Winter 12-8-2014

Testing The Antecedents of Well-Being and Its Effects on Loyalty: A Comparison Between Taiwan and Sweden College Students

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TESTING THE ANTECEDENTS OF WELL-BEING AND ITS EFFECTS ON LOYALTY: A COMPARISON BETWEEN TAIWAN AND SWEDEN COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Cross-cultural well-being is more critical to a social network service (SNS) development, since this kind of services need to help their users to builds social skills throughout the world. The purpose of this study is to investigate the antecedents of well-being and its effects on loyalty cross-culture differences between Sweden and Taiwan students on SNS. In the model, the well-being is divided into two formative second-order constructs: personal well-being and social well-being. personal well-being is driven by self-acceptance, autonomy, purpose in life, and personal growth, and social well-being is driven by positive relations with others and environmental mastery. A cross-cultural survey will be conducted to valid data from Sweden and Taiwan. The insights from this study will be expected to benefit social sellers in implementing more effective marketing strategies to foster brand loyalty.

Keywords: Social network services, perceived interactivity, personal well-being, social well-being, loyalty

INTRODUCTION

Social network service is known as an Internet service. Through social tool, it creates meaningful and valuable relationships, including friendship, family, hobby, and activity [1]. With the development of Internet technology today, traditional Internet social tools which include chat forums and newsgroups [2] have invented many functions that are more useful for interactions. Such as blogs, fantasy environments, and social networks [3][4]. Among these functions, social network service is the most popular one and develops the most rapidly [2]. Especially Facebook, founded in 2004, advanced more quickly [5]. About 90 percent of college students have the accounts of Facebook. Therefore, college students now highly used Facebook to expand interpersonal relationship and hobbies [6] However, the great developments of social network service make most of the industries work hard to run this type of platform in order to maintain the relationship with customers, get publicity, and have good reputations. As a result, the purpose of this research is to comprehend the factors which influence the loyalty of college students to social network service.

After Ryff put forward the concept of that happiness is a beautiful life in 1982, Sachs、Layard and Helliwell submitted World Happiness Report in 2012. Because of the two reports, people gradually think highly of the importance of well-being. The range of well-being is so wide that many concepts explored from views of psychology [8][9][11], economy [12][10], and sociology [13][14] developed. The research of social network service rarely discusses well-being and it only sets subjective well-being as a single index [15][16][17]. However, the complexity of well-being needs multi-index notation which is adaptable to measure virtual on-line well-being. Besides, the theory of well-being is formed of the essential cultural belief of people [18][19]. In western society, people usually consider well-being as a personal feeling that is positive and subjective. On the other hand, people in oriental society regard well-being as a kind of mentally joy and comfort [20]. Owing to the differences of Eastern and Western culture, the well-beings of western society has been larger than eastern one [21]. Nevertheless, 40.4 percent of population around the world use the Internet and as the pace of life gets faster and faster with higher working pressures, people nowadays would like to recreate a more satisfying life as a "Second Life" through the Internet. Consequently, this research considers that real and virtual well-beings are different and intends to contrast the online Eastern and Western well-beings.

Internet around the world has developed since 1993 and the users constitute from 0.3 percent to 40.4 percent of the world population in 2014 [22]. About 92 percent of the population in Sweden uses the Internet. According to Eurostat [23], the scales of using high speed broadband network in Sweden is the highest among Europe (87%). Almost half of Swede has Facebook account. In terms of the research, the main purposes of Swede to use Facebook are to show encouragement, let friends know that they are cared by the users, and visit profiles of friends. The secondary aims are keeping in touch with friends, viewing the status, and visiting friends of friends [24]. In addition, according to the investigation of Taiwan Network Information Center, TWNIC (TWNIC ,2014), the population that accesses the net is 77.6 percent of the population in Taiwan and people who use the broadband to surf the Internet apply social network the most often. The top three reasons of that 64.32 percent of Taiwanese use social network are understanding the statuses of friends (61.49%), killing time (33.43%), and sharing feelings (28.50%). Therefore, the functions people use are mainly looking through essays or news (70.46%), then posting photos or passages (42.64%), checking in (23.06%), and playing games (22.01%). In conclusion, Swede uses social network to connect interpersonal relationship, but in Taiwan, the major purpose is the amusement. As a result, the behaviors of using the Internet are different in the two countries. The research would like to explore the distinct interactive behaviors on social network of Eastern and Western in order to understand how they influence well-being.

The past on-line study of loyalty primarily investigated customers and brand loyalty for marketing aspect [25][26][[27]. It considered satisfaction degree [28][29][30] and reliance [26][25][31] as the biggest index that affects the loyalty. However,

there are studies pointing out that satisfaction degree and reliance do not really promote the loyalty of customers [32][33][34]. This research considers the users use the social network to get more happiness in life. Therefore, this research hopes to improve the loyalty to social network of the users in the world by contrasting the distinctions of Eastern and Western culture.

PROPOSITION DEVELOPMENT

Cultural components：Individualism and collectivism

Culture means a kind of standard that includes the truth, the goodness, the beauty and efficiency to discriminate different life styles [35]. In order to describe the distinctions of intercultural behaviors, customs, and values, individualism and collectivism are important standards [36][37]. Individualism is a type of slack social structure and everyone expectably takes care of themselves and their direct relatives [37].Collectivism is defined as a set of emotions about solidarity, faith, behavioral intention, behaviors, paying attention to others, cooperation, and cultivating affections with others [40][41].

Western culture is usually individualism. They consider themselves as an individuality that emphasizes personal demands. On the contrary, eastern culture usually belongs to collectivism. They highlight the benefit clusters [45]. In the different societies, although people are in a group, their emotions are independent and the well-being is a kind of subjective experiences. As a result, this research intends to contrast how Eastern and Western culture differences lead to distinct happiness of social network users and produce different loyalties to social network platform.

Well-being

Well-being means individuals follow the self-concluded standard to evaluate the quality of life, the best psychological function and experience [61][62]. Because well-being represents multidimensional model [63], it mainly relates to individual and social aspects [64]. Hence, this research divides well-being into two kinds of formative second-order construct : personal well-being and social well-being. First of all, personal well-being is a type of stable cognition and emotional experience that are produced by using self-concluded standard to value the qualities of their own lives [65]. Furthermore, social well-being is evaluating the situations and managerial capacity of an individual in the society [13]. According to the related definition of the past documents and after the discussions of the experts, this research classifies the model of psychological well-being that is defined by Ryff and Singer [63] into the two formative second-order construct of this research. The first-order construct of personal well-being includes self-acceptance, autonomy, purpose in life, and personal growth. On the other hand, the first-order construct of social well-being consists of positive relationships with others and environmental mastery. Hope this multidimensional model of well-being is able to explore how social network service influences the well-being of the users.

Perceived interactivity

Newhagen et al is the first person who raised perceived interactivity, which means the users make use of their own experiences and perceive the interactions between people to set up the presence in the society [55]. Interactivity is defined as a potential ability that measures the mass media and mutual communication between the sources of information and the receiving terminal. Accordingly, the users are able to accept the information from the technology passively and give feedback to change the process of further information. Therefore, the communication between the dispatcher of the information and the acceptor is allowed to have the exchange interaction. The documents indicates that interactivity is a multidimensional conception. Song and Zinkhan confirmed that executional factors are able to affect perceived interactivity and discovered that interactivity is capable of predicting the effectiveness of websites effectively. Hence, we use the five perspectives of perceived interactivity which were proposed by Yang: two-way communication, active control, content richness, synchronicity , and connectedness in order to investigate the influences of these interactivities on the well-being of the users in the social network service.

The characteristic of two-way communication influences the message exchange among people and the explanatory ability to each other. The communication advances the discussions and expressions between users and enhancing the communication can improve the relationship with people. As a result, this research assumes the two-way communication of social network service helps the promotion of social well-being. Besides, two-way communication can improve the interpersonal communications between users and the one between users and websites. This feature makes the users experience the fun and stimulations of the service more easily. Therefore, two-way communication acquires more mentally satisfactions than one-way communication. Hence, we propose two-way communication of social network service affects personal well-being positively.

Proposition 1a: Two-way communication of social network service affects social well-being positively.
Proposition 1b: Two-way communication of social network service affects personal well-being positively.

Active control can improve the controlling force of the users to their actions. The controlling experiences of the users toward social network advance the familiarity of the users to social network. Therefore, the exploring time of interpersonal relationship is shortened and the sense of identity of the community is strengthened. As a result, we assume the active control of social network service facilitates the promotion of social well-being. In addition, active control means making the users have the independent control toward social network service. Controllability or the feeling of things are controlled is considered as ideal personal psychological condition. The users are able to control the activities on the websites passively and then the conviction of self-efficacy of the users is enhanced. As a result, this lead to higher satisfactions. Therefore, we propose active control of social network service affects personal well-being positively.

Proposition 2a: Active control of social network service affects social well-being positively.
Proposition 2b: Active control of social network service affects personal well-being positively.

Content richness is the richness of the information provided by social network. Based on the perspective of that the characteristic of content richness promotes the sharing meanings and abundant discussions between users, and then enhancing the relationship of each other. Therefore, we assume the content richness of social network service affects social well-being positively. Besides, content richness can improve the understandability of the users to the content of multimedia, and it includes instant feedback, multiple clues, language variety, and personal focus. Because content richness can reduce the fuzziness of the message, it advances the understandability of the users and then produces good personal feelings. As a result, we propose the content richness of social network service affects personal well-being positively.

Proposition 3a：The content richness of social network service affects social well-being positively.
Proposition 3b：The content richness of social network service affects personal well-being positively.

Synchronicity can advance the instant interactions between the users (e.g. conversations or message exchange), but it do not mean delaying or asynchronous. According to Media Synchronization, people can share more information in the same communicational environment (e.g. social network) and at the same time. Thus, the synchronism improves the interpersonal communications to enhance social satisfaction. As a result, we assume synchronism of social network service improves the promotion of social well-being. Besides, synchronism can also make the users move instantly and precisely. This feature lets the users receive the response from the receiving terminal immediately after inputting messages. Owing to the speed of the website, synchronism of the service connects the expectations of the users. The higher synchronism improves higher satisfactions of the users. Therefore, we propose the synchronicity of social network service affects personal well-being positively.

Proposition 4a： Synchronicity affects social well-being positively.
Proposition 4b： Synchronicity affects personal well-being positively.

Connectedness can improve the connected feelings that are sensed and judged by the users in the interpersonal interaction. With the increase of the connected ways of sharing with each other, the joyful feelings of individuals to the society are also raised. Hence, we assume connectedness of social network service improves social well-being. In addition, connectedness is also able to help the development of empathy of the users in the interpersonal relationship and make the needs of human nature (e.g. love and respects) be satisfied. Therefore, the users increase the personal required motivation in the interpersonal relationship through connectedness of the service. As a result, we propose the connectedness of social network service affects personal well-being positively.

Proposition 5a：Connectedness affects social well-being positively.
Proposition 5b：Connectedness affects personal well-being positively.

Loyalty

Loyalty is a mentally promise [32] which means in a period of time, customers would go back to the same store or website when they need to. Loyalty is also defined as a future promise that the customers would purchase or persistently use a certain product or service. Social well-being is able to exploit the opinions toward the quality of life and improve the intimacy in the interpersonal relationship. Berry, Parasuraman, and Czepiel believed that establishing good relationship can increase the loyalty. Hence, if the users are in the specific environment (e.g. social network), they can have the positive emotions because of the good interactions between users. Then the loyalty is increased. In conclusion, this research proposes social well-being affects loyalty positively.

Proposition 6：Social well-being affects loyalty positively.

Personal well-being is the positive and subjective feelings of a person toward life experiences. When the users have a more cheerful experience than what they have expected, they would like to experience once again. Therefore, the emotions the users perceived affect loyalty greatly. To sum up, if the users acquire a positive emotional experience on social network, they are willing to try again and raising the loyalty. As a result, this research proposes personal well-being affects loyalty positively.

Proposition 7：Personal well-being affects loyalty positively.

CONCLUSION

Social network services are becoming important tools for creating user second life to socialize and connect with others. The purpose of this study is to investigate the antecedents of well-being and its impacts on loyalty cross-culture differences between Sweden and Taiwan students to encourage further researches into how different cultural tendencies of users may react in different ways to SNS. Combining the concepts perceived interactivity and well-being, the study builds an integrated cross-cultural loyalty model. The results will reveal East-West cultural differences: the east (Taiwan) belongs to collectivism and the west (Sweden) is individualism countries. There are several implications as following. First, online well-being in the East is higher than in the West. Second, different interactivities are effects on well-being cross-culture differences between Sweden and Taiwan students on SNS. Third, two kinds of well-being constructs (personal and social) have different influences

cross-cultural loyalty on SNS. Finally, an integrated cross-cultural loyalty model can be effective to predict the impact on cross-cultural social network services. Therefore, these insights from this study could benefit social sellers in implementing more effective marketing strategies to foster brand loyalty.

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