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Understanding Why Youths Love Facebook: Integrating Maslow's Hierarchy Of Needs And Uses And Gratifications

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UNDERSTANDING WHY YOUTHS USE FACEBOOK: INTEGRATING MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS AND USES AND GRATIFICATIONS

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Abstract

Facebook is a popular social network system that has a large number of users around the world, especially users from Europe, Asia, North America, and South America. Most users are in the adolescent age. However, Facebook has both pros and cons for users, particularly youths. To increase or to decrease Facebook usage, understanding reasons behind why youths use Facebook is necessary. Thus, this paper proposes a qualitative study of needs driving Facebook usages of young people, conforming to generally accepted theories: Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Uses and Gratifications.

Keywords: Facebook, Social Networks, Youths, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Uses and Gratifications

1.0 Introduction

Nowadays, social network systems (SNSs) are becoming a part of human life in the information society. Referring to statistics of Socialbakers.com (2012), United States, United Kingdom, and Thailand were ranked as the first, the sixth, and the thirteenth in terms of the total Facebook users (USA = 167 million users, UK = 33 million users, TH = 18 million users), with very high rate of penetration of online population: 72.90 per cent, 62.25 per cent, and 125.14 per cent respectively. Majority of Facebook users in these countries are in the age of 18 – 24 and 25 – 34, especially Thailand which the age-group 18-24 years is the largest age group with a total of 6 million users.

Facebook gives several advantages for users such as facilitating communication through information posted in the profile and providing information about one's identity (Pempek et al., 2009). Students use Facebook to look at profiles, to post/ update his/her profiles, to search for someone, to email someone, to write on someone's profile, to read blogs, to listen to music, to send friend/ connection requests, to search for members, to look up someone's status, to text someone, to write in a blog, to watch a video, to look for event information, to search for other single people, to contact a romantic prospect, to post a personals ad, and to involve other

activities (Selwyn, 2009). In different context, e-Participation in Iran, Facebook provides a number of benefits, including 'Facebook applications were easy and convenient to use for many people.'; 'The design of Facebook was suitable for e-Participation initiatives.'; 'Facebook can be used as an information channel to promote the communication between citizen and government.'; 'Facebook can promote the online political participation, and enhance citizen engagement in decision making process.'; 'Facebook can be used to create political equality, and increase government transparency.'; and 'Democratic practices were encouraged on Facebook platform.'. Nevertheless, Facebook has some drawbacks such as lack of privacy and some negative effects on e-Participation (Chen and Sali, 2010). In addition, the neuroscientist and educational psychologist believes that computer games, instant messaging, chat rooms, and social networking sites can shorten attention spans, encourage instant gratification, and make young people more self-centred (Derbyshire, 2009).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a widely accepted theory which classifies all human endeavours as an attempt to fulfil needs consisting of physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization. The theory can be applied as a framework to understand human actions. It has found its applications in various disciplinary fields: business, human resource management, and medicine (Yawson et al., 2009). Uses and gratification theory (U&G) is also extensively used in many researches. It has been applied from time to time to understand the adoption of different media, ranging from newspapers to the internet, because of its ability to support researchers to comprehend mediated communication situations from a set of psychological needs, psychological motives, communication channels, communication content, and psychological gratifications (Kobia, 2011; Ruggiero, 2000).

Some researchers studied SNSs and their applications. Luo (2002) investigated effects of informativeness, entertainment, and irritation on the attitude toward the Web, Web usage, and satisfaction, using a structural equation modelling (SEM) approach. Entertainment and informativeness positively influence Internet users' attitude toward the Web. Irritation associates with a negative attitude of a Web user. Joinson (2008) explored Facebook usage and gratifications of Facebook. Factor analysis derived 6 U&G dimensions: social connection, shared identities, content, social investigation, social network surfing, and status updating. Park et al. (2009) used the Web to collect

survey data to study Facebook Groups users' gratifications and the relationship between U&G and users' political and civic involvement offline. Results show that informational use is more related to civic and political participation than recreational uses. Pempek et al., (2009) investigated 92 undergraduate students' social networking experiences. Results reveal that students use Facebook approximately 30 minutes per day as a part of their daily routine. They communicate on Facebook as creators disseminating content to their peers. They also spend more time observing content on SNSs than actually posting content. Urista (2009) did an exploratory research using focus groups to understand why young adults use MySpace and Facebook. Results indicate that young adults heavily depend on Internet because of playfulness and information. Individuals also use SNSs to connect to friends for their interpersonal communication satisfaction and to seek approvals and encouragement from other people. Chen and Sali (2010) explored how Iranian Facebook users perceiving Facebook usage of e-Participation actions, how Facebook affect local democracy, and what are possible advantages and drawbacks of e-Participation via Facebook. Quan-Haase and Young (2010) examined gratifications obtained from Facebook. Results show 6 key dimensions which are pastime, affection, fashion, share problems, sociability, and social information. They also drew a comparison between Facebook and instant messaging. Comparative analysis indicated that Facebook is about enjoying and knowing social activities, whereas instant messaging is pointed more toward relationship maintenance and development. Selfhout et al. (2010) studied influences of Big Five personality traits on friendship selection. Results point that individuals are likely to choose friends having the same levels of Agreeableness, Extraversion, and Openness. Raacke and Raacke (2010) identified U&G constructs of social networking sites' users. Results indicate three constructs: Information, Friendship, and Connection. Zhou (2011) explored antecedents of online community participation from a social influence perspective. Results show that both social identity and group norm significantly affect user participation.

Although some of reasons for Facebook adoption were studied, none of them draw reasons why youths use Facebook upon two established psychological theories, as the big picture. Moreover, most of studies were conducted in Western environments. Hence, this paper is aimed at gaining more comprehensive answers of why Thai adolescents use Facebook, using a qualitative approach.

2.0   Literature Review

As described earlier, reasons why youths prefer Facebook have been specified in multiple viewpoints. In sum, many of them mentioned various needs and gratifications. Thus, this section will describe more details about Maslow's hierarchy of needs and U&G in literature.

2.1   Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs compose of physical needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. In general sense, *physiological needs* are the most fundamental needs that is the needs for food, water, shelter, clothing and others. *Safety needs* are the needs for protection from harm which is psychologically perceived to threaten life and survival. *Belongingness and love needs* are the need for affection, i.e., to love and be loved. People form relationships such as friendships, romantic attachments and families to fulfil the needs for companionship and care. *Esteem needs* are the needs for self-respect characterized by feelings or desire for confidence, self-worth, competence, achievement, mastery, and independence. They are also defined as the needs for respect by others characterized from the desires for social recognition of one's achievement, prestige, status, fame, and power. S*elf-actualization needs* are the needs to realize one's full potential, the desires for self-fulfilment. They are the highest experiences which Maslow mentioned to as transcendence (Yawson et al., 2009). In the context of community building on the Web, Kim (2000) also defined goals and needs of online community participants. This work applied Kim's definitions as an updated version of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Some studies emphasize the importance of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and online social network usage such as Facebook benefits about bridging social capital of students who have low satisfaction and low self-esteem (Ellison et al., 2006); intimate support and affective relationships in online medical support communities (Lampe et al., 2006); the effect of low self-esteem on the desire to communicate with strangers (Acar, 2008); the necessity of an online community to provide attractive responses to a member's intrinsic motivations and needs (e.g. maintaining one's identity in a technical and legal sense, getting protection from hacking and personal attacks, belonging to a community and some of its subgroups, contributing a community and

getting recognition, and taking on a role that develops and opens up new opportunities) (Arrasvuori et al., 2008); influences of the needs for friendship and peer feedbacks to address many concerns of youths and emerging adulthood (Pempek et al., 2009); and the positive correlation between problematic Internet uses and loneliness levels of prospective teachers in Turkey and South Korea (Tutguna et al., 2011).

2.2   Uses and Gratifications Theory

Media users seek to gratify their needs which are surveillance/ information, personal identity, personal relationships/ integration and social interaction, and diversion/ entertainment. *Information* is finding out about relevant events and conditions in immediate surroundings, society and the world; seeking advice on practical matters or opinion and decision choices; satisfying curiosity and general interest; learning; self-education; and gaining a sense of security through knowledge. *Personal Identity* is finding reinforcement for personal values; finding models of behaviour; identifying with valued other (in the media); and gaining insight into one. *Self-Integration & Social Interaction* are gaining insight into circumstances of others; social empathy; identifying with others and gaining a sense of belonging; finding a basis for conversation and social interaction; having a substitute for real-life companionship; helping to carry out social roles; and enabling one to connect with family, friends and society. *Entertainment* is escaping or being diverted from problems; relaxing; getting intrinsic cultural or aesthetic enjoyment; filling time; emotional release; and sexual arousal (McQuail, 1984).

Kobia (2011) classified uses and gratifications for individual use and choice of media as social integration needs, personal identity needs, and entertainment needs. Luo (2002) emphasized that, in the literature, three main important and robust dimensions of U&G theory are entertainment, informativeness, and irritation. Some works categorize U&G in different views; for example, Joinson (2008) specified that the nature of the uses and gratifications of Facebook are social connection, shared identities, photographs, content gratifications, social investigation, social network surfing, and status updates; Raacke and Raacke (2008) pointed uses and gratifications of college students adopting friend-networking sites to be meeting a 'friend' need and meeting a need by using the site as a source of information; Raacke and Raacke (2010) identified dimensions of friend-networking sites' usage as information,

friendship, and connection; and Park et al. (2009) concluded that four needs of using Facebook groups are socializing, entertainment, self-status seeking, and information.

3.0   Research Questions and Methods

A qualitative, exploratory, and descriptive study was applied to uncover why youths use Facebook. This study took online participation of freshman students who registered the Management Information System course. This course is the required course for all undergraduate students from all majors, with different background knowledge and interests. These students are in the main age group of Thai Facebook users. Almost all students have Facebook. Open-ended questions were applied to explore reasons why youths use Facebook. Freshmen or sophomores were asked to *give reasons why you love using Facebook or don't love using Facebook*. Online participation through Facebook group enables students to answer the question upon their convenience. The question was asked in Thai language. Written answers were later translated by the author. Conventional content analysis was conducted. It provides means for quantifying documentary material for statistical analysis by classifying key words, themes and ideas into a set of categories (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Each answer was read and phrases indicating reasons of Facebook usage were highlighted. Emergent sub-themes were extracted and then remaining answers were coded using these sub-themes. These sub-themes were later grouped into main themes using the Maslow's hierarchy of needs and uses and gratifications to seek a deeper understanding of youths' needs-driven Facebook usage.

4.0   Findings and Implications

Of the 64 students, 38 students participate on the set up topics (59.38 per cent of all respondents), 26 females and 12 males. Almost all students had Facebook, only a female student did not use it [F#19]. Reasons why she did not have Facebook account are described in Section 4.1 (Irritation). The age of respondents ranged from 19 to 20, with the average age being 19 years. Average friends of them were 560 persons (min = 10 persons, max = 2715 persons). The mean photos of them (post/ post by friends) were 334 (min = 3 photos, max = 1331 photos).

4.1 Results in the Multidimensional View

A sample of open-ended online transcripts from 38 students was read through. Nineteen sub-themes were extracted as shown in Table 1. This analysis was further validated using theory triangulation. Theory triangulation is an application of multiple theories and perspectives to interpret and to explain data (Burke-Johnson, 1997).

Emergent Sub-themes	Per cent Responses
Communicating with acquaintances, relatives, new friends, friends on campus, friends seen rarely, lecturers, etc.	84.21 (22 Females, 10 Males)
Making themselves relax by playing games and Facebook applications	50 (13 Females, 6 Males)
Expressing their self-identity and sharing stories about their everyday experiences	36.84 (8 Females, 6 Males)
Updating friends' information such as what do they do today?	36.84 (8 Females, 6 Males)
Creating or joining activities of group interests	34.21 (11 Females, 2 Males)
Updating recent news such as political issues, hot news, etc.	31.58 (9 Females, 4 Males)
Sharing or retrieving pictures, video clips, or links from others	28.95 (8 Females, 3 Males)
Meeting people with similar interests (Facebook groups)	21.05 (7 Females, 1 Male)
Sharing news or information to friends	21.05 (5 Females, 3 Males)
Expressing their opinion about the issue concerned (schools, products, services, politics, etc.) through Facebook pages, Facebook groups, or comments on others' contents, etc.	15.79 (4 Females, 2 Males)
Making themselves relax by chatting or teasing friends	10.53 (4 Females)
Meeting new friends (friends on campus, foreign friends, etc.)	10.53 (1 Female, 3 Males)
Playing games with peers and helping each other while playing	7.89 (2 Females, 1 Male)
Making themselves relax by writing notes or tagging friends	5.26 (1 Female, 1 Male)
Reminding life events e.g. friends' birthdays	5.26 (2 Females)
Following trends of Facebook use	5.26 (1 Female, 1 Male)
Getting to know friends better such as their preferences, their characteristics, etc.	5.26 (2 Females)
Improving their language (English) skill by playing games or reading foreign friends' statuses	5.26 (2 Females)
Creating business opportunities through Facebook pages	2.63 (1 Female)

Table 1. Emergent sub-themes and percentage of student responses regarding why they love Facebook (N = 38).

The extracted sub-themes were supported by student responses about why they use Facebook which are 'communicating with friends', 'looking at or posting photos', 'entertainment', 'finding out about planning events', 'sending or receiving messages', 'making or reading wall posts', 'getting to know people better', 'getting contact information', 'presenting oneself to others through the content' (Pempek et al., 2009); the themes emerged from the question "To what extent do young adults use social

networking sites (MySpace and Facebook) to fulfil their needs and wants?" which are 'efficient communication', 'convenient communication', 'curiosity about others', 'popularity', and 'relationship formation and reinforcement' (Urista, 2009); and social reasons for using social networking sites that are 'keeping in touch with friends they do not see often', 'because all their friends had accounts', 'keeping in touch with relatives and family', and 'making plans with friends they see often' (Subrahmanyam et al., 2008).

Above sub-themes were then grouped into main themes using Maslow's hierarchy of needs and U&G, to draw clear conclusion about why young people use Facebook. However, this does not necessary mean that all types of needs according to the theories would be extracted as main themes.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: Physiological Needs, Love Needs, Self-Esteem Needs, and Self-Actualization Needs

Not surprisingly, similar to many reports about reasons of Facebook usage, the major force driving Facebook usage of students are love needs. According to Kim (2000), *social needs* (or love needs) are the needs to belong to the community as a whole, and to be subgroups within the community. Thirty two respondents use Facebook *to communicate with their community* which are their acquaintances, their relatives, their friends, and their lecturers. This reason is supported by following statements: "I use it to contact acquaintances, relatives, or long-distance friends." [F#3]; "I can contact with my instructors, such as asking questions and sharing learning materials." [F#15]; Two respondents use Facebook *to get to know people in their community more*. A student wrote that "I can know what our friends' favorite groups are or where our friends are from."[F#14]. Twenty nine respondents use Facebook *to update news from people in their community* (friends, groups of interests, their country, the world). The following examples show this reason: "I can use it to update my friends' news." [F#4]; "I use it to follow political actions of some groups of politicians." [F#3]; "I use it to follow political situations and what is going on in the world." [F#5]. Two respondents use Facebook *to show that they follow the community trends*. One of them wrote that "I use it, because it is trendy." [M#6]. A respondent uses Facebook *to connect to the community* such as joining entertainment activities. She wrote that "I can play games with my friends." [F#21]. This theme is supported by using Facebook to maintain previous relationship (Ellison et al., 2006; Lampe et al., 2006; Pempek,

2009), the importance of affective social identity (Cheung and Lee, 2010), need to belong's influences on attitudes toward SNSs (Gangadharbatla, 2008), an individual's need for communication, need for belongingness (Hill and Dunbar, 2003), and popularity of Facebook (Pempek et al., 2009).

Secondly, students use Facebook due to their physical needs. ***Physical needs*** are defined as 'system access; the ability to own and maintain one's identity while participating in a web community.' (Kim, 2000). They are the needs of food, clothing, shelter, and health too. Fourteen respondents use Facebook *to show their self-identity and to share stories about their life experiences*. This reason is shown by the following statements: "I express myself by writing an article or showing my status." [F#1]; "I can show my photos and share them to other people." [F#2]. Six respondents use Facebook *to show their point of views*. Two of them wrote that "It is a place to share opinions, such as opinions about the institution we are studying in, goods, services and politics, etc." [F#3]; "I can share my opinions." [F#8]. In terms of mental health, twenty five respondents use Facebook *to relieve stresses* by playing games, using applications, chatting with friends, etc. Following quotes support this reason: "Facebook has many relaxing games and applications to play or use." [M#11]; "I use notes in Facebook to express my feelings or to tag." [F#6]. A student uses Facebook *to make money*. She wrote that "It is a way to do business, and in this case shop owners can save the rental fee." [F#17]. This theme conforms to the relationship of participating in an online community and defining a person's member identity (Arrasvuori et al., 2008), the opportunity of displaying extensive personal profiles, reducing stress and increasing emotional support after communicating between social network members (Acar, 2008), and using SNSs let others "know about me" (Pempek, 2009).

Third theme is self-esteem needs. ***Self-esteem needs*** are the ability to contribute to the community, and be recognized for those contributions (Kim, 2000). Thirteen respondents use Facebook *to set new groups of interests for community, to schedule appointments, or to create events and letting other people join*. Two students wrote that "I can create activity groups." [F#16]; "I use it to make hanging-out or activity appointments" [F#6]. Twenty respondents use Facebook *to help friends in game playing, to share some information to peers, and to share resources of others*. The following examples illustrate this reason: "Facebook has many games to play, which I and my friends can help each other by giving gifts and we can compete against each

other to increase levels." [M#2]; "I use it when I want to inform my friends in some occasions." [M#3]; "I shared photos, videos and links from other websites." [M#6]. This theme is supported by Evaluative Social Identity (ESI) for explaining intentional social action in online social networks (Cheung and Lee, 2010).

Lastly, the self-actualization needs theme was extracted. *Self-actualization needs* are defined as the ability to take on a community role that develops skills and opens up new opportunities (Kim, 2000). Eleven respondents use Facebook *to take an opportunity to meet new friends or new friends who have similar interests*. The following statements support this reason: "I use it to make new friends in my university." [M#4]; "I can get to know my friends' friends, so I can know more people, no matter what their genders and ages are or where they live." [M#5]; "I can know more people sharing common interests by joining groups in Facebook." [F#2]. This theme is confirmed by a need of social browser who use the site to find people or groups online with whom they would want to connect offline (Lampe et al., 2006), the opportunity to browse the student body of the same school and to establish or to join groups of their interest. (Acar, 2008), and using social networks to look for new people (Subrahmanyam et al., 2008). Two respondents use Facebook *to improve their language skills*. This reason is shown by the following statements: "I can practice my English when playing Facebook games." [F#7]; "I can keep in touch with my friends living abroad. This helps me practice my English at the same time." [F#20].

However, there is no emergent theme about security and safety needs from data analysis. Security and safety needs are defined as protection from hacking and personal attacks; the sense of having a 'level playing field'; ability to maintain varying levels of privacy (Kim, 2000).

Uses and Gratifications: Social Integration, Personal identity, Informativeness, Entertainment, and Irritation

Social integration is the most vital reason behind Facebook adoption. *Social integration* is establishing and maintaining contact with others (Kobia, 2011). Forty two respondents use Facebook *to keep in touch with friends (both old friends and new friends), relatives, and people with common interests, etc*. A respondent wrote that "In the past, it was not possible to contact someone if he/she had changed his/her phone number, but in the present day Facebook allows us to contact others everywhere and every time with no boundaries. In addition, we can save phone expense." [F#4].

Another student stated that "It allows people sharing common interests to conveniently contact each other." [F#3]. Ten respondents use Facebook *to join events (created by others) or to join game playing with others*. A respondent wrote that "Facebook has events asking us to join." [F#6]. This theme is supported by socializing need for using Facebook Groups (Park et al. 2009), interpersonal communication satisfaction affecting SNSs use of individuals (Urista, 2009), and social interaction as the gratifications sought from YouTube (Yue, 2008), sociability (Quan-Haase and Young, 2010), and socializing which drives engagement with MySpace (Boyd, 2008). Informativeness is the second theme driving Facebook use of adolescents. ***Informativeness*** is the extent to which the Web provides users with resourceful and helpful information (Luo, 2002). Twenty three respondents use Facebook *to gain information about friends' regular updates or group activity updates*. A student stated that "Facebook has an update page to let me know what people are doing via photos and videos that they uploaded." [F#4]. Another student wrote that "I can know what is going on in clubs or groups that I participated in, and I can more conveniently join their activities." [F#15]. Two respondents use Facebook *to deeper retrieve information about friends' characteristics*. A student wrote that "I use it to learn my friends' habits and personalities." [F#15]. Fourteen respondents use Facebook *to get news updates*. This reason is illustrated by following statements: "I use it to follow news, especially political news which is updated very quickly." [F#5]; "I use it to follow news, as sometimes news in Facebook is updated much faster, but I have to analyze it to get the fact." [F#6]; "I use it to check what is now trendy and to update news. For instance, who were near the place where the red shirt protesters were gathering? Therefore, I can always get the latest news from another channel, apart from television or newspaper." [F#9]. Two respondent uses Facebook *to get reminding information about friends' life events such as birthdays*. This theme conforms to information needs for using Facebook Groups (Park et al. 2009), information seeking as the gratifications sought from YouTube (Yue, 2008), an importance of social information (information about what activities and events peers are involved in, who is dating whom, what their friends' current status is, and what general news is important in the community) (Quan-Haase and Young, 2010), browsing the student body of the same school (Acar, 2008), and teen girls' information needs towards the virtual fashion worlds (Kobia, 2011).

Thirdly, entertainment theme is extracted. ***Entertainment*** is the extent to which the web media is fun and entertaining to media users (Luo, 2002). Like physical needs in terms of entertaining or relieving tension, twenty five respondents use Facebook *to play games, to chat with friends for fun and relaxation*. Following quotes indicate this reason: "The FarmVille game is a perfect place for women to relieve their stress." [M#1]; "Facebook has a lot of enjoyable games to play after studying, and it has many quizzes for people who like them, including absurd or fortune-telling quizzes, so many people get attracted to playing Facebook." [F#4]; "Facebook has many fun creativity-driven games, such as Happy Island and Farmville, which players can take a short period of time in a day to continuously play and proudly see their progress." [M#12]. This theme is supported by entertainment needs for using Facebook Groups (Park et al. 2009), entertainment and relaxation as the gratifications sought from YouTube. (Yue, 2008), pastime (comprises nine items measuring university students' use of Facebook as a means for getting away from responsibilities and pressures and providing a form of entertainment) gratification obtained from Facebook (Quan-Haase and Young, 2010), entertainment driving engagement of teens with MySpace Boyd, 2008), entertainment influence on the virtual fashion worlds (Kobia, 2011), and playfulness as the strongest predictor of SNSs actual usage (Sledgianowski and Kulviwat, 2008).

Fourthly, like physical needs in terms of the ability to own and maintain one's identity, personal identity is also discovered as the gratification of Facebook use. ***Personal identity*** involves learning about self (Kobia, 2011). Twenty respondents use Facebook *to express their thoughts, feelings, or experiences*. Following statements illustrate this reason: "I can share my experience with my friends, such as what we were doing in that day or where we were hanging out." [F#8]; "Everyone can express his/her opinions about uploaded photos and videos." [F#12]. This theme is confirmed by self-status seeking needs for using Facebook Groups (Park et al. 2009).

Lastly, irritation theme is emerged since three of thirty eight respondents mentioned disadvantages of Facebook usage as privacy invasion, wasting times, and health problems after using it. ***Irritation*** is defined as the extent to which the Web is messy and irritating to surfers (Kobia, 2011). Following statements show this reason: "It is a massive data source enabling other people to obtain your information. From a bad habit that you easily accept a new friend, your details or stuff, such as photos and gossips, can be posted on Facebook without any typing from you." [M#1]; "If

Facebook becomes part of your daily life and you cannot live without it, it will waste your time." [M#3]. The one who did not use Facebook also described that "I am afraid that I will get so addicted to it that I will not have time to do something else, because normally I am not a hard-working person. If I want to play it, it will be difficult for me to get a laptop to do so, as I do not have one of my own. In addition, in my opinion, it is not necessary for my life, and I always get terrible headache and eye ache when using a computer for a long time." [F#19].

4.2   Research Limitations

The limitation of this study is that answers were collected only from freshmen or sophomores of a university, Thammasat Business School, Thammasat University. This limitation may undermine the generalization of findings. It would be also desirable to find out whether the results are consistent with the results from other geographic areas or the results from utilizing other social network systems. Hence, further research should be carried in other Asian countries or should explore different social media tools. However, this study adds an interesting point of what make adolescents use Facebook.

4.3   Social Implications

Findings highlight reasons why young people love using Facebook so much. Results reveal the importance of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and U&G theory in adopting Facebook. Psychological needs in terms of socializing reasons are the main force of youths' Facebook usage, especially to online keep in touch with their offline friends. From the Maslow's hierarchy of needs aspect, students use Facebook to meet their social or love needs (to communicate with their community, to get to know people in their community more, to update news which is from people in their community, to show that they follow community trends, and to connect them to the community), physical needs (to show their self-identity, to share stories about their life experiences, to show their point of views, to relieve stress, or to make money), self-esteem needs (to set new group of interests for community, to make appointments or to create events and letting other people join, to help friends in game playing, to share some information to peers, and to share resources from others), and self-actualization needs (to take an opportunity to meet new people who have similar interests or to improve their language skills) respectively. According to the Maslow's theory, lower-level

needs have to be filled before needs in the higher level. Nevertheless, since Facebook is a kind of social tools which is aimed at creating networks for group socialization, love needs become the most important key. In terms of U&G, adolescents use Facebook due to social integration reasons (to keep contact with old friends, new friends, relatives, and people with common interests, to join events (created by others), or to join game playing with others), information reasons (to gain information about friends' regular updates or group activity updates, to deeper retrieve details about peers, to get news updates, and to get alert information about friends' life events such as birthdays), entertainment reasons (to play games, to chat with friends for fun and relaxation), and personal identity reasons (to express their thoughts, feelings, or experiences) consecutively. These findings can be applied by social network systems' developers to build more participation of youths in online communities by improving design or can be applied by parents or teachers to make less use of Facebook by offline fulfilling these needs to adolescents.

5.0   Conclusion

Facebook is the most famous online community in this century. Many business opportunities and various kinds of contents have been emerged there, both good and bad contents. Because the majority of users are in adolescent age, stakeholders should understand reasons behind the Facebook adoption. Qualitative study in Thai context indicates that youths apply Facebook to fulfil their love needs and self-focusing needs. They use Facebook to online keep contact with offline friends, people, or communities. Many students use Facebook to express their identity or to fulfil their needs of happiness (relaxation and entertainment). Information on Facebook is another key making youths love online social networks since they can get faster information such as friends' updates, group appointments, events, news update, etc. with free of charges. However, the correctness of information should be placed importance. Some respondents prefer to use Facebook only as necessary due to its irritation effects such as lack of privacy and a waste of time.

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