



**MEDIATING ROLE OF SATISFACTION IN THE RELATIONSHIP  
BETWEEN MOTIVATIONAL NEEDS AND INSTAGRAM CONTINUANCE  
INTENTION AMONG STUDENTS IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN  
MALAYSIA**

By

**JIN DIAN**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra  
Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**August 2024**

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**Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia  
in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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**August 2024**

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Faculty : Modern Languages and Communication**

Instagram, one of the most prevalent social media platforms, has attracted significant attention, especially among university students. Scholars have shown particular interest in understanding the factors that influence Malaysian university students' continued use of social media platforms like Instagram. The primary purpose of this study was to explore the role of satisfaction as a mediator in the relationship between various types of motivational needs and the continued intention to use Instagram. The motivational needs under study included cognitive needs, affective needs, personal integrative needs, social integrative needs, and escape needs. This research built on the foundations of Uses and Gratifications Theory and Expectation-Confirmation Theory. The research adopted a quantitative approach, using questionnaires to gather data from a sample of 384 students drawn from six universities in the Klang Valley, Malaysia—namely, Universiti Malaya, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti

Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Taylor's University, and UCSI University. The participants were selected using quota sampling. The collected data was then analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modelling. The findings of the study indicated that satisfaction significantly mediated the relationship between cognitive needs and continuance intention, personal integrative needs and continuance intention, and social integrative needs and continuance intention. In other words, the level of satisfaction derived from Instagram use was a significant factor influencing these specific motivational needs and the intention to continue using Instagram. However, the study found no evidence of satisfaction playing a mediating role between affective needs or escape needs and continuance intention. This suggests that these needs did not necessarily influence the decision to continue using Instagram based on the level of satisfaction derived from the platform. These findings have important implications for both theory and practice, particularly in understanding how satisfaction mediates the relationship between motivational needs and continuance intention on social media platforms like Instagram.

**Keywords:** instagram motivation needs, satisfaction, continuance intention

**SDG:** GOAL 4: Quality Education

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PERANAN PERANTARAAN KEPUASAN DALAM HUBUNGAN ANTARA  
KEPERLUAN MOTIVASI DAN NIAT BERTERUSAN UNTUK  
MENGUNAKAN INSTAGRAM DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR DI  
UNIVERSITI TERPILIH MALAYSIA**

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Instagram, salah satu landasan media sosial yang paling popular, telah menarik perhatian yang signifikan, terutama dalam kalangan pelajar universiti. Para sarjana menunjukkan minat khusus dalam memahami faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi penggunaan berterusan terhadap media sosial seperti Instagram oleh pelajar universiti di Malaysia. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk meneroka peranan kepuasan sebagai perantara dalam hubungan antara pelbagai jenis keperluan motivasi dan niat berterusan untuk menggunakan Instagram. Keperluan motivasi yang dikaji adalah termasuk keperluan kognitif, keperluan afektif, keperluan integratif peribadi, keperluan integratif sosial, dan keperluan melarikan diri. Kajian ini dibina atas dasar Teori Penggunaan dan Kepuasan serta Teori Pengesahan Harapan. Kajian ini mengambil pendekatan kuantitatif, menggunakan borang soal selidik untuk mengumpul data daripada sampel 384 pelajar dari enam buah universiti di Lembah Klang, Malaysia, iaitu Universiti Malaya, Universiti Putra Malaysia,

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Taylor's University, dan UCSI University. Para peserta dipilih menggunakan pensampelan kuota. Data yang dikumpul kemudian dianalisis menggunakan partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). Penemuan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kepuasan adalah signifikan berperantara terhadap hubungan antara keperluan kognitif dan niat berterusan, keperluan integratif peribadi dan niat berterusan, serta keperluan integratif sosial dan niat berterusan. Dengan kata lain, tahap kepuasan yang diperoleh daripada penggunaan Instagram adalah faktor penting yang mempengaruhi keperluan motivasi tertentu ini dan niat untuk terus menggunakan Instagram. Walau bagaimanapun, kajian ini tidak menemui bukti peranan perantara kepuasan antara keperluan afektif atau keperluan melarikan diri dan niat berterusan. Kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa keperluan ini tidak semestinya mempengaruhi keputusan untuk terus menggunakan Instagram berdasarkan tahap kepuasan yang diperoleh daripada landasan tersebut. Penemuan ini mempunyai implikasi penting untuk teori dan amalan, khususnya dalam memahami bagaimana kepuasan berperantara hubungan antara keperluan motivasi dan niat berterusan dalam ruangan media sosial seperti Instagram.

**Kata Kunci:** instagram, keperluan motivasi, kepuasan, niat berterusan

**SDG:** MATLAMAT 4: Pendidikan Berkualiti

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The completion of this PhD is not an end, but a commencement of a lifelong journey of learning and exploration. The experiences and relationships forged during this phase will forever be cherished and will continue to inspire me in my future endeavors.

As I pen down this acknowledgment, I am reminded of a proverb, "*It takes a village to raise a child.*" Indeed, it has taken a vibrant scholarly village to mold, nurture, and raise this academic endeavor to fruition. The memories and

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SNS	Social Network Services
UGT	Uses and Gratifications Theory
ECT	Expectation-Confirmation Theory
CN	Cognitive Needs
AN	Affective Needs
PIN	Personal Integrative Needs
SIN	Social Integrative Needs
EN	Escape Needs
SAT	Satisfaction
CI	Continuance Intention
JKEUPM	Ethics Committee for Research involving Human Subjects
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling
CB-SEM	Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modelling
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
PRISMA	Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews
CCA	Confirmatory Composite Analysis
CR	Composite Reliability
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
$d_{ULS}$	The Squared Euclidean Distance
$d_G$	The Geodesic Distance
NFI	Normed Fit Index
UM	Universiti Malaya

UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
UKM	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
UTM	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
Taylor's	Taylor's University
UCSI	Ucsi University
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction and Background

The study of Social Network Services (SNS) has become increasingly significant as these platforms have evolved to play a central role in modern digital life. SNS facilitate a wide array of human interactions, from personal communications to professional networking, and have become integral to various sectors such as business, education, and entertainment. Despite their pervasive influence, SNS face growing challenges in retaining users, especially as platforms like Instagram experience shifts in user engagement trends. Understanding the factors that contribute to the continuance intention of SNS users, particularly in the context of Malaysian university students, is crucial for sustaining platform loyalty and ensuring long-term user engagement. This research aims to address these challenges by examining the interplay between motivational needs, satisfaction, and continuance intention within the framework of Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) and Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT).

In recent times, the global landscape of SNS has experienced profound changes. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 led to unprecedented global lockdowns and restrictions. This, in turn, intensified digital adoption rates, with people increasingly turning to SNS platforms not only for social connection but also for news, work, education, and entertainment (Statista, 2020).

For instance, a report by Pew Research Center (2020) revealed a significant uptick in SNS usage during the pandemic, emphasizing its role in mitigating feelings of isolation and facilitating remote working and learning. Instagram, already a favorite among the younger population, witnessed enhanced engagement rates, especially with features like 'Live' becoming a medium for virtual events, classes, and webinars (Koeze & Popper, 2020).

However, this surge in online activity also brought forth challenges. Issues of digital well-being, misinformation, data privacy, and screen fatigue came to the fore, reshaping the discourse around SNS (Drouin et al., 2020). With these emerging challenges, understanding the dynamics of user engagement and retention has taken on heightened significance.

Furthermore, the contemporary context also emphasizes the evolving nature of user needs and preferences. The post-pandemic world is witnessing a blend of offline and online interactions, and users are becoming more discerning about their time spent on digital platforms. They seek meaningful engagements, value-driven content, and genuine community interactions (Twenge & Campbell, 2019).

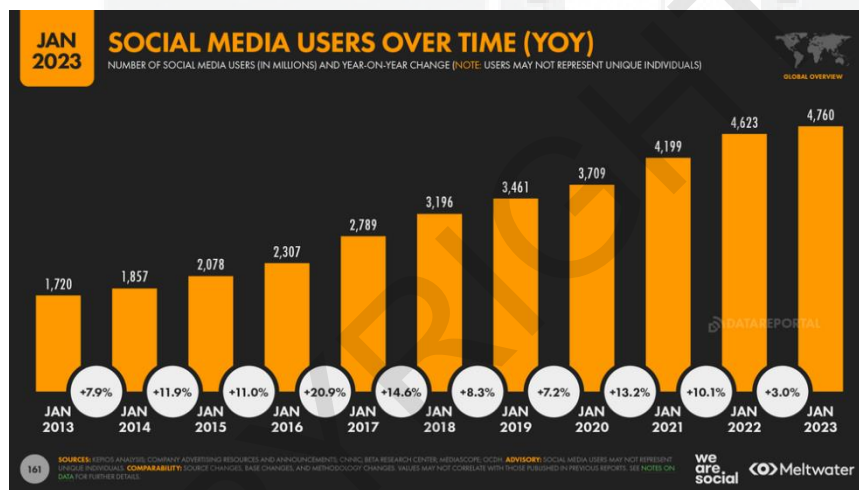
In such a milieu, platforms like Instagram are at a pivotal juncture. They must navigate these shifts, anticipate emerging user needs, and adapt to ensure continued relevance and engagement. The principle of continuance intention, therefore, is not just about understanding why users might stick with a platform; it's about understanding how platforms can evolve to remain resonant in a

rapidly changing world.

The rapid progression of internet technologies catalyzed the emergence and proliferation of Social Network Services (SNS) (Vannucci & McCauley Ohannessian, 2019). Presently, SNS - digital platforms designed to foster the production and sharing of user-generated content through a network of linked individual profiles - became an integral part of contemporary digital culture (Boyd, 2014). In SNS-related research, Shahbaznezhad et al. (2021) discussed the dynamics of SNS, emphasizing how these platforms enabled users to share varied content types, including text, audio, images, and videos. Moreover, they underscored the transformation of these sites into virtual communities where users could interact, communicate, and share content, effectively overcoming physical and temporal constraints. This reinforced the sense of connectivity and community among users, contributing to a more engaging and satisfying user experience.

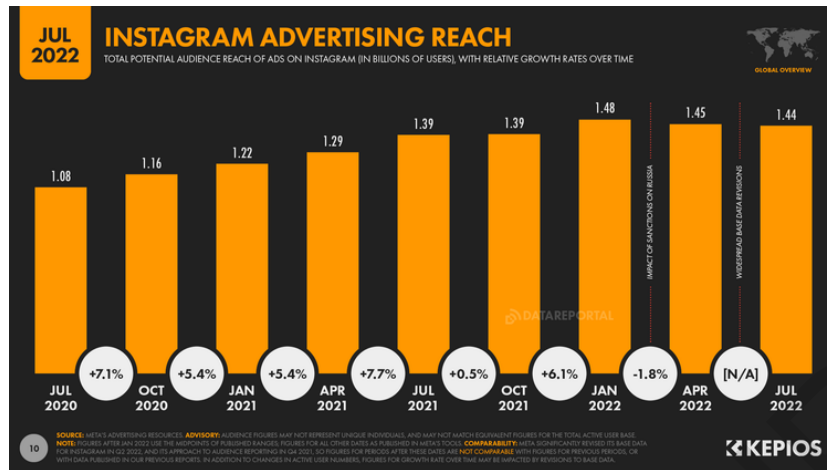
The ubiquity of SNS reshaped interpersonal connections and yielded a multifaceted avenue for self-expression, information sharing, and social interaction (Collin et al., 2011). These platforms offered substantial benefits to both individuals and organizations, such as facilitating customer relationship management (Emmanuel et al., 2022). Given the critical role of SNS in business sustainability (Alalwan et al., 2017), it was paramount to understand user engagement and retention factors, especially within the dynamically competitive SNS market.

Social network services providers needed to prioritize understanding and satisfying long-term user needs to foster platform loyalty (Gan & Li, 2018). While initial user adoption was a key aspect of social media success, retaining users over time was equally crucial (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Sustainable virtual communities largely depended on users' continuance use intention (Basak & Calisir, 2015), underlining the importance of studying predictive factors of individual users' intentions (Nguyen & Ha, 2022). This became particularly relevant as statistics indicated a declining



**Figure 1.1 : Social Media Users Over Time**  
(Source: Kemp, 2023)

Despite the overall slowing growth rate in social media usage (see Figure 1.1), some platforms, like Instagram, experienced a slight decrease in users (Datareportal, 2023), as shown in Figure 1.2. It was crucial to explore these trends in user behavior to maintain and enhance user engagement.



**Figure 1.2 : Instagram Advertising Reach**  
(Source: Datareportal, 2023)

The principle of continuance intention, an integral variable in this investigation, encapsulated an individual's inclination towards maintaining a previously adopted behavior or action (Yang, 2018). Within the domain of information systems, it was characterized as a variant of post-adoption behavior, critical to the endurance of services or products (Bhattacharjee, 2001; Gan & Li, 2018; Gogan et al., 2018).

Integral to the fabric of modern digital culture, SNSs facilitate various forms of human interaction, from personal communications to professional networking and from content sharing to collaborative knowledge creation (Boyd, 2014). Lenhart et al. (2010) suggest that SNSs, through their multifunctional capabilities, cater to diverse needs: they act as information repositories, social interaction hubs, entertainment sources, and professional networking platforms.

Delving deeper, Instagram, as one of the major players in the SNS landscape, stands out due to its emphasis on visual content and its appeal to younger demographics (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). With features like stories, IGTV, and reels, Instagram continuously adapts, reshaping how users consume content and interact on the platform (Hu et al., 2018). This dynamic nature has implications for user retention and platform loyalty.

User engagement and retention have emerged as critical focal points for SNS research, given the platforms' significance in various sectors, from business to education and beyond (Alalwan et al., 2017). Hsu & Lin (2016) argued that while the allure of novelty might attract users to a platform, it's the perceived utility, satisfaction, and community engagement that determine long-term use.

The principle of continuance intention has become central in this context. Rooted in the broader field of behavioral intention, it examines the factors influencing users' decisions to continue or discontinue a specific behavior, such as using a particular SNS (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Previous studies have linked continuance intention to a range of factors, from perceived usefulness and user satisfaction to external influences like peer behavior and societal trends (Turel & Serenko, 2012).

In light of the dynamic and ever-evolving landscape of SNS, especially platforms like Instagram, understanding continuance intention becomes not just relevant but imperative. As the digital age progresses, researchers and practitioners alike must stay ahead of the curve, anticipating shifts in user

behavior and strategizing accordingly.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

The decline in continuance use intention among social media users has become increasingly concerning, highlighting the necessity to explore the underlying factors contributing to this trend. The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), a widely used framework in social media studies (Tang et al., 2021), has often been integrated with other theories to identify the antecedents of continuance intention (CI). However, the justification for selecting motivational needs within the UGT framework lies in its ability to provide a comprehensive understanding of why users engage with specific media platforms, including Instagram (Kircaburun et al., 2020). This theory is particularly relevant in the Malaysian context, where the high penetration rate of social media—reported at 86% as of 2021 (Kassim & Ramlan, 2018)—and the unique socio-cultural environment necessitate a deeper exploration of user motivations. Moreover, while Instagram is a platform of considerable influence, particularly among Malaysian university students, it remains under-researched compared to other platforms like Facebook, which have been more extensively studied in this demographic (Salleh et al., 2021).

Despite the competition from emerging platforms like TikTok, which has gained significant traction among younger demographics globally and in Malaysia (Datareportal, 2023), Instagram maintains a strong presence, especially among university students. However, while UGT effectively explains why users engage with social media, it is crucial to explore how these motivational needs

translate into continued use intentions over time (Pham & Ho, 2021). This necessitates examining the psychological responses, particularly satisfaction, that mediate the relationship between these needs and continuance intention, as informed by the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT) (Bhattacharjee, 2001; Hsu et al., 2006). The selection of satisfaction as a focal variable is justified by its established role in ECT as a critical determinant of whether users continue to engage with a platform (Bhattacharjee, 2001). ECT posits that users' post-adoption satisfaction, influenced by the confirmation of their initial expectations, directly impacts their decision to continue using a service. This relationship is particularly significant in the context of Instagram, where user satisfaction can determine platform loyalty and long-term engagement.

Satisfaction is a pivotal concept in ECT, which posits that users' continued engagement with a platform is influenced by their post-adoption experiences and whether these experiences meet or exceed their initial expectations (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Previous studies have highlighted the significance of satisfaction in determining continuance intention, particularly in the context of information systems and social media platforms (Thong, Hong, & Tam, 2006; Lin, Wu, & Tsai, 2005). Combining UGT and ECT offers a comprehensive approach to understanding the dynamic between motivation, satisfaction, and continuance intention, particularly within the context of Instagram usage among Malaysian university students (Zhou, 2011; Hsu et al., 2006).

Previous research has primarily focused on how different gratifications influence user behavior on social media, with the platform being treated as a

dependent variable (Krasnova et al., 2017; Hwang & Cho, 2018). Although these studies have contributed to understanding the impact of gratification on SNS behavior, a considerable gap exists in examining the relationship between gratifications and users' psychological responses, such as satisfaction (Chiu & Huang, 2015; Gan, 2016).

Furthermore, the socio-demographic characteristics and usage patterns of university students in Malaysia, particularly their Instagram usage, have not been thoroughly explored in previous studies (Hamat et al., 2012; Kassim & Ramlan, 2018). Understanding these demographic factors and usage patterns is crucial to providing a comprehensive view of the factors influencing continuance intention (Wong et al., 2020). This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the relationship between motivational needs, satisfaction, and continuance intention, while considering the demographic context and usage characteristics specific to Malaysian university students.

The literature also highlights a scarcity of studies investigating the influence of motivational needs on users' psychological responses and how these responses impact their behavioral intentions (Lee & Kim, 2017; Hsu et al., 2015). Therefore, this study identifies the need for further research into the impact of motivational needs on users' satisfaction and continuance intention, particularly within the context of Instagram usage among Malaysian university students (Gogan et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2016).

Previous studies on SNS continuance intention have often emphasized technical aspects, overlooking the crucial role of user motivations in determining behavioral intentions (Gogan et al., 2018). This perspective is supported by Isa et al. (2020), who highlighted the importance of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, leading to an increased scholarly focus on continuance intention from the perspective of motivational needs.

Many studies have investigated the impact of gratifications on SNS adoption and use, primarily focusing on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Weibo (Hwang & Cho, 2018; Gan, 2016; Krasnova et al., 2017). However, these studies often neglect the connection between gratifications and users' psychological responses, signaling the need for more comprehensive research that delves into the influence of gratification on user psychological responses and its association with behavioral intentions.

UGT, as a key theoretical framework, explains the motivational needs underlying specific media usage (Sun et al., 2017). The existing literature establishes a link between motivational needs and continuance intention and acknowledges the mediating role of users' psychological responses, including satisfaction (Sun et al., 2017), sense of belonging (Guo et al., 2016), emotional attachment (Gogan et al., 2018), parasocial interaction (Chiu & Huang, 2015), and pleasure (Gogan, 2020). Among these factors, satisfaction is considered a critical precursor to continuance intention and is identified as the most prominent mediator.

Despite the high social media usage in Asia, particularly in countries like China (Zong et al., 2019), Korea (Hwang & Cho, 2018), and Malaysia (Hamat et al., 2012), Malaysia remains a largely unexplored research context despite its high social media adoption rates (Alam & Hashim, 2016). To address this research gap, this study focuses on Malaysia, considering its significant social media adoption rates, the growing importance of social media, its unique cultural background, a strong educational system, and government support for research.

In Malaysia, Instagram is especially popular among university students, making their continuance use intention a key research subject (Datareportal, 2023). While previous research has explored various aspects of student behavior, such as learning experiences and motivations behind social media usage, little research specifically targets Instagram within this demographic.

Given that Malaysian university students represent a substantial segment of social media users, this study focuses specifically on their continuance intention. Instagram has emerged as the most influential platform among Malaysian university students (Salleh et al., 2021), reinforcing its selection as the focus of this research.

Despite the considerable social media usage among this demographic and the significant role Instagram plays in their digital lives, comprehensive research focusing on the relationship between motivational needs and continuance intention, and the mediating role of satisfaction within this relationship, remains

scarce.

In the context of this research, continuance intention refers specifically to the sustained usage of Instagram among university students in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. The study examines five motivational needs—cognitive, affective, personal integrative, social integrative, and escape needs—as potential determinants of Instagram continuance intention among Malaysian university students, with satisfaction serving as a mediating factor, as informed by the Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT) (Bhattacharjee, 2001).

Therefore, this study addresses the following overarching problem: "Despite the significant role of Instagram in the daily lives of Malaysian university students, there is a notable absence of empirical investigations exploring the interplay between motivational needs (based on UGT), satisfaction (informed by ECT), and continuance intention to use Instagram. This gap in academic literature necessitates an in-depth study to provide insights into mechanisms that could enhance user engagement and loyalty toward this widely used platform."

### **1.3 Research Questions**

This research raised the following questions:

RQ1: Which socio-demographic attributes are prevalent among the university student population in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, participating in this study?

RQ2: What usage patterns are prevalent among the university student population in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, regarding Instagram?

RQ3: What specific motivation needs underlie the university students' intention to continue using Instagram in the Klang Valley, Malaysia?

RQ4: To what extent do the identified motivational needs influence the intention of university students in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, to continue using Instagram?

RQ5: Does satisfaction mediate the relationship between the identified motivation needs and the intention of university students in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, to continue using Instagram?

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The general objective of this study is to comprehensively investigate the socio-demographic characteristics, usage characteristics, motivation needs, and Instagram continuance intentions of university students in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. The specific research objectives of this study can be described as follows:

RO1: To determine the prevalent socio-demographic attributes of university students in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, who participated in this study.

RO2: To identify the dominant Instagram usage patterns among university students in the Klang Valley, Malaysia.

RO3: To discern the primary motivational needs that drive the intention of university students in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, to continue using Instagram.

RO4: To quantify the degree to which identified motivational needs influence the intention of university students in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, to continue their usage of Instagram.

RO5: To assess whether satisfaction acts as a mediator in the relationship between identified motivational needs and the continued intention to use Instagram among university students in the Klang Valley, Malaysia.

## **1.5 Significance of Study**

The value of this research extends beyond Malaysian university students; it also holds importance for the Malaysian government, social media practitioners, and Instagram administrators. This study examines the significance of the investigation from four dimensions — theoretical contributions, methodological enhancements, practical applications, and policy implications. Therefore, this study offers theoretical augmentation, refines research methodologies, guides practical operations, and aids in policy formulation.

### **1.5.1 Theoretical Significance**

This study holds considerable theoretical significance by extending the conceptual understanding of social media engagement, particularly Instagram usage. Utilizing the lenses of both the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) and Expectation-Confirmation Theory (ECT), it seeks to enrich the existing theoretical discourse surrounding user behavior on social media platforms. By investigating motivational needs and satisfaction as predictors of continuance intention, this research enhances existing theories and stimulates new theoretical propositions within the realm of digital media studies.

The focus on a specific user group—university students in Klang Valley, Malaysia—adds a nuanced understanding of Instagram usage in a unique socio-cultural setting. This context is marked by a high social media penetration rate, a diverse ethnic composition, and a blend of traditional and modern values that influence how social media is used and perceived. This theoretically grounded, context-specific research serves as fertile ground for further theoretical advancements in social media research, providing insights that may not be applicable in more homogeneous or less digitally integrated societies (Kassim & Ramlan, 2018; Hamat et al., 2012).

### **1.5.2 Methodological Significance**

This study represents a considerable methodological contribution to the field of social media research, particularly through the adoption of a quota sampling strategy. While quota sampling does not allow for generalizability in the same way that probability sampling does, this approach was chosen to ensure the representation of university students from six universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia—namely UM, UPM, UTM, UKM, Taylor's, and UCSI. By ensuring the inclusivity of different universities, this method diversifies the participant base and enhances the representativeness of the study's findings within the targeted population.

Moreover, the use of a survey instrument to collect data provides an efficient, effective means of capturing a broad range of responses and allows for robust statistical analysis. The combination of quota sampling and survey methodology is a valuable innovation that can guide future research in social

media usage and behaviors.

Collectively, these methodological decisions not only enhance the richness and diversity of empirical findings but also present a unique blueprint for similar studies in different socio-cultural or geographic contexts. By promoting methodological rigor and creating opportunities for comparative analysis, this research significantly contributes to the methodological advancements in the study of social media use.

### **1.5.3 Practical Significance**

From a practical standpoint, this study carries significant relevance for various stakeholders involved in social media management, design, and marketing. Firstly, the investigation into motivational needs and satisfaction levels that influence users' continuance intention of Instagram usage provides critical insights for social media developers and platform managers. This knowledge is instrumental in shaping the future development and design of the platform, ensuring it aligns closely with user motivations and satisfaction requirements. Informed by these findings, developers can innovate user-centered platform enhancements and engagement strategies, potentially resulting in improved user satisfaction, increased platform loyalty, and bolstered platform sustainability.

For marketers and advertisers, understanding the motivational dynamics and satisfaction parameters that underpin continuance intention among university students offers considerable practical benefits. As marketing strategies

become increasingly personalized and targeted, insights from this study can help tailor more precise and effective marketing messages on Instagram. The improved understanding of user behavior can lead to more engaging brand-customer interactions, potentially resulting in superior marketing outcomes and business performance.

Moreover, the practical insights gleaned from this study could also prove beneficial for educators and administrators in higher education. With a deepened understanding of student behaviors and motivations on Instagram, universities could potentially leverage this platform to improve student engagement, enhance educational experiences, and develop online learning communities.

Overall, the practical implications of this research extend beyond academia, with potential benefits for practitioners in various fields, from social media development and management to marketing and education. The insights obtained can be leveraged to facilitate more informed, evidence-based decisions and strategies, ultimately contributing to enhanced user engagement, improved marketing outcomes, and more effective educational practices on social media platforms like Instagram.

#### **1.5.4 Policy Significance**

The outcomes of this study carry substantial policy implications, particularly in advocating responsible and beneficial social media use among Malaysian university students, with a focus on Instagram. One of the pivotal policy

considerations emanating from this study is the paramount role of user satisfaction in the continuum of social media engagement. Given that satisfaction mediates the relationship between motivational needs and continuance intention, policymakers could endorse strategic directives for social media platforms to consider user satisfaction as a key determinant in their platform design and development processes.

This could materialize through the formulation of policy guidelines that encourage platforms to systematically evaluate user satisfaction levels and initiate necessary enhancements to improve user experience. For instance, the policies might recommend regular user surveys, feedback mechanisms, and innovative methods of user engagement to assess and improve user satisfaction. Further, platforms could be urged to establish specialized teams or departments to manage user experience and satisfaction, guided by these policy directives.

By cultivating an environment that prioritizes user satisfaction, social media platforms could not only facilitate continued user engagement but also promote user well-being. This satisfaction-driven approach could potentially mitigate adverse effects of social media use, such as addiction or mental health issues, thereby fostering a healthier digital landscape for users.

In a broader context, this research underscores the significance of striking a balance between online and offline activities in promoting user satisfaction. Policymakers could develop strategies that encourage healthy digital habits

and digital literacy among university students. This might include campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of balancing social media use with offline activities or programs to educate students about responsible social media use.

In summary, the policy implications of this research highlight the importance of fostering user satisfaction to promote responsible and beneficial social media usage among Malaysian university students on platforms like Instagram. Through targeted policies that prioritize this aspect, policymakers can help create an enabling environment that supports responsible social media usage while simultaneously enhancing user satisfaction and well-being.

#### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study was designed to provide a focused yet comprehensive examination of Instagram use among university students in Klang Valley, Malaysia. The main delineations that defined the scope of the study were as follows:

Regarding geographical scope, the study concentrated on Klang Valley, Malaysia, which is known for its high concentration of universities and student populations. This geographical restriction provided a clear context for the research, and the outcomes were most directly applicable to this region.

Regarding demographic scope, the research focused specifically on university students attending six selected universities within Klang Valley (UM, UPM, UTM, UKM, Taylor's, and UCSI). These universities were selected based on

their inclusion in the QS World University Rankings, specifically focusing on institutions ranked within the top 500 globally. This selection criterion ensures that the sample is drawn from universities that represent a high standard of academic excellence and a diverse student body. Quota sampling was then employed to ensure that students from each university were proportionally represented in the sample. The quotas were set based on the enrollment sizes of the universities, with the aim of reflecting the broader student population's diversity and ensuring a balanced representation across different academic disciplines and year levels.

Regarding platform scope, this study limited its investigation to Instagram, one of the most popular and influential social media platforms among the target demographic. By focusing on Instagram, the research could provide detailed insights into the use of this specific platform, which might not generalize to other social media platforms.

Regarding temporal scope, this study was conducted between June and July 2023, and the data collected reflected the motivational needs, satisfaction levels, and continuance intention among the participants at the time of the study. Therefore, the findings may not account for possible changes in Instagram's features, policies, or the broader digital landscape that might occur after the research period.

Regarding conceptual scope, this study centered on the examination of motivational needs as informed by the UGT, the mediating role of satisfaction

as posited by the ECT, and Instagram continuance use intention among university students. Satisfaction in this study specifically pertains to satisfaction with the Instagram platform itself as a tool, including its functionality, interface, and features. While other factors may also influence Instagram use, this study focused on these variables to provide more comprehensive insights.

By defining these parameters, the study aimed to contribute valuable, context-specific insights into the motivations, behaviors, and experiences of university students using Instagram in Klang Valley, Malaysia.

## **1.7 Keywords Definition**

This chapter elucidated an array of terminologies fundamental to the current study, encompassing continuance intention, motivation needs, satisfaction, Instagram, and Malaysian university students.

### **1.7.1 Continuance Intention**

Continuance intention was typically applied in scenarios where an individual perceived a sustained purpose or utility in an action or behavior they had undertaken (Yang & Jong, 2021). In the context of information systems, continuance intention was conceptualized as a form of post-adoption behavior, representing a suite of activities that followed initial acceptance of a system or service, which included routinisation, continuance, infusion, and assimilation (Bhattacharjee, 2001; Karahanna et al., 1999; Rogers, 2010). It often functioned as a synonym for continuance, indicating the individual's intention

to maintain the use of a product or service. Continuance intention was a critical aspect of users' behavior and was pivotal for the sustainability of a product or service (Lu et al., 2023). For the purpose of this research, continuance intention specifically pertained to the ongoing use of Instagram among university students in Klang Valley, Malaysia.

### **1.7.2 Motivation Needs**

Motivation needs emerged from the UGT and were intended to explicate the psychological impetuses that propelled individuals towards the utilization of a particular media platform (Wibowo, 2022). Katz, Blumler, et al. (1973) devised a typology of motivation needs based on a distillation of 35 needs identified in extensive literature on the social and psychological functions of mass media. These needs were structured into five categorizations, which have since been widely adopted: cognitive needs (seeking information and knowledge), affective needs (emotional or pleasurable experiences), personal integrative needs (enhancing credibility or confidence), social integrative needs (enhancing social connections), and escape needs (relief from boredom or the realities of life). Each category encompasses a unique set of psychological needs and motivations that drive media usage, shaping how users engage with different media types. Notably, these categories are not mutually exclusive; individuals may experience multiple needs simultaneously, and their motivations can shift over time and context (Wibowo, 2022). In this study, these five categories of motivation needs were treated as the antecedents to continuance intention, positing that they played a significant role in shaping Malaysian university students' ongoing engagement with Instagram. The

detailed exploration of these motivation needs and their relationship with continuance intention promised to shed light on the complex dynamics of Instagram usage, providing valuable insights for academics, practitioners, and policymakers alike.

### **1.7.3 Satisfaction**

Satisfaction, derived from the ECT, was a fundamental construct that encapsulated a user's evaluative judgment following the consumption of a service or product (Bhattacharjee, 2001). This judgment was influenced by the extent to which the user's expectations were confirmed or disconfirmed during usage. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction, as perceived by the users, determined the decision to continue or discontinue using a given service or product (Oliver, 1980). An adequate level of satisfaction was essential in cultivating user loyalty, as users who were satisfied with a service or product had a higher propensity to repeat their usage and resist offers from competitors (Garg & Sharma, 2020). Within the context of this research, satisfaction specifically referred to the level of fulfillment experienced by Malaysian university students when using Instagram. The study also investigated the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between motivation needs and continuance intention, offering a more nuanced understanding of user behavior on social media platforms.

### **1.7.4 Instagram**

Instagram, a globally recognized social networking service, was primarily dedicated to the sharing of photos and videos (Howe, 2023). Since its launch in 2010, Instagram had grown exponentially and established a diverse user

base spanning continents. Datareportal (2022) indicated that Instagram had 15.55 million users in Malaysia as of early 2022, underscoring the platform's extensive reach within the country. As a highly visual platform incorporating features such as filters, stories, reels, and IGTV, Instagram offered a distinctive user experience compared to other social media platforms. Its image-centric design and dynamic engagement features appealed to a broad demographic, making it particularly popular among younger users, including university students. In an academic context, Instagram provided a fertile ground for research due to its widespread usage, unique user engagement mechanisms, and influence on digital communication practices. In this study, Instagram was specifically considered the social media platform of focus, serving as the medium through which Malaysian university students' satisfaction, motivational needs, and continuance intention were investigated. Given Instagram's prominent role in the digital lives of university students, understanding their interactions with this platform could provide valuable insights into their digital behaviors, social engagement, and psychological experiences in the social media landscape (Rowan-Kenyon & Alemán, 2016). This nuanced understanding could, in turn, inform academic discourse, practical strategies, and policy guidelines pertaining to social media use in the higher education context.

### **1.7.5 Malaysian University Students**

"Malaysian University Students" refers to individuals currently undertaking higher education studies within Malaysia. These students are enrolled in various degree programs across a diverse range of recognized tertiary

institutions. These students populate the 20 public universities, 50 private universities, 34 university colleges, and 10 foreign university branch campuses that Malaysia boasts (StudyMalaysia, 2022). While these students come from varied academic disciplines and represent different years of study and socio-demographic backgrounds, they all share the experience of pursuing formal higher education, whether at the undergraduate, postgraduate, or doctoral level, within the Malaysian educational landscape. Given the prevalence of high social network penetration rates in Klang Valley, Malaysia (Alam et al., 2016; Ing et al., 2021; Samat et al., 2016), it served as a fitting context for this study. This research particularly focused on university students from six selected higher education institutions in Klang Valley, inclusive of four public universities - Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) - and two private universities - Taylor's University and UCSI University. According to Hamat et al. (2012), these universities collectively comprised a student body of 160,871 students, representing the target population for this study. By implementing a quota sampling strategy, the research aimed to gather a representative sample of over 384 students from these universities, using the quota sampling method. This sample was used to investigate Instagram usage, satisfaction, motivational needs, and continuance intention among Malaysian university students, providing valuable insights that were representative of the wider student population.

## 1.8 Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the background and significance of the study. It highlighted the importance of investigating the identified problems and emphasized the need to address these issues through research. Several research questions were formulated to guide the study towards a comprehensive understanding of the topic. Additionally, the scope of the study was outlined, specifying the geographical, demographic, conceptual, and temporal boundaries. Furthermore, key terms such as "continuance intention," "motivation needs," "satisfaction," "Instagram," and "Malaysian University Students" were defined in relation to the study's context.

The subsequent chapter was set to delve into an extensive review of relevant literature and theories applicable to the study. This literature review was designed to provide a solid theoretical foundation and contextual background to support the research objectives. By exploring existing knowledge, theoretical frameworks, and empirical studies, the next chapter aimed to contribute to the existing body of knowledge and further inform the subsequent research phases.

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