



Increasing Social Media Engagement Through Understanding the Uses and Gratification Theory

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Abstract. Describe Social-media is currently used as a marketing tool that has advantages compared to other media. However, not everyone understands how to use social media, especially marketers who are just starting their business and are starting to try to switch to digital marketing Background Problems: creating digital content on social media that can increase engagement is a problem for Novelty marketers: this research becomes the only one that discusses digital content marketing by looking at the uses and gratifications theory in increasing visitor engagement on social media Research Methods: Research data collection is done by distributing questionnaires to social media users who use it to find products which are then processed using a structural equation approach modeling with Smartpls Finding/Results: Uses and gratifications theory with its four dimensions can increase social media engagement. Information sharing has a very big influence on shaping engagement. Conclusion: through UGT, marketers can create the right content to increase engagement. Marketers can focus on creating informative content such as product-related information so that it doesn't just display products that make consumers unattractive.

Keywords: uses and gratifications theory · social media engagement · digital content marketing

1 Introduction

Social media is proven to be effective in creating relationships between companies and consumers today [1]. The emergence of social media Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Whatsapp and Tiktok has changed the way people communicate without having to meet directly but can feel their presence online in the form of photos or videos [2, 3]. [4] reports that in 2022 the world's social media users were 4.62 billion, with the most users of social media Facebook as much as 3.78 billion, Instagram 2.91 billion, and 3.78 billion. This number means that there is a great opportunity that social media users should take advantage of to be used as a medium for selling their products.

Especially for business actors in the category of small and medium-sized businesses that have relatively small marketing costs compared to large companies. Social media is a solution for small and medium-sized businesses to use social media as an alternative

to marketing their products [5, 6]. So it is very important for them to learn what motives users want when accessing social media.

Previous researchers studied the motives of someone accessing social media by looking at the uses and gratification theory (UGT) which can understand the reason someone accesses social media [7–9]. UGT can explain why someone uses social media to fulfill their needs so that it can be used by marketers on social media to find out what content is most appropriate to convey to users on social media [8]. When a company can provide the right content, it will have implications for profitable activities for the company [10]. This content can be interpreted as a form of marketing on social media. [11] explains that the dimensions of UGT can be seen from the consumer's desire to access social media in the scope of information sharing, new relationship building, self-presentation, and enjoyment.

But what needs to be considered is what are the consequences of understanding the content that can benefit business people. [12, 13] explains that engagement is the key to successful marketing on social media. Although previous researchers have discussed the concept of understanding UGT on social media engagement such as [14] which explores the antecedents of purchase intention by integrating UGT with social media engagement, UGT dimensions such as flexibility used cannot be adopted for small and medium-sized businesses. Medium in creating good content, especially in online stores that market products directly to consumers. [9, 15] also explained that there was a significant effect of having UGT content providers on increasing social media engagement, but they did not directly examine the perceptions of consumers accessing online stores on social media. Their research also focuses on only one social media platform, which is considered less applicable to all platforms that are widely accessed in Indonesia and cannot be used as input for small business actors who have varied products.

So this study will explore the consequences of understanding the reasons consumers access social media through the UGT. In particular, whether this understanding can increase engagement attitudes on social media. Furthermore, the proposed model will contribute to helping small and medium businesses to create the right content according to the target market. This research is the only one that discusses the consequences of UGT to social media engagement in the context of selling retail business products.

2 Literature Review

A. *Uses and Gratifications Theory*

The application of Uses and gratifications theory has been carried out before the existence of social media Instagram, Facebook and so on. The theory was able to reveal a person's motivation in consuming media which at that time was still limited to radio and television [16]. Advances in technology and the internet are increasingly massive, making social media one of the most popular communication media in the community. So that many business people use social media as a communication channel in reaching their customers, both small companies and large companies [17–19].

To see why someone uses social media, it can be seen from information sharing, new relationship building, self presentation, enjoyment [11]. The use of social media

also cannot be separated from the use of smartphones as a supporting tool. The basic reason for using smart phones other than as a communication tool is entertainment and information sharing. Information sharing is defined as the activity of sharing personal information with others through social media in a two-way and interactive manner [20]. This may be different from television media which only uses one-way communication. This information sharing has been widely used by previous researchers to see the reasons for someone to access social media and has been proven to be an antecedent that dominates the formation of uses and gratification theory [20–22].

In addition to understanding what motivates consumers to share information on social media, researchers can also understand the impact of information sharing that can increase or even hinder consumer engagement on social media [23]. [24] describes engagement as a state of value creation in a service that arises from a shared interactive experience. Meanwhile, engagement that appears on social media is currently known as social media engagement which is one of the benchmarks for marketing success on social media [13, 25, 26]. So the researchers put forward the following hypothesis:

H1: Information sharing has a positive and significant effect on increasing social media engagement.

The second dimension used to measure the uses and gratification theory is relationship building which is defined as a one-on-one conversation [27]. This dimension is seen because it refers to the basic nature of social media, namely participatory content that is shared in the form of forms of expression and means of building relationships between users on social media [28]. For example, Facebook social media users who seek pleasure by focusing instant messages on building and maintaining relationships that have been established among users [29, 30]. Another example of media that is widely used by companies to build customer engagement is by utilizing blogs [31].

Building relationships on social media can be seen from the high interaction of visitors when posting something or not [32] and marketers can also create and join several communities to discuss content that is being discussed a lot. This relationship can be easily carried out and studied by small companies that do not have a large budget compared to large companies in advertising [33]. When customers already feel they have a close relationship with marketers, it will create engagement on social media owned by marketers [34].

H2: Relationship building has a positive and significant effect on increasing social media engagement.

The third dimension is self-presentation which is defined as an attempt to present themselves to others in order to form a view that is directed as desired [35]. For example, Twitter offers facilities that can be used as a medium for delivering personal information about me, profiles, notes, and status updates that can be seen in real time by friends on social media [36]. They can determine which information can be presented or omitted so that it can be beneficial for themselves [37].

They also have to choose between several social media which have more interest according to their product segmentation. As found by [38] Facebook engagement will be higher than Youtube. Everything will depend on what type of product is marketed.

H3: Self presentation has a positive and significant effect on increasing social media engagement.

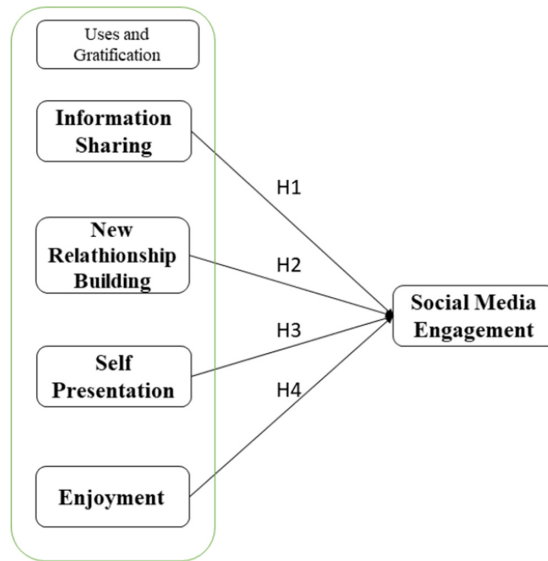


Fig. 1. Framework

The fourth dimension is enjoyment which is defined as happiness, pleasure when using any media [39]. Individuals will adopt certain services and technologies if they perceive that they are happy to use them [40]. The results of this happy attitude are expressed by clicking “like” on something that appears on the social media [41].

Today’s social media marketers use a lot of entertainment zones such as events, shows that are designed to give pleasure to their visitors so that they can be involved in these activities, especially for young people they provide guessing games or their equivalents [42]. Researchers call it affective involvement that arises from the pleasure obtained [25, 43]. Then there is a relationship between enjoyment and engagement, the more social media visitors enjoy the content delivered, the more consumer engagement will increase through liking, commenting and sharing [44].

H4: Enjoyment has a positive and significant effect on increasing social media engagement (Fig. 1).

3 Methodology and Data Analysis

Data were collected from 150 respondents who had been selected according to the sample criteria desired by the researcher, namely someone who had bought a product because they had seen product photos or videos on social media such as Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, Tiktok and so on. The details are shown in Table 1. This makes it easier to classify respondents with several characteristics. The questionnaire was distributed online with several explanations of some of the questions asked. Questions were adopted from previous research such as uses and gratifications with the four dimensions of Information sharing, New Relationship Building, Self-presentation, and Enjoyment [11]

and social media engagement [45, 46] and respondents answered using a Likert scale 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree.

The collected data is then analyzed using SmartPLS to test the measurement and structural models. The measurement model which is also called the outer model is how indicators are related to each other, while the structural model is how latent constructions are related to each other [47]. The first step is to determine the reliability and convergent reliability, Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted and Factor Loadings with the required value > 0.5 [48]. Composite Reliability (CR) is used to measure reliability which is considered more appropriate because it uses a factor load in the formula made with a value > 0.7 [47].

The initial stage of the research is to test the validity by looking at the loading factor > 0.5 and the average variance extracted must exceed 0.5 and CR > 0.7 [48]. The results of the study by looking at several indicators are shown in Table 2 which shows the loading factor value in the range of 0.638 - 0.888, the AVE value in the range of 0.561 - 0.720 and composite reliability in the range of 0.727 - 0.907. Cronbach’s alpha also shows a value > 0.7. All values are said to be valid and reliable so that further testing can be carried out. Table 3 shows the influence value between constructs built from the research model.

Table 1. Respondents Demographics

Measure	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	59	
	Female	91	
Education level	High School	51	
	Bachelor	50	
	Masters	33	
	Doctor	6	
Social Media	Instagram	88	
	Facebook	16	
	Youtube	5	
	Tiktok	19	
	Whatsapp	3	
Product categories	Fashion (shirts, pants, shoes)	115	
	Electronics	20	
	Food and beverage	15	

Table 2. Summary of the Measurement Model

Constructs and items	Loading	Cronbach's alfa	Composite reliability {rho a}	Composite reliability {rho c}	Average variance extracted {AVE}
<i>Uses and Gratification Theory</i>					
Information Sharing		0,710	0,727	0,838	0,635
ISI	0,826				
182	0,857				
183	0,699				
Relationship Building		0,771	0,791	0,867	0,686
RBI	0,885				
RB2	0,784				
RB3	0,813				
Self-Presentation		0,801	0,813	0,882	0,714
SPI	0,872				
SP2	0,828				
SP3	0,834				
Enjoyment		0,817	0,907	0,885	0,720
ENJI	0,820				
ENJ2	0,837				
ENJ3	0,888				
Social Media Engagement		0,928	0,931	0,938	0,561
Consumption Behavior					
Consul	0,638				
Consu2	0,770				
Consu3	0,734				
Consu4	0,660				
Contri 1	0,729				
Contri2	0,773				
Contri3	0,701				
Contri4	0,783				

(continued)

Table 2. (continued)

Constructs and items	Loading	Cronbach's alfa	Composite reliability {rho a}	Composite reliability {rho c}	Average variance extracted {AVE}
Create1	0,825				
Create2	0,790				
Create3	0,795				
Create4	0,764				

Table 3. Total Effect of Variables

Hypothesis	Construct	Original samples {O}	Sample mean {M}	Standard deviation {STDEV}	T statistics {IO/STDEVI}	P values
H1	Information Sharing → Social Media Engagement	0,242	0,243	0,077	3,125	0,002
H2	Relationship Building → Social Media Engagement	0,279	0,285	0,080	3,472	0,001
H3	Self Presentation → Social Media Engagement	0,112	0,116	0,076	1,467	0,142
H4	Enjoyment → Social Media Engagement	0,243	0,243	0,059	4,155	0,000

4 Research Result and Discussion

Based on the results of hypothesis testing conducted to see the effect of the construct of information sharing on social media engagement, the results obtained p value of 0.002 and the original sample of 0.242, which means that it has a positive and significant influence. The higher the information sharing obtained by visitors on social media, it will be able to increase their engagement on social media. This engagement can be seen from giving “likes”, comments, and frequently visiting social media profiles to get the latest content. The results of this study support the results of previous studies [26, 49].

This study also explains that someone accesses social media because they want to tell their friends on social media their activities. They can easily publish by uploading photos and videos of their activities. Basically, visitors on social media like to share and be creative by creating content to gain world fame [50]. This phenomenon can actually be used as a marketing strategy by, for example, providing good and interesting photo spots in offline stores. The hope is that visitors can voluntarily share their activities on social media with background information on the offline store they visit. So that the function of social media can be achieved by helping in bringing online consumer traffic to offline stores.

The second hypothesis testing was carried out to see the effect of the relationship building to social media engagement construct. The p value was 0.001 and the original sample was 0.279, which means it has a positive and significant effect. The higher the relationship building built by marketers on the content delivered by marketers, the higher consumer engagement on social media will be. The results of this study support previous research [51].

Humans as social beings certainly want to continue to communicate with other people both offline and online. Social media facilitates it with various features that make it easier for people to get to know people who have never been known or can also get to know people who have the same experience, background. For example, Facebook can recommend social media users to make friends with fellow Facebook users who have similarities in location, interests, age, and so on. So that social networking carried out on social media changes the interaction and communication patterns in social phenomena that occur in today's society [52]. These interactions can be in the form of text, photos, audio and video that make it easier for them to communicate and ultimately establish social relationships on social media [53].

Their habit of always spending time communicating on social media can be used as an opportunity for marketers to be present in the communication between visitors. For example, when they are communicating on social media, they will give each other comments on the posted content. Marketers can be actively involved in providing comments and opinions to exchange ideas. In the end they will feel engaged to the company that is always present in every communication and facilitates the relationship between visitors.

The third test looked at the effect of the construct of self presentation to social media engagement. The p value was 0.142 and the original sample was 0.112, which means it has a positive and insignificant effect. The higher the content delivered that has a high self-presentation value, it will actually reduce the attitude of social media engagement. These results are consistent with research [35, 54] which states that self-presentation cannot increase consumer engagement on social media. This is because content that is self-presented from the characteristics of consumers who have high exposure may not necessarily make consumers feel like taking action to get involved in social media [55]. Although [56] states that one's engagement on social media is based on self-presentation. His results may be different because the content delivered is content that is deliberately arranged for research purposes so that the research does not occur naturally with consumer engagement attitudes.

Of course, it will be different when creating content based on consumer needs by not studying consumer interest when accessing social media. Referring to the opinion

described by [57] that people consume media depending on their needs. So it is very important to know the basic role of social media is a medium for sharing information not as a selling medium. One of the media that is often used by young users of social media is a photo which is a self-presentation tool to reflect real behavior. But when this is done by marketers in creating content, the results of this study confirm that it is not a reason for someone to get involved. That's because they don't want the content to be part of a marketer's tool.

The fourth test looks at the effect of the enjoyment to social media engagement construct. The p value of 0.000 and the original sample of 0.243 are interpreted to have a positive and significant influence. The higher the content delivered is enjoyment, it will increase social media engagement. The driving factor for people to use social media is that they enjoy accessing it [58]. They do it in their spare time and when they feel bored during their daily activities. These results can be input for marketers to be able to find out the time usually spent by social media visitors accessing social media. This data can be obtained from the features provided by these social media, for example, we can find out when our followers most often visit our profile. So that we can display entertaining content at the right time. Like social media Facebook, Instagram, and tik tok it will be more fun when we post fun pictures and videos, for example funny and unique videos. Fun and entertainment can be created from interesting posts [59].

5 Implications/Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

Although this research has several implications that can be used as useful input for academics and practitioners. However, this is inseparable from several limitations that can be used as input for further research to complete it, so that the research model created can be applied in general in different contexts. First, the focus of this research is limited to only explaining visitor engagement on social media, while there are many consequences that can arise from content on social media such as measurement to purchase intention and even satisfaction with buying products on social media. Second, the power collection method used still uses a quantitative method by distributing online questionnaires. In the future, it will be better to use qualitative methods by conducting direct interviews with respondents in order to obtain more perfect data by using the mix method. Third, the respondents are consumers who live in Indonesia, the results may be different when the survey is conducted in other countries with different cultures. So that in the future this digital content model can be applied in all country contexts with the same case.

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