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Motives and Consequences of Social Network Sites: Teachers in Greece A Case Study

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Abstract

In the last fifteen years and especially during the pandemic of the COVID-19 virus, there have been an intense use of Social Network Sites (SNS) by all age, social and professional groups. Logically, that teacher could not escape from this trend. The purpose of this work is to evaluate the hedonic use, utilitarian use, socializing, procrastination, job escapism, work productivity of the specific professional team from the use of SNS. For this reason, a questionnaire consisting of 30 questions was created which was given to a sample of 351 teachers (N=351, Cronbach's alpha=0.90) in Greece. The results showed that the strongest motivation for the use of SNS is job escapism. It became apparent that the negative effects are associated with escapism and socializing, while hedonic use seems to be more linked with procrastination.

Keywords: Social Network Site, Utilitarian, Escapism, Socializing, Procrastination.

Introduction

It is commonly accepted that the use of Social Network Sites (SNS) such as Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Instagram plays an important role in the lives of millions of people (Griffiths et al., 2014). Using them allows social interaction between people through an online environment (Kus & Griffiths, 2012). For some, they are an important tool for solving problems both professionally and personally, for others they are a way of fun, and for another percentage, they are a gateway to access information (Griffiths et al., 2014). The user has a personal profile which he/she manages and in this way he/she can connect with other users and exchange ideas, information, content (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). According to Kus & Griffiths (2012), SNSs are essentially virtual communities. Access to them is possible through several devices such as mobile phones, tablets, personal computers, laptops, smart TVs.

Materials and Methods

Literature Review

The SNS can be used for multiple purposes, namely for entertainment, personal contentment, communication, and professional usage. There is a majority of motives that lead to their extensive use. Those motives will be thoroughly analyzed in this report. Research has shown that the use of the SNS can take the form of escapism that is a way to escape reality, as well that of entertainment, information sharing, and social relations (Oliver & Raney, 2011). Lin et al., 2014; Cao et al; 2005; De Wulf et al., 2006, have proven that the use of the SNS is highly linked with pleasure, enjoyment, and recreation. Moreover, Yen (2011) has also evidenced that the SNS's increasing gaining in popularity is defined by factors that have to do with contentment and fun. According to Ernst et al., (2013), the contentment factors play a significant role in the users' constant usage of the SNS.

Furthermore, the usability of the SNS constitutes an important factor in their constant use (Mantymaki and Riemer, 2011). Several studies that focused on the use of the SNS for consumerism have demonstrated that the



different types of informational systems and the varied use of the SNS affect usability and contentment (Kim et al., 2012; Lopez and Ruiz, 2011; Cotte et al., 2006; Hartman et al., 2006).

Elida et al., (2019) has evidenced that usability motives include usefulness, support, and recognition, whereas contentment motives have to do with positive experiences, recreation, appeal, and happiness. A research about the Internet, conducted by LaRose & Eastin (2004), has shown that the pleasure of forming online social relations through the SNS derives from the use of the Internet per se.

There are different definitions for the term Socializing. According to Cacioppo & Patrick, (2008) sharing the same interest, connecting with people, and keeping in contact with them is Socializing. As a result, those users can be motivated to share content (Cheung et al., 2011; Sheldon et al., 2011; De Vries et al., 2017). To Khan's mind (2016), by commenting on sites, such as Youtube that allows its users to search, share, and reproduce movies and videos, the users are finding themselves in a position to socialize, and exchange ideas based on the content of the video.

SNS are quite popular among younger ages because of the feeling of self-expression and belonging that can be created (Hartmann et al., 2017). Aguenza et al., (2012) mentioned that employees who can connect with others through Social Network Sites can become more efficient at their work as they can solve problems that occur. This is more likely to happen when people are outgoing and social (Agouenza et al., 2012). Steinfield et al., (2008); Ellison et al., (2007) believe that SNS offer pleasure to their users, and as a result, they can be more outgoing and social.

Manfredo et al. (1996) claim that the urge to escape reality is led by our need to rejuvenate, feel relieved, and decompress from our daily routines. Escapism derives from our engaging in activities that offer a way out from the problems and pressure that are part of our daily routines (Wu & Holsapple, 2014; Hellström et al., 2012; Smock et al., 2011).

McQuail (2005) regards entertainment as crucial since it entails relaxation, pleasure, less anxiety, and a getaway from reality. Moreover, Diddi & LaRose (2006), have concluded that the gratification granted by information-sharing, recreation, and escapism are, indeed, intertwined with the use of the Internet. To Hoffmann et al.'s (2017) mind, the SNS offers a getaway from reality that is really important in today's world. There is a wide variety of online platforms that can fit everyone's needs, motives, and desires.

The frequent use of SNS leads to some dire consequences such as procrastination and work productivity (Gougas & Malinova, 2020). Procrastination is a form of irrational behavior that is linked to characteristics, such as low self-esteem and impulsiveness (Steel, 2007; Reinecke & Hofmann, 2016). According to Sirois & Pychyl (2013), procrastination has to do with a person's failure to self-regulate and self-control. Thus, they find themselves unable to complete their tasks. Even though procrastination offers some type of instant gratification, ultimately it leads to anxiety, tediousness, and disappointment (Hofmann et al., 2017). Indeed, procrastination is considered to be one of the many causes of anxiety in the workplace (Beheshtifar et al., 2011). Simultaneously, the subsequent delay that comes with it entails low academic performance, a decline in self-esteem as well as an increase in disappointment and anxiety, not only for the person that procrastinates but also for those that are linked with them.

Research conducted by Hinsch and Sheldon (2013) has evidenced that the users who spend too much time online, may unconsciously sacrifice the gratification that real human contact offers and end up procrastinating more because they are engulfed in striving to virtually connect with other people. Indeed, because the users who procrastinate are actually drawn by it, sometimes fail to realize the repercussions that come with it (Reinecke & Hofmann, 2016).

Users who procrastinate have to cope with time lapsing and failure to meet deadlines (Flett et al., 2012; Sirois & Kitner, 2015). Procrastination results in anxiety, negative thoughts, and feelings as people cannot live up to their everyday commitments (Gougas & Malinova, 2020).

According to Przepiorka et al., (2016), procrastination affects younger people the most. What is more, workwise, those who are liable to procrastinate, tend to be relatively low-paid and more likely to remain unemployed longer (Nguyen et al., 2013). Seman (2014) has concluded that work productivity and procrastination are

intertwined since the former is highly affected by the time allotted on the SNS since user prioritizes their use over work.

Should a company allow the employees to have access to the SNS, it may come up with five possible dangers (Wilson, 2009). Those are low work productivity, financial loss, data leak from the staff, fraud, and free access to the company's network. The latter can happen because sometimes the passwords used, are obsolete and easy to get hacked.

Fusi & Feeney (2016) claim that public corporations may watch over and record their employees' online activity. For instance, they may check the latter's emails, block access to the SNS and personal websites, or watch over data transfers and their online activities in general.

On the other hand, according to Aguenza et al., (2012), although for most the social media sites are a waste of time and can prevent us from engaging in more fruitful activities, they can increase work productivity. Kim et al., (2015) state that communication is of vital importance to improve work productivity. Should the employees wish to achieve the best results in their workplace, stay up to date, and be more efficient, they need to be in constant contact with their colleagues.

The SNS allows the employees to communicate directly with their colleagues, irrespectively of the hierarchy at the workplace. This results in their being more efficient and productive (Lee & Ma, 2012). Research has shown that the use of social media as an educational tool can, indeed, improve both the employees' and the students' performance because it offers them the chance to participate in the learning process (Alshuaibi et al. 2018). Controlled use of the SNS can increase work productivity, because they allow the formation of groups that can enable the exchange of ideas (Arif and Kanwal, 2016).

HYPOTHESIS

The following questions are checked with the help of the questionnaire:

1. Why teachers are led to use SNS?
2. There are consequences from the use of SNS?
3. What is the correlation between the motivations for using SNS and their consequences of using it?
4. Are teachers' lives affected by the use of SNS?

For these questions to be answered, a questionnaire was distributed to teachers in different schools throughout Greece. This questionnaire deals with the reasons why educators seek to be entertained through social media sites. In addition to that, the subsequent consequences from the constant use of these sites are dealt as well.

It consists of 30 questions. The 25 questions refer to 6 dimensions (variables) of the use of SNS such as Hedonic use, Utilitarian Use, Socializing, Job escapism, Procrastination, and Work Productivity. The first four dimensions belong to the reasons for the use of SNS by teachers while Procrastination and Work Productivity are characterized as effects of the use of SNS (Gougas & Malinova, 2020b). The first four questions were about demographic data such as sex (male/female), age (30-44, 45-54, 55 and more) educational status (bachelor, master, doctorate), family status (single/married/divorced) and the fifth questions were about the social network site that is used by the participant.

Table 1: Questionnaire

No.	Question	Variable
6	I think that spending time on the SNS is enjoyable	Hedonic
7	I think that spending time on the SNS is fun	Hedonic
8	Using the SNS relaxes me	Hedonic
9	By using the SNS, I become more productive at work	Utilitarian
10	The use of the SNS improves my productivity	Utilitarian



11	I think that the SNS are useful for work related activities	Utilitarian
12	The use of the SNS makes me more efficient at work	Utilitarian
13	They offer a getaway from classroom-related problems	Job Escapism
14	The SNS offers a getaway from the problems caused by my superiors at work	Job Escapism
15	They offer a getaway from worries and unpleasant work related situations	Job Escapism
16	The SNS helps me put all my work related problems aside	Job Escapism
17	Though the SNS I can communicate with people who we share the same educational interests with	Socializing
18	Through the SNS I can be in contact with people who share the same work-related interests and problems as me	Socializing
19	Through the SNS I feel connected with others	Socializing
20	Through the SNS I can keep in touch with people who have the same mindset as me	Socializing
No.	Question	Consequence
21	Even though I have to meet deadlines, I find myself engaging in other activities	Procrastination
22	Sometimes I postpone my scheduled obligations	Procrastination
23	Frequently, I do not finish my assignments on time, even though I could have done so	Procrastination
24	Usually, I fail to complete my scheduled tasks in a day's time	Procrastination
25	I have come to realize that rarely do I complete time-consuming tasks on time	Procrastination
26	In the past 7 months, how often, do you think, there was a delay in the completion of your tasks or it took you longer to complete them?	Work Productivity
27	In the past 7 months, how often do you think that you failed to finish your scheduled assignments?	Work Productivity
28	In the past 7 months, how often do you think that you failed to suggest new ideas and work on them?	Work Productivity
29	In the past 7 months, how often do you think that you forgot to respond to a request?	Work Productivity
30	How often do you think that you had difficulty in concentrating on your work-related goals?	Work Productivity

Sample

In the survey 351 teachers from primary and secondary schools participated. They come from Thessaly, Greece and more particularly from Trikala, Larisa, and Karditsa. 234 of them are women (66.67 %) and 117 of them are



men (33.33%). 34.19% of them (120 people) are aged 30 to 44, 142 people (40.46%) are 44-54 years of age, whereas 25.35% are over 55 years old (89 people). 165 of them are Bachelor degree holders (47.01%), 163 (46.44%) are holders of at least one Master degree, while 23 of them (6.55%) are doctorate holders. 252 of those questioned are married (71.28%), 63 are unmarried (17.95%), whereas only 10.25% (36 people) are divorced.

The survey took place in June 2020. The questionnaires were distributed to the schools electronically. An email was sent to the school units of the aforementioned areas and the principals forwarded it to the teachers of schools. In total 351 people anonymously completed them.

For all the variables, except for the one that concerns work productivity, a Likert 5-like scale was used. Specifically: 1= I disagree, 2= I partially disagree, 3=neither do I agree, nor I disagree, 4=I partially agree, 5= I agree. As far as the work productivity variable is concerned, a Likert 5-like scale was used as well. The Likert scale for Work productivity was: 1=Never, 2=Occasionally, 3=Sometimes, 4=Frequently, 5=Almost always. All the questions concerning variables are closed type ones.

The reliability of the tool was measured based on Cronbach's Alpha coefficient and was found to be 0.90 which also shows the reliability of the measurement. Moreover the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.87 for productivity, 0.85 for procrastination, 0.91 for hedonic use, 0.93 for utilitarian use, 0.86 for socializing, and finally 0.95 for job escapism. According to Gougas and Malinova (2020a) values more than 0.70 show the reliability of the scale. There were no blank answers and all the questionnaires were used for the statistical processing that took place with SPSS 24.0.

Results and Discussion

From the correlation analysis, the conclusion is that using the Internet for pleasure somewhat concerns job escapism ($r = .56, p < .001$) or utilitarian use ($r = .50, p < .001$), while it does not have to do with socializing ($r = .28, p < .01$) or procrastination ($r = .24, p < .01$) that much. Ultimately, using the Internet for pleasure (hedonic use) is not linked with work productivity ($r = .06, p > .1$). However, searching for information online (utilitarian use) is positively linked with socializing ($r = .51, p < .001$) and with job escapism ($r = .62, p < .001$). Procrastination is highly linked with work productivity ($r = .65, p < .001$).

In order to examine the relationship between hedonic use, utilitarian use, job escapism and socializing with work productivity, a regression analysis was applied. The results have shown that multiple R is ten, number which is quite different from 0, $F(4, 351)=4.61, p<.001$). Hedonic use and utilitarian use did not affect work productivity while socializing ($\beta=0.21, t=3.23, p<0.001$) affected productivity while job escapism statically predicted in a negative manner the fluctuation in work productivity ($\beta = -.20, t = -2.77, p < .01$).

Simultaneously, another regression analysis was carried out as well, concerning whether and to what extent procrastination was predicted by using the Internet for pleasure, usefulness and escapism. The results have shown that the multiple R from the regression analysis is 38 which is statistically different from 0. In total, all four variables concerned 14.7% of the fluctuation in procrastination. Out of them, the fluctuation in procrastination was statistically predicted by hedonic use ($\beta = .27, t = 4.19, p < .001$), socializing ($\beta = .33, t = 5.32, p < .001$) and job escapism ($\beta = -.24, t = -3.39, p < .001$). On the contrary, using the Internet for utilitarian use did not statistically affect the fluctuation in procrastination.

Conclusions

Regarding the first question, it was found that Job escapism comprises the main motivation for using SNS with an average value of $M = 3.47$, with respondents agreeing (60% of them) but also, of course, existing people who disagree. Socializing use is the motivation with the largest standard deviation ($SD = 1.08$) which also points out the fact that there was a difference in the answers of the respondents. Both hedonic use and utilitarian use have average values of $M = 2.89$ and $M = 2.78$ respectively and show a neutral trend with a significant, however, percentage of respondents disagreeing. Regarding the socializing use, the average value $M = 2.30$ shows a quite disagreeing trend.

Research conducted by Yen, (2011); Ernst et al., (2013), concludes that it is pleasure that makes social media so popular. This survey has shown that socializing is the main motive behind the popularity of the SNS, followed

by using the Internet for pleasure. Thus, it is evident that the results of these two surveys coincide, stating that pleasure plays a significant role in their popularity. However, even though Ernst et al. (2013)'s survey utilitarian use was the second most popular motive, in this very one it did not play that big of a role. The results of this survey coincide with those by Lee & Ma (2011) and, Hartmann et al. (2017) indicating that socializing plays the most significant role in making the SNS so popular. Subrahmayam & Greenfield, (2008); Dunne et al., (2010) refer to that type of socializing that has to do with keeping in contact with real-life friends. This is, also, proven by Taylor & Kent (2010); Khan, (2016); Yuksel et al., (2016); Steinfield et al., (2008); Ellison et al.; (2007) who state that the use of the SNS boosts socializing, which makes the users feel amused. As far as job escapism is concerned, was linked either with Internet addiction (Kaldo, 2014) or with a bad psychological state (Shiroh, 2016; Alblwi et al., 2019). Research conducted by Gougas and Malinova (2020b) concludes that it is Job Escapism the main motive that makes Social Network Site so popular.

In this very survey, job escapism is the strongest motive behind the use of social media, followed by using the Internet for contentment. However, socializing and utilitarian use were less popular. Surprisingly, most of the answers concerning the motives were neutral, which is quite remarkable, because the participation was high and someone would the answers to vary. Consequently, every each motive is characterized by neutrality and this helps us understand the very motives that lead to this neutrality.

The excessive use of Social Network Sites is not connected with the variable procrastination ($M=2.09$). As a result, it seems that most of the questions seem to disagree (56.1% of them). On the other hand, work productivity is slightly affected by the use of the SNS ($M=2.21$), with most people stating that their work productivity had declined by a quite manner while the 56.7% of the participants answered the option 3 (sometimes) or occasionally (2). These results contradict those by Muller et al., (2020), who stated that procrastination results from the excessive use of the SNS. This fact is quite positive because it indicates that the negative emotions and the bad psychological state are linked with procrastination (Hofmann et al., 2017; Reinecke & Hofmann, 2016; Beheshtifar et al., 2011) and addiction (Kuss et al., 2014) seem to be almost nonexistent among the participants. Moreover, the results concerning work productivity seem to contradict those by Seman, (2014); Shepherd, (2011); Moqbel, (2012); Aguenza et al., (2012), who state that the decline in productivity derived from the excessive use of the SNS highly affects business. Furthermore, Lee & Ma, (2012); Potgieter & Du Plessis, (2009) linked the SNS with non-increased productivity. The increase in productivity is such a debatable issue that we may analyze it further in another survey. It seems that the participants do not experience any negative consequences from the excessive use of the SNS.

As far as using the Internet for hedonic use is concerned, it is somewhat connected with escapism and socializing. It is, further, somewhat linked with utilitarian use and procrastination. Also, job escapism is, to some extent, linked with socializing. Last but not least, socializing is somewhat linked with procrastination and work productivity. Ernst et al., (2013) support the correlation between using the Internet for pleasure and utilitarian use, concluding that these two motives have highly impacted the use of the SNS. Furthermore, the results of this survey verify the research conducted by Warmelink et al, (2009), according to which escapism is associated with procrastination. Apart from that, the findings of this survey agree with those of Beheshtifar et al., (2011) and Alblwio et al., (2019), according to whom, procrastination is linked with work productivity since the anxiety and delay caused by the former can highly affect the latter. Indeed, Nguyen et al., (2013) have associated the correlation between these two motives with relatively low salaries and unemployment.

Nevertheless, the findings of this research bring to the fore new evidence regarding the relation among these motives. It is quite evident that using the Internet for pleasure (hedonic use) is more linked with socializing and escapism than with utilitarian use, with the latter being both linked with socializing and escapism. Therefore, it becomes quite apparent that there is some connection between all these motives. In future research, we will analyze in what ways these motives are related to one another, so that the factors leading to the excessive use of the SNS can become more understandable.

Finally, as far as low work productivity is concerned, it is proven that it derives from the excessive use of social media and that it is, further, connected with escapism. The users' procrastination is affected when hedonic use, escapism, and socializing constitute the main motives behind the use of social media.

According to Hinsch & Sheldon (2013), spending too much time online to socialize, can make the users more susceptible to high procrastination, indicating that the latter is one of the outcomes of socializing. Our findings make it clear that work productivity is affected by escapism. As for procrastination, it is affected by usefulness, socializing, and escapism. However, it seems that escapism is that one motive that has the most consequences, followed by socializing and, ultimately, by hedonic use. For these relations to become more understandable, we need to examine further the elements and the factors that lead to these motives.

To sum up, the general conclusion is that job escapism was the strongest motives, while none of the other motives was that strong for the users, since the findings were quite neutral. Probably, this might be the reason why the participants did not experience any negative effects. Finally, it became apparent that the negative effects are associated with escapism and socializing, while hedonic use seems to be more linked with procrastination.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have declared no conflict of interest exists.

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