EXPLORATION OF THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE ADOPTION OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES BY GENERATION Y IN CHILE

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper is to study the adoption of social networking services (SNS) for a sample of members belonging to the Generation Y in Chile. The study used an adapted technology acceptance model (TAM) to measure the acceptance and use of SNS of the 173 respondents (111 women and 62 men). The basic TAM was enhanced with three antecedents of perceived usefulness: social identity, telepresence and altruism. Structural equation modeling has been applied to test the proposed model. Results show that a version of TAM model explains the adoption of SNS by Generation Y in Chile.

Generation Y is considered to be a pioneer population with regards to new technologies, Internet or social networking services (SNS). These young people have been at the cutting edge of information technology (IT) services for two decades. To know how this generation adopts and acts in relation to the challenges of Web 2.0 and SNS is quite relevant in order to analyze the future development of these ITs. They integrate the biggest segment of SNS users and their study will guide managers' decisions for IT firms.

In short, the main objective of this paper is to study the adoption of SNS for a sample of members of Generation Y from Chile. In addition, two sub-objectives that drive the main one are: 1) to test a model based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) of SNS in Generation Y, and 2) to evaluate the influence of personal features that may define Generation Y, such as telepresence, altruism and social identity and their relationship with the adoption of technology.

Literature Review

Generation Y

The field of marketing has used the theory of generations for the analysis of consumers through the characterization of the generations identified since 1900 and based it in cohorts of 20 years, known as G1, the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and for people born from 2003 onwards, Generation Z. Each generation is stereotyped with a range of attitudinal and behavioral characteristics, based on research and experience in developed countries (Baum, 2011). In this context, Generation Y represents those born between 1978 and 1994 (Sheahan, 2005).

Ten years ago, Generation Y was considered a young market, resistant to advertising efforts. For example, in a sample of college students, the results of Wolburg and Pokrywczynski (2001) indicated that depictions in movies and television are rated significantly better than depictions in advertising. Nowadays, generational differences at work are small, at least with regard to work attitudes. Com-

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pared to members of Generation Baby Boomers and Generation X, members of Generation Y reported higher levels of overall company and job satisfaction, satisfaction with job security, recognition, and career development and advancement; however, they reported similar levels of satisfaction with pay and benefits, and the work itself and turnover intentions (Kowske *et al*., 2010).

The literature on how to manage Generation Y is very limited. Nevertheless, some authors propse some features of this generation. Costello *et al*. (2004) indicate that Generation Y prefers active or kinesthetic learning environments. Crampton and Hodge (2009) indicate that the members of Generation Y are mostly educated, well-traveled, less outcome focused, have a sense of morality and civic duty, believe that making a lot of money is less important, that their contributions to society and their role as parents are equally important, believe that a job is a contract, not a calling (work to live as opposed to live to work), seem to lack interpersonal skills, tend to lack patience, and are easily bored. Rondán-Cataluña and Martín-Ruiz (2010) indicate that Generation Y is more likely to believe that downloading music from P2P networks is less illegal.

Researchers agree that members of Generation Y are technologically savvy and they are more involved in purchase behavior over the Internet. Nusair *et al*. (2011) indicate that the Internet is considered a major player in the lives of Generation Y across the entire globe. Generation Y uses the Internet for a variety of activities including text messaging, social networks, podcasts, and blogs.

User acceptance of social networking services

Social networking services. SNS are defined as web-based services that enable individuals to build a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). Bagozzi (2007) argued that great part of human behavior is not best explained by an individual acting in isolation. In particular, the decision to use SNS represents a social phenomenon that depends largely on the interactions between users and the use of social technologies, and may make sense only when a group of individuals is willing to use and keep using the technology together (Cheung and Lee, 2010).

Technology acceptance model. Proposed by Fred Davis (1989), TAM explains the process of acceptance of information technology at the individual level. TAM posits that an individual's behavioral intention to use IT is determined by the perceived usefulness and ease of use. At the same time, perceived ease of use directly impacts perceived usefulness. Since then, several revisions and expansions have developed from the original model, including intrinsic and extrinsic factors. The most popular developments have been TAM2 (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000) and TAM3 (Venkatesh and Bala, 2008).

The TAM model has been widely used, revised and expanded in the literature (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000; Venkatesh and Morris, 2000; Venkatesh and Bala, 2008) and in particular in a Web 2.0 context (Ong and Lai, 2006; Kim *et al*., 2008; Arenas-Gaitan *et al*., 2011; Muñoz-Leiva *et al*., 2012;). Below, we focus on testing the SNS as novel systems by extending the conventional TAM with the new perceived constructs: social identity, altruism, and telepresence.

Social identity. Social identity has been proposed as a factor affecting the use of a particular technology in virtual communities (Casalo *et al*., 2010; Cheung and Lee, 2010; Kwon and Wen, 2010; Lee *et al*., 2010, 2011; Sombutpibool, 2011). In the SNS context, social identity is a positive perception of belonging to a community where people are motivated to interact socially with others, and this has a positive impact on both their intentions to use SNS (Cheung and Lee, 2010; Sombutpibool, 2011) and their usage of SNS (Lee *et al*., 2011).

Social Identity Theory has been used in the field of technology (Casalo *et al*., 2010). Previous research uses this theory to explain how a person identifies with others (Akkinen, 2005). Overall, the theory proposes that people develop a sense of self from the groups to which they belong (Hung *et al*., 2011) and a collective identity that contrasts with other identities in which the individual is unique and separate (Bhattacharya *et al*., 1995). Social identity of individuals in relation to their social group is characterized by three elements: group solidarity, conformity to internal rules, and discrimination against outgroups (Riedlinger *et al*., 2004). Social identity implies that the person believes that he or she belongs to a certain social group and that this membership has significant value (Tajfel *et al*., 1971; Hogg and Terry, 2000). As a result, a sense of unity among group members is developed.

Different from personal identity, social identity means the individual's position in a social group (Gecas *et al*., 1973). Strong social identity is known to be an important variable for self-goal setting. Social identity helps those with low self-esteem establish self-conception and also helps to avoid low goal-setting (Festinger, 1954; Baumeister, 1993; Brockner *et al*., 1998). Individuals with a higher social identity tend to perceive their groups in ways that distinguish themselves positively from external groups; these individuals prefer a group that provides them with a positive self-image.

The above implies that social identity may influence the perceived usefulness of SNS (Kwon and Wen, 2010). For example, a friend plans to use an SNS to call a reunion event. However, the use of an SNS is dependent on whether other friends are willing to use it. In addition, their usage experiences will create a norm for them to continuously use it for their other reunion events. Thus, it would be more appropriate to examine the decision to use online social networks using the intentional social action perspective (Cheung and Lee, 2010).

Altruism. Trivers (1971) explained that "altruistic behavior can be defined as behavior that benefits another organism, not closely related, while being apparently detrimental to the organism performing the behavior, benefit and detriment being defined in terms of contribution to inclusive fitness". Previous research indicates that altruism can be classified into two types: kin altruism and reciprocal altruism.

Kin altruism benefits a genetic relative's chances of survival or reproduction, at the expense of one's own chances. Kin altruism is frequently observed in nature. Hamilton (1964) indicated that the degree of relationship is an important parameter in predicting altruistic behavior, and this could be explained in terms of natural selection: altruis-

tic behaviors arose from shared heritable variation.

Another mechanism for producing altruism is establishing trust between pairs of individuals who reciprocally help each other. This mechanism is named reciprocal altruism. In essence, it is an effort to explain the evolution of altruism among individuals who are not related. Specifically, reciprocal altruism is to help other individuals based on the belief that individuals who benefited will return such support in the future. Trivers (1971) suggests that reciprocal altruism can be selected even when the recipient is so distantly related to the organism performing the altruistic act that kin selection can be ruled out.

In information technology context, since altruistic people are willing to share knowledge to help others (Wasko and Faraj, 2005), altruism has been found as an important antecedent of use for certain types of information technologies related to knowledge. For examples, Lu and Hsu (2008) indicated that altruism is positively related to user attitudes towards answering questions in a Web 2.0 knowledge community. In addition, Prasarnphanich and Wagner (2009) identified altruism as a key success factor in the production processes of contents on Web 2.0. Finally, Hung *et al*. (2011) indicated that altruism is a relevant antecedent of perceived ease of use of an electronic knowledge repository.

In a SNS context, users can perform the two types of altruism and their altruistic behavior can positively affect the perceived usefulness of the system (Kwon and Wen, 2010).

Telepresence. Minsky (1980) coined the term telepresence to emphasize the possibility that individuals could feel the sense of being physically transported to a remote work place via teleoperation systems. Since then, several authors have referred to telepresence in order to explain the sense of being transported by technology (Sukoco and Wu, 2011). Steuer (1992) explains that presence is the direct experience of reality and telepresence is the simulated perception of direct experience. Kim and Biocca (1997) indicated that the concept of telepresence means that the individual feels like he is located in a remote place from where he currently is. In other words, telepresence describes the compelling sense of being present in a virtual environment.

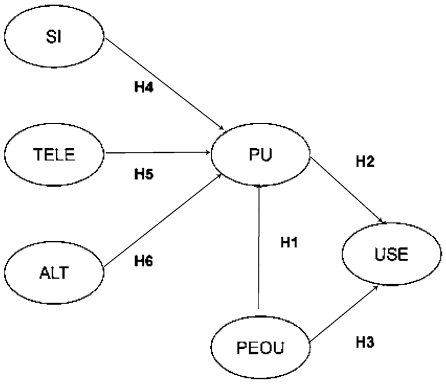

Figure 1. Proposed model. SI: social identity, TELE: telepresence, ALT: altruism, PU: perceived usefulness, PEOU: perceived ease of use, USE: utilization of social networking services.

According to Steuer (1992), telepresence has two determinants, interactivity and media richness. The author defines interactivity as "the extent to which a user can participate in modifying the form and content of a mediated environment in real time", and media richness as "the representational richness of a mediated environment's formal features; that is, the way in which an environment presents information to the senses". Later, studies supported this affirmation empirically (Sukoco and Wu, 2011).

In an Internet context, telepresence has been used both as a factor for the effectiveness of online advertisements (Klein, 2003; Sukoco and Wu, 2011) and as a factor with a positive effect on perceived usefulness of SNS (Kwon and Wen, 2010; Sombutpibool, 2011).

Research Model

Figure 1 illustrates the research model based on the techonology acceptancve model (TAM), which relates the constructs of perceived usefulness (PU), perceived ease of use (PEOU) and utilization (USE) of social networking services (SNS). This TAM model is enriched with three constructs of perceived use: social identity, telepresence and altruism.

The TAM model has been used successfully in a range of contexts (Venkatesh and Morris, 2000) and particularly in a Web context (Kim *et al*., 2008; Arenas-Gaitan *et al*., 2011; Muñoz-Leiva *et al*., 2012). Recently, some studies have used TAM in a SNS context (Cha, 2009; Kwon and Wen, 2010; Lee *et al*., 2011; Lorenzo-Romero *et al*., 2011; Sombutpibool, 2011). Based on these previous studies and considering the importance of contributing with new empirical data in a SNS context, and specifically on Generation Y, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: PEOU is positively related to PU in adopting SNS by Generation Y.

H2: PU is positively related to USE in adopting SNS by Generation Y.

H3: PEOU is positively related to USE in adopting SNS by Generation Y.

Previous studies suggest that social identity (SI) has a positive impact on intentions to use SNS (Cheung and Lee, 2010; Sombutpibool, 2011) and using SNS (Lee *et al*., 2011). In particular, SI is positively related to PU of SNS (Kwon and Wen, 2010). Besides, prior studies indicate that telepresence (TELE) has a positive effect on PU of SNS (Kwon and Wen, 2010; Sombutpibool, 2011). Furthermore, altruism (ALT) has been found as an important antecedent on the use of certain types of IT related to knowledge (Prasarnphanich and Wagner, 2009; Hung *et al*., 2011). Consequently, it has been suggested that ALT has a positive impact on PU of SNS (Kwon and Wen, 2010). Based on these results, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: SI is positively related to PU in adopting SNS by Generation Y.

H5: TELE is positively related to PU in adopting SNS by Generation Y.

H6: ALT is positively related to PU in adopting SNS by Generation Y.

Materials and Methods

The empirical research is based on a non-probabilistic and self-selection sampling method; therefore it is a convenience sample. Specifically, the data was collected in Chile from a sample of on-line questionnaires from January 14th, 2011 to March 15th, 2011. The exclusion of invalid questionnaires due to duplications or empty fields provided a final sample size of 173 SNS users who belong to Generation Y. Of the final sample, 111 respondents were women (64.2%) and 62 men (35.8%). The average ages of women and men interviewees were 21.9 (SD= 3.8) and 21.4 (SD= 3.2) years old, respectively. The major-

TABLE I
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Latent variable	Global mean	Indicator	Mean	SD
ALT	6.2367	ALT1	6.0867	1.0391
		ALT2	6.2659	0.9079
		ALT3	6.3584	0.9818
PEOU	6.2045	PEOU1	6.3353	0.8232
		PEOU2	6.0694	0.8995
		PEOU3	6.1676	0.9343
		PEOU4	6.2543	0.8983
PU	6.1435	PU1	6.1792	1.1449
		PU2	5.9422	1.3150
		PU3	6.3931	0.9378
		PU4	6.0925	1.1323
SI	5.0947	SI1	4.7399	1.6018
		SI2	5.4971	1.2038
		SI3	5.0578	1.5764
TELE	4.4896	TELE1	4.2832	1.6898
		TELE2	5.3468	1.4451
		TELE3	3.8035	1.7609
		TELE4	2.6821	1.7971
USE	5.3220	USE1	6.0058	1.5039
		USE2	5.2659	1.7182
		USE3	4.7110	1.8732

ALT: altruism, PEOU: perceived ease of use, PU: perceived usefulness, SI: social identity, TELE: telepresence, USE: utilization of social networking services.

ity (91.9%) of respondents had tertiary education.

The applied measurement scales have been tested in other studies. Specifically, to measure TAM constructs the scales proposed by Venkatesh and Bala (2008) have been adapted, and to measure SI, TELE and ALT the scales proposed by Kwon and Wen (2010) have been adapted. In all cases, a 7-point Likert-scale was employed.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis using analysis of moment structures (AMOS; Arbuckle, 1994) was used to test the proposed research model.

Results

Results of the descriptive statistics are shown in Table I. As a previous step to the structural model analysis it is necessary to analyze reliability and validity of the measurement model. We conducted both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Table II shows the six components obtained from EFA that explained 73.35% of the total variance.CFA was applied to test the adequacy of the measurement model. Reliability was evaluated by examining individual loads (λ) of the measures with their respective latent variables; indicators with $\lambda \geq 0.5$ were accepted. Cronbach's α coefficient was used as the reliability index of the latent variables. In addition, composite reliability was calculated. The convergent validity of latent variables was assessed by examining the average variance extracted (AVE; Table III) and variables with AVE>0.5 were accepted (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity of latent variables was tested by analyzing whether the square root of AVE of each one was greater than the correlations with the remaining latent variables; Table IV shows the results obtained.

Finally, path analysis was run in AMOS to test the hypotheses. Figure 2 shows results of the model. The ratio χ^2/degrees of freedom of 2.5 and other goodness-of-fit statistics (GF= 0.862, AGFI= 0.823, CFI= 0.906, NFI= 0.854, and RMSEA= 0.076) indicated an appropriate goodness of fit of the predicted model. Based on these results hypotheses H1, H2, H4 and H5 are accepted. However, hypotheses H3 and H6 are not supported because the relationships hypothesized were not statistically significant.

TABLE III
CRONBACH'S α, AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED (AVE) AND COMPOSITE RELIABILITY

Latent variable	Cronbach's α	AVE	Composite reliability
ALT	0.8898	0.8173	0.9305
PEOU	0.8626	0.7049	0.9050
PU	0.8080	0.6350	0.8741
IS	0.8445	0.7618	0.9056
TELE	0.7658	0.5769	0.8446
USE	0.9093	0.8454	0.9425

ALT: altruism, PEOU: perceived ease of use, PU: perceived usefulness, SI: social identity, TELE: telepresence, USE: utilization of social networking services.

TABLE II
RESULTS FROM PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS

Indicators	ALT	PEOU	PU	SI	TELE	USE
ALT1	0.8397	0.0413	-0.0192	0.2040	0.1131	0.0525
ALT2	0.9095	0.0143	0.1712	0.1016	0.0990	0.0366
ALT3	0.8808	0.0305	0.1619	0.0492	0.1086	-0.0499
PEOU1	0.1248	0.7653	-0.0113	0.0052	-0.0021	0.3286
PEOU2	-0.0148	0.8550	0.1293	0.0397	0.0256	0.0290
PEOU3	0.0657	0.8960	0.0578	-0.0165	0.0229	0.0828
PEOU4	-0.0559	0.8055	0.1017	0.1634	0.0715	-0.0782
PU1	0.0939	0.1352	0.6462	0.1304	0.0958	0.3251
PU2	-0.0513	-0.0184	0.8025	0.1797	0.0676	0.1268
PU3	0.2335	0.0812	0.8177	0.0586	0.0133	0.1818
PU4	0.1099	0.1277	0.7131	0.1434	0.1478	0.1069
SI1	0.0184	0.0771	0.1908	0.7798	0.1208	0.1680
SI2	0.2417	0.0933	0.2109	0.7862	0.0691	0.1889
SI3	0.1547	0.0198	0.0868	0.8850	0.0580	0.1281
TELE1	0.1159	0.0087	0.1746	0.1525	0.6866	0.1068
TELE2	0.2607	0.0450	0.0743	0.1357	0.7087	0.0361
TELE3	0.0817	0.0832	0.0357	-0.0404	0.7998	0.0468
TELE4	-0.0873	-0.0227	0.0215	0.0286	0.7908	0.1662
USE1	0.0550	0.1487	0.3650	0.0835	0.1355	0.8187
USE2	0.0268	0.0563	0.1990	0.1779	0.1426	0.8958
USE3	-0.0570	0.1029	0.2091	0.3503	0.1617	0.7776

Discussion

Three main contributions of this study are highlighted. Firstly, a version of TAM model to explain the adoption of SNS by Generation Y has been successfully used, including dimensions that are more focused on the social interactivity of SNS.

Secondly, the finding of a strong and significant relationship in members of Generation Y between telepresence and perceived usefulness of SNS is remarkable. This can be interpreted as: the more interactivity and media richness, the more users' perception of utility.

TABLE IV
DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY *

	ALT	PEOU	PU	SI	TELE	USE
ALT	0.9040					
PEOU	0.0948	0.8396				
PU	0.2768	0.2267	0.7969			
SI	0.3058	0.1740	0.4117	0.8728		
TELE	0.2756	0.1038	0.2738	0.2623	0.7595	
USE	0.1122	0.2693	0.5398	0.4410	0.3165	0.9195

* The square root of AVE in the diagonal and correlations between constructs below the diagonal.
ALT: altruism, PEOU: perceived ease of use, PU: perceived usefulness, SI: social identity, TELE: telepresence, USE: utilization of social networking services.

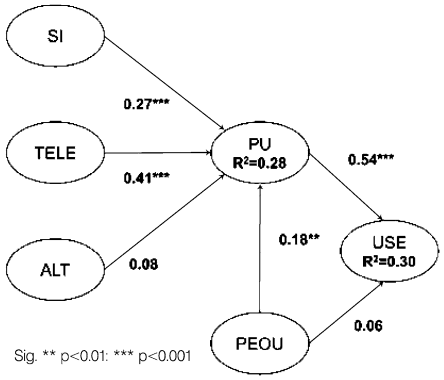

Figure 2. AMOS results. SI: social identity, TELE: telepresence, ALT: altruism, PU: perceived usefulness, PEOU: perceived ease of use, USE: utilization of social networking services.

Thirdly, a significant relationship between social identity and perceived usefulness was found, indicating an attitudinal characteristic of Generation Y to use Web 2.0. If members of Generation Y conceive the use of SNS as a way of belonging to a community where people are motivated to interact socially with others, they will show a higher perception of usefulness of its technology.

Considering that young people belonging to Generation Y have been at the vanguard of IT services over the past two decades and in the near future will remain a very important group of consumers of such technology, the following are two implications of this study.

Firstly, Generation Y prefers telepresence. Telepresence, in accordance with previous studies in age heterogeneous samples (Kwon and Wen, 2010; Sombutpibool, 2011), has a positive effect on the perceived usefulness of a SNS by members belonging to Generation Y. Study findings support the conclusions of consulters that indicate the fact that telepresence is one of the opportunities for growth in services aimed towards young people.

Secondly, Generation Y is solidary. Members of Generation Y believe that their contribution to society is important. Study findings support this idea in SNS context; altruism and social identity (which includes group solidarity) are the exogenous variables most highly valued by respondents (see Table I). Therefore, we believe that this sense of solidarity can be an important clue to explore in future studies on the behavior of this generation.

This study has some limitations that guide future work. First, the validation of results requires a larger sample of individuals. Second, the use of a non-probabilistic sampling method limits the generalization of findings. Third, the study is cross sectional, a longitudinal study would be advisable to compare the different stages of the adoption of SNS.

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EXPLORACIÓN DE LOS FACTORES QUE AFECTAN A LA ADOPCIÓN DE LOS SERVICIOS DE REDES SOCIALES POR LA GENERACIÓN Y EN CHILE

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RESUMEN

El propósito de este trabajo es estudiar la adopción de los servicios de redes sociales (SRS) en una muestra de miembros pertenecientes a la Generación Y en Chile. El estudio utilizó una adaptación del modelo de aceptación de tecnología (TAM) para medir la aceptación y el uso de los SRS en 173 encuestados (111 mujeres y 62 hombres). El modelo TAM básico fue enriquecido con tres antecedentes de la utilidad percibida: identidad social, telepresencia, y altruismo. La técnica de modelado de ecuaciones estructurales se utilizo para probar el modelo propuesto. Los resultados muestran que la versión del modelo TAM explica la adopción de la SRS por la Generación Y en Chile.

EXPLORAÇÃO DOS FACTORES QUE AFETAM À ADOÇÃO DOS SERVIÇOS DE REDES SOCIAIS PELA GERAÇÃO Y NO CHILE

Patricio Ramírez-Correa, F. Javier Rondan-Cataluña e Jorge Arenas-Gaitán

RESUMO

O propósito deste trabalho é estudar a adoção dos serviços de redes sociais (SRS) em uma amostra de membros pertencentes à Geração Y no Chile. O estudo utilizou uma adaptação do modelo de aceitação de tecnologia (TAM) para medir a aceitação e o uso dos SRS em 173 entrevistados (111 mulheres e 62 homens). O modelo TAM básico foi enriquecido com três antecedentes da utilidade percebida: identidade social, telepresença, e altruísmo. A técnica de modelagem de equações estruturais foi utilizada para provar o modelo proposto. Os resultados mostram que a versão do modelo TAM explica a adoção da SRS pela Geração Y no Chile.