates new ways of work	0.09	**0.75**	0.20	0.27	0.22	0.18	
because it helps me feel important	0.12	**0.75**	0.39	0.03	0.08	0.03	
Content gratifications 1 *General Content*							0.80
For knowledge retention and management (knowledge sharing)	0.11	0.24	**0.76**	0.09	0.33	0.06	
to keep up-to-date on the latest information, news	0.34	0.06	**0.71**	0.19	0.07	0.32	
to enable cross-boundary communication	0.22	-0.06	**0.54**	0.33	0.13	0.05	
because it supports media-rich content (audio and video)	0.18	0.24	**0.50**	0.38	0.09	0.48	
Social gratifications 1 *Social Connections*							0.73
because it helps to encourage participation	0.12	0.25	0.12	**0.79**	0.17	0.02	
to reach a wider audience that other media	0.21	-0.01	0.14	**0.76**	0.08	0.26	
to socialize and keep in touch with others	0.40	0.07	0.28	**0.51**	-0.32	0.29	
Content gratifications 2 *Content for problem solving and training*							0.85
For problem solving	0.21	0.12	0.20	0.12	**0.86**	0.06	
For training and learning purposes	0.02	0.28	0.17	0.07	**0.81**	0.23	
Content gratifications 3 *Content for recruitment and feedback*							0.63
For recruitment purposes	0.09	0.24	0.09	0.13	0.14	**0.82**	
to get feedback	0.02	0.20	0.31	0.25	0.16	**0.57**	

Table 2. Factor analysis on the Motivational Factors

The factor analysis results in table 3 indicate that there are two distinct social media experiential factors. We label the first factor as "Type 1 Social Media Experience" which refers to experiences with social media such as blogs and microblogs. We label the second

factor as "Type 2 Social Media Experience" which refers to experiences with a variety of social media technologies (i.e. wikis, photo/video sharing sites, social networking sites, and social bookmarking sites). These social media are in the other 3 categories based on Kaplan and Haenlein's classification.

N=157	Factors		
Social Media Experience	**1**	**2**	**Alpha**
1. Type 2			0.73
Wiki	**0.72**	0.10	
Photo/Video Sharing	**0.71**	0.34	
Instant Messaging	**0.68**	-1.55	
Social Networking Site	**0.65**	0.41	
Social Bookmarking	**0.57**	0.36	
2. Type 1			0.69
Micro-blogging	0.42	**0.85**	
Blog	0.12	**0.83**	

Table 3. Factor analysis on the experiential factors

Independent Variables	Standardized Beta	t-values
FIRST BLOCK		
Process Gratifications 1 - *Tasks Accomplishment*	0.15	1.97+
Process Gratifications 2 – *Emotional*	0.80	1.04
Content Gratifications 1- *General Content*	-0.03	-0.30
Social Gratifications - *Social Connections*	0.15	1.70+
Content Gratifications 2 -*Content for problem solving and training*	0.06	0.08
Content Gratifications 3 - *Content for recruitment and status update*	-0.11	-1.25
Adjusted R2	0.12	
SECOND BLOCK		
Type 1 Social Media Experience	0.13	2.01*
Type 2 Social Media Experience	0.53	7.99**
Change in Adjusted R2	0.36	
Adjusted R2	0.48**	

Note: a. dependent variable is Use of Social Media at Work; b. *** $p < .001$; c. ** $p < .01$; d. + $p < .05$

Table 4. Hierarchical Regression Results (N=157)

4.2   Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Next, we employed hierarchical regression analysis to examine the relationship between the seven motivational factors and the two experiential factors. The results from our hierarchical

regression analysis are shown in Table 4. Overall, our results indicate that experiential factors have more significant influences than the motivational factors. Specifically, both the experiential factors are significant predictors on the use of social media at work. Among the gratification factors, only "process gratifications 1" (i.e. relates to general task accomplishment) and "social gratifications" (i.e. relates to social connection) are significant in influencing the use of social media at work. None of the content gratifications dimensions are significant.

5   DISCUSSION

Drawing from the uses and gratifications perspective, the main objective of this study is to investigate the factors driving employees to use social media in the workplace. Based on the U&G theory, we identify process, content and social gratifications which are likely to influence the use of social media by working professionals in the workplace. Since one of the shortcomings of the U&G theory is to assume that users are always actively evaluating their gratifications from media usage and does not take into account the influence of prior media experience (LaRose 2009), we also incorporated the experiential factors in our model. In sum, this study investigates the effects of process, content, and social gratifications as well as the effects of past social media experience on the use of social media in the workplace.

Overall, our results indicate that the two experiential factors have significantly stronger influences than the motivational factors. Specifically, both experiential factors were highly significant whereas only two of the motivational factors were moderately significant. Our finding highlights that respondents who used social media in their personal lives were most likely to use social media at work. Our results further indicate that prior social media personal experience can reinforce the usage of social media at work. Specifically, for experienced users, prior social media experience can be transformed into part of their organizational routines as the usage behaviours become ritualized (Rubin, 1984). This implies that organizations have to pay careful attention to the past usage experience during recruitment and selection of social media team members.

The most salient factor in our model is the experience with a variety of different types of social media technologies (e.g. wikis, social bookmarking sites, social networking sites and content communities). Our study suggests that the experience with such technologies are "transferable" which means that the experience gained from one type (e.g. social networking sites) may lead to the use of other types of social media (e.g. wikis, content communities). This means that the experience gained from using one type of social media enhance the self-efficacy and confidence towards using other types of social media technologies in the workplace (Chen et al., 2011).

Interestingly, another important significant predictor in our model is the socialization gratification. In the workplace, socialization is typically characterized through an exchange of resources directed explicitly at professional tasks, and are activated when a need arises (Nardi, et al., 2002). Our results confirm that employees in the workplace may also seek to gratify their socialization needs for work purposes via the use of social media. In particular, past research reported that social networking sites are used in the workplace to maintain weak ties within the enterprise because such weak ties connections may provide resources. Huy and Shipilov (2012) further advocated the use of social media to solidfy the feeling of shared values and interests, regardless of whether these are worked related. They explained that

when employees identify common non-work-related interests among each other, they forge informal bonds which may lead to discussion of work-related matters even outside formal work hours. Thus, social networking sites or any other social media that afford socialization is critical in the workplace because it supports organizational socialization. Specifically, organizational socialization is the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behavior, and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an organizational member (Haueter et al., 2003). Thus, our results indicate that the need to maintain organizational socialization drives some employees to use social media at work. Such socialization in the workplace helps to maintain awareness of colleagues, build rapport and create stronger working relationship.

Unexpectedly, our results show that all the content gratifications factors were not significant. As discussed earlier content gratifications are mostly derived from informational needs. A possible explanation for this finding is that there are other substitutes or other forms of organizational repositories to fulfill working professionals' informational learning and seeking needs. Further, privacy concerns are on the rise with regards to the use social media platforms especially for platforms that reside in the public domain. Thus, working professionals are likely to be very careful about contributing work related content in such open virtual spaces. This is especially so for companies without a clear policy or guideline regulating the use of social media to share work related content. We believe that such concerns may be alleviated once firms have clearer policies regulating the content. In terms of process gratifications, the need to accomplish task was significant to drive individuals to use social media to share or retrieve content. Surprisingly, we found that working professionals are not relying on social media for gratifying emotional needs even though past research has shown that some social media platforms such as YouTube support emotional expressions (Lee, 2012). Perhaps, emotional expressions in the workplace may likely to be different from emotional expression outside work. Nevertheless, as the use of social media in the workplace becomes more entrenched, we anticipate that social media will be the platforms for employees to seek for emotional gratifications. Specifically, a recent study by Huy and Shipilov (2012) advocated the use of social media to develop emotional capital which focuses on building positive feelings towards the organization and colleagues.

6   CONCLUSION

The present study contributes to research in several ways. First, to our knowledge, this is one of the first studies that draw from diverse literature (e.g. communication, information systems, information retrieval) to investigate antecedents of social media use in the workplace. Specifically, we complement the U&G framework with experiential factors to explain employees' use of social media for work related purposes. Hence, our conceptualization and research model provides a theoretical foundation that can be used to conduct further investigations on the use of social media in the modern workplace. Second, we also establish that experiential factors have significant influences on the use of social media in the workplace. It is clear from our study that a form of "social media competence" related to prior social media experience will be essential for the success of social media initiatives in organizations. Past research has conceptualized the competence required for employees in the workplace to achieve computer-mediated-communication effectiveness (Spitzberg, 2006). Likewise, future research should look into the conceptualization of social media competence to ensure the successful implementation of social media in organizations. For practitioners, understanding the gratification and experiential factors underlying social media use in the workplace has important implications. First, designers of social media platforms can

incorporate features to allow the building and maintenance of professional social networks. Second, understanding factors influencing the use of social media will shed light on sustaining social media use in the workplace. Specifically, since the adoption and use decisions of "employee-driven" technology such as social media cannot be mandated by organizational authority, it is thus critical for organizations to understand the underlying motivating factors driving the use of such technologies. With such understanding, organizations can then develop incentives to sustain the use of social media at work for organizational purposes.

There are some limitations in the present study that warrants caution in interpreting our results. First, we did not consider the attributes of different types of social media platforms on usage behaviours. Specifically, different social media afford different resources which may influence employees' usage selections and behaviours. Second, the nature of this study may reduce the generalizability of its findings. Specifically, respondents were working professionals and part-time graduate students. Replication of this study in other contexts (e.g. more diverse age groups, non-students) would be useful to uncover and understand the factors influencing social media use. Third, our study was not conducted within a particular organization. We acknowledge that investigating the use of social media in a particular context or workplace may reveal more insightful findings. Specifically, the contextual environmental factors may have influential effects on the success of social media initiatives since Huy and Shipilov (2012) noted that the same social media technology may yield different results and outcomes in different firms. Nonetheless, despite these shortcomings, we believe that the findings from our exploratory study will shed light on the general drivers motivating social media use in the workplace.

7   ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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