**Global Social Networking Sites and Global Identity: A Three-country Study**

**ABSTRACT**

Drawing on social identity theory and self-verification theory, this study seeks to delineate the relationship between global identity and global social networking sites usage. Despite the significance of users’ motivation in predicting SNS usage, there has been insufficient focus on other potential drivers that are relevant in today’s global and competitive marketplace. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive framework of the role of global identity in shaping SNS behavior through users’ motivation. Empirical evidence from 696 global SNS users in Austria, Indonesia and Thailand are analyzed in order to test the underlying mechanism of the suggested relationship. In addition, findings reveal differences across countries that are indicators of the existence of some country-specific patterns. Finally, this research extends the current literature on digital and international marketing and provides SNS managers with nuanced insights into marketing strategies they should follow in different country contexts.

Keywords: global identity, social networking sites motivation, social networking sites usage, cross country

**1. Introduction**

Globalization has led to an evolving global business environment with a profound impact on both business activities and the consumer landscape (Özsomer, Batra, Chattopadhyay, & Hofstede, 2012). Within this environment, markets and consumers are integrated more than ever before thanks to advances in technology and telecommunications. Previous studies investigating predictors of technology usage have focused on the perceived ease of use and usefulness, as well as on consumer traits. However, recent research suggests that identity-related antecedents, such as self-identity, may be as important as other traditional variables in explaining technology usage (Nysveen, Pedersen & Thorbjorsnsen, 2005; Thorbjorsnsen, Pedersen & Nysveen, 2007). The new business reality has led to the emergence of a global identity to represent consumers’ global orientation (Arnett, 2002; Zhang & Khare, 2009). Global identity stems from consumers’ assimilation in the globalization process and it reflects consumers’ global culture and individuals’ global orientation (Zhang & Khare, 2009).

Existing research indicates that consumers with a strong global identity display a positive disposition towards global brands (Alden, Steenkamp, & Batra, 2006; Zhang & Kare, 2009; Zhou, Teng, & Poon, 2008). This phenomenon has been explained on the basis that the consumption of global brands carries symbolic meanings that aid consumers towards constructing their global identity (Strizhakova, Coulter, & Price, 2011). Apart from the diffusion of global brands, technology and digitalization have also played a major role in the creation and propagation of global consumer culture (e.g. Alden et al., 2006; Cannon & Yaprak, 2002). Consequently, researchers have aimed to investigate how people attempt to construct and express their globally-oriented identity through the use of technology, with empirical findings corroborating the notion of global identity as a driver of technology usage (Westjohn, Arnold, Magnusson, Zdravkovic, & Zhou, 2009).

Although previous studies discuss the effect of global identity on consumer behavior from several perspectives, there has been no research discussing the impact of global identity on the consumption of digital brands. Social networking sites (SNS), in particular, have played a major role in the dissemination of the global orientation culture. At the same time, they represent a unique category of digital brands and offer a fruitful context for international research due to the variety of SNS available worldwide. Global SNS, such as Facebook and Instagram, have all the inherent characteristics of global brands, since they are marketed in multiple countries and enjoy worldwide availability, acceptance and desirability (Steenkamp, Batra and Alden 2003). As such, they are an attractive means of identity construction for users with a global identity. To the best of our knowledge, there has been no study which explains participation in global SNS from the perspective of users’ global identity.

In an attempt to elucidate the role of global SNS towards enhancing their users’ global identification, the present study combines social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2001) and self-verification theory (Stryker & Burke, 2000). Drawing on the common underlying premises of these theoretical perspectives, we are proposing that *(a)* consumers prefer brands associated with a set of identity traits congruent to their own, and *(b)* consumers prefer these brands because they enable them to express their own identity. Thus, we suggest an engagement mechanism that leads from global identity to enhanced usage of global SNS. Specifically, we claim that motivation to participate in global SNS will be boosted by global identity, since participation in global SNS enables users to engage in an identity-consistent behavior. In turn, increased motivation is expected to positively influence actual usage of global SNS. The concept of global identity is therefore advanced as essential in understanding drivers of usage of global SNS, and new insights into this antecedent should be valuable both for industry managers and academic scholars.

The consumption of global brands, and global SNS usage in analogy, are typically more relevant and appreciated in developing economies compared to developed economies, as consumers from the former feel a stronger need to display their global identity by consuming those (Batra, Ramaswamy, Alden, Steenkamp & Ramachander, 2000). Several scholars note that consumers in emerging markets have a particularly strong desire for global elements to construct their identity (Cleveland & Laroche, 2007). Thus, in emerging markets, consumers with a global identity are more prone to using self-identity signals embedded in global brands and are hence more likely to consume those (Strizhakova & Coulter, 2013). Additionally, research has recognized that culture has a profound influence on SNS usage patterns (e.g. Chu & Choi, 2011; Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009; Kim, Sohn, & Khoi, 2011). Consequently, investigating mechanisms that lead to global SNS usage across users from countries that differ substantially in socioeconomic indicators, as well as in cultural norms, will further extend our knowledge on the explanatory power of global identity in the context of digital brands.

To summarize, this study employs a multi-country sample of 696 Facebook and Instagram users from Austria, Indonesia and Thailand and aims to make three contributions to existing literature: *(i)* to extend research on the effect of global identity on consumer behavior by investigating the unexplored case of global SNS usage; *(ii)* to provide insights into the mechanism through which users seek to confirm and further construct their global identity through participation in global SNS; and *(iii)* to explore potential cross-country variations of this mechanism. The paper opens with a review of the literature on identity theory, consumer global identity and SNS motives. The methodology, analysis and results then follow. The paper ends with a discussion of the findings and a concluding section, which highlights significant theoretical and practical implications as well as future research.

**2. Literature review and hypotheses development**

Our research contributes to the international marketing literature by shedding light on a contemporary but unexplored relationship between global consumer identity and global digital brands through the lens of global SNS. In particular, this study aims to investigate the mediating mechanism of three types of consumer motivation most frequently used in the relevant literature (e.g. Westjohn et al., 2009; Li & Lu, 2011), namely hedonic, utilitarian and social motivation. Recent studies have shown the positive effect of hedonic motivation on the intention to use SNSs (Li & Lu, 2011; Malik et al., 2016; Xu et al., 2012; Powell, 2009; Tapscott, 2008). Similarly, research indicates a positive link between utilitarian motivation and engagement with SNSs (Kang & Lee, 2010; Sledgianowski & Kulviwat, 2009), as well as social motivation and SNS usage (Li & Bernoff, 2008; Pfeil et al., 2009; Baker & White, 2010). However, current literature lacks a study that views these three types of motivation (i.e. hedonic, utilitarian, social) holistically in one model. On top of that, relevant research has failed to capture the role of identity-related antecedents of SNS motivation, such as global identity.

In addition, since the literature clearly suggests that consumers use knowledge at the brand level to process information and to make purchase decisions (Low & Lamb, 2000), the global digital brand is the focus of this research endeavor. We base our definition of a global digital brand on Steenkamp et al.’s (2003) operationalization of perceived brand globalness, which builds on consumer perceptions of a brand’s worldwide availability, acceptance and desirability. Thus, global digital brands are characterized by *“global awareness, availability, acceptance and desirability, and are often found under the same name with consistent positioning, image, personality, look, and feel in major markets enabled by standardized and centrally coordinated marketing strategies and programs”* (Özsomer & Altaras, 2008, p. 1). A more recent view of perceived brand globalness by Steenkamp (2014) highlights three key components of what makes a brand global: use of a standardized marketing strategy worldwide, availability in multiple world regions and awareness outside the brand’s customer base. Furthermore, our study follows the digital product classification based on a taxonomic categorization approach (Halkias, 2015; Makri et al., 2018), where global SNS are viewed as a sub-category of global digital brands. Therefore, our research uses Facebook and Instagram as two prominent global SNS that primarily represent global digital brands. Considering that prior research has merely conceptualized SNS as an advertising means with regards to consumer responses to promotional messages on SNS (Kelly et al., 2011), such approaches have failed to investigate the attributes of SNS as global digital brands and, thus, the literature has yet to address important considerations regarding the drivers of SNS usage (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010; Tsai & Men, 2014**)**. Hence, the underlying theoretical framework of this paper builds on the concepts of global identity, global SNS motivation and SNS usage. To conceptualize how the different factors fit together and interrelate, a brief review of the extant literature is presented next. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the study.

*Insert Figure 1 somewhere here*

*2.1. Global identity and global SNS motivation*

The literature acknowledges that people derive a sense of identity from their membership of spatial groups, such as a specific nation (e.g. Blank & Schmidt, 2003) or the entire world (e.g. Zhang & Khare, 2009). This phenomenon, known as location-based identification, was extensively examined by Tu, Khare, & Zhang (2012, p.36), who formally defined global identity as “mental representations in which consumers believe in the positive effects of globalization, recognize the commonalities rather than dissimilarities among people around the world, and are interested in global events”. Therefore, global identity refers to the identification with people around the world. At the same time, the attitude towards an international community is also often referred to as internationalism or cosmopolitanism (Cleveland, Laroche, & Papadopoulos, 2011). Several studies have sought to explain the role of an individual’s group identification in shaping attitudinal responses and favoritism towards brands and global brands in particular.

Social Identity Theory (SIT) describes the relationship between individuals and the social group they feel affiliated to in order to provide explanations as to how memberships can influence individuals’ behavior (e.g. Tajfel & Turner, 2001). In this respect, SIT explains in-group favoritism, or favorable evaluations as well as preferential treatment of people perceived to belong to the same in-group. This in-group favoritism is a result of the intrinsic need for social identity and the need to positively differentiate the in-group from out-groups. This need for positive distinctiveness triggers a sequential process of social categorization, social identification, and social-group comparison, which leads to in-group favoritism (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Therefore, from a SIT perspective (Tajfel, 1978), in-group or social identities reflect group membership, which defines an individual’s self-concept, confers on them a relevant group identity and shapes their cognition and behavior (Tajfel & Turner, 2001).

Global identity can be perceived as a natural consequence of globalization and has led to the emergence of a global consumer culture (Reed *et al.,* 2012). A global identity exists when consumers identify with people around the world and the positive effects of globalization and commonalities outweigh the dissimilarities between people (Zhang & Kare, 2009). Notably, the emergence of a global identity does not necessarily require physical interaction with a global community as it also evolves through interaction with virtual groups or working for a global company (Erez, Lisak, Harush, Glikson, Nouri, & Shokef, 2013).While global identity reflects individuals’ global orientation, global brands are seen as sources of symbolic values, such as status, prestige, social approval, excitement, and modernity (Halkias, Davvetas, & Diamantopoulos, 2016; Steenkamp, Batra, & Alden, 2003; Özsomer *et al*., 2012). In this context, recent studies support the view of an identity-based function of global brands, where consumers view global brands as a medium to express their modern self-image and global identity (Strizhakova & Coulter, 2013; Xie, Batra, & Peng, 2015). In fact, location-based identification puts forward a congruence effect such that global identity typically leads to a preference for global brands (Zeugner-Roth, Zabkar, & Diamantopoulos, 2015).

Scholarly research around SNS users’ motivations is underpinned by the gratification theory, which posits that individuals use SNS in order to meet certain motivation needs, which consequently leads to gratification (e.g. Ko, Cho, & Roberts, 2005; Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009; Joinson, 2008; Dunne, Lawlor & Rowley, 2010; Whiting & Williams, 2013). According to this stream of research, the needs of SNS users include entertainment, information seeking, researching, social interaction and social network browsing (Stafford & Gillenson, 2004; Joinson, 2008; Heinonen, 2011). In fact, scholars investigating SNS motivations classify motives into three distinct categories: *(a)* hedonic motives that imply a need for entertainment, relaxation and emotional relief (Park et al., 2009), *(b)* utilitarian motives that pertain to information seeking/exchange, perceived usefulness (Tsai & Men, 2014); and *(c)* social motives that address the need for social integration and connection (Daugherty, Eastin, & Bright**,** 2008). The above categorization is also in line with a rather inclusive classification of online motives into emotional (hedonic), rational (utilitarian) and social motives, capturing needs for entertainment, information search and knowledge sharing, as well as social interaction and self-expression (i.e. Krishnamurthy & Dou, 2008).

Meanwhile, relevant studies in information technology stress the important role of identity in the consumer decision-making process, as consumers tend to develop attitudes and shape behaviors that reinforce their self-identity (Westjohn et al., 2009; Westjohn, Singh, & Magnusson, 2012). This identity-reinforcing process is also known as self-verification. According to self-verification theory (Swan, 1983), individuals seek to maintain self-consistency by ensuring and defending the stability of their identities. In doing so, people aim to engage in identity-consistent regulation processes and to enact identity-congruent behaviors (Aaker, 2000; Coleman & Williams, 2013; Micevski, Halkias & Herz, 2018; Swan et al., 2004). Against this background, participating in global SNS enables users with a strong global identity to validate their social identity through engaging in identity-consistent behavior. Consequently, in the process of striving for coherence and stability of their global identity, users are expected to display strong motivation to participate in global SNS. Hence, based on the self-verification theory, global SNS users in the process of achieving congruence with their global identity are expected to be driven by increased usage motivation.

Through their global SNS participation, users with a global identity aim to experience benefits consistent with their social identity (e.g. Reed, 2004; Burke & Stets, 2009). In line with the gratification research in the context of SNS, the benefits that users enjoy through their SNS participation are closely associated with their main motivational needs (i.e. hedonic, utilitarian and social). We therefore hypothesize that users with a global identity are expected to be driven by increased hedonic, utilitarian and social motivation when participating in global SNS. Findings from prior research have showed that hedonic motivation is positively associated with self-identity (Coleman & Williams, 2013). Given the fact that utilitarian and social motivation are established drivers of SNS usage (e.g. Li & Lu, 2011; Malik et al., 2016), we hypothesize that global identity will boost these two types of motivations, too. The assumption about the existence of an identity- motivation relationship is also in line with related studies in the context of technology usage (Oyserman, 2009; Westjohn et al., 2012). Thus, we expect that:

*H1a: Global identity enhances global SNS hedonic motivation.*

*H1b: Global identity enhances global SNS utilitarian motivation.*

*H1c: Global identity enhances global SNS social motivation.*

* 1. *From global SNS motivation to global SNS usage*

Previous research suggests that SNS motivation is a fundamental predictor of SNS usage (e.g. Kim et al., 2011; Huang et al., 2014). In particular, Krisanic (2008) indicates that entertainment and social connections are the main drivers of Facebook usage. Likewise, Raacke & Bonds-Raacke (2008) suggest that the primary reason for using Facebook is to meet friends and seek information, while several studies reveal a few more drivers behind the use of global SNS, such as amusement, sociality and relationship maintenance (Brandztaeg & Heim, 2009; Kim et al., 2011; Ku, Chu, & Tseng, 2013). Similarly, Mendelson & Papacharissi (2010) suggest that the photo-sharing activity – a popular trend in global SNS like Instagram – allows users to share their feelings and emotions, while using it as a practical and informative means of interpreting self-image and identity management (Eftekhar, Fullwood, & Morris; 2014). Therefore, SNS motivation leads individuals to increased usage of SNS (Huang et al., 2014). Several scholars confirm this positive relationship (Tsai et al., 2009; Poude et al., 2011), which is in line with the global SNS literature, as consumers’ motivation is an important predictor in users’ intention to use digital products such as Facebook and Instagram (Shin & Shin, 2011; Wang, Zhao, & Bamossy, 2014). Therefore, we hypothesize that global SNS motivation will predict actual SNS usage:

*H2a: Global SNS hedonic motivation is positively associated with actual global SNS usage.*

*H2b: Global SNS utilitarian motivation is positively associated with actual global SNS usage.*

*H2c: Global SNS social motivation is positively associated with actual global SNS usage.*

The number of friends and type of SNS were also included in our model as control variables to account for differences between different platforms.

*2.3. Cross-country differences*

According to the literature, the extent to which global identity influences consumer motivation toward global brands depends on the country context, mainly in terms of the level of economy and national culture (e.g. Batra et al., 2000).

Consumers with a global identity are eager to adopt global brands, as they tend to view these brands as more similar to them, which enhances their sense of distinctiveness and prestige (Tajfel & Turner, 1985; Brewer, 1991). As indicated by several studies, global identity refers mostly to consumers from developing countries such as Indonesia and Thailand (Arnett, 2002; Steenkamp & De Jong, 2010). People from emerging economies have a stronger drive to identify themselves as ‘’global citizens’’ than their counterparts from developed countries (Holt, Quelch & Taylor, 2004; Guo, 2013). In emerging countries particularly, global brands are perceived as a passport to global citizenship, and thus consumers with a global identity are more prone to both quality and self-identity signals embedded in global brands, and hence more likely to prefer them (Cleveland & Laroche, 2007; Strizhakova, Coulter, & Price, 2008).

National culture also has a profound influence on all aspects of consumer behavior, including online behavior (e.g. Davis, Wang, & Lindridge, 2008; Mazaheri, Richard, Laroche, & Ueltschy, 2014) and particularly SNS usage (e.g. Chu & Choi, 2011; Kim et al., 2011; Park et al., 2015). Research has shown that cultures, or broad cultural contexts, can influence patterns of SNS usage (Chapman & Lahav, 2008; Kim et al*.,* 2011). Recent studies also report that users from collectivistic cultures, such as Asian countries, demonstrate a higher level of SNS engagement compared to users from individualistic cultures, such as Western and European countries (Chu & Choi, 2011; Makri & Schlegelmilch, 2017). There is a large stream of research supporting that online cultures are products of offline cultures, thus mirroring their cultural norms (Morling & Lamoreaux, 2008). In fact, regarding SNS, the existence of a highly diversified and localized landscape is a clear indication of this effect of culture (Tsai & Men, 2014).

Despite some evidence to suggest that differences may exist, in the absence of a strong rationale to pinpoint how global identity affects patterns of global SNS usage, this study employs a multi-country sample to assess the stability of the research hypotheses across countries that differ significantly on the above-discussed variables. Thus, findings of this cross-country study will enable us to understand how global SNS, and Facebook and Instagram in particular, are perceived in countries with different socio-economic and cultural characteristics.

**3. Methodology**

*3.1. Study and participants*

We conducted a survey in Austria, Indonesia and Thailand, using convenience samples of students enrolled in marketing degrees offered by esteemed business schools in all three countries. The selection of the countries under investigation was made on the basis of including country contexts that differ substantially in national cultures and that display different levels of economic development, which would allow us to test the stability of our research model, as well as explore potential differences that could be attributed to country-specific variations. Austria, on the one hand, is a good prototype of a central European country with a developed economy, with a GDP per capita of 47,291 USD in 2017 (World Bank, 2018). Indonesia and Thailand, on the other hand, are good representatives of Eastern cultures and are two of the largest emerging economies worldwide, with a GDP per capita of 6,593 USD and 3,847 USD in 2017, respectively (World Bank, 2018). Facebook and Instagram are leading SNS globally, with 2,167 million and 800 million active users worldwide, respectively (Statista, 2018). Their ubiquity makes them good representatives of global SNS. Moreover, they are available and successful within Indonesia, Austria and Thailand. In order to capture relevant responses, two versions of a structured questionnaire were designed: one for Facebook users and one for Instagram users. The nationality of the participants was captured within the questionnaire, which was initially developed in English and then translated and back-translated by native speakers and bilinguals into three languages: Indonesian, German and Thai. Following formal cross-country research methodologies suggested by previous scholars (Makri & Schlegelmilch, 2017; He et al., 2018), inconsistencies between the original version and the translated versions of the questionnaire were discussed among translators and resolved to minimize idiomatic issues. The final questionnaires were pilot tested with 5 to 8 respondents from each country.

The total sample was composed of 696 respondents (271 Indonesian students, 247 Austrian students and 178 Thai students), who were on average 24 years old (=23.56, SD=8.75). 61% of the respondents were female. In Indonesia, users had on average 540 friends/followers on Facebook/Instagram, with an average of 15% international acquaintances. Apart from Facebook and Instagram, the most frequently used SNS by Indonesian respondents were Whatsapp (56 %) and Line (51%). Austrian users had on average 324 friends/followers on Facebook/Instagram, with an average of 33% international acquaintances. Apart from Facebook and Instagram, the most frequently used SNS among Austrian users were Snapchat (53%), Twitter (23%) and YouTube (12%). Thai users had on average 554 friends/followers in Facebook/Instagram, with an average of 21% international. Apart from Facebook and Instagram, the most frequently used SNS among Thai users were Line (54%) and Twitter (32%). In terms of the average daily time (minutes) spent of Facebook/Instagram, Indonesian users (= 114.21; SD = 68.91) were found to spend significantly more time online that their counterparts in Austria (= 45.24; SD = 46.88) and Thailand (= 40.97; SD = 45.96).

Regarding measures included in the questionnaire, well-established scales were administered to measure all constructs of interest. In particular, global identity was measured by the Tu et al. (2012) scale. SNS hedonic and utilitarian motivation were measured by the Babin et al. (1994) scale, while the Wu (2016) scale was used to measure social motivation. All measures used a 7-point scale format. Actual SNS usage was measured by the average time spent on the specific SNS per day. Number of friends/ followers and SNS type were also used as control variables in our research model. Considerable literature exists on the differences in structural properties across several SNS platforms that can be accountable for different usage patterns across platforms (i.e. Mutinga, Moorman & Smit, 2011; Saridakis et al., 2016). Thus, in order to account for potential differences caused by the different platforms, SNS type was operationalized with a dummy variable (0= Instagram, 1= Facebook) and included as a control variable in our model.

*3.2. Measurement validation and invariance analysis*

To ensure reliability and validity of our measures, we investigated the fit of four measurement models (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988); one model for the global (total) sample and three models each corresponding to one of the countries included in our sample (Indonesia, Austria and Thailand). Table 1 presents the results of the confirmatory factor analysis for the measurement models, performed in Amos 23. For measurement purification purposes, three items were dropped at this stage, as they systematically displayed low factor loadings (< 0.5) across country-models. Items per construct retained for further analysis, as well as items rejected, are shown in the Appendix. Fit indices for the measurement models using both the global sample (n = 696) and country-specific samples indicate a satisfactory model fit (= 69.8 to 155.586, CFI = .958 to .985, RMSEA= .04 to .06). Factor loadings of the remaining items were all large and significant (*p < .01*). In addition, composite reliabilities and average variance extracted (AVEs) indicated acceptable levels of reliability and convergent validity both at the global level, as well as at the country-specific level. Also, using Fornell and Larcker’s (1981) criterion, discriminant validity among the constructs is indicated, as all AVEs were higher than the square inter construct coefficients, as illustrated in Table 2. Furthermore, all indicator loadings were higher than their respective cross-loadings, providing further evidence of discriminant validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Finally, recognizing that common method bias (CMB) is a potential problem in studies that rely on a single informant (i.e. Podsakoff et al., 2003), we aimed to control for this issue. In particular, we employed the marker variable approach, as suggested by Lindell and Whitney (2001), for all measurement models. Lindell and Withney (2001) have argued that if a variable can be identified that should not be theoretically related to at least one other variable included in the study, then it can be used as a marker. Any observed relationship between the marker and any of the other variables can be assumed to be due to common method variance. The authors further conclude that partialling out the average correlation between the marker variable and the other variables included in the study should allow the researcher to control for the possible contaminating effect of method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Social desirability was selected as a latent marker variable, since this construct was expected to be conceptually unrelated to the rest of the constructs included in our measurement models. Three items measured on a seven-point scale were used to measure the marker variable: '*I like to gossip at times* ', '*I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone’s feelings* ', and '*I am always willing to admit it when I make a mistake* ' (measured on a seven-point scale anchored at *strongly disagree*/*strongly agree*) (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972). We performed a partial correlation analysis of the items measuring our constructs and assessed whether the significance of their zero-order correlations changed when the marker variable was partialled out. The significance of the resulting coefficients did not change, suggesting that CMB was not a problem for our analysis.

*Insert Table 1 somewhere here*

*Insert Table 2 somewhere here*

As one aim of the study is to investigate cross-country variations of the hypothesized relationships, equivalence of the scales used to measure constructs should be established across countries. For this reason, invariance analysis was further performed using multi-group structural equation modeling in Amos 23. Following Byrne, Shavelson, & Muthén (1989), a configural invariance analysis was first performed to determine whether respondents from Indonesia, Thailand and Austria use the same pattern in measurement items. In order to investigate whether the pattern of factor loadings for each observed variable is equivalent across countries, we first determined an unconstrained (baseline) model, which fitted the data adequately for each country (i.e. group) separately (Table 1). Then all parameters estimated in the unconstrained model were also estimated in a three-group model. For the purposes of establishing configural invariance, the fit of the unconstrained baseline model, also known as configural model, was estimated. As Table 3 indicates, fit indices of the configural model were acceptable ( = 532.41, *p* < .00; CFI = .93; RMSEA = .062), which is evidence that the number of factors and the pattern of their structure are similar across the Indonesian, the Thai and the Austrian samples. In a following step, a metric invariance analysis was performed (Table 4), as configural invariance is not a sufficient condition for establishing measurement invariance (Byrne et al. 1989). Full metric invariance was not supported across countries, as the difference between the baseline model and the full metric invariance model was significant (Δ= 229.59, p < .05). In an attempt to achieve partial metric invariance, invariance constraints were relaxed step-by-step for the three-group model. With two invariant items across countries, partial metric invariance was finally supported since the difference between the baseline model and the partial metric invariance model was insignificant (Δ= 6.85, p = 0.28).

*Insert Table 3 somewhere here*

**4. Results**

*4.1. Hypotheses testing*

Hypotheses were formally tested via structural equation modeling in Amos 23. In particular, structural models were again tested at global level and at country-specific level. First, the model was assessed using the global sample and it exhibited acceptable levels of fit (Global model: = 423.0, *p* < .00;CFI = .928; RMSEA = .070). Standardized coefficients and the corresponding t-values reported in Table 4 provide evidence for H1a, H1b, H1c, H2a and H2b for the whole sample. In contrast, H2c was not confirmed. Global identity drives global SNS hedonic, utilitarian and social motivation. In turn, only hedonic and utilitarian motivation are positively correlated with actual global SNS usage, while social motivation shows no significant correlation with actual usage. Second, a formal mediation analysis was employed in order to further investigate how the interplay between global SNS motivation and global identity drives actual global SNS usage. In this respect, we conducted a bootstrap mediation analysis (PROCESS, Model 4 with 5000 bootstrap resamples; Hayes, 2013) to further corroborate the mediating effects of global identity on global SNS usage through the triggering of motivation types, controlling for the number of friends and the type of SNS. The results are consistent with those produced in our structural model. Specifically, the indirect effect through the path global identity -> hedonic motivation -> usage was significant with an estimate of 5.45 (BCCI: 3.3760 – 8.1092). Similarly, the indirect effect through the path global identity -> utilitarian motivation -> usage was significant with an estimate of 1.08 (BCCI: .4481 – 2.0843). In contrast, a nonsignificant indirect effect was found for social motivation (global identity -> social motivation -> usage: -.43, BBCI: -1.5177 - .2076). Third, a three-group model was assessed in order to test for the stability of our findings across countries. The model exhibited acceptable levels of fit (three-group model: = 1085.6, *p* < .00;CFI = .963; RMSEA = .035). As Table 4 shows, in Austria all paths are significant except for the one leading from global identity to global SNS utilitarian motivation. Thailand and Indonesia exhibit identical results, with all relationships having been confirmed, apart from the one between global SNS social motivation and global SNS usage.

*Insert Table 4 somewhere here*

Having established partial metric invariance across country-specific models, a comparison of the magnitudes of the paths included in the structural model across countries was performed. In order to explore potential differences in the strength of these paths, which could be attributed to country dissimilarities, we imposed all regression weights to be equal across the three countries. A comparison showed a significant deterioration when all paths were restricted to be equal compared to the unrestricted model (Δ= 20.7, p = .00), providing support for the varying impact of some variables. Subsequently, each country was compared with the other two by constraining paths one by one. Results revealed one path which was significantly different. This refers to the impact of global identity on SNS hedonic motivation in Thailand, which was significantly higher than in Austria (Δ= 4.2, p = .04; = .41; .26) and in Indonesia (Δ= 4.1, p = .04; = .41; .22). Therefore, the association between global identity and hedonic motivation is stronger among SNS users in Thailand than among SNS users in Indonesia and Austria.

Results from our study clearly indicate that SNS usage patterns differ across countries. In an attempt to explain variations found across global SNS users from Thailand, Indonesia and Austria, we reviewed relevant literature on cross-country SNS research. Researchers recognize that national culture has a profound influence on SNS usage patterns (e.g.  Chu & Choi, 2011; Park et al., 2009; Kim et al., 2011). Along Hofstede’s (1991) indices, Thailand and Indonesia differ substantially from Austria. Austria is a prototype of an individualistic culture and society, while Thailand and Indonesia are comparatively collectivistic.

Collectivistic cultures place emphasis on interdependence among people and strong solidarity within groups. Conversely, in individualistic cultures, people consider themselves to be independent ([Triandis, 2001](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0747563210002736" \l "b0260)). The difference in value orientation between the two prototype cultures (i.e., individualism vs. collectivism) largely influences individuals’ communication styles. According to Hall (1976), communication styles can be classified into high-context vs. low-context communication. High-context communication is rather implicit, indirect, and abstract, as “most of the information is already either in the physical context or internalized in the person” (Hall, 1976, p.91). In contrast, low-context communication is rather explicit and direct, and non-dependent on contextual factors. Previous research suggests that low-context communication is predominant in individualistic cultures, while high-context communication occurs in collectivistic cultures (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Gudykunst et al., 1996).

The contrast between these two prototypical cultures is manifested in the way individuals develop and manage social relationships and has also implications for the way individuals perceive and use SNS. In a collectivistic culture, people tend to attach value to lifetime relationships ([de Mooij, 1998](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0747563210002736" \l "b0045)), whereas an individualistic culture is characterized by rather fragmented and short-term relationships (Hall, 1976; Taylor et al., 1994). This cultural difference in building and managing social relationships may also explain how individuals use SNS. By nature, online platforms such as SNS provide a limited range of communication tools and relationship-building services, and therefore promote rather casual and instrumental relationships among their users. Similarly, SNS as a communication means allow for limited opportunities to display context-related information, and thus might inhibit individuals from high-context cultures to become deeply involved with each other and develop high levels of social bonds and commitment. Along these lines, individuals in different cultural contexts may utilize SNS with different motives, reflecting their prevalent cultural values. In fact, existing research indicates that social capital is positively associated with individualistic cultural values, while members of collectivistic cultures do not typically use SNS for developing their social capital (Allik & Realo, 2004; Cho, 2010). This might explain why the relationship between social motivation and SNS usage was found to be non-significant among users from Thailand and Indonesia.

Again, according to Hofstede’s (1991) indices, Thailand scores significantly lower than both Indonesia and Austria in long-term orientation. Individuals from cultures that score low in long-term orientation are in principle people who care more about the short-term outcomes of their actions and are generally in favor of instant gratification. Short-term oriented individuals tend to focus on reality and how to benefit and make the most out of life today. They therefore seek hedonic gratification and playfulness, and they value obtaining instant pleasure and enjoyment from their online interactions (Childers, Carr, Peck & Carson, 2002). In contrast, individuals from cultures scoring high on long-term orientation tend to be less hedonic-oriented individuals and show greater perseverance when it comes to achieving results, as they seek long-term gratification (Strathman, Gleicher, Boninger & Edwards, 1994). Therefore, the stronger relationship between hedonic motivation and global SNS usage for Thai users compared to their counterparts in Indonesia and Austria can be attributed to this differentiation in their national cultural values. To sum up, our results nicely corroborate existing research findings indicating that cultural values strongly influence daily activities, such as [social networking online](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/psychology/online-social-networking) ([Lim, Leung, Sia, & Lee, 2004](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0148296317301625" \l "bb0210)).

**5. Discussion**

Given the importance of global branding in today's global and digital business environment, the contribution of our research is three-fold: *1)* viewing global SNS as global digital brands, we extend research on the effect of global identity on consumer behavior responses by investigating the unexplored case of global SNS usage; *2)* focusing our research on two popular global SNS, we provide the first empirical evidence of the mechanism through which users seek to confirm and further construct their global identity through participation in global digital brands; *3)* testing the engagement mechanism with global SNS in three countries, we explore potential cross-country differences between a developed and two emerging countries. These results offer a series of useful theoretical and managerial implications, which are outlined below.

*5.1. Theoretical implications*

Our study constitutes a novel attempt to a) examine the effect of global identity on global digital products, b) consider SNS motivations as mediators of this relationship, and c) empirically test this path of relationships in a cross-country context. As such, it represents a substantial contribution to the development of the dialogue around consumers’ global identity and preference for global brands, in the context of digital brands, such as SNS. Overall, our findings offer three main propositions for theoretical advancement. First, by considering Facebook and Instagram as prominent global digital brands, our study builds on our current knowledge with regards to the drivers of SNS usage, which have so far been limited to SNS motivation and perceived value (e.g. Huang et al., 2014; Park et al., 2009). Extant research suggests that global identity produces an assimilation effect, such that consumers with high global identity tend to prefer global products (Zhang & Khare, 2009). Given that a global identity does not require physical interaction with global brands (Erez et al., 2013), our study extends previous research by supporting that global identity drives global SNS usage, which is triggered through the interaction with the SNS virtual community. Therefore, our findings indicate for the first time how global digital brand usage can be increased through the lenses of global identity.

Second, our study incorporates prior research in the fields of social identity theory and self-verification theory to provide an updated investigation with regards to the underlying mechanism leading to increased global SNS usage. According to social identity theory, consumers seek to enact identity-congruent behaviors to maintain consistency in their feelings and actions (Oyserman, 2009; Westjohn et al., 2012) and to avoid potential tensions (Josiassen, 2011). In addition, gratification research suggests that through participation in SNS, users meet friends, seek information, share feelings, while also making use of practical and informative means of interpreting self-image and identity management (e.g. Eftekhar et al., 2014; Brandztaeg & Heim, 2009; Ku et al., 2013). Drawing on these two research streams, our findings indicate that global identity enhances SNS users’ hedonic, utilitarian and social motivation, which in turn increases the actual global SNS usage. This enhances our understanding of the process through which global identity impacts consumer behavior in the global digital brands context.

Third, our study advances the stream of research which investigates the role of consumer global identity in formulating positive disposition towards global products under the lens of emerging versus developed markets (Alden et al., 2013; Guo, 2013; Strizhakova & Coulter, 2013; Swoboda et al., 2012). Based on our findings, we explore the differences related to our tested model among SNS users in Indonesia, Austria and Thailand. In particular, our results confirm that global identity can be a potential driver of SNS motivation, as users seek consistency between their identity and motivation (Burke & Stets, 2009; Oyserman, 2009). However, no significant relationship was found between global identity and utilitarian motivation in Austria. A possible explanation for this outcome could be the absence of any local SNS in Austria, which could lead SNS users to underestimate the importance of utilitarian benefits (i.e. perceived usefulness, convenience), as they do not have an alternative SNS to compare with. Mixed empirical findings from Indonesia, Austria and Thailand support prior research regarding the relationship of national culture and SNS usage (e.g. Park et al., 2009; Makri & Schlegelmilch, 2017). The effect of social motivation on SNS usage was found to be non-significant in Thailand and Indonesia. An explanation for this finding could be that Thai and Indonesian users come from countries with a highly collectivistic culture and their needs for social connection and integration are already fulfilled through their participation in their physical communities. On the other hand, the positive relationship between social motivation and SNS usage is evident for users from an individualistic culture of a Western-European country, such as Austria.

*5.2. Managerial implications*

According to the relevant literature on perceived brand globalness, our study treats global SNSs as global digital brands (e.g. Steenkamp, 2014; Diamantopoulos & Davvetas, 2016). This is also in line with a digital product classification approach based on taxonomic categorization (Halkias, 2015; Makri et al., 2018), which treats global digital SNS as sub-categories of global digital brands. This suggests that the present implications are applicable across all digital product categories, such as smartphone applications, web browsers and digital entertainment platforms. Therefore, our study offers useful insights for practitioners about global digital brands in general. First, our findings show that global identity has a positive effect on the global SNS usage mediated by SNS motivation. Considering that people with a global identity tend to prefer global digital brands (Cleveland et al., 2011), which also reflect cosmopolitanism, modernity and prestige (Halkias et al., 2016; Ozsomer et al., 2016), digital brand managers should build or improve such characteristics that would activate the global identity of their target audience. In turn, this would trigger identity-related motivation and subsequently increase the usage of their digital brands. For instance, international events (e.g. Spotify Sessions, Facebook Live, Amazon Prime) that promote such characteristics can boost the global identity expression of users, positively influence their motivation (e.g. entertainment, convenience, social connection), and consequently increase product usage. Based on our cross-country results, digital marketing managers in developed economies should primarily aim to associate the global nature of their brand with the hedonic and social needs of consumers.

Second, our results suggest interesting practical implications regarding the relationship between global SNS motivation and usage. In particular, all types of motivation have been found to be positively linked to actual global SNS usage. Thus, global SNS managers should strive to promote hedonic, utilitarian and social benefits arising through usage. Fun and perceived usefulness of networking contribute to an individual’s basic hedonic, utilitarian and social needs, and therefore should be emphasized by any SNS platform. For instance, Netflix and LinkedIn have successfully entered emerging markets, including Thailand and Indonesia, as both brands meet such needs worldwide. Furthermore, our findings indicate that in collectivistic countries, such as Thailand and Indonesia, managers should emphasize how their brands meet the hedonic and utilitarian needs of consumers, since addressing social needs through a digital brand may not be a priority for consumers.

Third, prior research suggests that consumers around the world welcome global brands because they perceive their worldwide availability as a promise of higher functional value and symbolic benefits (Steenkamp et al., 2003; Davvetas, Sichtmann, & Diamantopoulos, 2015). In this respect, global SNS marketers should try to reinforce the global nature of their brands, thereby making global identity more accessible for consumers. For instance, they might promote functional and symbolic characteristics of their brands, such as international networking, knowledge sharing and social approval, in order to enhance the perceived globalness of their SNS. This would activate the global identity of their existing or potential users and, in turn, would lead to increased usage.

Finally, for the purposes of our study, SNS are considered as a representative of digital brands. However, SNS, and global SNS in particular, apart from being digital brands themselves, are also important promotion tools for companies and marketers that aim to communicate their brands across the globe successfully. Therefore, our empirical findings are also relevant for managers who use SNS as a digital extension of their brand.

*5.3. Limitations and future research avenues*

Our results should be interpreted in light of certain limitations. First, our study takes into consideration global digital brands as represented by global SNS, and offers insights into the role that global identity plays in shaping behaviors towards Facebook and Instagram. Global identity refers to just one side of the coin when it comes to location-based identities research. The other side of this coin has to do with local identity derived from an awareness of belonging to a local community that shares the same values and norms (Thompson, 2001). Global or local identity produces an assimilation effect towards the product evaluation; that is, consumers with a global identity tend to prefer global products, whereas consumers with a local identity tend to prefer local products (Zhang & Khare, 2009). Due to the lack of measurement of local identity, as well as the lack of inclusion of local SNS alternatives, results are unable to delineate users’ behaviors toward global and local digital brands. Therefore, future studies should attempt to collect comparable data from individuals with an accessible local identity in developed and emerging economies as well as data from users of local SNS, such as the Chinese WeChat or Japanese Line. Such a comparative study could offer additional empirical support for the occurrence of the above-mentioned assimilation effect.

Second, from a methodological perspective, given the cross-cultural survey-based method used, our study has some inherent limitations. Different methods and samples in future studies should aim to verify the generalizability of the present study’s findings. More countries could also be included for more insightful cross-country research.In addition, future research would also benefit from investigating a number of potential moderators, which might alter the magnitude of the relationships between global identity and motivation in the context of global SNS. For instance, the international marketing literature identifies cosmopolitanism (Cleveland et al., 2011) as an individual trait, which can influence consumers’ behaviors. Future studies should also aim to remedy the exclusion of several factors that might interact with our constructs and thus act as control variables in our conceptual model, such as individual measures of collectivistic-individualistic value or the use of private vs. public SNS profiles.

Third, the research in this field would benefit from the inclusion of other constructs that may influence global SNS usage. Earlier studies indicate a positive relationship between social norms and behavior towards social media (e.g. Schaarschmidt & Walsh, 2018; Gretry et al., 2017). Therefore, considering that the average age of our respondents is 24, social norms may affect the relationship between consumer motivation and SNS usage. In addition, the device used to access global SNSs and global digital brands in general could also affect their usage. For instance, recent research suggests that smartphone users are more willing to engage with SNS due to the lower perceived risk (Zhou & Li, 2014) and higher perceived enjoyment (Yang et al., 2012) they experience while using SNS. Thus, future research should also consider such factors that may affect the usage of global digital brands.

To conclude, our study offers new avenues for future research in the interdisciplinary field of digital brands and international marketing that would help managers to understand the underlying mechanism of their product usage. Our findings highlight the indirect effect of global identity on global SNS usage through increased hedonic, utilitarian and social motivation. These insights are also empirically tested in one developed and two emerging markets, thus allowing managers to explore the cross-cultural differences with regards to this mechanism and to finetune their marketing strategies accordingly.

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**Figure 1.** Conceptual model



**Table 1.** Measurement models results

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Global (*n=696*)** | | **Indonesia (*n=271*)** | | **Austria (*n=247*)** | | **Thailand (*n=178*)** | |
| *Items* | *Loading* | *t-value* | *Loading* | *t-value* | *Loading* | *t-value* | *Loading* | *t-value* |
| GLOB1 | 0.724 |  | 0.712 |  | 0.758 |  | 0.691 |  |
| GLOB2 | 0.812 | 15.68 | 0.760 | 9.39 | 0.887 | 10.86 | 0.774 | 7.49 |
| GLOB3 | 0.696 | 15.32 | 0.735 | 9.35 | 0.680 | 10.09 | 0.777 | 7.89 |
| HED1 | 0.730 |  | 0.827 |  | 0.826 |  | 0.509 |  |
| HED2 | 0.869 | 19.96 | 0.894 | 17.01 | 0.898 | 1.47 | 0.559 | 7.89 |
| HED3 | 0.711 | 27.69 | 0.811 | 15.20 | 0.697 | 11.56 | 0.978 | 9.97 |
| UTIL1 | 0.863 |  | 0.778 |  | 0.858 |  | 0.877 |  |
| UTIL 2 | 0.962 | 33.45 | 0.891 | 14.71 | 0.991 | 21.21 | 0.924 | 15.92 |
| UTIL 3 | 0.817 | 27.69 | 0.763 | 12.83 | 0.826 | 17.16 | 0.802 | 13.45 |
| SOC1 | 0.610 |  | 0.681 |  | 0.622 |  | 0.438 |  |
| SOC 2 | 0.850 | 15.63 | 0.903 | 12.66 | 0.840 | 8.55 | 0.585 | 8.06 |
| SOC 3 | 0.716 | 14.49 | 0.867 | 12.43 | 0.652 | 7.91 | 0.976 | 10.21 |
| G*oodness of fit statistics:* | | | | | | | | |
|  | 155.58 |  | 106.12 |  | 69.8 |  | 123.34 |  |
| df | 48 |  | 48 |  | 48 |  | 48 |  |
| CFI | 0.974 |  | 0.967 |  | 0.985 |  | 0.958 |  |
| RMSEA | 0.06 |  | 0.06 |  | 0.04 |  | 0.07 |  |

**Table 2.** Constructs means and standard deviations (*per Country*) & latent variable correlations, reliability and validity (*Global*)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Indonesia  M(*SD*) | Austria  M(*SD*) | Thailand  M(*SD*) | *CR* | Global identity | Hedonic motivation | Utilitarian motivation | Social motivation |
| Global identity | 4.97(*1.21*) | 4.96(*1.43*) | 5.05(*1.21*) | *0.79* | **0.56** |  |  |  |
| SNS hedonic motivation | 3.12 (*1.12*) | 3.49(*1.45*) | 4.31(*1.29)* | *0.82* | 0.256 | **0.60** |  |  |
| SNS utilitarian motivation | 3.96(*1.61*) | 2.41(*1.36*) | 4.03(*1.42*) | *0.91* | 0.142 | 0.270 | **0.78** |  |
| SNS social motivation | 3.93(*1.42*) | 3.39(*1.65*) | 3.49(*1.25*) | *0.77* | 0.187 | 0.582 | 0.396 | **0.54** |

**Note**: M- means; SD-standard deviations; Elements along the diagonal represent square root average variance extracted (AVE) estimates; Elements below the diagonal represent Pearson’s intercorrelations; CR – Fornell and Larcker’s (1998) composite reliabilities; AVE – Fornell and Larcker’s (1998) average variance extracted

**Table 3.** Measurement invariance results

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** |  | **df** | Δ | **Δdf** | **p-value** | **CFI** | **RMSEA** |
|
| Baseline model (unconstrained) | 532.41 | 144 |  |  |  | 0,93 | 0,062 |
| Full metric invariance model (all factor loadings set equal)\* | 762 | 160 | 229.59 | 16 | < .05 |  |  |
| Partial metric invariance model\*\* | 539.26 | 156 | 6.85 | 12 | 0.28 | 0.929 | 0.065 |
| (*HED3: Compared to other things I could have done, being on Facebook/Instagram is truly enjoyable, SOC3: I use Facebook/Instagram to tell my friends/family what I have learned/read/heard)* | | | | | | | |

**Note**: \*Full metric invariance not supported \*\*Partial metric invariance is supported (non-invariant items in parenthesis)

**Table 4.** Structural model results

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Global model** | | **Three-group model** | | | | | |
|  | **All (*n=696*)** | | **Indonesia (*n=271*)** | | **Austria (*n=247*)** | | **Thailand (*n=178*)** | |
| *Path* | *β* | *t-value* | *β* | *t-value* | *β* | *t-value* | *β* | *t-value* |
| ***H1a:*** global identity -> hedonic motivation | 0.30 | 6.379\*\* | 0.22 | 2.945\*\* | 0.26 | 3.576\*\* | 0.41 | 4.298\*\* |
| ***H1b:*** global identity -> utilitarian motivation | 0.18 | 4.098\*\* | 0.32 | 4.281\*\* | 0.03 | 0.439 | 0.44 | 3.764\*\* |
| ***H1c:*** global identity -> social motivation | 0.23 | 4.839\*\* | 0.19 | 2.526\*\* | 0.23 | 2.93\*\* | 0.26 | 2.875\*\* |
| ***H2a:*** hedonic motivation -> usage | 0.46 | 8.76\*\* | 0.16 | 1.713\* | 0.24 | 2.678\*\* | 0.43 | 1.856\* |
| ***H2b:*** utilitarian motivation -> usage | 0.17 | 4.587\*\* | 0.16 | 2.633\*\* | 0.13 | 2.287\* | 0.30 | 3.485\*\* |
| ***H2c:*** social motivation-> usage | -0.07 | -1.293 | 0.01 | 0.060 | 0.16 | 1.724\* | -0.14 | -0.623 |
| *Control Variables* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| No. of friends | 0.08 | 2.485\* | 0.24 | 4.096\*\* | 0.21 | 3.703\*\* | 0.15 | 2.266\*\* |
| SNS type | -0.02 | -0.609 | 0.01 | 0.126 | -0.09 | -1.57 | 0.01 | 0.154 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Goodness of fit* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 423.0 | | 1085.6 | |  |  |  |  |
| df | 82 | | 246 | |  |  |  |  |
| CFI | 0.928 | | 0.963 | |  |  |  |  |
| RMSEA | 0.07 | | 0.035 | |  |  |  |  |

**Note**: \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.0

**APPENDIX**

Measurement scales (*Construct/Items)*

|  |
| --- |
| **Global Identity *(****Tu et al. 2012)* |
| I believe people should be made more aware of how connected we are to the rest of the world. (*GLO1*) |
| I identify myself as a global citizen. (*GLO2*) |
| I care about knowing global events. (*GLO3*) |
| My heart mostly belongs to the whole world (*excluded item*) |
| **SNS hedonic motivation** *(adapted from Babin et al. 1994)* |
| I enjoy passing the time on Facebook/Instagram (*HED1*) |
| Using Facebook/Instagram is truly a joy (*HED2*) |
| Compared to other things I could have done, being on Facebook/Instagram is truly enjoyable (*HED3*) |
| I enjoy using Facebook/Instagram for its own sake, not just for information I find (*excluded item*) |
| **SNS utilitarian motivation** *(adapted from Babin et al. 1994)* |
| Facebook/Instagram success is finding what I am looking for(*UTIL1*) |
| Facebook/Instagram helps me with planning (*UTIL2*) |
| I like getting in and out of Facebook/Instagram with no time wasted(*UTIL3*) |
| **SNS social motivation** *(adapted from Wu 2016)* |
| I use Facebook/Instagram to keep in touch with my friends/family (*SOC1*) |
| I use Facebook/Instagram to share news with my friends/family(*SOC2*) |
| I use Facebook/Instagram to tell my friends/family what I have learned/read/heard(*SOC3*) |
| I use Facebook/Instagram to be connected and meet other people with similar interests (*excluded item*) |
| **No. of friends/followers** |
| Approximately how many friends/followers do you have on Facebook/Instagram? (open-ended) |
| **SNS usage** |
| How much time do you spend on Facebook/Instagram in an average day? Please specify approximate minutes per day. (open-ended) |