

Motivation, Reliance and Diversity of Social Media Use and Psychological

Well-being: A Cross-cultural Analysis of Korea and the United States

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## Abstract

The rapid development in new communication technologies transformed our ability to record and transmit sound and images, and greatly increased the speed with which we can do so. Prevalence of social media use is continually increasing in Korea as well as in the U.S. Although some effects of social media use may be universal, the degree to which individuals are affected by social media use may vary across cultures. A key function of communication is to create social ties and relationships, ultimately to make people feel satisfied with their life. Though it was mainly a domain of interpersonal communication, new communication technologies now became an important part of social interaction environment. To understand how social media influences psychological well-being, it is important to examine the motivation behind people's social media use. What individuals seek to gain from social media use may not only influence the nature and extent of their social media use behaviors, but also what kinds of psychological outcomes they get from social media use. Using survey data from the U.S. (N= 564) and Korea (N= 565), the present study examines cross-cultural differences in the relationship between psychological well-being and six different motivations and outcomes of social media use. This study further explores cross-cultural differences in the relationship between psychological well-being and social media use comparing Korean and U.S. college students. Results show that different motivations for social media use exert differing level of influence on social media use. Social media use was shown to influence psychological well-being through two different outcomes of perceived social support and self-esteem. The pattern of relationship also differs for Korea and the U.S., demonstrating that culture does influence the observed relationship. Implications of the findings are discussed.

## **Motivation, Reliance and Diversity of Social Media Use and Psychological Well-being: A Cross-cultural Analysis of Korea and the United States**

### **Introduction**

The creation and adoption of new communication technologies accelerated to an impressive pace in the past several decades. The rapid development in new communication technologies transformed our ability to record and transmit sound and images, and greatly increased the speed with which we can do so. These technological inventions transformed how people communicate with one another. Prevalence of social media (SM) use is continually increasing in Korea as well as in the U.S. Social networking now accounts for 11 % of all time spent online, and Twitter processed more than 1.2 billion tweets in January 2010 and averages almost 50 million tweets per day in the U.S. (Parr, 2010). As of 2011, there are around 165 million Facebook users in the U.S. as of 2013, which is about 71% of the online population (Nierhoff, 2013; Duggan & Smith, 2014). As of December 2010, Korean Facebook claims about 2.5 million subscribers (Cho & Jung, 2011), and 87.5% of young people in Korea aged 20 to 29 use SM according to the Korea Internet and Security Agency (Lee, 2014). Although some effects of SM use may be universal, the degree to which individuals are affected by social media use may vary across cultures.

A key function of communication is to create social ties and relationships, ultimately to make people feel satisfied with their life. Though it was mainly a domain of interpersonal communication, new communication technologies now became an important part of social interaction environment. While there has been a growing number of studies which examines social and individual consequences of social media (SM) use, many of these studies focus either on social interaction or civic participation, and there are not many studies that focus on understanding the impact of SM use on psychological well-being (PWB) of its users. Given that psychological health is often a strong predictor for physical well-being as well as an integral part of the quality of life (Felce & Perry, 1995; Salovey, Rothman, Detweiler, Steward, 2000), it is quite an important topic that needs additional empirical research efforts.

To understand how SM influences PWB, it is important to examine the motivation behind people's SM use. What individuals seek to gain from SM use may not only influence the nature and extent of their SM use behaviors, but also what kinds of psychological outcomes they get from SM use. Furthermore motivations and perceived outcomes for SM use may differ for different cultural contexts. The present study examines cross-cultural differences in the relationship between PWB and different motivations and outcomes of SM use in Korea and the United States of America.

### **Motivation & Communication Choice**

People's motivations for using SM vary. Nevertheless, most of studies on SM use and PWB tend to rely on general SM use. On the other hand, there have been efforts to specify types of motivation behind SM use (e.g., Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009), and several scholars (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Valkenburg et al., 2006) suggested to specify and take into account the underlying motivation to investigate the effect of SM. In fact, studies (Kraut et al., 2002; Zhao, 2006) on the Internet found different relationship patterns between the Internet use and loneliness when they differentiated the type of Internet use (e.g., social vs. non-social) rather than using the overall time spent on the Internet without differentiating the types of use. Pointing out the inconsistency in previous research on the relationship between Internet use and well-being and self-esteem, Valkenburg et al. (2006) suggested that this inconsistency could be partially attributed to treating Internet use as a one-dimensional construct. They argued that social and non-social SM use should be differentiated and posited that, for example, SM use for communication rather than for information seeking would influence self-esteem and well-being.

Indeed some of the findings in previous studies could be interpreted in accordance to Valkenburg et al.'s (2006) perspective. For example, Kim and Lee (2011) reported that, while honest self-presentation on Facebook had a significant indirect effect on subjective well-being through perceived social support, positive self-presentation had direct effect on subjective well-being and was

not associated with perceived social support. The authors interpreted this finding as such that one could receive social support from SM use only when one's own need for social support is properly communicated through self-disclosure (i.e., honest self-presentation). Put differently, this suggests that how individuals use SM to satisfy their need is important for SM use to have positive impact on PWB. In this sense, using SM in order to satisfy their need for self-expression might be directly related to PWB, while using SM in order to satisfy their need for social interaction might be indirectly related to PWB via perceived social support or perceived social connectedness.

Several studies suggested several types of SM use motivation. Sheldon (2008) proposed six factors: relationship maintenance, passing time, virtual community, entertainment, coolness, and companionship. Four factors of Facebook motivation explored by Park et al. (2009) are socializing, entertainment, self-status seeking, and information. Among them, informational use was found to be more related to civic and political participation compared to other types of use. Based on the existing literature and factor analysis, Ji et al. (2010) identified five motivations for SM use: expert search, communication, connection, content sharing, and identity. Kim et al. (2010) differentiated social vs. non-social SM use motivation. More recently, Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) conducted a comprehensive literature review on Facebook use and associated personality and individual characteristics. Based on the comprehensive literature review, they have proposed two basic social needs as a model of Facebook use: (1) the need to belong (2) the need for self-presentation. Among those, four types of motivation explored by Park et al. (2009) in fact correspond to the typology used for traditional media: information, personal identity, social interaction, and entertainment (McQuail, 1985; Zillman, 1985). This study, therefore, relies on Park et al.'s (2009) conceptualization and typologies.

***Motivation for Socializing: bonding & bridging.*** Obviously, socializing is the most important reason to use SM. According to Pew Research Center (Smith, 2011), staying in touch with and connecting with friends and family members are major reasons for Americans to use SM. Most studies which explored SM use motivation commonly mentioned socializing as an important aspect of SM use (Ji et al., 2010; Kim et al., 2010; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Park et al., 2009; Sheldon, 2008). While motivation for socializing is conceptualized unidimensional in those studies, it might be necessary to differentiate more specific types of socializing motivations: motivations for bonding vs. bridging.

The term of bonding and bridging has been used in conjunction with social capital. Bridging social capital refers to loosely connected networks between individuals which primarily offer information, whereas bonding social capital refers to tightly-knit relationships, such as family and close friends, which offer emotional support. Previous studies have examined how bonding and bridging social capital is related PWB. Strong bonding ties are found to contribute to individuals' health by providing emotional support or reducing stress (Wellman & Wortley, 1990), while, for persons who serve as a support provider, they could negatively affect one's psychological health (Sarason et al., 1997). Studies also report a positive impact of bridging social capital on mental health (Erickson, 2003; Mitchell & LaGory, 2002), as those with greater bridging capital tend to be more informed about health issues (Erickson, 2003).

Given that bonding and bridging social capital offer different resources (Putnam, 2000) and could be related to different physical and psychological health outcomes (Ferlander, 2007), using SM for bonding (to connect with those who are close and can turn for advice) vs. bridging (to build weak ties) may differently contribute to PWB. SM use motivation for bridging could be further divided into different levels of bridging: at one level, people may use SM to be in touch with or check out those who they know and have relatively weak relationships; at the more distant level, people may use SM to connect with new people. Given that the impact of a reference group could differ depending on its social distance to oneself (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005), these different levels of bridging activities through SM may result in different outcomes. In order to fully understand how SM contributes to PWB, it would be necessary to understand how differently SM use driven by different socializing motivation be related to PWB.

***Motivation for Self-status seeking.*** Self-status seeking mentioned in Park et al. (2009) as a

SM use motivation (Park et al., 2009) has been also mentioned in other studies, being referred to as the need for “self-presentation” (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012), “coolness” (Sheldon, 2008), and “identity” (Ji et al., 2010). While being in different terms, at the core, these concepts highlight using SM in order to maintain and express one’s positive self. It is expected that using SM for self-status seeking will be positively related to PWB via promoting one’s self-esteem. SM allows people to selectively promote positive aspects of the self thus contribute to maintaining positive self-esteem (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011). As self-esteem is known as being positively associated with PWB (Paradise & Kernis, 2002), using SM for self-status seeking is expected to contribute PWB via self-esteem.

***Motivation for Information seeking.*** In the research tradition of media use and gratification, information seeking has been considered a central motivation of traditional media use. A number of studies have explored how information seeking from and exposure to the media (i.e., newspaper, TV, or the Internet) is related to various social behaviors, such as political or civic participation (e.g., Kenski & Stroud, 2006; Shah, Kwak, & Holbert, 2001). In the domain of political communication, this exploration has recently extended to SM (e.g., Gil de Zúñiga, Jung, Valenzuela et al., 2012) but its impact on one’s PWB has not received academic attention. Information seeking is expected to contribute to one’s PWB possibly through promoting one’s sense of environmental mastery. By following social events that are of great interest among other people and how others think about them through SM, one may be able to develop sense of self-efficacy to deal with changing social environment.

***Motivation for Entertainment.*** Entertainment motivation for SM use refers to engagement in social media for recreation and pleasure (Park et al., 2009; Sheldon, 2008). With the surge of media entertainment, entertainment has been considered as one of the primary reasons to use traditional media along with the information seeking motivation. Both positive and negative consequences of media use for entertainment have been reported. For example, Norris and Jones (1998) concerned that media use for the entertainment purpose may be detrimental to civic involvement and this argument has been supported by several studies (e.g., Prior, 2005). On the other hand, there are also studies countering this perspective. For instance, Campbell and Kwak (2010) have reported a positive relationship between use of mobile telephony and civic engagement. In regard to PWB, although it is hard to find a study which directly addresses the relationship between media use for entertainment and psychological well-being, Oliver and Raney’s (2011) study provide an insight in regard to this: their study suggested that people who consumed entertainment contents for hedonic reason were less likely to search for meaning in life, which is an important aspect of psychological well-being. On the other hand, a recent study (Rieger, Reinecke, Frischlich, & Bente, 2014) suggests that media entertainment could contribute to PWB. In this sense, it is not clear how SM use for the entertainment purpose be related to PWB.

Taken together, these four types of motivation are expected to drive social media use, which would in turn contributes to PSW as discussed following.

## **Social Media Use and Psychological Well-Being**

The role of SM in one's PWB has increasingly received academic attention around 2000. Cumulating evidences are suggesting positive influence of SM use on various outcomes related to PWB. For example, Kim and Lee (2011) reported positive effect of the number of Facebook friends and positive self-presentation on Facebook on subjective well-being. Nabi, Prestin, and So (2013) also found that the number of Facebook friends was positively associated with perceived social support which, in turn, reduced stress and physical illness, and increased well-being. The positive effect of the number of Facebook friends has been attributed to its positive impact on self-esteem by reminding people of their social connections (Gonzales & Hancock, 2010; J. Kim & Lee, 2011). In fact, a couple of studies suggest the link between SM use and PWB by showing the positive influence of SM use on self-esteem. In a study conducted in Netherland, SM use measured by frequency, rate, and intensity showed a positive indirect effect on well-being (i.e., satisfaction with life) via tone of reactions received on SM and self-esteem (Valkenburg, Peter, & Schouten, 2006). In an experiment by

Gonzales and Hancock (2011), participants reported greater self-esteem after updating their Facebook profiles and viewing them. The authors concluded that selective self-presentation afforded by SM technologies has a positive influence on self-esteem.

On the other hand, there are also evidences that SM use may not always have positive impact on PWB. In Burke et al.'s (2010) study, while SM activities such as communication directed to Facebook friends and overall friend network size predict one's bonding and bridging social capital, mere consumption of SM contents reduced social capital and increased loneliness. Kim and Lee (2011) construed two possibilities as to the relationship between Facebook friends size and social support: more Facebook friends could offer more social support on aggregate vs. they would not because significant portion of the Facebook relationships are likely to be superficial compared to actual off-line relationships. While their study revealed a positive effect of the number of Facebook friends on subjective well-being, they also found an inverted U-shape curve relationship between the number of Facebook friends and perceived social support from Facebook. In Valkenburg et al.'s study (2006), while the tone of SM feedbacks influence self-esteem, the general use of SM (frequency of reactions on SM and the amount of relationships formed through SM) was not related to. This may suggest that what matters to self-esteem and well-being is quality of SM use (possibly how and why use SM) rather than quantity of it.

In summary, we contend that different motivations behind individual's SM use are likely to lead to different outcomes from their SM use behavior. For example, those who seek to use SM for socializing purposed will likely to feel that SM use enhanced social support, while those who use SM for self-status see a boost in their self-esteem. The sense that they are getting what they were looking for through SM use, i.e. increased social support and enhanced self-esteem, will then lead to PWB. The proposed model is presented in Figure 1.

### **Culture, Motivations for SM Use, and the Effect of SM Use on Psychological Well-being**

Culture may influence which motivation plays more important role in determining satisfaction and well-being. As PWB is deemed inextricably connected to cultural values (Ingersoll-Dayton et al., 2004), the domain of PWB could differ by culture or a certain aspect of PSW could be more or less emphasized depending on culture. Further, motivations and patterns for SM use may also differ due to cultural differences. For example, Koreans are more collectivistic than Americans and emphasizes in-group membership and group conformity (Hofstede, 1980; Kim, 2005; Oyserman, Coon, & Markus, 2002). Chung and Mallery's study (2000) found that higher collectivism was associated with an overall increased desire to compare, are more active in observing information on shared norms and in confirming whether they live up to the social standards (White & Lehman, 2005). These cultural differences may result in differences in motivation, reliance and diversity of SM use, and how these variables influence PWB ultimately. For instance in a more hierarchical culture, social status and connectivity may play much more important role for well-being and satisfaction. For a more independent culture, informational motivation and sense of mastery over their own environment may prove to be more important in determining well-being and life satisfaction.

There are several studies (Karl, Peluchette, & Schlaegel, 2010; Seder & Oishi, 2009; Vasalou, Joinson, & Courvoisier, 2010) that compared use of Facebook among those with different nationalities and these studies suggest that the motivation individuals use SM may be different based on cultures (See Błachnio, Przepiórka, & Rudnicka, 2013 for review). However, a few studies explored the role of culture in the effect of SM use and compared SM uses between individualistic and collectivistic cultures. Nadkarni and Hofmann's (2012) suggested that scholars should examine this cultural difference. They expected that there would be difference in Facebook use between individualistic and collectivistic cultures, as such that individuals in collectivistic cultures be likely to have more frequent interactions and form a close circle of FB friends compared to those in individualistic cultures. They also posited that the relationship between Facebook use and self-esteem may depend on culture: Facebook use is more likely to increase self-esteem among collectivistic individuals rather than among individualistic cultures.

Among a few of the empirical studies, Ji et al. (2010) examined cultural difference in motivation for SM use on the dimension of individualism-collectivism. They found that Korean and Chinese users mainly use expert search and connection functions to form bridging and bonding social

capital while American users mainly form bonding through communication functions. Choi, Kim, Sung, and Sohn's (2010) study, which compared Korean and American college students' SM use, also found a difference between groups: American college students tended to form "larger but looser networks with a far greater portion of weak ties" whereas Korean students "maintained smaller and denser networks with the roughly even ratio of strong and weak ties" (p. 107). As a result, whereas there was no significant difference in the level of bonding social capital between the two groups, American students reported obtaining more bridging social capital from their networks in SM compared to their Korean counterparts. Although not directly compared individualistic vs. collectivistic cultures, Kim et al.'s (2010) study provides additional insights in regard to this. In their study, social interdependent self-construal found out to be positively related to social-motivations to use SM, in turn leading to satisfaction with SM use. While there also exists a study (Chu & Choi, 2010) that provides findings inconsistent with aforementioned studies, it seems cultural differences in SM use and its consequences exist at least.

Taken together, it is expected that culture would influence the relationship between motivation for SM use, outcomes of SM use and resulting PWB. We would expect different patterns of relationship for Korean sample compared to the U.S. sample.

## Method

### Participants

Five hundred and two Americans (age  $M = 21.13$ ,  $SD = 4.50$ , 60.1% female) were recruited at the University of Hawaii at Manoa in the U.S. and 518 Koreans (age  $M = 22.35$ ,  $SD = 2.15$ , 62.6% female) were recruited at Hallym University in Korea. The ethnicities of American participants were 48% Asian, 22% Caucasian, 20.8% multiethnic and 9.8% others. Korean participants were all ethnically and culturally Korean. All of the participants were asked to complete an online survey.

### Measures

The questionnaire was produced in both English and Korean. The English version of the questionnaire was created first, and it was translated into Korean using the back-translation method to ensure equivalence in meaning. Participants completed the questionnaire in their native languages. The questionnaire consists of five parts: social media use measure, 6 types of motivation for social media use, perceived social support, self-esteem, life satisfaction and demographic information. All measures used a Likert-type response format (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) unless other response format was listed. Correlations among the variables, reliabilities of the variables and mean and standard deviation of each variable are presented in Table 1.

**Social Media Use.** Social media use was measured with one item, "Which social networking sites do you use? Please mark all the services you use from below." Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Livejournal and Foursquare were listed for Americans and Cyworld and Me2day were added instead of Livejournal for Koreans. Also an open-ended space was given for those who use other social media.

**Motivation for Social Media Use.** Six different types of motivation for social media (MSM) use were measured: information seeking (4 items; e.g. To get information about current affairs), bonding (5 items; e.g., To stay in touch with people who are close to me), bridging (level 1; 4 items; e.g., To learn more about other people in my social groups), bridging (level 2; 4 items; e.g., To contact with new people all the time), entertaining (3 items; e.g., Because it is funny) and self-status seeking (3 items; e.g., Because it makes myself look cool). These specifications were adapted from Park et al.'s (2009) three motivations for social media use. The items were developed based on the literature and any relevant previous research. In particular, some items from Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe's study (2007), Williams' study (2006), Ridings, Gefen, and Arinze's study (2006) and Kim, Kim, and Nam's study (2010) were modified for this study. For those who did not use any social media, "0 = not available" was added as well as 5-point Likert-type response format. After reading the instruction, "Please indicate why you use social media such as Facebook, Twitter etc. by checking the appropriate response," participants answered all items.

**Perceived Social Support.** Four items were selected from Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet and Farley's study (1988). An example item is "There is a special person who is around when I am in need."

**Self Esteem (SE).** Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) was used. An example item is "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself."

**Psychological Well-being (PWB).** PWB reflects the eudaimonic perspective and refers to perceived self-actualization and optimal functioning of one's life (Ryff, 1989), and different researchers have operationalized the concept in different ways. For instance, based on review of many research on the topic, Diener (1984) identified three relatively independent components of well-being: Positive Affect, Negative Affect, and Life Satisfaction. On the other hand, Ryff (1989) identified six psychological dimensions for well-being: Self-Acceptance, Positive Relations with Others, Environmental Mastery, Autonomy, Purpose in Life, and Personal Growth. Other researchers have also argued that life satisfaction is closer to class conception of well-being as a happy life, which involves a person's judgment of his/her life (Tatarkiewicz, 1976; Rojas, 2004).

In this study, PWB was measured by life satisfaction (LS) scale developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985). An example item is "In most ways my life is close to my ideal." We chose to use the one-dimensional LS scale rather than multi-dimensional PWB scale for two reasons. First, the LS scale is a one-dimensional, internally consistent measure that has shown good convergent validity with other scales of well-being (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Second, more importantly the LS scale, which is already available in many languages including Korean, has been shown to have cross-cultural validity (Pavot & Diener, 1993; Arrindell, Heesink, & Feij, 1998). On the other hand, the Ryff's (1989) PWB scale has 42 items representing 6 different dimensions that have not been properly validated in cross-cultural context.

## Results

The proposed relationships were tested in a path model using the AMOS 7.9 computer program (Arbuckle, 2006), which utilizes the maximum likelihood estimation method. As Byrne (2001) suggested, Goodness of fit between the path model and the data was assessed with four criteria. That is, (1) a non-significant chi-square value at  $p < .05$ , (2) a comparative fit index (CFI) of .95 or greater, (3) a Tucker-Lewis (TLI) or nonnormed fit index (NNFI) of .95 or greater and (4) a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of .05 or lower.

For the U.S. sample, the suggested model displayed an excellent fit of the data,  $\chi^2(19) = 5.39$ ,  $p = .000$ , CFI = 0.96, NNFI = .96, RMSEA = .09. The model explains 40% of the variance in life satisfaction. All path coefficients were significant at  $p < .05$  except for the paths between SMU and MSM-bridging (level 2), MSM-information seeking, MSM-self-status seeking and MSM-entertainment, respectively (see Figure 2). Post-hoc modification indices did not detect any unspecified direct paths that would contribute significantly to the model. MSM-boding ( $\beta = .14$ ,  $t = 2.32$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and MSM for bridging (level 1;  $\beta = .20$ ,  $t = 2.75$ ,  $p < .01$ ) affected SMU positively, but MSM-bridging (level 2;  $\beta = -.06$ ,  $t = -0.86$ ,  $p = .390$ ), MSM-information seeking ( $\beta = .10$ ,  $t = 1.38$ ,  $p = .167$ ), MSM-self-status seeking ( $\beta = -.09$ ,  $t = -1.67$ ,  $p = .095$ ) and MSM-entertainment ( $\beta = .06$ ,  $t = 0.95$ ,  $p = .344$ ) did not change SMU. Further, SMU influenced SE negatively ( $\beta = -.09$ ,  $t = -2.28$ ,  $p < .05$ ) which in turn increased LS ( $\beta = .48$ ,  $t = 12.48$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Finally, SMU affected PSS positively ( $\beta = .11$ ,  $t = 2.41$ ,  $p < .05$ ), which in turn increased SE ( $\beta = .44$ ,  $t = 10.91$ ,  $p < .001$ ). PSS also increased LS through SE ( $\beta = .26$ ,  $t = 6.63$ ,  $p < .001$ )

For the Korean sample, the suggested model displayed an excellent fit of the data,  $\chi^2(19) = 3.09$ ,  $p = .000$ , CFI = 0.98, NNFI = .97, RMSEA = .06. The model explains 37% of the variance in life satisfaction. All path coefficients were significant at  $p < .05$  except for the paths between SMU and MSM-boding, MSM-bridging (level 1) and MSM-entertainment, respectively and the path between SMU and PSS (see Figure 3). Post-hoc modification indices did not detect any unspecified direct paths that would contribute significantly to the model. MSM-bridging (level 2;  $\beta = .18$ ,  $t = 2.52$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and MSM for information seeking ( $\beta = .17$ ,  $t = 3.10$ ,  $p < .01$ ) affected SMU positively, but

MSU for self-status seeking influences SMI negatively ( $\beta = -.14, t = -2.52, p < .05$ ). MSM-boding ( $\beta = .01, t = 0.18, p = .859$ ), MSM-bridging (level 1;  $\beta = -.09, t = -1.39, p = .165$ ) and MSM-entertainment ( $\beta = .05, t = 0.893, p = .372$ ) did not change SMU. Further, SMU influenced SE positively ( $\beta = .13, t = 3.17, p < .01$ ) which in turn increased LS ( $\beta = .54, t = 14.32, p < .001$ ). Finally, SMU did not affect PSS ( $\beta = .06, t = 1.39, p = .165$ ) although PSS increased SE ( $\beta = .38, t = 9.33, p < .001$ ), and LS through SE ( $\beta = .14, t = 3.58, p < .001$ ).

### Conclusion

The present study further explores cross-cultural differences in the relationship between PWB and motivation and outcomes of SM use comparing Korean and U.S. college students. Results from the study show that different motivations for SM use exert differing level of influence on SM use. Social media use was shown to influence PWB through two different outcomes of perceived social support and self-esteem. The pattern of relationship also differs for Korea and the U.S., demonstrating that culture does influence the observed relationship.

The results have several implications. First, this study suggests that individuals' motives may be important in understanding the consequences of SM use. Since SM is different from the traditional media in that SM provide users much greater control of content consumption and even content dissemination and production, it is important to take into consideration of individuals' motivations for SM use in order to understand how different outcomes of SM use including PWB.

Second, findings from the study underscore the importance of incorporating culture in studies of SM. The motivations behind and needs for SM use in one culture may be different from those in another culture, and this may influence the outcome variables rather differently. Thus, intercultural studies of SM will benefit from addressing specific motivations for social media use.

### Limitations of the Study and Future Directions

There are several limitations of the present study that need to be noted. First, the SM use was measured with a single item asking which social networking sites respondents used. As such, while it measures how many different social networking sites respondents used, it does not provide more nuanced details about the extent of their SM use and the types of activities they engage in each site. Given that our study shows that motivations for SM use lead to different outcomes in the end, it would be important to examine if different motivations lead to different patterns of SM use behavior. Future studies will benefit from including more detailed SM use measures to allow such examinations.

Second, we have used the life satisfaction scale to measure PWB rather than a full multi-dimensional scale in this study. While we had a strong case for using a measure that has been validated in cross-cultural context, it is possible that a multi-dimensional measure of PWB may have produced somewhat different results. Research is needed to validate and develop functionally equivalent multi-dimensional measure of PWB that can be included in future cross-cultural studies involving PWB.

In this study, the effects of social media use were not examined together with traditional mass media, such as TV or magazines. This limits our understanding of the effects of SM use compared to that of traditional mass media, as well as the possible interplay between these media outlets. A future study that includes both SM and mass media together may provide a more comprehensive picture on the roles of SM in relation PWB.

In addition, by relying on cross-sectional data, the causal relationship implied in this study cannot be claimed with a high degree of certainty. We also recognize that the U.S. sample for the study came from Hawaii, and that the findings from this study may not be generalizable to the U.S. as a whole given that Hawaii has rather distinctive cultural environment that may be different from other parts of the U.S.. Future research efforts should be directed at replicating this study using more representative sample from the U.S. mainland.

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Figure1. The proposed model

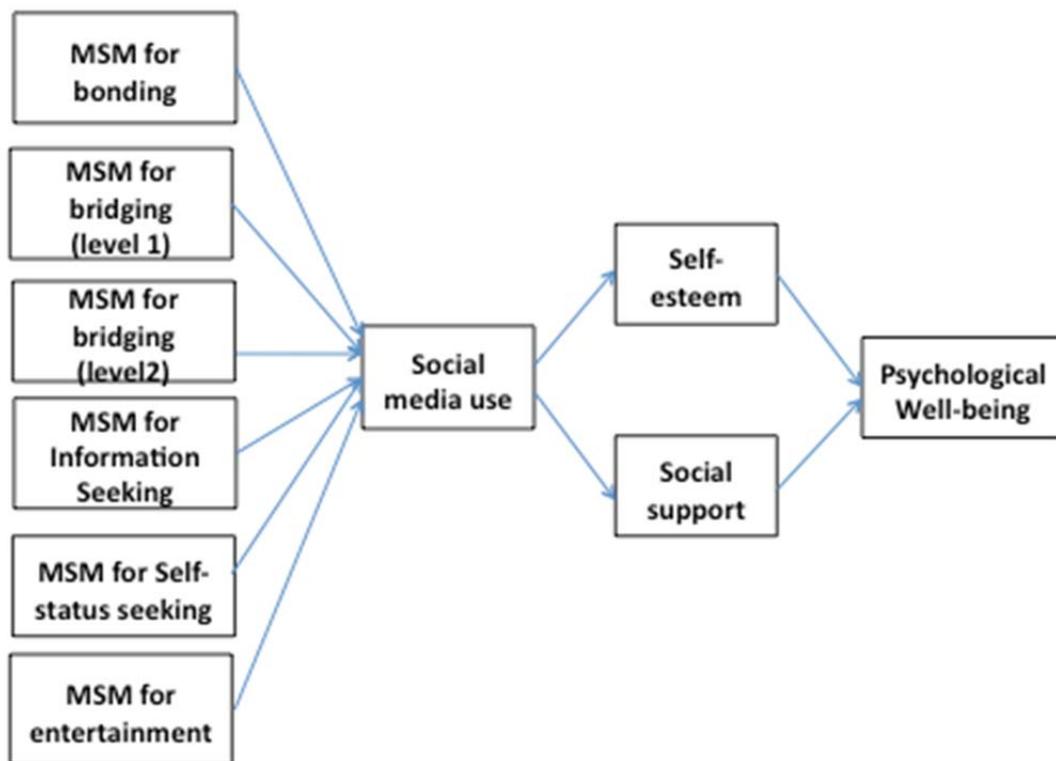


Figure2a. Path analysis results (US participants)

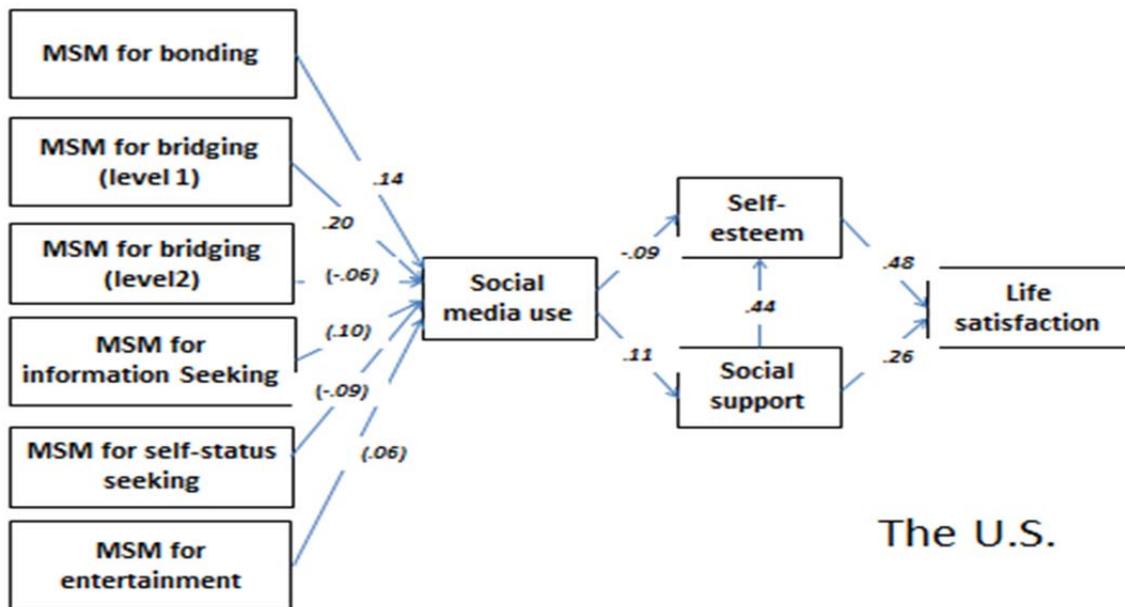


Figure2b. Path analysis results (Korean participants)

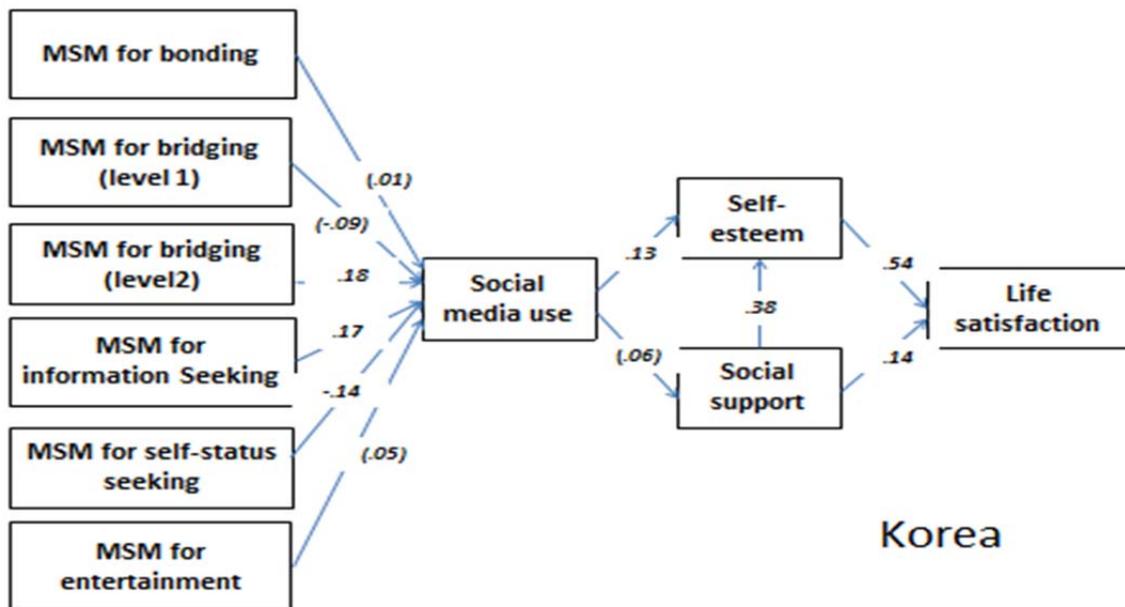


Table 1. *Reliabilities, Correlations, Means, Standard Deviations and Range of Variables.*

	BO	B1	B2	I	S	E	SM	SE	SS	LS
<u>The U.S.</u>										
MSM										
Bonding (BO)	(.88)									
Bridging (level1; B1)	.63**	(.83)								
Bridging (level2; B2)	.61**	.72**	(.84)							
Information seeking (I)	.62**	.68**	.75**	(.88)						
Self-status seeking (S)	.45**	.48**	.60**	.53**	(.77)					
Entertainment (E)	.58**	.67**	.55**	.17	.36**	(.92)				
Social media use (SM)	.23**	.25**	.17**	.00	.07	.21**	n.a.			
Self-esteem (SE)	.09	.09*	.00	(.92)	-.11*	.06	-.04	(.86)		
Social support (SS)	.21**	.22**	.06	.56**	-.06	.25**	.12**	.43**	(.98)	
Life satisfaction (LS)	.23**	.15**	.11*	.15**	.04	.21*	-.02	.59**	.46**	(.88)
<u>Korea</u>										
MSM										
Bonding (BO)	(.85)									
Bridging (level1; B1)	.69**	(.83)								
Bridging (level2; B2)	.69**	.67**	(.85)							
Information seeking (I)	.51**	.48**	.57**	(.91)						
Self-status seeking (S)	.58**	.59**	.58**	.46**	(.79)					
Entertainment (E)	.56**	.58**	.16**	.49**	.40**	(.93)				
Social media use (SM)	.10*	.08	.16**	.19**	.02	.13**	n.a.			
Self-esteem (SE)	.12**	.02	.07	.07	-.01	.07	.15**	(.84)		
Social support (SS)	.07	.06	.01	.08	-.05	.18**	.06	.38**	(.95)	
Life satisfaction (LS)	.08	-.01	.09*	.03	.08	.06	.03	.61**	.35**	(.80)
<u>The U.S.</u>										
<i>M</i>	3.24	3.41	2.79	3.12	2.05	3.68	1.32	3.52	4.12	3.49
<i>SD</i>	1.12	1.05	1.08	1.13	0.97	1.15	0.74	0.54	0.90	0.88
<i>Range</i>	0-5	0-5	0-5	0-5	0-5	0-5	0-5	1.5-4.60	1-5	1-5
<u>Korea</u>										
<i>M</i>	3.08	3.46	3.01	3.24	2.14	3.51	1.72	3.29	4.09	3.06
<i>SD</i>	1.11	1.09	1.12	1.25	1.09	1.25	1.01	0.45	0.80	0.74
<i>Range</i>	0-5	0-5	0-5	0-5	0-5	0-5	0-7	1.90-4.50	1-5	1-5

Notes. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$