Beyond Access to Social Media: A Comparison of Gratifications, Interactivity, and Content Usage Among Egyptian Adults

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Abstract

Based on the concepts and new trends of Uses and Gratifications Theory and its application on new media, this study searched in the gratifications sought from Social Media SM sites among Egyptian adults (N=322); how they use the content and practice interactivity through the sites. Data were collected through a quantitative study applying a questionnaire conducted in February and March 2017. Findings through Exploratory Factor Analysis showed four categories of motives and six of content usage. Despite some sites predicting some motives, Facebook was the most leading medium to satisfy all types of users' needs. Outcomes revealed that specific content not only can satisfy specific needs but also can meet other purposes of SM usage. In addition, both Facebook and Twitter were the most predictive of interactivity among Egyptian users. The study also found some effects of demographic variables on both users' gratifications sought and interactivity.

Keywords: Uses and gratifications theory; Motivation; Social media; Interactivity

Introduction

With the development of Web.2, where everyone began to participate in the production of knowledge and had an influential and active role in society, that active participation on some of social media SM sites has turned into a new manifestation of modern life for the new generation. Because of such social media features, SM platforms have quickly gained popularity and tremendous use throughout the world. In 2017, statistics show the steady growth every year in SM users to become 2.46 billion [1]. In Egypt, SM played a role in the January 25, 2011 Egyptian Revolution [2], then, SM sites have widely turned into a new space for Egyptians to share information, ideas, and news and to communicate socially. With SM technologies developing and varying day by day, the uses of these networks are being multiplied by Egyptian an user who became more active participants and able to advance socially as the SM has become an increasingly user-generated content. This highlights the importance of studying uses and gratifications U&G approach as Ruggiero [3] has confirmed that "any attempt to speculate on the future direction of mass communication theory must seriously include the U&G approach". SM research is found to be lacking exploration from the U&G approach especially in Egypt and the Arab world. The current study attempts to fill these research gaps and to gain a better understanding of studying the extent of SM type's usage by Egyptian users and what drives them to employ SM platforms, meaning the types of gratifications sought GS from SM usage. It is also more relevant to examine what types of content they use on SM applications and how they interact with them.

Uses and gratifications theory and social media

The traditional imposition in uses and gratifications U&G theory is looking at why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy specific needs and that they are able to recognize their reasons for making media choices [4,5]. The focus of the research has changed from the traditional "media effects" to the functionalist paradigm of social science and the research should be focused on the functional analysis of U&G studies which would help to make the audience play a more dynamic role in mass media than a passive role [6] to come to terms with the question by Katz [7] "what do people do with media? instead of "what do media do to people?. Katz, Gurevitch, and Haas [8] categorized 35 needs that motivate the audience to use the traditional media into five groups: cognitive, affective, personal integrative, social integrative, and tension release needs.

"Every medium for mass communication provides a progressive approach at the initial stage" [9], that certain kinds of consumers' needs will drive them toward certain types of media and contents [3,10]. With the widespread adoption of new media, several studies have emerged to search in the new kinds of GS and gratifications obtained GO from using the Internet [10-14]. With the large widespread of SM, their content has the potential to become much more varied and user became a potential producer of content [15]. Although this content is not necessarily truly creative with SM, it can reach so far and become more extensive through re/sharing, re/tweeting and re/pining within the SM sites.

Scholars are interested in uses, tools, and adoption of different SM sites and their services by users to fulfill specific needs. These needs which generate motives (gratifications sought) GS vary depending on the nature and characteristics of SM sites [16-21], social and psychological conditions [22-25] or economic variables and advertising [20,26,27].

Interactivity as a development of active audience

Active audience model was associated with U&G theory when it was applied to traditional media. The model argues that media audience members are active and goal-oriented in their selection of media use behaviors [28] and they do not just receive information passively but are actively involved, often unconsciously, in making sense of the message within their personal and social contexts [29] and they can interpret messages received. However, the active audience theory is based on a mainly one-way model of communication, as audience members cannot interact with or respond to the content of traditional media directly [30].

With the characters of SM environments, the attention was given to the contemporary term "user" which fits in the concept of the active audiences and is actually replacing the traditional terms of the auditor, the viewer and the reader which fit more in the concept of the audiences' passiveness [18]. The creative human tendency plays an important role in highlighting users' interactivity and their ability to generate and participate in SM content "user-to-content interaction" such as ranking the content, adding to playlists, sharing with others, posting comments [15] and fulfillment of social expectation "user-to-user interaction" such as social interaction and social networking [15,16]. Therefore, one of the main purposes of the current study is to address users' interactivity as a generative agent affected by the extent of using of different SM sites and their content.

Literature Review

With the Internet use, Stafford et al. [14] proved three main categories of gratifications: content (uses of the Internet including the need for researching or finding specific information or material, which are gratified with content), process (users gain gratification from the experience of purposeful navigating or random browsing of the Internet in its functional process) and social gratifications (uses encompass a wide range of forming

and deepening social ties). In prior studies [12,13,31-34] the most identified gratifications under these dimensions were: information seeking, self-actualization, diversion, sociability, social interaction, research, education, communication interaction, companionship, convenience, combating boredom, arousal, relaxation, entertainment, voyeurism, habit, escape and passing time. Also technological devices which became available to be used to access the Internet have given way to study new directions of U&G approach, in this regard, some of the studies [35-40] concluded gratifications from using mobile phones, text messaging and e-mail such as: affection/sociability, entertainment, instrumentality, psychological reassurance, communication facilitation, status symbol, relationships, coordination for business, fashion/status, mobility, immediate accessibility and innovation motive. Other studies [41-43] investigated in gratifications which evolved from online radio listenership such as information seeking, passive mood setting, social utility, and Self-actualization.

While early and subsequent studies about applying U&G theory on SM and social networking sites SNSs were devoted to adolescents and college students [21,36-38,44-47], some early studies on adults' usage of SM [10] examined why and how adults are adopting SM because of its focus on active audience members, individual choices, and divergent populations. Papacharissi [13] concluded six gratifications from personal home pages usage: passing time, entertainment, information, self-expression, professional advancement, communication with friends and family. A developmental study by Xu, et al. [48] found that social network usage was predicted by utilitarian (rational and goal-oriented) gratifications of immediate access and coordination, hedonic (pleasure-oriented) gratifications of affection and leisure and Website social presence. In comparing gratifications related to different SM, for instance, Gan and Wang [16] found that content gratification plays the most salient role in using microblog, while social gratification is the most important for WeChat usage.

Research on the most popular SM sites (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, MySpace and Instagram) proposed motives affecting YouTube and Facebook use: self-expression, media drenching, passing time, information seeking, personal status updating, relationship maintenance, socializing and entertainment [19,49], and male subjects attached more importance to narcissism and self-expression motivators while females preferred information seeking and relationship maintenance [49]. In Twitter usage, information motives are positively related to Twitter use while social motives are not significantly related to Twitter use [17,50]. One recent study identified the following Facebook users' gratifications: entertainment, information sharing, media appeal, escapism, socialization, self-documentation, self-expression, [51] and another one extrapolated affection, attention seeking, disclosure, habit, information sharing and social influence gratifications [52].

In the current study, it is a great relevance to extrapolate what motivates Egyptian adults to adopt and use the most known and popular SM sites to them, while categorizing their GS from that

use and preferred content through the use of factor analysis. Certainly, it is appropriate to study the users' interactivity related to their access to SM as an indicator of their communicative actions.

Research Questions

After the review of the literature, two main questions emerge:

RQ1: What are the perceived GS by SM users?

RQ2: What are the types of content used by SM users?

The first question is helpful for understanding what motives Egyptian users have to use SM sites. The second question comes to deduce the various kinds of content which users are reading, commenting on and sharing via SM. The previous studies did not investigate in calculating and classifying SM content. In the current study, the classification of SM content will be held depending on exploratory factor analysis which will be used too with GS from SM.

Research Hypotheses

The study tries to test the following hypotheses:

H1: *The different SM platforms usage will significantly predict the users' GS.*

The traditional and new media U&G approaches revealed that people consciously choose the medium that could satisfy their needs [4], these needs are represented as motives for using a particular medium [13]. As SM sites differ in terms of their characteristics and applications, interactivity forms and users' control over content due to new technologies related to their choices, it is expected that these different SM attributes will predict various types of GS by users.

H2: *The different patterns of SM content usage will significantly predict the users' GS.*

The consumption of SM content differs from that in traditional media which is one way (reading, listening or watching). In SM users can skip these stages to comment post and share various kinds of content. The second hypothesis tests the degrees of SM content usage as predictors for the types of GS. As previous research in SM did not study this kind of relationship between content usage and GS, hence the current study tries to examine this relation.

H3: *The users' demographics will significantly predict GS from using SM.*

Much of previous studies on SM usage have focused on college students as shown in the literature review and few of them studied other demographic variables (economic status, level of education, age, and sex), in a way that some of those few studies attached these variables to young adults. In addition, it is needed to test the impact of other demographic variables on GS from SM by adult users specially in Egypt as a country of the Arab world.

H4: *The different SM platforms usage will significantly predict the user's interactivity.*

H5: *The users' demographics will significantly predict the interactivity of SM users.*

As interactivity became the main feature to distinguish new media and SM from traditional media, the users have the ability to generate content to communication partners or respond to various sources. The term "produsage" has been added to delineate this new SM production which is responsible for the creation of digital content in Web 2.0 environments [21,53]. It is vital to examine the most SM networks predictors for users' interactivity in the fourth hypothesis. It is also a great relevance to examine users' demographic variables as predictors for interactivity in the fifth hypothesis.

Research Design and Methodology

The present study depends on conducting a survey method to collect data within a questionnaire on the selected sample of the study to examine respondents' situation, their level of motivations, uses and interactivity on SM, and demographic characteristics.

Testing validity and reliability

The validity: The initial questionnaire was presented to a group of academic experts of mass communication, new media and journalism[1] to evaluate the scientific applicability and its relevance to the objectives and study hypotheses. As well, the questionnaire was pre-tested on 50 respondents who use SM to identify misunderstanding or error questions and sentences in order to modify them as needed and to explore the most common types of SM they use to be placed on the final questionnaire list. The average correlation of consistency in the answers to the questions was 91% taking into account that questionnaires with a validity degree less than 80% were excluded.

The reliability: Re-applying the questionnaire instrument on 30 respondents of the whole sample, the value of reliability coefficient for study instrument according to Cronbach's alpha was 0.89, which is a high value and acceptable to the application.

Sample

The study applied two kinds of samples. The first kind was the systematic random sampling process applied to collect data over 322 adult residents from Greater Cairo which is the capital and biggest region in Egypt and comprising the three governorates of Cairo, Giza, and Qaliubiya from 20 February 2017 to 17 March 2017[2]. Differences of socio-economic status among the three levels of neighborhoods in this area have been taken into account to include two districts for each level. Due to the nature of the study which required respondents' proficiency in reading

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[1]The jury members were: Prof. Adel Abdul Ghafar, Prof. Ashraf Abdul Mogheeth and Associate Prof. Mehrez Ghaly (All are at Faculty of Mass Communication-Cairo University).

[2]Egypt has a population of 85.8 million and Cairo is the largest capital in the Arab region with a population of 25 million throughout the three governorates (Cited in Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics. 2014. Statistical Yearbook 2014.).

and writing, the ten trained interviewers excluded respondents with less than a prep school certificate[3]. The second kind was the purposive sample consisting of respondents that the interviewers asked first if they were using SM or not to fill in the questionnaire with those who use it.

Research Variables and Measurements

The questionnaire items included dependent and independent variables as follows:

Dependent variables

The questionnaire included two main dependent variables:

Gratifications sought: This variable is associated with the respondents' motives behind SM usage:

Based on previous studies on GS from using traditional media [4,54,55], Internet and the Web [10,11,13] and SM [21,56,57], respondents were asked 18 closed questions about their motives for accessing SM so that the answers would be measured on a five-point scale: never=1, few=2, on average=3, very often=4, and always=5. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to extract the types of respondents' GS from SM.

Interactivity through social media usage: Five items were used to measure the degree of respondents' participations and interactions with SM: "I am eager to share information, video, and photos with others through SM", "I use SM to express my opinion and comment on various issues and topics", "I am keen to create posts through SM on various interests", "I am interested in creating pages or Hastag on SM sites to call for action or take a particular position", "I create a group/groups or subscribe to them through social media". For each item, the response options were measured on a five-point scale that included: never=1, few=2, on average=3, very often=4, and always=5. The total scores of the five terms were calculated (M=14.8, SD=4.308).

Independent Variables

The questionnaire contained levels of predictors as shown in the following:

Social media sites usage: Respondents were asked questions about how many times per week they had access to each type of SM sites and how many hours per each time they used each of SM platforms. The total of the two questions' answers was computed to calculate the scale points ranging from very high=4, high=3, mid=2, low=1, to non=0 **(Table 1)**.

Social media content usage: 26 kinds of topics were mentioned to respondents to answer how they were interested in and interacting with SM content. Each topic was measured on a four-point scale which included: never=0, read only=1, comment=2, share, forward or post=3. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to extract the types of preferred content for SM users.

Demographic variables: The study used four standard demographic variables: age, measured with a four-group scale:

from 18-29 coded=1 to 50 years old and above coded=4 (M=1.84, SD=0.91); gender, male coded=1, female coded=0 (M=0.37, SD=0.48); education level, measured with a four-point scale: from less than high school coded=1 to postgraduate, master or PhD degree coded=4 (M=2.79, SD=0.60); and income, measured with a six-point scale: from 2000 EGP or less coded=1 to 10000 EGP and above coded=6 (M=2.59, SD=1.41).

Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis

The exploratory factor analysis used the principal components procedure on factors selected for having an Eigenvalue of greater than 1 for extraction and the Varimax method of rotation with suppressing absolute values less than .60. All reliability measures were 0.7 or higher to reduce data to a smaller set of summary variables and to explore the underlining theoretical structure of the following variables:

Factor analysis on gratifications sought

The factor analysis extracted four patterns of GS from using SM which altogether explained 65.20% of the total variance. These patterns of GS as shown in **Table 2** were: Marketing and Reinforcement of opinions (M=24.06, SD=6.15), Social interaction and information (M=16.28, SD=3.15), Expressive interaction (M=12.96, SD=3.57) and Pastime (M=10.30, SD=2.91).

Factor1: Marketing and reinforcement of opinions (MRO): As shown in **Table 2**, this factor included seven items expressing the motives behind respondents' access to social networks. The Eigenvalue of this factor is 7.36 and the factor explains 40.86% of the total variance. The factor encompassed two stages of respondents' dealing with opinions, ideas, and views. The first one was related to the marketing of opinions as a means for obtaining, updating, forming and comparing ideas and views on issues and events. The four gratifications items most expressed by respondents through this factor – "To communicate with the updated ideas on the raised issues" (M=3.70, SD=1.06), "Because I seek to know different views on the issues", "To form opinions on events and issues" and "To compare different views in the media" – reveal that respondents use SM significantly in order to grasp and compare all views and opinions on raised issues and events. Then comes the second stage of reinforcement of ideas presented in SM. The last three items through this factor comprise this stage: "To view ideas comparable to mine", "To obtain information consistent with my views and beliefs" and "To

Table 1: Means of SM sites usage.

SM sites	Mean	SD
Facebook	3.29	1.14
YouTube	1.73	1.39
Instagram	1.22	1.55
Twitter	0.88	1.28
Google plus	0.81	1.21
Blogs	0.37	0.85
My space	0.21	0.72
Flickr	0.19	0.61

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[3]According to the education system in Egypt, the education in the prep stage takes three years following the elementary stage.

explore views that reflect my own political opinion on events".

Factor 2: Social interaction and information (SII): This factor was composed of four items measuring respondents' use of SM as a means for communicating with others, seeking for useful information, answers and updates about the surrounding social environment and forming new relationships with others (Eigenvalue=1.69, Variance explained=9.36%). The most expressed gratification item was "to communicate with friends and relatives", showing how respondents use SM as a tool for communicating with people. The recent emergence of SM uses has accelerated this trend, as shown in MySpace, Facebook, and many other social sites which are rooted in meeting people's social interaction needs [15] through interacting with other users either online or offline to format and maintain the virtual communities on user-generated sites. Through this factor, acquiring social information about others and surrounding community ranked second. This is clearly demonstrated by the two gratifications items "To find out what's going on around me and keep up with friends' updates" and "To keep up with developments in the surrounding social environment". This "information seeking is driven by people's desire to increase awareness and knowledge of one's self, others, and the world" [15] and to be keen on the continuity of the acquisition of such information **(Table 2)**.

Finally, in this factor respondents are seeking for friendship through the item "To search for old friends or make new friends". This finding completely integrates with previous studies [21,23,58,59] which found that SM (e.g., Facebook) is not used to meet new people and overcome inhibitions but, rather, to maintain existing social ties which Ellison et al. [58] had measured

as "Facebook Relationship Maintenance Behaviors".

Factor 3: Expressive interaction (EI): This factor consisted of four items (Eigenvalue=1.60, Variance explained=8.88%) expressing the extent of respondents' interactivity while using SM. These gratifications were "To add new posts that reflect my attitudes and thoughts", "To express my personal views on various issues", "To comment on the news, information and views of the participants" and "To share my interests and information with friends and groups" revealing that the respondents' expression of their views and sharing interests are the most important forms of interaction on SM. This is consistent with the view of Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre [60] who defined SM as "employing mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content".

Factor 4: pastime: The composition of this factor includes some of the motivations reached by previous studies [21,38] which found "entertainment," "relaxation," and "escape" as GS from Facebook. In the current study, three items were loaded on this factor: "To entertain and enjoy the light topics, "To spend leisure time" and "To escape from the daily events and problems that I might encounter".

Factor analysis of content usage

The factor analysis extracted six patterns of content which are preferred and used by respondents on SM and entirely explained 61.92% of the total variance. These patterns of content as shown in **Table 3** were: Hard topics (M=6.56, SD=3.51), Economic topics (M=1.89, SD=1.32), Social topics (M=4.70, SD=2.01), Light topics

Table 2: Factor loading for GS from using SM.

Factors Descriptive	Mean	SD	Factors loading			
			1	**2**	**3**	**4**
F1: Marketing and reinforcement of opinions						
To communicate with the updated ideas on the raised issues	3.7	1.06	0.695	0.45	0.128	0.047
Because I seek to know different views on the issues	3.68	1.05	0.768	0.189	0.018	0.178
To form opinions on events and issues	3.53	1.16	0.614	0.396	0.337	0.007
To compare different views in the media	3.46	1.12	0.729	0.076	0.218	0.255
To view ideas comparable to mine	3.28	1.16	0.638	0.094	0.32	0.338
To obtain information consistent with my views and belief	3.25	2	0.781	0.016	0.259	0.189
To explore views that reflect my own political opinion on events	3.16	1.14	0.718	0.153	0.237	0.105
F2: Social interaction and information						
To communicate with friends and relatives	4.38	0.842	0.009	0.73	0.274	0.187
To find out what's going on around me and keep up with friends' updates	4.24	0.919	0.313	0.697	0.163	0.096
To keep up with developments in the surrounding social environment	3.98	1.04	0.557	0.649	0.081	0.144
To search for old friends or make new friends	3.68	1.14	0.128	0.63	0.403	0.114
F3: Expressive interaction						
To add new posts that reflect my attitudes and thoughts	3.6	1.2	0.196	0.275	0.707	0.08
To express my personal views on various issues	3.5	1.09	0.07	0.445	0.637	0.018
To comment on the news, information and views of the participants	3.14	1.19	0.447	0.012	0.624	0.22
To share my interests and information with friends and groups	2.73	1.21	0.253	0.155	0.696	0.006
F4: Pastime						
To entertain and enjoy the light topics	3.71	1.1	0.238	0.476	0.074	0.599
To spend leisure time	3.52	1.24	0.066	0.315	0.031	0.804
To escape from the daily events and problems that I might encounter	3.03	1.29	0.19	0.065	0.152	0.782

Table 3: Factor loading for content usage on SM.

Factors Descriptive	Mean	SD	Factors loading					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
F1: Hard topics								
Terrorism issues	1.36	0.832	0.629	0.047	0.227	0.087	0.442	0.146
Government performance	1.09	0.695	0.692	0.311	0.117	0.024	0.151	0.037
Public and political freedoms	1.06	0.755	0.746	-0.044	0.04	0.025	-0.104	0.181
Police practices	1.04	0.731	0.694	0.197	0.09	0.088	0.332	-0.031
Practices of the Muslim Brotherhood	1.01	0.872	0.665	0.034	0.108	-0.083	0.319	0.112
Politics and foreign affairs	**0.99**	0.719	0.73	0.23	0.097	-0.081	0.143	-0.072
F2: Economic topics								
Services, facilities and infrastructure	0.98	0.797	0.275	0.655	0.279	0.036	0.016	0.091
Investment and business issues	0.91	0.768	0.3	0.722	0.066	0.024	0.124	-0.198
F3: Social topics								
Education issues	1.61	0.821	0.001	0.288	0.678	0.222	0.392	0.059
Religious Subjects	1.61	0.806	0.214	-0.019	0.757	0.196	0.049	0.146
Health issues	1.48	0.766	0.09	0.269	0.771	0.05	0.071	-0.048
F4: light topics								
Culinary and decoration	1.16	0.97	-0.145	0.149	0.209	0.784	0.194	-0.241
Fashion	1	0.886	-0.011	-0.018	0.069	0.9	-0.028	-0.024
Advertising	0.8	0.766	0.027	0.218	0.236	0.625	-0.076	0.094
F5: Incidental topics								
Martyrs of the army and police	1.5	0.866	0.311	0.045	0.234	0.182	0.714	0.085
Parliamentary elections	0.97	0.839	0.286	0.178	-0.064	-0.038	0.617	0.296
F5: Sport topics								
Sports	1.07	0.955	0.074	0.122	0.286	-0.1	0.159	0.726
Eigenvalue			7.87	3.23	1.53	1.33	1.11	1.04
% of variance explained			30.28	12.4	5.86	5.11	4.28	3.99
Cronbach's Alpha (Reliability scores)			0.854	0.595	0.792	0.771	0.579	----
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy			0.838					

(M=2.95, SD=2.18), Incidental topics (M=2.47, SD=1.43) and Sport topics (M=1.07, SD=0.955). Nine topics were removed because of their low loading values[4] **(Table 3)**.

Results and Discussion of Hypotheses

Regression analysis in **Table 4** shows a partial support to the first hypothesis that Facebook was the only medium used by respondents to match with the four types of GS which were positively regressed on this medium usage. This finding comes first from the fact that Facebook is the most popular SM site — of the second quarter of 2017, Facebook reached 2 billion monthly active users as compared to 1 billion in the third quarter of 2012, making it the first social network ever to do so [1] beside being the highest ranking among Egyptian users as shown in **Table 1** (Facebook usage mean=3.29 compared to Twitter the second medium of ranking which mean=1.73) and this is the same finding in the study by Oloo [61] which found that Facebook is leading in terms of favorability among SNSs. Hence, Facebook has the opportunity to satisfy all instrumental, ritualized and social interaction motives due to its characteristics which enable

users to get a benefit and some of them are not available in other SM sites. Such characteristics include: hosting games, hide updates about people and see everyone else's updates, birthday reminder, live broadcast feature, video recording feature and send on friends' pages and messages to congratulate them on their own occasions as an alternative to photos, the search feature which allows users to search for pages, people, groups or even specific news, allowing users to connect all friends to their friends list... etc. Also, this seems to be partially supported by former research who found four needs for participating in groups within Facebook: socializing, entertainment, self-status seeking, and information [19] **(Table 4)**.

As shown in **Table 4**, MRO gratifications were only predicted positively by Twitter usage. This outcome is partly supported in the study by Liu et al. [50] which illuminated that Twitter does not fulfill the motivation of social interaction and it does not dedicate to develop functions for fun and entertainment environment for play as provided in the current study. Although MRO gratifications were not on the scale of the study by Liu and his colleagues, they found alternative gratifications that Twitter fulfils users' needs for self-documentation (keeping a record of what a person learns, keeping track of what a person is doing and documenting life) and information sharing (to provide information, to share information useful to other people and to present information

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[4]These topics were: High prices, Nile water crisis, Financial and administrative corruption, Tourism, Social events, Cultural and literary subjects, Family and society, Crime and Accidents, and Children's supplies and schools.

on person's interests). These two types of gratifications reveal that Twitter was designed for sharing and seeking information (P.936) that is used for the utilitarian value of the service since Twitter is considered as an information-oriented medium [62]. In addition, Johnson and Yang [17] revealed that although Twitter was created for its social aspects to keep in touch with friends via status updates of what a user is currently doing, their data strongly suggested that Twitter is primarily used as an information source and as a means to share information. The user can choose which users to follow; thereby, each user is an information source and this means that users have the capacity to easily customize which streams of content to consume or not consume.

My finding of attaching the MRO to twitter usage indicates that the respondents in the current study who use this medium may tend to be more followers than to post or write on Twitter in order to know, form, compare, explore and communicate with different ideas and views. This notion does not fit with the "publicity model which proposes that some users of media aim not to engage with others but aim to "catch and hold visual or aural attention" of spectators" [63]. Also, this finding does not seem to be strongly supported by other previous studies which found that other key motives were related to the Twitter usage

such as social and information motives, hedonic, utilitarian and social appearance values [64]. In addition, Ballard [44] demonstrated that public interaction and communication among Tweeters are a major part of the social media network that the top three GS from Twitter were "entertainment," "passing time," and "expression, while the top three GO from Twitter by the same participants were actually "entertainment," "relational maintenance," and "information seeking". That means Twitter users actually obtain more opportunities to manage their relationships than they anticipate. The differences between the current study and the studies mentioned above may be due to the cultural and social differences, different methods and tools or the lower level of Twitter usage by respondents compared to Facebook in the present study.

SII gratifications sought were only predicted positively by Instagram usage. The regression of this kind of gratifications seems to be logical within the characteristics of Instagram which allow the Hashtag property and enable the user to customize Hashtag for each occasion to publish pictures and short videos and his friends see them. Also, users can like, comment on and bookmark others' posts, as well as send private messages to their friends via the Instagram Direct feature. This social

Table 4: OLS Regression predicting of GS on the extent of using SM sites.

Predictors (the extent of using SM sites)	Gratifications sought factors							
	Marketing and reinforcement of opinions (MRO)		Social interaction and information(SII)		Expressive interaction (EI)		Pastime	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Facebook	1.152***	0.306	0.838***	0.156	0.641***	0.173	0.840***	0.145
Twitter	1.936*	0.886	-0.183	0.162	0.261	0.181	-0.217	0.151
YouTube	0.421	0.262	-0.118	0.133	0.101	0.148	0.082	0.124
Instagram	0.076	0.254	0.271*	0.129	0.096	0.144	0.183	0.12
MySpace	-0.545	0.646	0.401	0.329	0.296	0.366	-0.353	0.306
Flickr	0.544	0.319	-0.122	0.451	-0.23	0.502	0.422	0.42
Blogs	-0.471	0.556	0.052	0.283	0.065	0.315	-0.112	0.264
Google plus	0.494	0.318	0.269	0.162	0.686***	0.18	-0.011	0.151
R	0.374		0.389		0.424		0.369	
R square	0.14		0.151		0.18		0.136	
F change	6.351***		6.966***		8.580***		6.151***	
Table entries are Unstandardized Regression Coefficients (B) and standard errors (SE). Degrees of freedom=8, *p ≤ 0.05, ***p ≥ 0.001. N=322								

Table 5: OLS Regression predicting of GS on SM content usage.

Predictors (Preferred content on SM) casi	Gratifications sought factors							
	Marketing and reinforcement of opinions		Social interaction and information		Expressive interaction		Pastime	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Hard topics	0.841***	0.117	0.230***	0.062	0.341***	0.07	0.144*	0.06
Economic topics	0.39	0.272	-0.23	0.145	0.047	0.164	-0.188	0.139
Social topics	-0.558**	0.185	0.019	0.099	0.254*	0.112	-0.384***	0.094
Light topics	0.466**	0.152	0.304***	0.081	0.289**	0.092	0.443***	0.077
Incidental topics	-0.108	0.27	0.298*	0.144	0.098	0.163	-0.118	0.138
Sport topics	0.172	0.339	0.363*	0.18	0.644**	0.205	0.395*	0.173
R	0.488		0.424		0.421		0.341	
R square	0.238		0.18		0.177		0.117	
F change	16.388***		11.538***		11.317***		6.923***	
Table entries are Unstandardized Regression Coefficients (B) and standard errors (SE). Degrees of freedom=6, *p £ 0.05, **p £ 0.01, ***p £ 0.001. N=322.								

interaction through photos and videos posting, sharing and commenting is strongly expressed in the study by Oloo [61] which was applied on university students and concluded that 50% of the participants have met most of their friends through SNSs including Instagram and that posting photos on Instagram can play role in a higher level of socialization compared to just posting comments because when students are posting photos on Instagram their friends might see them, comment and leave feedback on them, so, making interaction is a favorable activity among university students. In addition, other previous studies found that Instagram users scored highest for showing affection, following fashion, and demonstrating sociability when they followed brands [20] and that users are on Instagram to gratify the need for self-expression and social connection and do not separate these gratifications; that users may be aware that other users may not be portraying accurate depictions of true-self on the site; and lastly, that the motives originally thought to apply to Instagram have changed/or are changing [65].

The higher use of Google plus only led to the higher EI gratifications sought as shown in **Table 4**. This finding is compatible with the characteristics of Google Plus platform which allow the user to share, tag, continue and comment without any inconvenience and make his personality popular among elite members and those getting jobs as well. Moreover, the "user-generated media" perspective shows these expressive interaction needs from Google Plus usage as a reflection to allow the significance of who one is and what one does to show himself/herself [15].

Finally, **Table 4** shows that there were no regressed correlations of the four kinds of GS on the other SM sites usage (YouTube, MySpace, Flicker, and Blogs), meaning that the Egyptian users do not have specific motives behind using these media's platforms **(Table 5)**.

Regression analysis in **Table 5** shows some support to the second hypothesis. First, the four types of GS were positively predicted by both hard and light topics usage, meaning that while hard topics are related to MRO, SII and EI gratifications sought from SM, they are also related to the seeking for "pastime" gratifications and the same with the light topics which are related to pastime GS as well as to the other three types of gratifications. Although this finding violates the traditional assumption of U&G theory which claims that each need can be fulfilled by specific content or there is a trade-off between motivations through content [66], some of previous U&G research on both traditional and new media which revealed that entertainment and information gratifications are sought and derived from content [4,15,67] may interpret the current finding that while users are seeking for serious and hard content through SM to fulfill instrumental needs, they also use them as pastime –which includes entertainment, spend leisure time and escape. Constructs based on the theoretical underpinnings of U&G approach, such as the need for social interaction, the need for entertainment, information seeking and sharing needs, and the desire for reward or remuneration have all been explored in recent SM studies [68].

This outcome of the current study reveals that any type of GS from social media can be satisfied not only by the specific type of content but also by different kinds of it because SM

content is not merely for reading, viewing or posting. Users; for examples, can make use of MySpace, Facebook, and other social media to "learn how to make sense of things from their peers on just about any subject" [69] and clips which are presented in "YouTube for entertainment seekers can be considered a buffet of "snack" videos and highly meeting people's needs for high-speed entertainment munching" [15] and it can also meet seeking information needs. The past regression relationships are similar to sports topics usage which positively predicted SII, EI and pastime gratifications, but did not predict MRO gratifications. This may be explained that sports topics usage does not need one's reinforcement or marketing of his views and ideas about sports events, sports heroes or preferred games. This kind of topics is considered as entertainment content to satisfy users' needs for pastime and, therefore, can motivate audiences to use the media for other purposes [67]. On the other hand, there were no regression correlations of the four kinds of GS on the Economic topics usage.

Table 5 also shows that SII gratifications were positively predicted by incidental topics (Martyrs of the army and police and Parliamentary elections) usage. The correlation is possibly due to the fact that this type of content which contains events occurring incidentally and are controversially connected within the community is needed to be discussed through various channels including SM sites which are characterized as "discursive media" "because online communication is both active and engaging and allows arguments through recurring discussions. This kind of involvement lends itself to a greater number of interpersonal discussions and reasoning efforts" [30] specially with this type of political content (incidental topics factor) in the current study in which people are empowered to act, communicate, or participate in the broader society and political process [70]. Therefore, this kind of SM services satisfies people's need for information and developments in the surrounding environment as well as social interaction opportunities with online friends.

Table 5 shows negative regression correlations of MRO, EI and pastime gratifications on the social topics usage (Education issues, Religious subjects and Health issues) which are characterized as permanent and dominant social issues and, as a result, trends and values towards them are established and therefore do not affect users to seek to strengthen or change beliefs and values about them, to express views and attitudes about them or to access SM sites just to spend time with these kinds of content. The low level of these motivations to use social topics on SM does not fit with the "spectacle performance paradigm" which assumes that the users are not only readers or watchers but they are also performers at the same time [49] that there is no "user-to-content interaction" in the current study with regard to social topics to achieve what Shao [15] claimed that users rate the content, save to their favorites, share with others, post comments, etc. **(Table 6)**.

Regression analysis in the **Table 6** shows a partial support to the third hypothesis. First, both MRO and EI gratifications were positively predicted by male SM usage. This means that more males than females tend to use SM to aggregate and compare information and opinions and then use them for self-expression

and interaction. This finding is consistent with previous studies which found that males attach more importance to narcissism and self-expression motivators than females who attach more importance to the relationship maintenance motivation factor than males [49,71] and are generally restrictive in the amount of personal information they put on the internet because they guard their privacy more carefully than men [61] who are significantly skewed towards a certain news-seeking need [72] to help them for reinforcement of views and opinions. In contrast to my findings which coincided with the above studies, there have been other studies reaching no effects of gender differences when they were associated with youth (age and sex), that college men and women are equally likely to share their personal information or to communicate with those who date them [47,73] and both men and women express strong feelings towards their relationships and partners [74]. In relation to education level, there was only one significant negative predictor to pastime gratifications that the respondents with the lower education level attached more importance to pastime motives.

Also, in relation to age, regression analysis indicated significant negative correlations between it and MRO, EI and pastime gratifications. These results may be deducted from the fact that younger users in age of college students in the current study are more likely to engage in fun activities than other Internet users [73] and are "more performers than older users that they attach more importance to media drenching and performance motive" [49]. These outcomes illuminate that while the younger users turn to SM for entertainment and enjoyment they also look for more insight viewpoints and interactivity via sharing and posting information and opinions. In other words, these types of GS from SM by younger users can be explained through the notion of "eudaimonic motivation". When given the variations in individuals' desire to seek pleasure and life's meaning from entertainment media it is likely that moral judgment would be distinctly impacted [74] to search for deeper meanings, insights and experience strong emotions [75,76] and to be more willing to improve their status in the world because they have more expectations about the future [49] **(Table 7)**.

Regression analysis in the **Table 7** shows a partial support to the fourth hypothesis that users' interactivity was positively predicted by both Facebook and Twitter usage; whereas the other types of SM platforms did not predict interactivity

intention. The emergence of highly interaction with Egyptian users of Facebook and Twitter strongly suggests that the users of these two SM platforms tend to engage in conversations and to convey and exchange information with each other based on the expectation of gaining social rewards such as approval, status, respect [77] and building reputation which is a strong motivator for active participation [78]. The high interactive rate on Facebook and Twitter can be attributed to their ability to host discussions and controversies about issues and events, to share and update information, news, ideas, and views and to internalize social values and identity. These activities of sharing and posting information and views are viewed by Yoo et al. [64] to be influenced by "social conformity" which is (in Twitter for example) based on explicit or implicit consensus among group members and is perceived as an important source of information sharing. Such activities are a metaphor for active Twitter functions including tweeting, tweeting and providing additional content, mentioning other users and messaging other users directly [44]. The features of Facebook and Twitter are relevant to some physical and psychological characteristics of users which prove their activity on these two SM platforms. For example, there is a "dopamine" system in the user's brain which is stimulated by unpredictability, by small bits of information, and by reward cues – pretty much the exact conditions of social media – that dopamine breeds the "wanting" to seeking for information [79], and "opioid" system which controls the feelings of pleasure associated with "liking" [47]. In the sharing behavior, there are many opportunities for users to devote more of speech about themselves, to provide others with a better sense of who they are and what they care about. These portraits of self-disclosure, human feeling or emotion are due to the brain's dopamine reward system that rewards users for talking about themselves [47]. Given the design of both Facebook and Twitter, they allow users to update status, to post information, opinions, views, and ideas, or to share activities to get the rewards that the brain expects **(Table 8)**.

Regression analysis in **Table 8** shows some of the support to the fifth hypothesis by indicating a positive regression of interactivity on gender, that male users are likely to be more active on SM than females. This outcome comes from the fact that because women interest more in interpersonal relationships online for keeping existing relationships while men are seeking new friends

Table 6: OLS Regression predicting of GS on demographic variables.

Predictors (Preferred content on SM)	Gratifications sought factors							
	Marketing and reinforcement of opinions		Social interaction and information		Expressive interaction		Pastime	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Gender (male)	2.154**	0.73	0.26	0.38	1.153**		0.383	0.332
Income	0.168	0.249	0.055	0.13	0.023		0.022	0.113
Education level	0.677	0.59	0.455	0.307	0.035		0.828**	0.268
Age	1.248**	0.399	0.318	0.208	-0.593*		0.792***	0.182
R	0.216		0.132		0.181		0.345	
R square	0.047		0.017		0.033		0.119	
F change	3.881**		1.402		2.688*		10.696***	
Table entries are Unstandardized Regression Coefficients (B) and standard errors (SE). Degrees of freedom=6, *p £ 0.05, **p £ 0.01, ***p £ 0.001. N=322								

Table 7: OLS Regression predicting of interactivity on the extent of using SM sites.

Predictors (The extent of using SM sites)	Interactivity	
	B	SE
Facebook	0.595**	0.208
Twitter	0.729***	0.217
YouTube	0.339	0.178
Instagram	0.284	0.173
My space	0.201	0.439
Flickr	-0.554	0.603
Blogs	-0.174	0.378
Google plus	0.387	0.217
R	0.435	
R square	0.189	
F change	9.145***	

Table entries are Unstandardized Regression Coefficients (B) and standard errors (SE). Degrees of freedom=8, **p £ 0.01, ***p £ 0.001. N=322.

Table 8: OLS Regression predicting of interactivity on demographic factors.

Predictors (Demographic factors)	Interactivity	
	B	SE
Gender (male)	1.761***	0.502
Income	0.003	0.172
Education level	-0.197	0.406
Age	-1.260***	0.275
R	0.286	
R square	0.082	
F change	7.054***	

Table entries are Unstandardized Regression Coefficients (B) and standard errors (SE). Degrees of freedom=6, ***p £ 0.001. N=322

and those who share the same interests on SM [71], they will be more interactive to present themselves, present self-descriptions within an online community and articulate their social networks [70].

Also, age is the lonely significant negative predictor to interactivity that younger users are more likely to interact via SM than older users. This result can be interpreted as approved by Madden and Smith [73] that young adults are the most active online reputation managers in several dimensions and, when compared with older users, they more often customize what they share and whom they share it with.

Conclusion and Study Limitations

This research attempts to apply developments in theoretical concepts describing how Egyptian adults interact and use SM. Through the examination of U&G theory, factor analysis showed that the users participate in virtual community activities to obtain knowledge and views on events that they need in a stage of marketing views that help them in opinion reinforcement. These intellectual and cognitive aspects of Egyptian users which reveal a kind of political GS are due to the environment of controversy and debate created by SM especially after the Egyptian Revolution of January 25, 2011. As information-seeking is a major motivator of web use, it is important to study in future research the quality

and credibility of information seeking and sharing via SM sites.

I found SM sites usage was related to social connectivity that users used them as tools for communicating and keeping involved with others or acquiring social information about others and surrounding community. Egyptian users tend to freely express their lives, thoughts and views through SM, then their privacy and content sharing need a pattern of social and moral discipline. Because "social media users' online knowledge-sharing behavior is the most essential activity for maintaining and developing the virtual communities" [80,81], my findings also illuminate the discussion about users to be the core of the sharing process of information, ideas and opinions. It is needed in future research to examine users' activities of information sharing via SM and how these activities affect the users' online information privacy. It is also important to examine the degree of users' adoption of information shared through SM and how they rely on them in forming opinions and issue judgments about various events and issues either by joining groups or free use of blogging through social media.

In addition to the three types of utilitarian motives mentioned before, users are looking for entertainment and pastime through SM sites in the current study. Ruggiero [3] express this situation claiming that entertainment and mass media are nearly synonymous for most people. While mood management theory reveals that people's entertainment choices should similarly serve the management of moods [76], Egyptian users are capable of altering prevailing mood states through the consumption of entertaining content. Through SM platforms, entertainment forms vary for users that they can use millions of audio and video clips by accessing YouTube or playing games via other sites especially on Facebook.

Factor analysis showed six types of content usage through SM. These types of content usage were associated with various motives of using SM. Such finding reveals that specific content not only can satisfy specific needs of using SM sites but also can meet other purposes of their usage. While users are seeking for or consuming content with hedonistic qualities they are given opportunities to achieve utilitarian uses and the same goes for users who are seeking for content with utilitarian purposes. Moreover, Web-browsing process is beyond just utilitarian purpose that there is a presence of user enjoyment [14,47]. It is relevant in future research to examine the appropriate content of each of SM sites according to its characteristics and attributes and to distinguish between the process and content motivations of each SM platform. This is because SM sites develop their platforms and add more options and advantages to the users; hence, there will be multiple areas for using content, interactivity and social interaction.

The results of this study highlight how patterns of GS reveal notable differences across categories defined by the extent of SM type's usage. In my sample of Egyptian adults, besides the point that Facebook was the leading in terms of favorability among SM sites, it fulfills all types of Egyptians' needs from SM usage. Some of the other sites were suitable to meet specific needs such as Twitter which satisfies users' needs to market and reinforce

their opinions through seeking for information, views, and ideas, and Instagram which has its usage to fulfill their needs for social interaction and social information, while Google plus is a suitable medium for users to express their opinions and views. These results show the need to highlight the types of SM for Egyptian users and the relevant kinds of their GS and GO due to the unique and different design and usability features of SM platforms. Also, it would be valuable to discover new areas of GS and GO due to the impact of smart devices applications usage.

A major finding of this study is that the features of Facebook and Twitter are more suitable to the Egyptian adult users to practice high levels of interactivity which did not appear with other SM sites mentioned in the current study. The future research must exceed the traditional ways of measuring users' interaction

through SM due to evolving technology which enables SM to incorporate new platforms that help users to adopt various interactive techniques whether online or offline usage.

Other major findings of the current study were related to the effects of some demographic varieties on GS from SM usage and on adult users' interactivity. Because cultural differences determine the U&G of social networks [82], the findings of the current study may be different if applied in other societies with the same demographic variables. Also, Future studies must employ data collected from global databases about SM users to identify the medium most used by specific community segments and, thereby, explore the aspects of uses, gratifications, and interactivity through SM according to population characteristics.

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