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The flipside of ubiquitous connectivity enabled by smartphone-based social networking service: Social presence and privacy concern[☆]Sujeong Choi^{*}

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ABSTRACT

The spread of smartphones triggers the universal use of smartphone-based social networking services (SNS) by satisfying users' needs for maintaining seamless, constant connection and developing intimate relationships with others, such as family, friends, and acquaintances. Under the circumstances, this study examines the consequences of ubiquitous connectivity, considering that it is a typical characteristic of mobile technologies. More specifically, this study addresses both sides of ubiquitous connectivity due to smartphone-based SNS namely, social presence and privacy concern. Furthermore, the study verifies the role of enjoyment which has been argued as a key determinant of the continued use of hedonic IS. The results show that first, ubiquitous connectivity increases social presence and privacy concern simultaneously. Second, enjoyment derives from not only ubiquitous connectivity but also social presence and privacy concern. Finally, smartphone-based SNS continuance intention is determined by enjoyment, social presence, and privacy concern. Discussion and implications on the results are presented.

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1. Introduction

Along with the rapid spread of smartphones, smartphone-based social networking service (SNS) has penetrated into our daily lives by allowing people to maintain close and intimate relationships with others as well as to keep in touch with each other anytime and anywhere. According to a survey conducted by Korea Internet & Security Agency (KISA, 2014a), six-in-ten Internet users are using SNS. It appears that 95 percent of SNS users are using profile-based SNS (e.g., Facebook and KakaoStory) which refers to the SNS type composed of a main page and sub-pages displaying their personal information, such as pictures and interests. Besides, 94.2 percent of users access SNS by means of smartphones. According to SNS use by age, users in their twenties represent the largest portion at 87.8 percent, followed by those in their thirties at 77.4 percent and those in their forties at 59.1 percent. In this sense, this study uses the term smartphone-based SNS as distinguished from online SNS based on desktop computers, focusing on users in their twenties and thirties.

Another annual report demonstrates that the main purpose of using smartphone-based SNS is to communicate with and share their daily lives with family, friends, and acquaintances (KISA, 2014b). It is also reported that the most popular smartphone-based SNS in Korea is KakaoStory, which is now integrated into KakaoTalk (namely, the free mobile instant messaging service) (KISA, 2014b). Kakao Corporation launched KakaoTalk in 2010 and then released KakaoStory in 2012, recognizing the need of users to share their own personal information along with pictures by using smartphones. KakaoStory enables users to easily upload short messages, photos, and video clips to their SNS account. Likewise, smartphone-based SNS is widely used as a platform to connect people irrespective of time and place.

Under the circumstances, this study aims to address the main value that people seek to obtain from using smartphone-based SNS, which leads to their continued use. That is, it is possible to induce users' continued use of smartphone-based SNS by satisfying the key value that they pursue. Generally, smartphone-based SNS is regarded as a typical hedonic IS consumption, pursuing enjoyment (i.e., fun and pleasure) in the process of IS use rather than pursuing utilitarian purposes. In the context of hedonic IS use, previous research has underlined that enjoyment is a key determinant of users' attitudes and behaviors of the IS (Lin & Lu, 2011; van der Heijden, 2004). Many studies have verified that enjoyment is positively associated with individuals' adoption, use, and continued

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use of hedonic IS (Barnes, 2011; Choi, 2012, 2013; Turel, Serenko, & Giles, 2011, 2010; Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012). In line with this idea, this study examines enjoyment a main value of smartphone-based SNS use and its effect on continuance intention.

Indeed, there is no doubt that enjoyment is a key predictor of user behavior in the context of hedonic IS use and its continued use. However, little is known about what factors could be the sources of enjoyment. For example, although Venkatesh et al. (2012) have newly included hedonic motivation (i.e., enjoyment) as a determinant of behavioral intention and use behavior, there is no discussion about the factors leading to enjoyment. Hence, there is a need to develop a better understanding of the factors that cause users' enjoyment in the context of smartphone-based SNS use.

Considering that smartphone-based SNS is characterized by mobile technologies, this study proposes ubiquitous connectivity as a main source of creating enjoyment. Ubiquitous connectivity is proposed as a key feature of mobile technologies, explaining that people can use mobile service without time and place limits (Lee, Park, Chung, & Blakeney, 2012). Ubiquitous connectivity enabled by smartphone-based SNS allows people to maintain seamless, constant and synchronized connection with family, friends, and acquaintances, which is reported as the main purpose of using the SNS. It is noteworthy that the mobile characteristic of smartphones enables people to be constantly connected with others around the clock. In this regard, it is expected that ubiquitous connectivity can be a fundamental source of enjoyment by satisfying the needs of being together anytime and anywhere.

Furthermore, given that people are constantly connected with others through smartphone-based SNS, it is necessary to understand both positive and negative consequences resulting from such ubiquitous connectivity. Recognizing this, the current study considers both sides caused by ubiquitous connectivity and verifies their effects on SNS continuance intention: social presence and privacy concern. On the positive side, ubiquitous connectivity enhances social presence which means the sense of "being together" psychologically (Animesh, Pinsonneault, Yang, & Oh, 2011). In other words, people feel as if they are together psychologically due to constant connection with others via SNS, despite the fact that they are in different places physically.

On the other hand, this study views privacy concern as a negative side of ubiquitous connectivity. Ubiquitous connectivity facilitates the exchange of personal information, which is inevitable to what extent for establishing an intimate relationship with others in the context of SNS use; however, it simultaneously causes the worry about an invasion of privacy (Animesh et al., 2011; Lowry, Cao, & Everard, 2011). Generally, when people join KakaoStory, their basic personal information such as ID, birth date, residence and the latest several pictures are automatically open to friends who are registered on their SNS. Such basic self-disclosure can generate more sensitive personal information of SNS users, such as their tendencies, social position and status, personal connections, daily life, and so on (Nosko, Wood, & Molema, 2010). SNS users are concerned about the disclosure of their personal information and frank opinion to unfriendly people whom they are reluctant to open it to. Besides, people who are unaccustomed to SNS functions are sharing many kinds of personal information for their carelessness. The risks of privacy invasion are extremely high because it is almost impossible to cease the spread of the information through social networks, once people upload their personal information on SNS voluntarily or by mistake (Nosko et al., 2010). Indeed, privacy concern is revealed as the number one reason to arouse the fatigue due to SNS use (SK Communications, 2013). It is an irony that through smartphone-based SNS, people are willing to be constantly connected with others and share their personal information in daily life to enhance their awareness in a virtual world, despite a

high risk of the personal information leakage (Lowry et al., 2011). It seems to be both sides of the same coin. That is, as long as people are connected via smartphone-based SNS, they can hardly be free from the worry about privacy invasion. It is unavoidable releasing personal information in order to use smartphone-based SNS. Therefore, it is expected that although ubiquitous connectivity promotes people to perceive the sense of being together psychologically, it inevitably arouses concerns about an invasion of privacy at the same time (Lowry et al., 2011). Therefore, it is important to simultaneously understand both positive and negative consequences of ubiquitous connectivity enabled by the use of smartphone-based SNS.

In a nutshell, the main objectives of this study are as follows: first, the study examines ubiquitous connectivity and its positive and negative consequences: social presence and privacy concern. Second, this study identifies main sources of enjoyment including ubiquitous connectivity, social presence, and privacy concern. Finally, this study verifies key determinants of continued intention to use smartphone-based SNS.

2. Theory and hypotheses

2.1. Hedonic IS use: enjoyment

To explain why people adopt, use and further continue to using IS, Davis (1989) suggests technology acceptance model (TAM) in which includes usefulness and ease of use as key determinants of user behavior. Given that TAM reflects the context of using IS for utilitarian purposes (e.g., accomplishing tasks), there is a limitation in explaining the phenomenon of using IS only for fun or pleasure (van der Heijden, 2004). In this regard, researchers have started to distinguish hedonic IS use (i.e., referring to intrinsic motivation) from utilitarian IS use (i.e., referring to extrinsic motivation), recognizing that people seek to obtain fun and pleasure in the process of using IS in itself, rather than seeking to accomplish tasks or enhance individual/organizational performance (van der Heijden, 2004). It is generally argued that hedonic motivation is an important utility that users aim to obtain from using IS (Nysveen, Pedersen, & Thorbjørnsen, 2005; van der Heijden, 2004).

In terms of intrinsic fun and pleasures created in the process of using IS, van der Heijden (2004) conceptualized as 'perceived enjoyment' and asserted that it is the more robust variable in predicting users' IT-related behaviors than usefulness and ease of use in TAM. Subsequently, many researchers have verified that enjoyment is a key determinant of user behavior in the various contexts of hedonic IS use (Choi, 2012, 2013; Lee, 2011; Nysveen et al., 2005; Turel et al., 2011, 2010; Venkatesh et al., 2012). More specifically, it is proven that enjoyment increases the continued intention to use interactive media services including mobile chatting via mobile devices as well as online chatting via desktop computers (Nysveen et al., 2005). Besides, it is verified that enjoyment is the most influential variable in predicting people's behavioral intention and actual use in the context of a hedonic IS use, such as digital artifacts (Turel, Serenko, & Bontis, 2010) and Second Life (Barnes, 2011). Venkatesh et al. (2012) additionally included hedonic motivation (i.e., enjoyment) in UTAUT2 (unified theory of acceptance and use of technology) which is the updated version of UTAUT suggested by Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, and Davis (2003), reflecting the hedonic facet of IS use. That is, UTAUT is proposed in the context of workplace pursuing higher performance, whereas UTAUT 2 is suggested in the context of mobile internet use pursuing hedonic motivation. Therefore, it can be said that enjoyment is a key factor in determining users' attitudes and behaviors, particularly in the context of hedonic IS use (Turel et al., 2010; van der Heijden, 2004). In this sense, this study assumes that

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