ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The effects of motivations, trust, and privacy concern in social networking

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Abstract This study proposes and tests a model that uses privacy concern, trust, and motivations to explain the process leading to information disclosure and the intensity of social network services (SNS) use. Use of SNSs has been shown in our investigation to be negatively correlated to a user's privacy concern but positively correlated to a user's trust and motivations. Furthermore, by using a hierarchical regression model, we show that trust accounts for a significant additional amount of variance in SNS use after controlling the variance explained by privacy concern. In addition, motivation accounts for a significant additional amount of variance in SNS use after controlling the variance explained by both privacy concern and trust.

Keywords Social network service (SNS) · Motivation · Trust · Privacy concern · Information disclosure

1 Introduction

Communication technology and the Internet have surged in mainstream popularity in recent years. By searching and interacting with others who share common interests in the virtual world, Internet users create various virtual communities that easily cross political, economics, and geographical borders. Although these online communities are no longer neighborhood social entities, they do resemble

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traditional communities in that they both share some social understanding and provide support and information between members.

Although the explosive diffusion of the Internet fostered the proliferation of virtual communities, social network services (SNSs)—the most prominent type of virtual community—became popular only after Web 2.0 technologies emerged. A typical social network service is usually a Web site that focuses on building and maintaining social relationships. A subscribed user can usually create a personal profile and an account. Subsequently, these social network sites and the associated web technologies enable the user to add friends, make friends, chat with friends, and keep up to date with friends' activities without any difficulties. Online social network sites such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, and Twitter have all experienced exponential growth in membership in recent years. Facebook, which was launched in 2004, has ~ 700 million users and is currently the largest social networking site in the world.

Social network sites have also become part of many people's everyday lives. Using the SNS Facebook as an example, an estimated 250 million users log in and use the service every day. A typical (active) user has an average of 130 friends, spends more than an hour and a half on the site each day, and creates 90 new entries per month on Facebook. Internet users enjoy these new opportunities for communication and the convenience of real-time interaction and exchange of information. However, the extensive information revealed online also makes privacy risks a critical issue in the SNS environment (Gross and Acquisti 2005; Fogel and Nehmad 2009; Debatin et al. 2009). The recent addition of Facebook's Face Recognition feature sparked privacy and security concerns and is considered a cause of possible membership decline (The New York Times 2011).

However, although privacy concern may have a negative effect on an SNS user's intention to interact with friends online or disclose personal information, trust and other intrinsic or extrinsic motivations counteract the negative impact on a user's behavior. These constructs and their inter-relationship were addressed in prior literature focused on the trust and privacy issues impacting e-commerce, and much of the researchers' efforts went toward identifying the factors that can increase a consumer's adoption of online transactions (Huarng et al. 2010). However, the results obtained from e-business studies cannot directly be applied to SNSs because typically, no clear transactions are involved in these virtual communities. Recently, some researchers have built conceptual models or conducted empirical studies to investigate the effects of privacy, trust, and motivations on the use of social network sites (Jairak et al. 2010; Krasnova et al. 2010; Shin 2010). However, most of the results remain controversial. For example, although most of the empirical findings suggest that privacy concerns significantly decrease the intentions of SNS users, Jairak et al. (2010) found that the connection is not significant.

Thus, the goal of this research is to deepen our understanding of how privacy concern, trust, and motivations affect the use of SNSs. In particular, we present a conceptual framework for linking these constructs, create a measurement scale based on several previous empirical studies, survey more than 200 participants, and finally use hierarchical regression models to separately and successively test the effect of privacy concern, the incremental effect of trust, and finally the incremental

effect of motivations on the tendency to reveal information and the time of SNS use. This study lays the groundwork for understanding the most critical drivers of social networking and contributes to our growing understanding of how SNS users reveal personal information and to what extent mechanisms designed by SNS companies shapes the process of social networking and information sharing.

In Sect. 2 of this article, we review the development of conceptual models and discuss the empirical findings related to the effects of users' privacy concern, trust, and motivations on the use of SNSs and/or information disclosure on the social network sites, and to establish our research territory, we identify relevant gaps in the existing literature. In Sect. 3, we construct a model and present the hypotheses for testing the validity of our theoretical model; we also discuss our scale design and the sampling process. We then present the results of our analysis in Sect. 4. Finally, conclusions and directions for future work are given in Sect. 5.

2 Literature review

This section discusses past studies concerning SNS use and examines the literature related to factors influencing the frequency of use of SNSs and/or the intention of information disclosure on SNSs. Some of the studies have focused on the information and communication technology developments in recent years (Huarng 2011; Yu 2011; Huarng and Yu 2011). Although the rapid growth in online social network technologies, sites, and users is relatively recent, a large body of literature in psychology, information technology, and business management has already evaluated why and how people use online social networks. Some researchers even proposed an integrative research framework for studying the SNSs (Lee and Chen 2011). However, our literature review in this section focuses only on those articles most relevant to our research. In particular, we focus mainly on the factors that affect the user's intention to disclose personal information, and we are especially interested in how privacy concerns deter self-disclosure behavior, how trust in the SNSs or trust in other SNS users mitigates the perceived risks or privacy concern, and what motivations most influence SNS use. This review leads us to identify the problems and gaps in current knowledge of the uses of online SNSs, and we propose a model for predicting SNSs use and information disclosure with a series of hypotheses.

2.1 Privacy concern

Users of social network sites are generally required to provide private information on their profiles and usually state that they are worried about their privacy. However, most users still disclose detailed personal information on their profiles and put only a limited effort into privacy control, such as reviewing the privacy policy of SNSs or adjusting or employing more restrictive privacy settings. Barnes (2006) named this phenomenon the "privacy paradox". As social networking sites such as Facebook have become part of our daily lives and people share some of their

intimate thoughts online, this discrepancy and the associated privacy risk issues have received considerable attention and have been addressed in many studies.

Lo (2010) used a survey to test a trust-risk model of information disclosure in which privacy concern was considered a dispositional factor and an antecedent of trust. Results showed that the privacy concern significantly affected the perceived risk and thus information disclosure in SNS context. Similar findings were also found in Utz and Krämer (2009), in which the authors addressed the factors affecting the choice of privacy settings. They found that higher privacy concern led to more restrictive protection of profiles, whereas dispositional trust had no effect on the choice of privacy settings. Väänänen-Vainio-Mattila et al. (2010) conducted a 4-week field study with different online community services to examine the drivers and hindrances of social user experience, and they found that lack of privacy was one of the most important hindrances. Even in an older study about online B-to-C relationships, Eastlick et al. (2006) found privacy concern negatively influenced a customer's purchase intention.

However, several other empirical studies pointed out the weak or absent relationship between privacy concern and SNS use or information disclosure. Jairak et al. (2010) adopted the theory of technical acceptance model (TAM) to develop a theoretical framework and found that SNS users' intentions seem to be more strongly related to social factors such as pleasure-orientation. Privacy concern was not a main factor reflecting intention to use SNSs. Acquisti and Gross (2006) surveyed student members of Facebook and found that even the privacy-concerned individual revealed large amounts of personal information. They concluded that privacy concern was only a weak predictor of one's membership on the Facebook social network. Furthermore, Acquisti and Gross (2006) also suggested that privacy concern did not have a significant impact on a user's information disclosure behavior. Even using a larger sample of college student members of Facebook and MySpace, Tufekci (2008) drew similar conclusions. Little to no relationship was found between privacy concern and information disclosure. Similar arguments are offered in Debatin et al. (2009).

One possible explanation for this disagreement on the impact of privacy concern on SNS use or information disclosure is the effect of other social or non-social motivations or a user's trust in network providers or other users. For example, Krasnova et al. (2010) found that, although privacy risk is a critical barrier for self-disclosure, this privacy risk can be mitigated by the user's trust in the network provider. Furthermore, social motivations such as maintaining and developing relationships also turned out to be a key factor influencing information disclosure. Similarly, Ariyachandra and Bertaux (2010) tried to validate a comprehensive model for online social networking uses and found that the desire to obtain information or the motivation of enjoyment mitigated the negative effects of privacy concern. Even in an Internet transaction, Dinev and Hart (2003) found that trust, personal interest, and the ability to control personal information may outweigh a user's privacy concern. In other words, the perceived benefits outweighed the cost of information disclosure.

2.2 Trust

Mayer et al. (1995) define trust as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party." Trust has long been considered an important factor in exchange, communication and relationship building (Fukuyama 1995). The Internet is an environment full of uncertainty and various types of players, and an online user always experiences some level of risk. Thus, trust has become the strategy for dealing with uncertain outcomes or future, and it is considered one of the most reliable predictor for online behavior (Gefen 2000). Its key role in the electronic market was proposed and verified in many studies (Luo 2002; Dinev and Hart 2003).

Trust has also been central to investigations into the use of online social network sites. For example, Jairak et al. (2010) concluded that familiarity-based trust was one of the most important factors influencing the intention for SNS general purpose usage and the dispositional trust was the one reflecting intention in SNS marketing usage. Similarly, the conceptual model developed and empirically tested in Krasnova et al. (2010) showed that trust mitigated the privacy risk and positively affected information disclosure. Dwyer et al. (2007) compared trust and privacy concern within Facebook and MySpace and found that Facebook members expressed higher level of trust and were more willing to share their personal information. Other studies that tested the trust-risk model of information disclosure led to consistent conclusions (Lo 2010; Shin 2010). Although most studies regarding the privacy paradox on social network sites confirmed the positive influence between trust and information disclosure, Utz and Krämer (2009) concluded that dispositional trust had no effect on the privacy settings for a user's personal profile. Because Utz and Krämer (2009) involved numerous trade-off factors and considered only dispositional trust, their findings do not completely overrule the importance of trust.

2.3 Motivation

The Uses and Gratifications Theory is one of the most popular approaches to understanding media use. This approach suggests that people use the media to fulfill specific social gratifications, and thus understanding their motivations is critical (Katz et al. 1974). Motivation is the reason or driving force by which humans achieve their desired goals. Motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic, depending on whether the motivation is driven by an interest of task itself or relies on external forces or pressure.

Motivation has played a key role in understanding participation in online social networking. Jairak et al. (2010) found that intrinsic motivation, especially pleasure-orientation, significantly affected intention to use SNSs. Brandtzæg and Heim (2009) conducted a large-scale survey into reasons for SNS use via an open question. They found that the most important reasons were to get in contact with new people, to keep in touch with old friends, and to generally socialize. Brandtzæg

and Heim (2009) thus concluded that social motivation was the main driving force for SNS use. Kim et al. (2010) classified motivations into social and non-social motivation, and found that while non-social motivation had marginally (positive) influence on SNS use time, social motivation affected the number of friends in SNS and the overall satisfaction from SNS use. However, no significant effects between motivation and profile length were reported in Kim et al. (2010). In other studies, similar social motivational factors, including social compensation, social identity gratifications, desire to meet new people, and relationship maintenance, were all found to positively influence information disclosure on SNSs or the use of such sites (Joinson 2008; Barker 2009; Ross et al. 2009; Hargittai and Hsieh 2010; Dumrongsiri and Pornsakulvanich 2010).

2.4 Relevant gaps in current research

Most of the aforementioned empirical findings are limited to investigating specific constructs (i.e., privacy concern, trust, or motivation). In contrast, in real-world applications, the incremental validity of these constructs (e.g., the extent of trust or motivation to explain variation in information disclosure on SNSs over and beyond that of putting privacy concern in the model) is likely to interest both social network providers and our society at large. Thus, extension of existing results to understand the influence of some variables after correcting or controlling the effects of others would be highly desirable in order to make the results applicable to management of online SNSs for both industry players and policy makers.

3 Method

3.1 Research model and hypothesis development

According to the preceding literature review and theoretical examination, the relationship between privacy concern and use of SNSs has not yet been made clear, reflecting the privacy paradox observed in users' behavior. Although trust is an important factor influencing information disclosure on SNSs or usage intensity, the extent to which trust explains social networking behavior after correcting for a user's level of privacy concern is still in question. Moreover, additional studies are still needed to investigate how different motivation types mitigate privacy risk and provide extra explanation or prediction power for information disclosure or usage frequency on SNSs.

These research gaps led to our research model and hypotheses. The diagram shown in Fig. 1 provides a visualization of the theoretical model that guided our data collection and analysis. The independent variables are online social networking privacy concern, trust in the social networking site, trust in other members (i.e., friends) on social networking sites, and motivations (including both social and non-social motivations). The dependent variables are measured with respect to the use of SNSs, including both information disclosure and intensity of use.
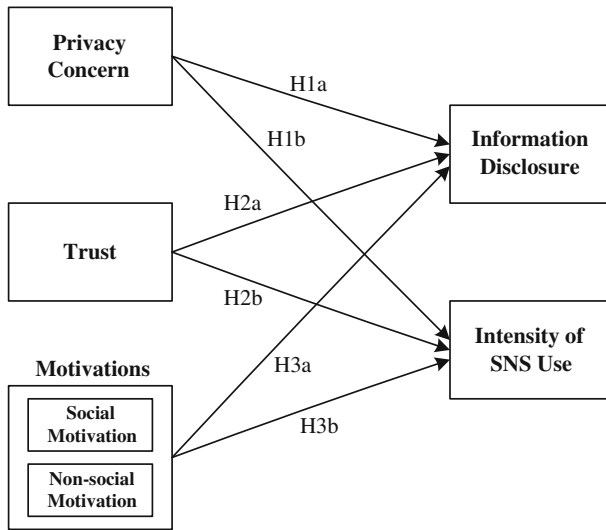
Fig. 1 Research model

Based on the discussion in the literature review, we argue that the use of SNSs is affected by three sets of factors: an SNS user's privacy concern, an SNS user's trust, and an SNS user's motivation. This leads to the following hypotheses:

H1a: High privacy concern is negatively associated with information disclosure
H1b: High privacy concern is negatively associated with the intensity of SNS use
H2a: High trust is positively associated with information disclosure
H2b: High trust is positively associated with the intensity of SNS use
H3a: High motivation is positively associated with information disclosure
H3b: High motivation is positively associated with the intensity of SNS use

Furthermore, our model also suggests that the three sets of factors affecting SNS use may be arranged in a hierarchical order. First, an SNS user's privacy concern is the fundamental determinant of usage intensity and the main barrier to information disclosure. However, this factor can be mitigated by the user's trust in the network provider or trust in other users. In other words, unless an SNS user really trusts the network provider or trusts other users (in the network), the level of usage and information disclosure will not be very high. Finally, with privacy concern and trust, an SNS user's actual behavior will still depend on social and non-social motivations, which provide extra drivers for an SNS user to disclose personal information or participate in other networking activities. As a result, we further hypothesized that:

H4: Trust explains variation in SNS use over and beyond that of privacy concern
H5: Motivations explain variation in SNS use over and beyond that of privacy concern and trust

The purpose of this study is to provide an empirical test of factors affecting SNS use based on our proposed model. Hypotheses 1 through 3 postulate that privacy concern, trust, and motivations are three important factors affecting SNS use. Hypotheses 4 and 5 further specify that the first three hypotheses are arranged in a hierarchical order.

3.2 Samples

A survey technique was used to collect data. The sample was selected from individuals who are currently using Facebook social networking services. Initially, we ran two pilot tests on 30 SNS users respectively to remove or revise some ambiguous items in the measurement scale. A total of 207 users participated in the formal online survey (from March 20 to April 7, 2011). Respondents were 34.7 % male and 65.3 % female. Most respondents fell in the age range from early 20 s to middle 40 s, with the majority from 26- to 35-years-old (56.5 %). The results also showed that 87.8 % of respondents have used Facebook for more than 6 months, and 71 % of respondents access the site every day. Thus, the respondents seem to be qualified to analyze factors influencing the use of SNSs.

3.3 Measurement

All the measurements in this study are based upon previously validated measures. Survey questions were created to capture perceptions of privacy concern and trust, social and non-social motivations, the intensity of general use, and the intensity of information disclosure. The items of privacy concern were adapted from Ganesan (1994), Jarvenpaa and Leidner (1999), and Dinev and Hart (2006) and modified to fit the context of online social networking. The items of trust in the social networking site were adapted from Doney and Cannon (1997), whereas those for trust in other members or users were adapted from Pavlou and Gefen (2004). To address both social and non-social motivations, this study used measures developed in Berry and Parasuraman (1991) and Peltier and Westfall (2000). Finally, items from Gefen et al. (2003) were adapted and used to measure the uses of SNSs. Several demographic variables, including gender, age, education, and profession, were added.

All of the constructs in this study were examined in terms of reliability and validity. Results of the analysis of measurement model for reflective measures indicated that satisfactory reliability and validity were achieved. The composite reliability values for all constructs in the model are greater than 0.78, which is larger than the 0.7 acceptable level suggested by Hair et al. (2010). For the convergent validity, two criteria suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981) were used: (1) all the factor loading should exceed 0.7, and (2) average variance extracted (AVE) by each construct should exceed the variance due to measurement error for that construct. Both criteria were satisfied in our measurements, and the convergent validity is guaranteed.

Furthermore, because of inter-correlations between our constructs, we conducted discriminant validity assessment on the constructs involved. The criterion suggested

by Hair et al. (2010) states that "the variance extracted estimates should be greater than the squared correlation estimate". In other words, the square root of the AVE should be greater than the correlation between the construct and other constructs. Table 1 shows the correlations among constructs and the square root of AVE on the diagonal. Because the correlation between each pair of constructs (i.e., off-diagonal elements) was less than the squared AVE (i.e., diagonal element), discriminant validity was thus justified.

4 Results

4.1 Correlation analysis

Table 1 provides zero-order correlations among all of the variables included in the theoretical model along with descriptive statistics. We found that information disclosure and intensity of SNS use showed convergence ($r = 0.499$, $p < 0.01$), which means a user who discloses more personal information usually spends more time on social network sites. Correlation coefficients between independent variables and dependent variables also showed several trends. First, privacy concern is negatively associated with information disclosure ($r = -0.217$, $p < 0.05$) and intensity of SNS use ($r = -0.107$, $p < 0.1$). Both coefficients indicate weak linear relationships. Furthermore, the magnitudes of these two coefficients of correlation are considerably different. Privacy concern seems to have a stronger negative association with information disclosure than with intensity of use. In addition, trust has positive relationships with information disclosure ($r = 0.409$, $p < 0.01$) and intensity of SNS use ($r = 0.325$, $p < 0.01$). The size of the coefficients also shows that trust is a more dominant determinant in determining usage behavior than privacy concern. Furthermore, both social and non-social motivations are positively associated with SNS use. However, the effects of social and non-social motivations on SNS use are not homogeneous. Social motivation has a higher correlation with intensity of use ($r = 0.677$, $p < 0.01$) than with information disclosure ($r = 0.381$, $p < 0.01$), whereas non-social motivation seems to have a stronger positive association with information disclosure ($r = 0.434$, $p < 0.01$) than with intensity of

Table 1 Zero-Order Pearson Correlation Coefficients and Squared Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Measure	Priv. C.	Trust	S. Mot.	Non-s. Mot.	Inf. D.	Intens.
Privacy concern	0.822					
Trust	−0.429**	0.805				
Social motivation	−0.098	0.335**	0.827			
Non-social motivation	−0.103	0.162*	0.261*	0.905		
Information disclosure	−.217*	0.409**	0.381**	0.434**	0.755	
Intensity of SNS use	−.107†	0.325**	0.677**	0.315**	0.499**	0.818

† $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

use ($r = 0.315$, $p < 0.01$). Based on the above correlation analysis, Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 are supported.

4.2 Hierarchical Rregression

In this study, we are interested in examining the predictive utility of privacy concern, trust, and motivations, and we stress two criteria: information disclosure and intensity of SNS uses. We conducted two sets of hierarchical regression analysis (one for each criterion) to investigate the effects of the specific order of the predictor as determined by our hypotheses. These analyses provide a more rigorous test of the hypotheses in this study and help to identify the important determinants of SNS use. Results of these analyses are shown in Table 2.

In the first step, privacy concern accounted for a significant variance in information disclosure ($R^2 = 0.047$, $F(1, 205) = 10.17$, $p < 0.01$). In the second step, trust accounted for a significant amount of additional variance in information disclosure after controlling the variance attributable to privacy concern ($R^2 = 0.169$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.122$, $\Delta F(1, 204) = 29.91$, $p < 0.01$). In the final step, motivation accounted for a significant additional amount of variance in information disclosure after controlling the variance explained by both privacy concern and trust ($R^2 = 0.340$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.171$, $\Delta F(2, 202) = 26.14$, $p < 0.01$).

Similar analysis was conducted when intensity of SNS use was the dependent variable. In the first step, privacy concern accounted for a significant variance in intensity of SNS use ($R^2 = 0.011$, $F(1, 205) = 2.77$, $p < 0.1$). In the second step, trust accounted for a significant amount of additional variance in intensity of SNS use after controlling the variance explained by privacy concern ($R^2 = 0.106$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.095$, $\Delta F(1, 204) = 21.76$, $p < 0.01$). In the final step, motivation accounted for a significant additional amount of variance in intensity of SNS use

Table 2 Results of hierarchical regression analysis

	Information disclosure			Intensity of SNS use		
	B	ΔF	ΔR^2	B	ΔF	ΔR^2
Privacy Concern	−0.043	10.17	0.047**	0.021	2.77	0.011†
Trust	0.306**	29.91	0.122**	0.108*	21.76	0.095**
Motivations		26.14	0.171**		75.37	0.382**
Social	0.213**			0.671**		
Non-social	0.253**			0.142**		
Model R^2			0.340			0.488
Adjusted R^2			0.327			0.478
Unique contribution						
Privacy concern			0.047			0.011
Trust			0.167			0.105
Motivations			0.265			0.470

† $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

after controlling the variance explained by both privacy concern and trust ($R^2 = 0.488$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.382$, $\Delta F(2, 202) = 75.37$, $p < 0.01$).

As expected, privacy concern explained a significant portion of variance in both information disclosure and intensity of SNS use. However, trust explained an additional significant portion of the variance of both criteria on top of privacy concern. The changes in R^2 for the information disclosure and intensity of use were 0.122 ($p < 0.01$) and 0.095 ($p < 0.01$) respectively. Thus, Hypothesis 4 is supported. Furthermore, we also found that after trust entered the model, privacy concern is no longer a significant determinant of SNS use. This finding is consistent with both the observation of the privacy paradox found at most SNSs and some of the empirical findings that suggest that trust mitigates SNS users' privacy concerns.

Similarly, motivations explained an additional significant portion of the variance of SNS use. The changes in R^2 for information disclosure and intensity of uses were 0.171 ($p < 0.01$) and 0.382 ($p < 0.01$) respectively. Thus, Hypothesis 5 is also supported. Furthermore, by observing the regression coefficients, we found that social motivation and non-social motivation have similar effects on information disclosure. However, social motivation has a much stronger influence on the intensity of SNS use than non-social motivation.

5 Discussion and conclusions

Understanding the factors determining information disclosure and usage intensity on SNSs has become an important issue in recent years. Although a strong link between a user's privacy concern and use of SNSs is often assumed, little empirical evidence has been found to establish a direct relationship between these two variables. Literature that tries to explain the privacy paradox and SNS usage behavior has not been very successful. Therefore, in this study, we propose a model that explains the process leading to information disclosure and intensity of SNS use, and we empirically test the model using a sample of SNS users. Results provide good support for the major components of the model. SNS use negatively correlates to a user's privacy concern but positively correlates to the user's trust and motivations.

The results of this study also lead to an interesting conclusion about uses of social networking sites. Many studies suggest that the attractive means of communication and interaction on social network sites usually raise both privacy risk and security concern and cite privacy concern as the critical barrier to information disclosure, but our results show that privacy concern is not the most important factor in determining information disclosure or intensity of use on SNSs. Instead, our results indicate that trust can effectively mitigate a user's privacy concern and should be considered a more dominant factor in determining both information disclosure and the intensity of SNS usage. Furthermore, motivations explain an additional significant portion of variation in SNS use even after controlling the variance explained by both privacy concern and trust. The findings from this research thus suggest that use of SNSs cannot be enhanced without sufficient motivations and trust.

Although these results are generally supported for both analyses, using information disclosure and usage intensity as dependent variables, we found that the magnitudes of effect are different, especially for the effects of social and non-social motivations. Social and non-social motivations have the same importance in determining information disclosure, but social motivation seems to play a much more important role in determining the intensity of use.

The results of this study have also some theoretical implications. The following discussion focuses on how the current study clarifies or extends our theoretical understanding of SNS use. One of the theoretical aims of this study was to explore the importance of trust in mitigating the effect of privacy concern on SNS use. Previous studies usually tested the effects of privacy concern and trust separately (Dwyer et al. 2007). Our hierarchical regression model confirms that trust can explain an additional significant portion of variance and verifies the relative importance of trust versus privacy concern in determining information disclosure and SNS usage. Another important contribution from this study, which extends the previous literature, is that our hierarchical regression model also explores the effects of motivations after controlling or correcting the effects of privacy concern and confirms the critical role motivations play in determining the uses of SNSs.

This study also renders some practical and managerial implications. Similar to the discussion of the role trust plays in the electric market (Luo, 2002), it re-emphasizes the importance of trust-building for a social network site provider and confirms that managerial interventions or practices that increase institutional trust, such as providing a clear privacy policy, providing more convenient privacy settings, and building one's individual reputation, can be an effective way to lower users' privacy concerns. This study also suggests that information disclosure can be motivated by both social and non-social motivations, thus building mechanisms into networking sites that provide enough incentives (e.g., offering financial rewards—virtual currency or in-game currency) or building better interfaces or new gadgets that make social interaction easier will definitely promote users' information disclosure, which is one of the most important components that makes SNSs successful (Jairak et al. 2010). However, financial incentive mechanisms such as virtual currency or in-game currency might not be very effective in motivating people to spend more time on the network in comparison to better interfaces that promote social interactions.

Although this study presents a new approach for interpreting people's SNS use and the effects of their privacy concern, trust, and underlying motivations, it has several limitations. The self-report nature of all of the measurements is a possible limitation. Social desirability might affect the way participants answer the items. In terms of sampling, future research may also need to acquire a larger sample pool and diverse participants in order to elaborate on the findings of the current study.

In addition, this study focuses only on the use of one social networking site, Facebook. Although Facebook is considered to be one of the most important social networking sites, and there is no obvious reason why privacy concern, trust, and motivations would have different effects on the use of other SNSs, whether these results can be generalized to other SNSs is still an empirical question. Thus,

subsequent studies should compare SNS use by considering the use of Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter, and other similar SNSs.

A final limitation of this study is the inattention given to other important factors that influence information disclosure or intensity of SNS use. The roles of personality and demographic variables such as gender, age, or social class were not examined in this study. According to the coefficients of determination of our regression models, a large portion of the variation in SNS use cannot be explained by the three main factors discussed in this article. Additional research would be necessary to make definite claims along these lines.

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