



Research In Brief

English version of Social Networks Adoption Scale: A validation study

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to validate the English version of the Social Networks Adoption Scale developed by Usluel and Mazman (2009). The original scale consists of 21 items and 5 factors that include usefulness, ease of use, social effect, facilitating conditions and community identity. An online sample of 109 Facebook users completed an internet version of the translated the scale from the USA, Germany, Turkey, and Canada. For the scale's structural validity, first and second order confirmatory factor analysis was conducted. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients (0.90) and item total correlations were calculated to investigate reliability of the scale. Through validity study it was proven that English version of the scale was consisted of five factors. But as a result of the second order confirmatory factor analysis, correlation between social influence variable and adoption variable was found to be insignificant. Therefore, two items included in the social influence factor were extracted from scale. The results indicated that the English version of the Social Networks Adoption Scale consisting of 19 items and 5 factors provided valid and reliable measures of social networks adoption. The Social Networks Adoption Scale can provide an insight to educators about the adoption process of international students from different cultures who seek to use Facebook for educational purposes.

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1. Introduction

The improvements related to Web 2.0 applications brought about some descriptive studies on the usage of the technologies. It was realized, in results of the studies, that some of Web 2.0 applications were adopted and diffused more quickly than others (Corrocher, 2011; Huang et al., 2013; Tyagi, 2012; Usluel and Altıntaş, 2012). In this progression it could be stated that social networks are ahead of other Web 2.0 applications, one of them is Facebook, which exceeded 1.28 billion monthly active users in March 2014 (Facebook, 2014).

It is crucial to understand why social networks are adopted quickly by heterogeneous groups in terms of age, gender, culture, language, etc., and which factors are effective in this process. The use of theories and models regarding diffusion, acceptance and adoption is seen in the process to answer those questions. In the literature, while initially only one model was used as a theoretical framework to explain adoption process (Korpelainen and Kira, 2013; Vishwanath and Goldhaber, 2003;

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Zayim et al., 2006) it is noticeable that more and more complex models are being created and tested (Lee et al., 2011; Ho et al., 2013; Jackson et al., 2013). It is well known that variables which have impact on diffusion, acceptance, and adoption process are varied and in great numbers. In literature, a descriptive review study was done, about acceptance, adoption and diffusion of innovations analyzed 65 research articles. At the end of the analysis it was realized that the adoption of innovation process was explained approximately by 130 different variables and the most studied variables were “perceived usefulness” and “perceived ease of use” (Usluel et al., 2013). In fact in the theory of diffusion of innovation (Rogers, 2003), perceived characteristics of innovations, communication channels, structure of social system and innovation decision process play a role in the rate of adoption. So, the process can be defined as multidimensional and dynamic from this point it can be put forward that a factor, which explains the variation of the adoption of innovation process in a social system with a high percentage value, must be tested in different social systems.

The increase in the level of using Facebook shows that social websites are strong enough in terms of educational use (Mazman and Usluel, 2010; Wang et al., 2014). It is seen that Facebook can be used in various lessons with the aim of education (Irwin et al., 2012; Mazer et al., 2007; Raman et al., 2014). Raman et al. (2014) stated that Facebook applications are one of the best methods which are adjusted to education for the last decade. Facebook is defined as a platform which can ease learning activities (Irwin et al., 2012). Facebook has some qualities such as communication, data-sharing and owing to these qualities it is seen as an educational tool, and these features lead Facebook to be used as educational purposes (Irwin et al., 2012; Mazman and Usluel, 2010). It is stated that Facebook is better than the other e-learning environments in terms of various features such as the ease of sharing educational sources; students' receiving the information that shared by teachers; the interaction between the other users with chat and discussion, etc. (Jong et al., 2014). Therefore, how some features of Facebook have been perceived by learners and the determination of Facebook adoption are predictors in terms of student's entering Facebook with the aim of educational environment in the future (Mazman and Usluel, 2010; Milošević et al., 2015). Students' adoption of Facebook in educational context is important for obtaining effective learning outcomes with Facebook. Findings related to adoption process contribute to faculties that want to use Facebook with educational purposes both in the process of teaching design and within the context of providing process to continue (Kara and Kokoç, 2013; Surry and Farquhar, 2007).

Diversity of the social systems entails a wide spectrum. In this sense, while different social systems can be examined by studying the aims or outputs of the social systems, a cross-cultural comparative studies could also be researched in a similar perspective. For example, the most studied “usefulness” and “ease of use” perceptions can be alike in entertainment or education field or do they represent the same value to explain the variation either in western or eastern cultures in the adoption of innovation process. As a matter of fact when technology acceptance model was applied to different cultures, it was concluded that culture had an impact on choice of communication media and attitudes (Straub, 1994; as cited in Lee et al., 2003). Thus, we can foresee that items which have impact on adoption process may vary with respect to cultures. For example, in a study on the adoption of Web 2.0 tools, it was found that the factors which were affective in the adoption process differed between the Korean and American students (Yoo and Huang, 2011). Also in other studies which were conducted among cultures on social networks, patterns of behavior and methods of communication in social networks, patterns of self-expression, purposes of usage, importance referred to environment and motivations regarding usage may also vary with respect to culture (Chapman and Lahav, 2008; Cho, 2010; Jackson and Wang, 2013; Rosen et al., 2010).

Social networks such Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and etc. have a basic aim to facilitate social interaction and communication among people. They can also be defined as web based environment and/or virtual community enabling people to form their personal profiles, networks and share visuals such as pictures and videos. It is also possible to exchange information on a definite subject (Cheung and Lee, 2010; Murray and Waller, 2007). It is further stated that if social network users have different cultural demographic characteristics, this will change their interaction and communication behaviors on online environment (Cho, 2010). This being the case, on one hand social networks' authentic nature, while on the other hand Individuals' perception of innovation and change of forms of interaction with respect to cultures require a comparison study among cultures. Analysis of intercultural comparison of social networks will both enable the explanation of social networks' adoption process and theories and models in the review of literature.

From this point of view, the purpose of this study was to adapt the “Social Networks Adoption Scale” (Usluel and Mazman, 2009) into English while providing validity and reliability. When developing the scale, the existing models and theories were examined and the structural, individual and social properties were noted; therefore, it could be stated that the items in the scale were then developed relevantly.

2. Method

2.1. Sample

Conventional sampling method was used, taking into account any sampling criteria (Fraenkel et al., 2012). The sample consisted of 109 Facebook users from United States of America, Germany, Turkey, and Canada. All of the participants were those who studied or were proficient in English. Since the participants of the original scale study were Facebook users, the data were obtained from Facebook users in this study as well.

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