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Global and Local Identity Effects on Hedonic Motivation and SNS Value

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Abstract – This study analyzes the impact of global and local identity on hedonic motivation and appraised value of social networking sites (SNSs) in culturally-different contexts. Using survey data from Austria and Thailand (n = 425), confirmatory factor evaluation and multi-group SEM approaches were employed to test the measurement validity, the measurement invariance, and the structural relationships. Our results show a high rate of reliability as well as cross-country measurement equivalence. Hedonic motivation is a significant mediator of the link between SNS value and identity constructs with significant cross-country differences that arise. Global identity plays a greater role in Thailand while local identity is more prominent in Austria. The results suggest the presence of culturally contingent identity mechanism to drive SNS engagement.

Keywords – Social Networking Sites, Global Identity, Local Identity, Hedonic Motivation, Measurement Invariance, Structural Equation Modeling.

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of technology has been a center point of modern society for more than 15 decades. This development has been highly enhanced in the last 3 decades, especially when personal computers became more affordable and popular to individual users. Earlier on, the term "technology" was considered as autonomous contemporary machines. Today, its scope has diversified to integrate additional products that are relevant in scientific applications. Technological applications such as factory machines were initially employed to complete challenging tasks, and then later applied in entertainment and information management, including televisions and computers.

Currently, technology acts as a significant instrument for individuals' socialization and communication in areas such as social networking sites (SNS), video phone, and e-mail. As technology became a very vital element of consumers' daily life, certain myths and meanings regarding their consumption gets embedded to it. Consumers' technology and cultures related ideologies influenced consumers' technology usage. SNS are an example of technology used for socialization, and these could have the most sophisticated and personalized elements of technology since they deal with consumer engagement with several other users.

Jo [1] reviewed SNS as either utilitarian or hedonic technologies and developed on consistent Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) basics. Even though the hedonic state of SNS can be reviewed in literature due to the fact that "perceived enjoyment" has been identified to have a positive impact on SNS consumption behavior, SNS' utilitarian nature is still unclear. Actually, the findings related to the impact of "perceived usefulness" on consumption behavior substantially vary

from one another. Integrating both perspectives concerning SNS nature, we believe that these networks are dual technologies, which are both utilitarian- and hedonic-based. We also believe that findings related to the impact of "perceived usefulness" on SNS consumption behavior are heterogeneous in nature since its measurements differ significantly across the literature. Developing upon dual TAM backgrounds and by employing effective "perceive usefulness" operationalization, we are able to address the issue of literature inconsistencies and clarify whether SNS consumption is determined by utilitarian motivations, hedonic motivations, or both.

The manner in which individuals use social media (such as accruing a large network of friends, time spend on the platform, and their interactions with the network) affects their social comparison experience. This comparison tends to be upwards, probably because individuals tend to present themselves more positively there. As described in [2], on SNS, people have "better lives and are happier". Social media's comparison has been linked with negative results such as depression, low self-esteem and poor body image. In a study by Schmuck et al. [3], exposure to high social comparison and upward comparison orientation both resulted to low self-esteem after a particular social media session. Until now, the causal aspect between social comparison and social media usage is generally unclear. In general, less cross-culture study has been done regarding SNS's social comparison, and has generally concentrated only on a few countries.

The purpose of our study is to examine the role of global and local identity in hedonic motivation and the perceived value of social networking sites; and how the relationships between hedonic motivation and perceived value of SNS may vary across different national cultural contexts. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to validate properties of identity- and motivation-related constructs and establish cross-national measurement invariance, and measure differences in structural paths between Austrian and Thai SNS users. By drawing on identity theory as well as hedonic views on consumption, the study aims to offer empirical findings into culturally contingent factors that influence the value and usage patterns of SNS.

The rest of this paper is structured in the following manner: Section II integrates a theoretical framework that consists of the social identity theory, hedonic consumption theory, and consumer ethnocentrism. Section III is the methodological section that describes the design and operationalization of measurements, structural equation modeling (SEM), hypothesis testing, multi-cluster SEM, measurement invariance and the robustness checks. In section IV, the empirical findings are presented, including the consideration of such critical elements as (i) measurement model validation, (ii) measurement invariance and multi-group analysis, (iii) measurement of common method bias, and (iv) structural model evaluation and hypothesis testing. Lastly, Section V provides a conclusion of the research and an explanation of its implications to the body of knowledge in social networking site usage, especially in the critical role of identity-based processes in hedonic motivation and perceived SNS value.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Identity Theory

As described by Brown [4], the Social Identity Theory (SIT) provides a description of "minimum intergroup bias", and also a wide statement regarding how relations between real-life groups relate to identity. According to SIT, there is a dimension on which relationships and identity can be portrayed as completely interpersonal and personal as one end, and completely intergroup or social on the other end.

Personal identity results from features, idiosyncratic traits, and personalities, and certain individual relations with others. A special aspect of SIT is that an effective group/intergroup phenomenon is not possible if the theoretical framework only considers relationships and personal identity. Social identity is the person's knowledge, which he/she belongs to a particular social cluster related to their value and emotions. This identity influences and is influenced by intergroup relationships. The theory also aims to define the coherence and uniformity of group/intergroup behaviors as mediated by social identity.

The ideology of social identity is closely interlinked with social media affordance. SNSs provide instruments of self-portrayal, allowing users to create their profiles, highlight interests, and participate in self-disclosures. Individuals can also selectively present themselves to connect and project desired image with others who have similar affiliations, interests, or values. The digital ecosystem of social media provides a sense of agency and control over one's self-presentation, hence being a significant factor in the negotiation and establishment of social identity. Social media's impact on identity goes beyond personal self-presentation to group/intergroup dynamics.

Hedonic Consumption Theory

Barbopoulos and Johansson [5] reviewed hedonic consumption motivations into two clusters as social and individual reasons. While individual reasons integrate sensory stimuli, personal desire or pleasure, desire to have cheaper services/products, entertainment activities, and physical activities; social reasons integrate community with others, gaining social experience, being associated with respected people in the society, friendship activities, authority, status, reference groups/interviews, etc. According to study by Perez-Truglia [6], titled "On the Causes and Consequences of Hedonic Adaptation", consumers tend to do shopping with high emotions and because of many reasons/motivations.

Hedonic motivation is one of the major three constructs integrated into the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) due to its consumer context extension. In reference to prior research by Ursavaş [7], hedonic motivations (such as motivations) for SNS usage affect both information systems and consumer behaviors. In their research, testing UTAUT in the aspect of consumer usage of social media technology, hedonic motivations were identified as a critical factor of behavior intentions.

A significant number of works have recorded that one of the major motivations of students' usage of social media is because of the enjoyment provided by social interactions. This phenomenon is certainly significant when referring to consumers' hedonic motivations. With the advent of web 2.0 applications as well as SNS, users can effectively record this experience in a digital society. Participating in online conversations during the browsing process can significantly provide pleasure to users.

Consumer ethnocentrism

In a study by Chaturvedi, Agnihotri, and Tripathi [8], the term "consumer ethnocentrism" was described as users' normative beliefs in superiority of their locally-produced products. This ideology is hypothesized to surpass mere functional and economic viewpoints, and, instead, to bear more significant foundation embedded in morality. This means that consumer ethnocentrism is envisioned to consider the aspect that some users believe is immoral to buy foreign-produced products, because it negatively affects the local economy, and leads to low of employment opportunities. In general, this is considered unpatriotic.

Moeller et al. [9] focused on the issue of whether a products' "foreignness" will render it less preferable to users in other nations. In addition, they state that obstacles to success in international markets still exist, and ethnocentrism is one of them. This has been one of the most ancient concerns among global marketers. In reference to this theory, Kouznetsov and Dass [10] posited that it is wrong to by foreign-made products because it can hurt the local economy. As stated above, the scholars also agreed that it is unpatriotic to purchase imported products because such endeavors have a significant effect on the local employment levels. It is considered that consumer ethnocentrism, integrated with patriotism, and emphasis on ethnic and cultural identity, has a strong impact on global business ecosystems, particularly during an economic crisis.

Klein, Ettenson, and Krishnan [11] also investigated "consumer ethnocentrism" within various constructs such as "readiness to purchase foreign products", attitudes towards purchasing foreign products", and "buying intentions towards imported products" as earlier discussed. This study will reflect the motivations and perceived value of using global/local products or services.

III. METHODOLOGY

Survey Design and Measurement Operationalization

The researchers used a cross-sectional survey of the sub-groups of social network site (SNS) users in Thailand and Austria, where n is 178 and 247, respectively. Multi-item reflective scales to operationalize the latent constructs (consumer ethnocentrism (ETHN), SNS Value (VAL), Hedonic Motivation (HED), Local Identity (LOC), and Global Identity (GLO)) were taken out of the tested literature (e.g., in [12]). The responses on Likert scales were measured on the anchors with strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (7).

Where x_{ij} denotes the actual score of respondents i on item j of the measure of latent construct η_k. Measurement model of every item is obtained using Eq. (1).

$$x_{ij} = \lambda_{jk}\eta_{ki} + \varepsilon_{ij}, \varepsilon_{ij} \sim N(0, \theta_j) \tag{1}$$

and λ_{jk} is the standardized factor load and θ_j refers to the variance in the measurement error. The difference between the observed score may be disaggregated using Eq. (2).

$$\mathrm{Var}(x_j) = \lambda_{jk}^2 \mathrm{Var}(\eta_k) + \theta_j \tag{2}$$

The measurement model in terms of all indicators of n respondents in the matrix model is represented as Eq. (3).

$$\mathrm{X} = \Lambda\eta + \varepsilon \tag{3}$$

with X is the $n \times p$ matrix of observed indicators, Λ is the $p \times m$ Loading matrix and η is the mnlatent variable matrix and εi has been defined as the p error matrix. The AVE (average variance extracted), and CR (composite reliability) of every latent construct were computed in Eq. (4).

$$CR_k = \frac{\left(\sum_{j=1}^{p} \lambda_{jk}\right)^2}{\left(\sum_{j=1}^{p} \lambda_{jk}\right)^2 + \sum_{j=1}^{p} \theta_j}, AVE_k = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{p} \lambda_{jk}^2}{\sum_{j=1}^{p} \lambda_{jk}^2 + \sum_{j=1}^{p} \theta_j} \tag{4}$$

Those items with λ_{jk} greater than or less than 0.5 were dropped to ensure convergent validity. Discriminant validity was evaluated in terms of Fornell-Larcker criterion where AVE's square root of every construct was contrasted with the correlations with remaining constructs, in Eq. (5).

$$\sqrt{AVE_k} > | r_{kl} |, \forall k \neq l \tag{5}$$

This would make sure that the latent constructs are clear and are measured appropriately to give a good basis of further structural modeling.

Hypothesis Testing and SEM

The hypothesized relationships between the latent constructs were confirmed with SEM with covariance-based estimation in Amos 23. The model in the form of a structure is computed in Eq. (6).

$$\eta = \mathrm{B}\eta + \Gamma\xi + \zeta, \tag{6}$$

where η denotes a vector of endogenic latent variables, ξ is a vector of exogenic latent variables, B holds coefficients among endogenous constructs, Γ holds impacts of exogenous constructs on endogenous constructs, and ζ represents disturbances.

The covariance of observed variables Σ is modeled using Eq. (7).

$$\Sigma = \Lambda\Phi\Lambda^{\mathrm{T}} + \Theta, \tag{7}$$

and where Φ is the covariance latent constructs matrix and Θ is the covariance measurement error matrix. The maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) reduces the discrepancy function in Eq. (8).

$$F_{ML} = \log \mid \Sigma(\theta) \mid + \mathrm{tr}(S\Sigma(\theta)^{-1}) - \log \mid S \mid - p, \tag{8}$$

where S is the model covariance matrix, p is the observed number of variables, and θ represents model parameters.

Exogenous variables included control variables such as number of friends (NF), SNS type (SNS), and consumer ethnocentrism (ETHN), in Eq. (9).

$$\eta_{HED} = \beta_1 GLO + \beta_2 LOC + \gamma_1 NF + \gamma_2 SNS + \gamma_3 ETHN + \zeta_{HED},\ \eta_{VAL} = \beta_3 HED + \gamma_1 NF + \gamma_2 SNS + \gamma_3 ETHN + \zeta_{VAL} \tag{9}$$

Path significance was evaluated with critical ratios (CR), which are identical to t-statistics, and the value of 1.96 CR is significant with $p < 0.05$.

The general analytical process, including data collection as well as multi-group analysis and robustness testing, is represented in **Fig. 1**, and the related methodological goals and products are listed in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Methodological Objectives/Products

Stage	Objective	Key Output / Metric
Data preparation	Enhancing completeness and normality.	Cleaned dataset, descriptive statistics.
Measurement model estimation	Validate constructs	Factor loadings, CR, AVE
Invariance testing	Make cross-country comparison possible.	Configural, metric invariances
Structural model estimation	Test the hypotheses of relationships.	Path coefficients that are standardized.
Robustness analysis	Adjuster methodological bias.	CMB test Marker-adjustments.

Measurement Invariance, Multi-Group SEM, and Robustness

Multi-group SEM was used to study cross-country differences. The configural invariance was initially defined in Eq. (10) and it guaranteed that the fundamental factor structure works in both Austria and Thailand.

$$\mathrm{X}^{(A)} = \Lambda^{(A)}\eta^{(A)} + \varepsilon^{(A)}, \mathrm{X}^{(T)} = \Lambda^{(T)}\eta^{(T)} + \varepsilon^{(T)} \tag{10}$$

The test was performed using Eq. (11) by setting the factor loads to be the same as all groups (metric invariance).

$$\lambda_{jk}^{(A)} = \lambda_{jk}^{(T)}, \forall j, k \tag{11}$$

In Eq. (12), χ^2 difference analyses were employed to determine the equality of structural paths among groups.

$$\Delta\chi^2 = \chi^2_{\text{constrained}} - \chi^2_{\text{unconstrained}}, \Delta df = df_{\text{constrained}} - df_{\text{unconstrained}}, p = P\left(\chi^2_{\Delta df} \geq \Delta\chi^2\right), \tag{12}$$

Where a non-significant $\Delta\chi^2$ is used to show the absence of difference between the structural paths among countries.

Harman single-factor test and marker-variable methods were used to explain the possible common method bias (CMB). Regression pathways were introduced with latent marker variable M to every item, computed using Eq. (13).

$$x_{ij} = \lambda_{jk}\eta_{ki} + \beta_j M_i + \varepsilon_{ij}, \quad (13)$$

where β_j is a capture of possible method bias effects. Path coefficients do not change significantly between the introduction of Mindicate minimal CMB and prior to the introduction.

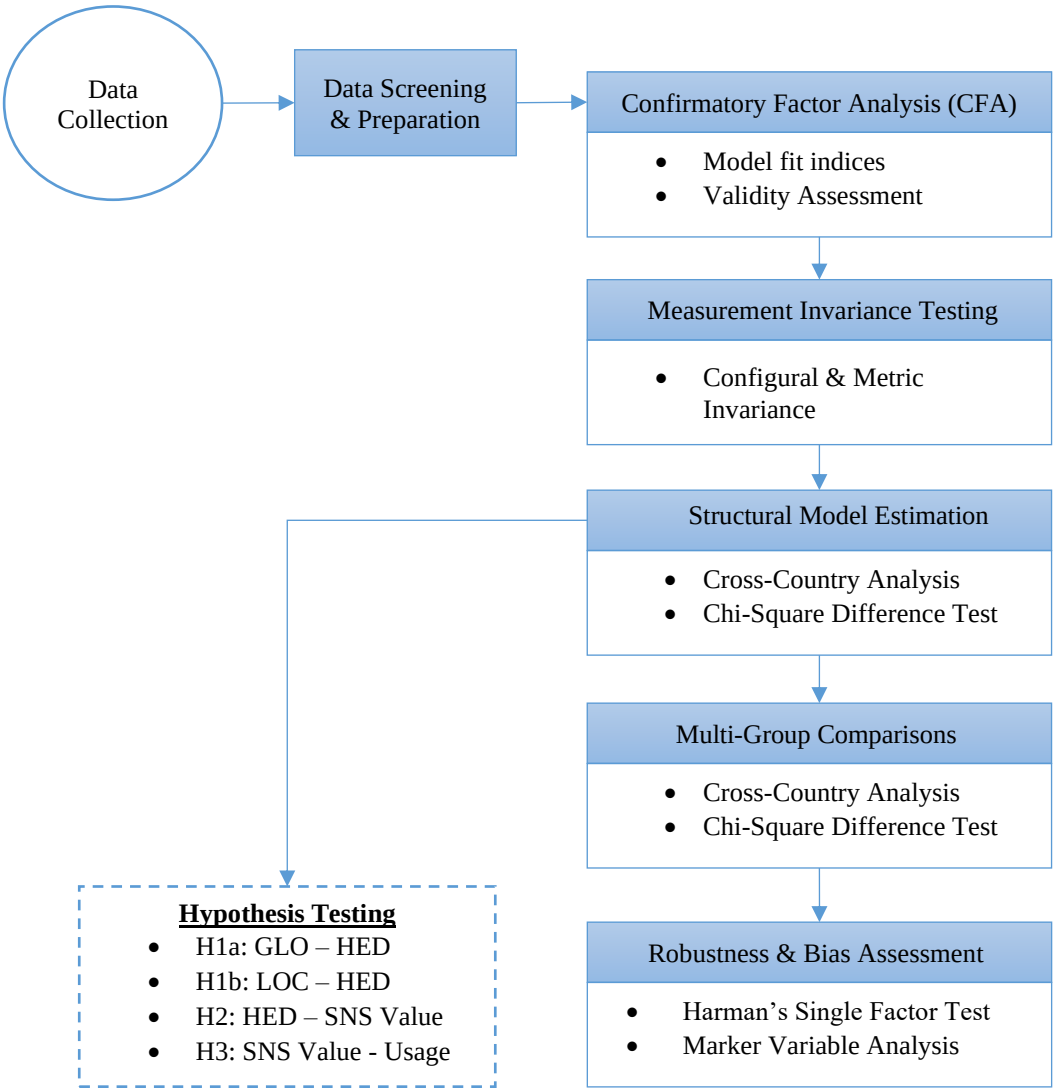

Fig 1. Analytical Process.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model Validation

We started our study with CFA (confirmatory factor analysis) to evaluate the models' measurement elements, based Amos 23. These elements are retrieved from the common factor models that state that every indicator is a cluster of recorded measures, which includes a linear function of a single or multiple common factors and a single unique one.

Based on a study conducted by Snider-Simon and Frantziskonis [13], validity and reliability of scales were assessed by reviewing the fit of three elements/models of measurement, one of the general samples where n is 425, and one for every country distinctively (Thailand and Austria). To clean the models, we dropped some items displaying a lower factor load of < 0.5 and thus did not exhibit enough psychometric features in all elements.

As indicated in **Table 2**, fit data highlight a close fit to dataset for all these 3 elements. In addition, the remaining items' factor loading were significantly larger (0.567-0.1`990) with $p < 0.01$). This provided proof of convergent validity. We also carried out an estimation of construct reliability based on AVE (average variance extracted), and CRS (composite reliability score). All our constructs had scores of composite reliabilities that is more than 0.7 (0.8-0.97). On the other hand, AVE for all constructs was more than 0.5 (0.62-0.92), fulfilling the proposed limits.

Table 2. Findings From Measurement Models

	All ($n = 425$)		**Austria ($n = 247$)**		**Thailand ($n = 178$)**	
Items/Constructs	**Loading[a]**	**t-value**	**Loading[a]**	**t-value**	**Loading[a]**	**t-value**
			Global identity			
GLO1	0.73		0.77		0.68	
GLO2	0.78	13.23	0.85	11.22	0.73	7.85
GLO3	0.75	13.03	0.71	10.43	0.78	8.19
			Local identity			
LOC1	0.76		0.69		0.80	
LOC2	0.63	11.10	0.57	7.67	0.87	11.26
LOC3	0.78	12.27	0.86	8.65	0.72	9.74
			Hedonic motivation			
HED1	0.76		0.85		0.66	
HED2	0.79	14.24	0.88	16.32	0.63	5.75
HED3	0.78	14.18	0.84	15.68	0.66	5.82
			SNS value			
VAL1	0.87		0.86		0.86	
VAL2	0.97	27.53	0.99	21.22	0.92	14.51
VAL3	0.83	22.51	0.83	17.11	0.79	12.55
			Ethnocentrism			
ETHN1	0.87		0.88		0.87	
ETHN2	0.93	23.59	0.92	16.96	0.96	16.44
ETHN3	0.77	19.31	0.76	14.05	0.78	13.05
			Goodness of fit			
χ^2	164.91		178.32		131.11	
CFI	0.97		0.95		0.96	
df	80.01		80,01		80.01	
RMSEA	0.051		0.072		0.061	

Notes: CFI (comparative fit index), and RAMSEA (root mean square error of approximation). All our estimations have a 0.01 significant level.

In **Table 3**, we have presented reliability scores, intercorrelations, and descriptive statistics of our constructs. Lastly, we evaluated discriminant validity based on a highly restrictive test defined by Zhu [14]. This approach evaluates AVE's square root with latent construct correlations. According to **Table 3**, each AVE square root has a higher value compared to the correlation of other relative constructs, hence providing a firm proof of divergent validity. Therefore, all measurement scales have a good validity and reliability level.

Table 3. Numerical Findings

	M (SD)	**CR**	**AVE**	**GLOB**	**LOC**	**HED**	**ATT**	**ETHN**
GLO	4.691 (1.372)/4.663 (1.081)	0.922/0.922	0.793/0.781	0.891/0.893				
LOC	4.672 (1.281)/4.522 (1.190)	0.881/0.942	0.721/0.852	0.414/0.471	0.851/0.921			
HED	3.751 (1.590)/4.392 (1.331)	0.950/0.831	0.871/0.622	0.295/0.511	0.353/0.342	0.931/0.791		
VAL	2.413 (1.361)/3.310 (1.273)	0.971/0.962	0.921/0.894	0.033/0.060	0.070/0.131	0.152/0.211	0.961/0.952	
ETHN	2.551 (1.250)/2.701 (1.240)	0.961/0.962	0.891/0.893	−0.011/−0.191	0.031/−0.021	0.041/−0.251	0.121/−0.071	0.950/0.951

Notes: ETHN (ethnocentrism), CR (composite reliability) AVE (average variance extracted), HED (hedonic motivation), LOC (local identity), GLO (global identity), VAL (SNS value). Components along the diagonal signify AVE approximations, while elements below it represents Person's intercorrelation.

Measurement Invariance and Multi-Group Analysis

Invariance measurements with multi-group SEM were done based on a study by Chin et al. [15]. Many scholars have reported significant variation of structural weightiness for both PU (perceived usefulness) and PEU (perceived ease of use) as elements of TAM where IU (intention of use) was employed as a measure of users' acceptance across the application. In general, they provide partial assistance and are inconclusive to a designer interested in relative efficacy of PU against PEU in determining user acceptance. Therefore, the designer still has to depend on their intuition and experience in assigning resources.

Deng et al. [16] demonstrate the application of MASI (multi-group analysis of structural invariance) to determine the variations of structural weightiness of PEU and PU in forecasting IU in 4 different application suites (i.e., graphics, word processing, spreadsheet, database). Whereas application suite is comparatively mature, the market is massive and resources tend to be available to boost their interface features and functionality or remodify these applications for slim web/client content.

To ensure study constancy, the trends of factor loading for every statistic must first be compared across multiple clusters. Through the process of validation, we identified the reference fitting the data effectively for every cluster (i.e. each nation) distinctively. The next procedure is to evaluate a similar parameter, which was approximated in the reference in a multi-cluster model. Due to this reason, as the first phase, no fairness limits were deployed on any of the constraints. In **Table 4**, we highlight the unconstrained model fit, which is also referred to as the configural model, as satisfactory where $RMSEA$ is 0.047, CFI is 0.96, χ^2/df is 1.93, p is less than 0.00, and $\Delta\chi^2_{(160)}$ is 309.4.

Table 4. SEM Findings

	Dual-cluster model					
	All		**Austria**		**Thailand**	
Route	**β**	**t-value**	**β**	**t-value**	**β**	**t-value**
H1(a): GLO→HED	0.281	3.802**	0.171	2.131*	0.541	3.280**
H(b): LOC→HED	0.153	2.06*	0.280	3.380**	−0.032	−0.196
H2: HED→VAL	0.230	4.23**	0.151	2.235*	0.201	2.151*
H3: VAL→PU	0.180	3.97**	0.171	2.757*	0.131	1.701*
Control variable						
ETHN	−0.111	−2.30*	−0.030	−0.465	−0.180	−2.502*
No. of friends	0.311	6.87**	0.281	4.546**	0.251	3.482**
Type of SNS	0.061	1.227	−0.031	−0.421	−0.011	−0.097
Goodness of fit						
χ^2	326.41		584.21			
df	128		256			
CFI	0.941		0.91			
RMSEA	0.062		0.056			

*Notes: RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation), CFI (comparative fit index). Standardized βs. **p<0.01; *p<0.05*

Nonetheless, structure is not the best status for determining equivalence of a measurement. When determining the invariance, we focused on the degree to which coefficients in the model elements of the model are the same across the two clusters. This procedure necessitates formal comparisons between the benchmark models and the complete measure invariance ones, where equivalence constraints are allocated on a factor load. This comparison has been highlighted in **Table 5**. Provided that the χ^2 variance between the complete metric invariance and baseline models is insignificant (where $\Delta\chi^2_{(10)}$ is 17.50, and with a p that is greater than 0.05), we consider that complete structure is maintained. The complete constraint will be employed in succeeding cross-county evaluations.

Table 5. The Findings of Baseline/Reference and Invariance

Model	**χ^2**	**df**	**$\Delta\chi^2$**	**Δdf**	**p-value**	**CFI**	**RMSEA**
Baseline	309.41	160	–	–	–	0.961	0.046
Factor loading invariance	326.90	170	17.51	10	ns	0.950	0.048

CMV Assessment

We defined the common method variance (CMV) as a model-induced error variance, which stems from a single approach employed to assess our study constructs. When the method influences the link between different variables, bias is present. Due to this reason, we suggested employing CMV.

According to Jakobsen and Jensen [17], CMB can happen when both the independent and dependent model components are assessed in one survey, using common feedback approaches (e.g., ordinal scales). Certainly, is common in literature, and there have been arguments regarding how to control, avoid, and recognize CMB. However, there is a general consensus across different fields that CMB can significantly influence the empirical findings.

Moreover, we used the marker variable method (MVM) proposed by Kongsri et al. [18] for both models of measurement (Thailand and Austria). Particularly, we integrated social desirability as an MVM) in our measurement prototypes which, based on a conceptual perspective, was discrete to our study constructs. Social desirability as recorded by 3 objects: "I have never intentionally mentioned something that will hurt a person's feelings", "I occasionally like to gossip", and "I am always ready to accept it when I make mistakes" (assessed using a 7-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree).

We evaluated the relevance of structural model parameters after and before the advent of marketer variables. The significance of coefficients was constant, showing that CMB was not an issue in the assessment. Thus, we may effectively conclude that CMB cannot describe the recorded links among our hypotheses.

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

To evaluate and test our hypotheses, SEM was done using Amos v23. A complete model (integrating both Thailand and Austrian participants) was measured to assess H1(a) to H3. Since the amount of Instagram/Facebook followers/friends can affect the duration spent in SNS, we integrate this metric as measure in our models. In addition, the type of SNS was integrated as a benchmarking variable to determine the impact originating from structural variations between two social media sites (i.e., Instagram and Facebook). ETHN is one of the most profound study constructs employed to highlight the preference of consumers for regional and local brands over global ones.

The model of localism has initiated the advent of brands, which have widely connected the manufacturing of such products to particular geographic locations. The perception of consumers regarding local brands, especially food items, determines such items as manufactured and advertised within a particular distance from the position of manufacturing. However, the distances vary based on geographical area. In a study by Wang [19], it was highlighted that the comprehension of what is local varies based on region. However, the globalization process seems to have initiated the need for using geographical indicators even further giving rise to "made in" cataloguing. In addition, the advent of progressive competitive rivalry, companies have advertised their authenticity by connecting them to certain communities and regions.

Our model showed acceptable fit levels where $RMSEA$ is 0.06, CFI is 0.941, χ^2/df is 2.551, p is less than 0.00, and $\chi^2_{(128)}$ is 326.41. Moreover, standard constraints and t-values highlighted in **Table 5** provide proof of H2/H3 for the entire sample. Both LOC and GLO was key HED drivers. A typical analysis of our prototype with model constructs in which the constants were equalized (and based on H1a and H1b) highlighted that there was no significant improvement in the general fit (where p is 0.34, and $\Delta\chi^2_{(1)}$ is 0.9). Nonetheless, a critical review within the subsamples showed that even though in Thailand GLO predicted HED accurately compared to LOC (where p is 0.02 and $\Delta\chi^2_{(1)}$ is 4.8), in Austria, the two identities forecasted HED equality (where p was 0.24, and $\Delta\chi^2_{(1)}$ is 1.4), degrading the general effect. In general, H1(a) and H1(b) was partly established.

Later, we performed a cross-country comparison to assess the variations in structural metrics between SNS users in Thailand and Austria. As highlighted by Champahom et al. [20], the connection between HED and LOC was statistically not significant in Thailand. We can interpret this finding by relating it to the status of Thai markets. Generally, Asia's often more raging socio-economic and political context is mirrored in its wide-spread country-based marketplaces. This diversification is also reflected in SNS markets, with various region-based platforms such Chinese "WeChat", "Weibo", and Japanese "Line" gaining more popularity. Specifically in Thailand, both regional and global platforms operate successfully, while in Austria, just like in many parts of Europe, international SNS widely monopolize the marketplaces.

With the availability of different regional SNS alternatives (such as "WeChat" and "Line"), the marketplace is polarized, with Thai consumers identifying themselves on a local level being projected to show their preference to region-based SNS instead of international brands. This preference might be specifically strong amount users with collectivistic societal mentality, such as Thai users, and thus the link between HED and LOC to desire global products can be further deteriorated. Even though the coefficients of the link between LOC and VAL was recorded to be not significant at a 95% statistical confidence for Thai users, it is still significantly low compared to Austria users. Certainly, a formal contrast of this link's scale between Thailand and Austria confirms a substantial variance.

V. CONCLUSION

The research study contributes to the knowledge on SNS use since it shows that identity-based processes play a key role in HED motivation and perceived SNS value, and it also indicates significant cross-country variations. The findings confirm high levels of reliability, validity and also complete measurement invariance between samples of both Austria and Thailand due to rigorous CFA and multi-group SEM so that robust cross-cultural comparisons can be made. The results indicate that hedonic motivation is also a major mediating factor between both global and local identity and SNS value and consequent use. Nevertheless, the intensity of these effects of identity varies in contexts: in the case of Thai users, GLO has a greater impact on HED motivation, whereas in Austria, local identity has a more significant role. Such differences are indicative of difference in market structure, cultural orientation, and the co-existence of global and regional SNS platforms.

CRediT Author Statement

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows:

Conceptualization: Nur Azwani Mohamad Azmin, **Methodology:**Nguyen Quang Vu, **Software:** Nur Azwani Mohamad Azmin and Nguyen Quang Vu, **Data Curation:** Nur Azwani Mohamad Azmin and Nguyen Quang Vu, **Writing- Original Draft Preparation:** Nguyen Quang Vu, **Visualization:** Nur Azwani Mohamad Azmin, **Supervision:** Nur Azwani

Mohamad Azmin, **Validation:** Nur Azwani Mohamad Azmin and Nguyen Quang Vu, **Writing- Reviewing and Editing:** Nur Azwani Mohamad Azmin and Nguyen Quang Vu, All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Data Availability
No data was used to support this study.

Conflicts of Interests
The author(s) declare(s) that they have no conflicts of interest.

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