



Consumers' motivation and active participation on fashion brand's social networking sites:
Moderating effect of general SNS usage

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Introduction. The emergence of social networking sites (SNS) has changed the way of communication between brands and their consumers (Tsai & Men, 2013). Many fashion brands are aware of the importance of offering brand's SNS. According to previous studies (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001; Kang., et al., 2014), consumers tended to have enhanced brand knowledge when they participated in the brand's SNS actively and active participation also influenced consumers' brand trust and brand commitment. Therefore, it is important to encourage consumers to participate in the brand's SNS community actively. The purpose of this study is to examine consumers' motivations that influence active participation on fashion brands' SNS and to investigate the moderating effect of general SNS usage on the influence of motivations on active participation.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses The use and gratification theory proposes that individuals' media use is motivated by a set of psychological needs. Based on this theory, the key motivators for individual media choices and usage are entertainment, social integration, personal identity, and information. It is also applicable to consumers' SNS usage (Boyd, 2008). In addition to four key motivators, remuneration and empowerment were added in social media literature as motivators (Tsai & Men, 2013). These key motivators were categorized and renamed as functional, social-psychological, hedonic, and monetary motivation using Kang et al.'s (2014) model. Functional motivation describes obtaining information in fashion and the ease of communication. Social-psychological motivation refers both psychological and sociological concepts. It is motivation to find self-identity and to have relationships among SNS users. Hedonic motivation focuses on pleasure, fun, and entertainment. Monetary motivation is to gain economic advantages like discounts or special price breaks. In the present study, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H1: Functional motivation have a positive influence on active participation.

H2: Social-psychological motivation have a positive influence on active participation.

H3: Hedonic motivation have a positive influence on active participation.

H4: Monetary motivation have a positive influence on active participation

H5: The positive relationship between functional motivation and active participation will be stronger among high users of general SNS than low users.

H6: The positive relationship between social-psychological motivation and active participation will be stronger among high users of general SNS than low users.

H7: The positive relationship between hedonic motivation and active participation will be stronger among high users of general SNS than low users.

H8: The positive relationship between monetary motivation and active participation will be stronger among high users of general SNS than low users.

Method The questionnaire was developed from existing measures of the variables. It included functional, socio-psychological, hedonic, monetary motivations, active participation, general SNS usage and demographic information. All items were measured using 5-point Likert type scales. A survey was administered to answer the research questions and test hypotheses. The participants were 217 female undergraduate students attending an university in Seoul, Korea

Results The average age of the sample was 21.93 years old (range 19 to 30 years). To examine hypothesized relationships, a multiple regression was employed. There were positive relationships between functional motivation and active participation ($\beta=.475$, $p<.01$), supporting H1. There were positive relationship between hedonic motivation and active participation ($\beta=.137$, $p<.05$), supporting H3. There were also positive monetary motivation and active participation ($\beta=.163$, $p<.01$), supporting H4. However, social-psychological motivation was not significantly related to active participation, not supporting H2. Two of the interaction effects explaining active participation were found to be statistically significant. First, the interaction terms between functional motivation and general SNS usage were statistically significant ($\beta=.143$, $p<.01$), supporting H5. Second, the interaction terms between monetary motivation and general SNS usage were also statistically significant ($\beta=.096$, $p<.05$), thus supporting H8. However, H6 and H7 were not significant. The moderating effect of general SNS usage was partially detected.

Conclusions. The findings showed female college students in Korea participated actively on fashion brands' SNS when they had functional, hedonic, and monetary motivations but social-psychological motivation was not a factor to encourage active participation. The effects of functional motivation on active participation in the fashion brands' SNS was stronger among students who have high usage of general SNS than students who have low usage. In addition, the positive relationship between monetary motivation and active participation on fashion brands' SNS was stronger among high users of general SNS than low users. Based on the findings, marketers in the fashion brands can develop effective strategies to increase consumers' participation.

References

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