

Master's Thesis

**Social Media and Thai Baby Boomers:
Focus on Needs Satisfied by Social Media Usage**

by

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Certification of Originality

I, **Sirikarn Thongpithukwong**, confirm that this thesis is my own original work. Any information used in this thesis that derived from other's journal has been cited appropriately.

Sirikarn Thongpithukwong

29 November 2016

Acknowledgements

I don't know when my mom, my aunts, my uncles and people age 50 up around me start using social media. When I realized, they have been my friends in social media such as Line and Facebook already. This situation leads me to be curious that why people who I think that they are not interested in any technologies to start using social media.

As MBA student, I think that the relationship of baby boomers and social media are the interesting topic that reflects the current situation in this era. So I would like to thank APU for a chance to study this issue.

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Abstract

Nowadays, the internet is widely used in global, especially social media. Many people think that technology is only used for young people, but we can see the number of elderly internet users is increasing significantly. In future decades, Thai will experience a surge in elderly people that lead to being an aging society. Therefore, social media and baby boomer, people who were born during the year 1946 to 1964, are the interesting issues in this era.

This research studies about the relationship of Thai baby boomers and social media by focusing on needs satisfied by social media usage. In order to find out the reason of using social media, to understand their behaviors and to identify which needs satisfied by social media usage. Hence, uses and gratification theory and hierarchy of needs theory are adopted as the conceptual framework of this study. Besides, qualitative methodology is appropriate to apply in this research by using semi-structured interviews method to collect data.

The results indicate that firstly, belonging needs is a majority to contribute Thai baby boomers to start using social media, follows by safety needs. Secondly, Line and Facebook application are used to satisfy their needs. Thirdly, social media can be increased and decreased the level of gratification at the same time. Fourthly, belonging needs, safety needs and physiological needs of Thai baby boomers are satisfied by using social media.

Although needs of Thai baby boomer are satisfied by using social media, most of them also concern about the disadvantage point of social media.

Keywords: Social media, Internet, Technology, Baby boomers, Elderly, Uses and gratification, Hierarchy of needs, Thailand

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Digital overview in Thailand

The internet has become a necessary part of daily life. People use the internet for entertainment, education, socialization, e-commerce, etc. This situation is different from the past when people used the internet only for working as well as sending and receiving emails. The technology advancement allows everyone easy access to the internet. People can use the internet via smartphones, other devices and gadgets at affordable prices. Moreover, the Thai government recently introduced the “Digital Economy” policy to stimulate the Thai economy and society. At present, the behavior of Thais has changed because of technology development, particularly the spread of the internet. The objective of the policy is to develop fundamental communication structures to support good quality internet usage covering all areas at a reasonable price (Wayuphap, 2015).

In Thailand, the number of internet users continues to increase, especially the number of social media users. It ranks 9th in the world, similar to Germany, at 28 million people or about 42% of the total Thai population. Also, during 2013 to 2014, the number of users who spend time on social media such as Facebook and Instagram increased 53% and 13% respectively (it24hrs, 2014). Thais spend time on the internet at approximately 5.30 hours per day via computer PCs or tablets and spend more than 4 hours a day on mobile phones. Moreover, the average daily social media usage among Thai users are approximately 3.46 hours (Thai tech, 2015).

A research in 2015 by the Electronic Transactions Development Agency (ETDA) in the Thai Ministry of Information and Communication Technology reports that the top three popular activities for internet users in Thailand via mobile instruments such as smartphones or tablets are communicating via social media at 82.7%, searching information at 56.6% and following and reading news at 52.5% respectively (Wayuphap, 2015).

1.2 Internet usage behavior in Thai baby boomers

Thai digital media users aged between 50-65 years old have continuously increased since 2005 to 2010. The statistics increased around 22% for smartphones usage and from 13% to 25% for internet usage (Manager Online, 2011). Moreover, the average use of the internet in Thai baby boomers is approximately 32.5 hours per week. They use the internet through desktop computers at 68.1% and smartphones at 59.8%. The place to use the internet is at home 80.9%, at the office 68.9%, and during commuting at 19.7%. The most popular online activities via smartphones among Thai baby boomers are social network 63.5%, search for information 43.2% and send and receive emails at 29.8%. Furthermore, the most popular social media applications are Line 81.5 % and Facebook 75.6% respectively (Wayuphap, 2015).

Table 1: Devices for internet usage in Thai baby boomers	
Devices	Percentage
1. Desktop computer	68.9 %
2. Smartphones	59.8%

(Source: (Wayuphap, 2015))

Table 2: The place for internet usage in Thai baby boomers	
Place	Percentage
1. Home	80.9%
2. Office	68.9%
3. During commuting	19.7%

(Source: (Wayuphap, 2015))

Table 3: Activities for internet usage in Thai baby boomers	
Activities	Percentage
1. Social media	63.5%
2. Search for information	43.2%
3. Send – receive e-mails	29.8%

(Source: (Wayuphap, 2015))

Table 4: Most popular social media application among Thai baby boomers	
Application	Percentage
1. Line	81.5%
2. Facebook	75.6%

(Source: (Wayuphap, 2015))

1.3 Thai aging population

The Thai government official website reveals that in 2014, there are more than 10 million or approximately 15% of the total population aged over 60 years old in Thailand. Moreover, they expect that this figure will increase to 20% in 2021 and increase to 30% in 2034 (Royal Thai Government, 2016). Therefore, in future decades, Thailand will experience a surge in elderly people that leads to an aging society. The cause of this issue comes from medical development as death and birth rates have decreased. Also, nowadays women work outside of homes and emphasize on work rather than getting married. Therefore, the population structure is gradually changing (Sudsomboon, 2014).

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology reveals that one of the development strategies for the digital economy by the Thai government is creating a digital society. It aims to contribute to internet accessibility and utility for all Thais, especially for those in remote areas, elders and the handicapped. To reduce the gap in the society and increase the quality of life, information on education, health and lifestyle will be provided through digital services (Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, 2016).

1.4 Research Objectives

It has been shown in the above statement that Thai baby boomers use social media and that number is continuously increasing. With regards to this development, this research aims to:

1. Identify needs that Thai baby boomers seek to satisfy by social media usage.
2. Study the type of social media that Thai baby boomers use to satisfy their needs.

3. Examine gratification obtained from social media usage.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research studies the relationship between Thai baby boomers and social media. The purpose is to seek insights of social media usage, understand why Thai baby boomers use social media and find out what they do with social media. The results of this study will provide insights of Thai baby boomers to marketers, people who want to conduct business with Thai baby boomers and government policy makers.

Chapter 2: Literature Reviews and Conceptual Frameworks

2.1 Literature Reviews

2.1.1 Generational Theory

The Generational theory explains the different characteristics of each generation stating that each generation has its distinct mood influenced by the events or social mood that happened during their childhood years (Murray & Chua, 2014a). Moreover, Murphy et.al. (2010) explains that people are influenced by family, friends, schools and organizations as well as by the society, politics, historical events, media, music and, recently. It is the internet that reminds people of past experiences (Murray & Chua, 2014a). Crumpacker (2007) also has the same notion about the Generational theory that members of each generation are recognized as having shared a common awareness among their generation (as cited in Murphy et al., 2010). For example, older American generations are influenced by war experiences such as World War II, the Cold War, and Vietnam War. While, recent American generations may be influenced by the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre on September 11, 2001, in New York (Murphy et al., 2010).

Baby boomers in industrialized countries were the generation first introduced to television and advertising. It was a time of economic prosperity and security (Niemela-Nyrhinen, 2007). Thus, television continued to impact innovations and development (Szmigin & Carrigan, 2000) as well as values, attitudes, and preferences (Schewe & Noble, 2000). In Thailand, there were also important events impacting its generations. For example, the event during World War II rose nationalism in Thailand, events in the 60s and 70s during the Vietnam War caused Thailand to be intensively involved with

the United States, while globalization enormously impacted the events in the 70s' onward (Murphy et al., 2010). Therefore, disastrous events affect Thai generations who lived in that period (Murphy et al., 2010). Inglehart explains that *'many of these challenges take place as countries change from agricultural societies, move toward industrialization, become industrialized and then become postmodern societies. In fact, 'a person's total value system may undergo change as a result of socialization...cultural upheaval'* (in Murphy et al., 2010, p.547). Whereas, the disputed issue of generational theory is the range that each generation begins and ends. The precise year that separates the generations are still uncertain (Chandler, 2015).

2.1.2 Baby Boomers

Lancaster and Stillman (2002) mention that baby boomers are people who were born during 1946 to 1964 (as cited in Chandler, 2015), which was the result of World War II. As countries needed the economy to recover, the demand for services and goods increased. Industrially developed countries produced goods and materials for their countries and exported them. Therefore, as their economy was inflated and rapidly grew, more incomes allowed families to have more children. Consequently, during 1946 to 1964, the world population grew sharply (Roy, 2014). The concept of baby boom widely occurred in America, western and eastern countries as well as South East Asia. However, the cause and period may differ from country to country (Roy, 2014).

Baby boomers grew up during the social and cultural revolution which was the period of economic growth and peace; this caused them to become idealists (Murray & Chua, 2014b). Moreover, the report *Overcoming Generational Gap in the Workplace* by United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (2009) and Chandler (2015) explain about the

generational diversity in workplaces that client-oriented baby boomers use telephones to contact clients or co-workers. In the technology aspect, they use documents prepared by their associates, use e-mail primarily in the workplace and limit web usage (Chandler, 2015; United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, 2009).

Important terminal values and the ultimate modes of an idealized life in Thai baby boomers are accomplishments, family security, mature love, pleasure, and salvation. While the important instrument values and conduct mode to achieve terminal values in Thai baby boomers are honesty, loyalty, and responsibility. This information point out goals for Thai baby boomers are to “be treated equally, acquiring sexual and spiritual intimacy, having enjoyable and leisurely life and being safe” (Murphy et al., 2010, p.560). To accomplish the goals, they are “sincere, responsible and truthful, affectionate and tender, dedicated to their organization and are dutiful and respectful (Murphy et al., 2010, p.560).”

2.1.3 Baby Boomers and Technology

For technology products and services, traditional marketers focus on younger people as their target market (Silvers, 1997). This is due to the stereotype that 50-plus consumers seek stability and routines, non-innovative (Schiffman & Sherman, 1991) and lack the ability to learn new technologies, therefore, they are not considered by traditional marketers (Niemelä-Nyrhinen, 2007). Also, there is evidence that older people tend to have a higher level of computer anxiety when compared to younger people (Chua, Chen, & Wong, 1999).

Silvers argues that the above-mentioned stereotypes and image of 50-plus consumers have changed (Silvers, 1997) because of one important reason which is the

entrance of baby boomers to the mature market (as cited in Niemela-Nyrhinen, 2007). Young consumers are less emphasized as being the most important consumer because of the growing number of older people in the market (Carrigan & Szmigin, 1999). Nevertheless, research in Finland by Niemelä reveals that baby boomers are different from the traditional stereotypes when they have experienced various technologies such as SMS and the internet. Also, if they are in a group, they are not anxious technology users (Niemela-Nyrhinen, 2007).

2.1.4 Baby Boomers and Social Media Usage

Nadkarni & Hofmann states that the primary motivation leading people to use Facebook are belonging needs. This involves an internal drive to associate with other people and to become accepted by the society as well as needs for self-presentation which refers to “the continuous process of impression management” (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012, p.245). For older people, there are various reasons for social media usage.

The first motivation for elderly people to use social media is enjoyment (Nimrod, 2010). The second reason is to reduce loneliness because the online social network allows people to interact with others. The third reason is to seek information about their family members and acquaintances (Vošner et al., 2016c). Social media is an appropriate tool for elderly people to reconnect with people from the past (Madden, 2010) and “*social media bridges generation gaps,*” so it cements their relationship with people in different ages (Madden, 2010, p.7) such as their descendants. The fourth reason is to overcome fear and anxiety because social media provides elderly people with social support (Vošner et al., 2016b). The last reason is to seek health-related

information because elderly people are more concern about health than younger people (Madden, 2010). Moreover, social media are low-cost and user-friendly for elderly people. (Bo Xie et al., 2013).

Research in Thailand by Ractham and Techatassanasoontorn reveals that top 5 activities elder people use social media for “community, consumer, family, health, and work” to satisfy their overall life. They are least satisfied when social media are used to build new a relationship while younger people use social media to find new friends (Ractham & Techatassanasoontorn, 2014, p.9).

2.1.5 Hierarchy of Needs and Social Media

Normally, people satisfy their belonging needs by creating relationships with people that they know such as family members and friends. Nowadays, as technology spreads, particularly the internet and social network system, people start to nurture the long-distance relationship and form new relationships with someone whom they have never met (Özad & Uygarer, 2014). The Hierarchy of Needs aligns with communication when communicating is defined as insufficient or as an increase in needs (Maslow, Birsh, Stein, & Honigman, 1945 as cited in Kang & Jung, 2014). Insufficient needs are concerned with feelings of people for interpersonal dialogs. People use media or interpersonal contacts to satisfy their physiological and safety needs. Furthermore, when people communicate with others via media channels, belongingness, social relationships and love are fulfilled (Huizinga, 1970 as cited in Kang & Jung, 2014).

The concept of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and social networks are used to study social media users. Ellison et al. emphasize the significance of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and social network. They study the advantages of Facebook

application and social capital of students who have low gratification and low self-esteem (Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2006). Moreover, this concept is used to understand the effect of low self-esteem on the wish to connect with aliens (Acar, 2008).

2.2 Conceptual Framework

2.2.1 Social Media

Social media is communication, conveyance, collaboration, and cultivation among interconnected and independent networks of people, communities and organizations enhanced by technological disseminate capabilities and mobility (Tuten & Solomon, 2015). It provides an area where people who have similar interest gather together to discuss and exchange ideas. Moreover, social networks obviously represent the relationship between individual and groups in the society (Dunne, A., Lawlor, M. A., & Rowley, J., 2010).

2.2.1.1 The History of Social Media

Social media was built on the concept and technical foundations of Web 2.0 (Whiting & Williams, 2013) which is an online technology development that enables users to interact and exchange content (Tuten & Solomon, 2015). Moreover, Web 2.0 users can interact with services and applications in different situations and period (Tuten & Solomon, 2015). People can move from one-way communication (Web 1.0) to a 24/7 interactive social system (Web 2.0) (Tuten & Solomon, 2015). The first community website named “Open Diary,” a blogging website where people can publish

their diary online, occurred in 1998. It was where users can easily find their acquaintances (Dahl, 2015).

2.2.1.2 Social Media Zones

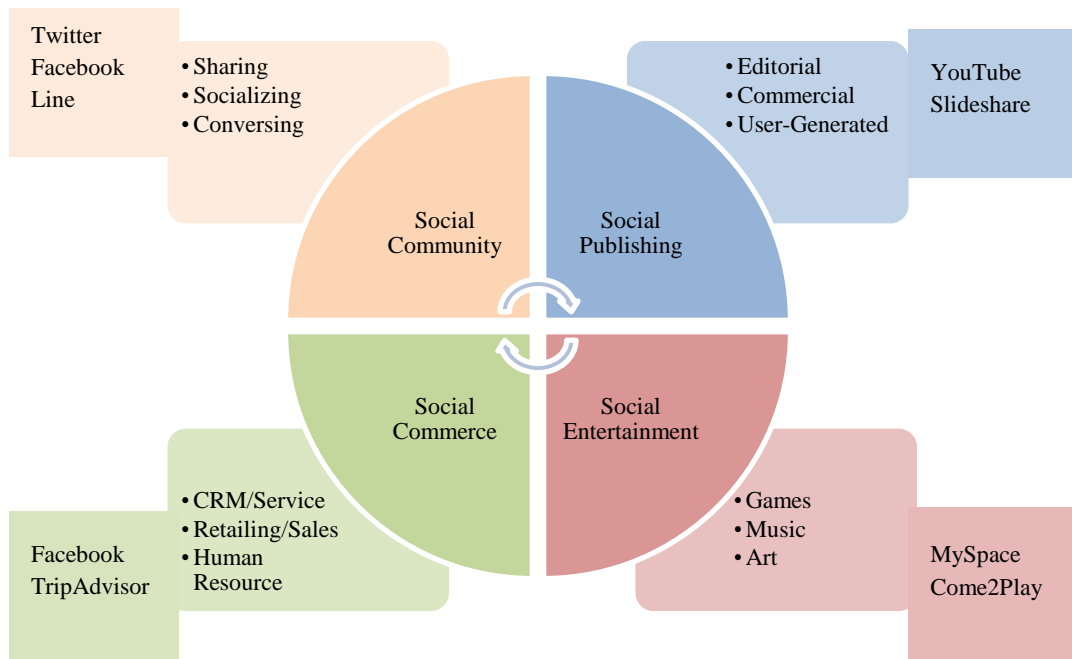


Figure 1: Social media zones

Source: Adapted from (Tuten & Solomon, 2013; Tuten & Solomon, 2015)

In figure 1, social media is classified into four zones, which are Social Community, Social Publishing, Social Entertainment and Social Commerce (Tuten & Solomon, 2013). Sometimes each area overlaps depending on its purpose (Tuten & Solomon, 2015). The different zones can be described as follows:

1. Social Community Zone focuses on relationships and everyday activities of people that participate with other people who are interested in the same thing. The main purpose of people who engage with the social community is to build and maintain relationships.

Channels often used in social community zone is social networking sites or SNS which are online host providing services. It is where people can contribute and retain their profile to identify themselves by focusing on personal communication and cooperating in the community, for example on Facebook and Twitter (Tuten & Solomon, 2013). Moreover, social networking sites are the fundamental structure of social media because social media is based on interaction among members in the community (Tuten & Solomon, 2015).

2. Social Publishing Zone is where people can disseminate their contents to other audiences. Obvious channels in the social publishing zone are blogs and media sharing sites. Blogs are websites that usually update contents such as texts, pictures or video files, which operate like an online magazine, online news source, and online diary. Blogs mostly update texts, but media sharing sites is used when people want to share videos, audio files, photos, and presentations, for example on YouTube, Flickr, and iTunes (Tuten & Solomon, 2013).
3. Social Entertainment Zone offers opportunities for people to play and enjoy. This zone includes social media games which provide the opportunity where people can interact with other players, virtual worlds where people participate as avatars and entertainment communities that provide social entertainment services (Tuten & Solomon, 2013).

4. Social Commerce Zone uses social media to support purchasing and selling product or services online. Reviews and ratings, deal sites, deal aggregators, social shopping markets and social storefronts are channels for this zone. Moreover, some organizations use features on Facebook which is the Fan Page to support the official online website (Tuten & Solomon, 2013).

2.2.1.3 Impulses Influencing Social Media Activities

Tuten & Solomon identify six impulses that are satisfied by social media (Tuten & Solomon, 2015).

1. Affinity Impulse: Users use social media to express their affinity with person and groups so users' affinity is responded when they can keep relationships with their old high school friends and create new relationships (Tuten & Solomon, 2015).
2. Personal Utility Impulse: For this impulse, people use social media for the personal impulse which are seeking information, entertainment, convenience and incentives (Tuten & Solomon, 2015).
3. Contact Comfort and Immediacy Impulse: Due to the natural human psychology, contact comfort and immediacy are needed. Therefore, people may feel anxious if they have not checked their Facebook (Tuten & Solomon, 2015).
4. Altruistic Impulse: Sometimes people use social media for immediate altruistic responses (IAR) (Tuten & Solomon, 2015). For example, they use it to help abandoned animals or to collect money for

donation. This impulse serves as a value-expressive function for people to express their beliefs through social media usage (Tuten & Solomon, 2015).

5. Curiosity Impulse: People response to their curiosity by following other people via social media such as on Twitter or visit other people's Facebook page (Tuten & Solomon, 2015).
6. Validation Impulse: By using social media, people can share as much personal data as they want and comment others as per their satisfaction. Therefore, validation impulse serves the ego-defensive function which is that "people seek to eliminate perceived external threats and eliminate self-doubts." (Tuten & Solomon, 2015) For example, users may post their picture on their Facebook page to show their superiority or Facebook users will check the feedback of their photos by the number of likes (Tuten & Solomon, 2015).

2.2.2 Uses and Gratification

2.2.2.1 Uses and Gratification Theory

The Uses and Gratification (U&G) theory is used to understand how and why people seek out particular media to satisfy specific needs (Bosch & Currin, 2015). This theory examines gratifications or benefits that attract and hold audiences to variety types of media and content that satisfy their social and psychological needs (O'Donohoe, 1994). In other words, people are motivated and active to find media to fulfill their needs or desires. Moreover, the U&G theory is used as an influential framework for

researchers to study and understand the impact of new media and audiences' engagement with contents (Ruggiero, 2000).

The theory was argued by Rubin that the simple assumption that consumers are active when using media is not enough. Intensive consideration should be applied to examine the specific motivations that contribute people to use media (Rubin, 1993 as cited in in Keppler, 2014). This theory defined the specific motivation as Gratifications Sought (GS) and Gratifications Obtained (GO) which examines the reason why people seek for certain media and whether those reasons were satisfied (Rubin, 1993 as cited in in Keppler, 2014). GS and GO frequently involve the Expectancy-Value theory and suggest that GS are based on GO. It states that, at first, media users use their experiences with specific media to forecast GO, then formulates GS accordingly (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985 as cited in Keppler, 2014). The Expectancy-Value theory is based on beliefs, probabilities, valued rewards and expectations while GO is the real outcome (Rubin, 1993 as cited in Keppler, 2014). Users will be satisfied when gratifications are obtained or customer experiences are higher than gratification sought or customer expectation (Gibbs et.al., 2014). Media consumers may have various motivations that simultaneously prompt media consumption at many levels. Nevertheless, GO can emerge through exposure to selected media, even if those GO are not the GS by the users (Keppler, 2014). In other words, sometimes gratification that occurred may not be the intended gratification of the customer.

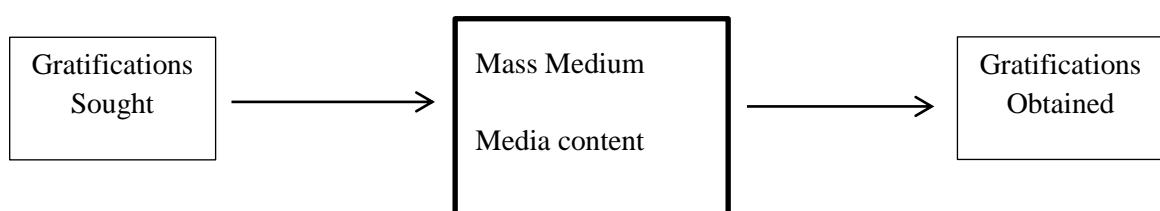


Figure 2: Gratifications Sought & Gratifications Obtained

Source: (Blumler & Katz, 1974)

Figure 2 shows that people use specific media or content in the media to satisfy certain needs (Blumler & Katz, 1974).

2.2.2.2 Uses & Gratification and Social Media

Uses and Gratification is most popularly used for theoretical applications, online surveys and methodologies (Kim & Weaver, 2002) to gain a better understanding of how people engage with social media such as Facebook and Twitter (as cited in Gibbs et al., 2014). Audiences use different types of social media to seek different types of gratification (Gibbs et al., 2014). People use Facebook as a place to share social information while they use instant messaging for intimacy (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010). Moreover, according to Gibbs et al., Twitter is used for seeking news and information whereas Facebook is used when it relates to social factors (Gibbs et al., 2014).

Whiting and Williams created seven common themes explaining the purpose of customer social media usage by focusing on four frameworks from works of Palmgreen and Rayburn (1979), Korgaonkar and Wolin (1999), Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) and Ko et al. (2005) (Whiting & Williams, 2013).

1. Social Interaction: The title of this theme comes from Ko et al.'s (2005) work on social interaction motivation and website duration (Ko, Chang-Hoan Cho, & Roberts, 2005). This theme explains that

people use social media to communicate with other people (Whiting & Williams, 2013).

2. Information Seeking: The title of this theme comes from Papacharissi and Rubin's (2000) work about information seeking and internet usage (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000). This theme explains that people use social media for seeking information and self-learning (Whiting & Williams, 2013).
3. Pastime: Social media is used to "occupy time and relieve boredom" (Whiting & Williams, 2013). This is defined by Palmgreen and Rayburn's (1979) work in a research, Uses and Gratifications for Television Viewing (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000).
4. Entertainment: Entertainment and enjoyment are also purposes for social media usage (Whiting & Williams, 2013).
5. Relaxation: According to Palmgreen and Rayburn, they view relaxation as one of the dimension in their Uses and Gratification theory for television viewing (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985) where people use social media to relieve stress (Whiting & Williams, 2013).
6. Communicatory Utility: Social media is used as a communication facility which supports information for communication instead of providing social interaction. For example, Facebook helps people create topics to talk to other people (Whiting & Williams, 2013).

7. Convenience Utility: Audiences use social media because it is convenient, for example, for online shopping (Korgaonkar & Wolin, 1999).

2.2.3 Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow created the concept of human needs as a hierarchy model in 1940 (Maslow, 1943 as cited in Kang & Jung, 2014). The Hierarchy of Needs consists of physiological needs as a fundamental element, followed by safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1954 as cited in Kang & Jung, 2014). When the basic needs are satisfied, the next needs in the hierarchy will emerge (Huizinga, 1970 as cited in Kang & Jung, 2014). For example, when physiological needs are fulfilled, safety needs become active for satisfaction.

Physiological needs include needs for food, water, shelter, clothing, etc. In other words, they are needs that nourish the organism and provide comfort and pleasure (Maslow, 1954 as cited in Kang & Jung, 2014). Safety needs are the needs of being financially and physically protected. Moreover, belongingness and love needs will be satisfied when people encounter love, affection, and belongingness from relationships such as friendship, romantic moments or from the family. Esteem needs are defined as self-respect, self-esteem, and esteem for other people. For self-respect, people need to feel confident, experience accomplishments and require to be recognized by the society for their status, prestige, and power. Finally, self-actualization is on the top of the pyramid which is satisfied by fulfilling “the desire to become more and more of what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming” (Maslow, 1943 as cited in Kang & Jung, 2014).

2.2.4 Conceptual Framework

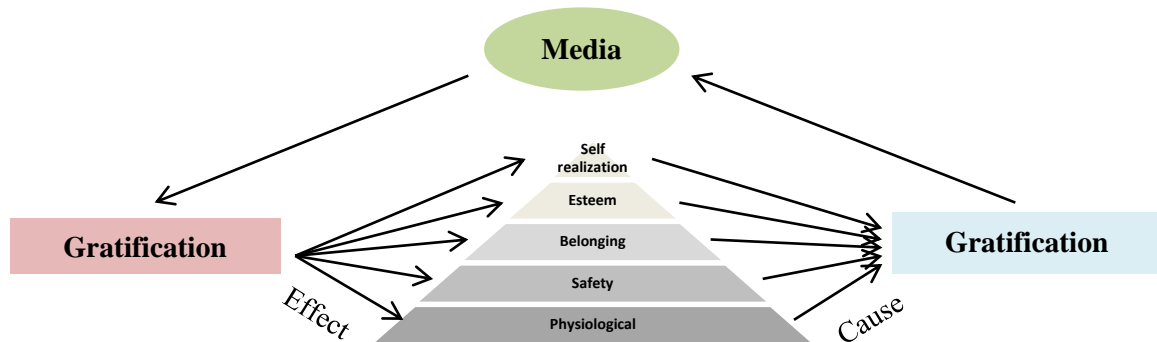


Figure 3: Conceptual framework

Source: Adapted from (Blumler & Katz, 1974) and (Maslow, 1943 as cited in Kang & Jung, 2014).

The theory of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Uses & Gratification theory are integrated to form a framework to understand the insight of Thai baby boomers as to which needs contribute their using behavior and which needs are satisfied by social media usage.

Audiences use media to satisfy their social and psychological needs (O'Donohoe, 1994) and specific motivations lead people to use media are defined as Gratification Sought (GS) and Gratification Obtained (GO) (Rubin, 1993 as cited in Keppler, 2014). GS will be based on GO because people use their personal media experience to predict GO, and then devise GS accordingly (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985 as cited in Keppler, 2014). Sometimes GO may not emerge according to the initially intended GS (Keppler, 2014). Furthermore, the Hierarchy of Needs theory is widely used to study human needs and media usage (Ellison et al., 2006) because people use media to satisfy needs by communicating with others through media channels which satisfy the belonging needs

(Huizinga, 1970 as cited in Keppler, 2014). Moreover, social media usage can satisfy more than one level of needs (Tuten & Solomon, 2015) and can emerge from a different level of needs. Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) state that belonging and esteem needs contribute to social media usage.

Therefore, the scope of this research will focus on the framework that covers the following areas.

1. Needs that Thai baby boomers intend to satisfy by social media usage.
2. Kind of social media that Thai baby boomers use to satisfy their needs.
3. Results after Thai baby boomers use social media and what kind of gratification or experience do they obtain.
4. The level of needs satisfied by social media usage.

2.3 Identifying Research Question

2.3.1 Problem Statement

Due to the increasing number of social media users among Thai baby boomers together with aging society concerns that Thailand is facing, Thai baby boomers will be one of the most important target group for businesses and government policy makers. Therefore, the Researcher would like to seek insights of Thai baby boomers and study the needs they want to satisfy by social media usage.

2.3.2 Research Question

The research aims to understand Thai baby boomers regarding how and why they use social media by focusing on the needs satisfied by social media usage.

Therefore, an exploratory research was employed to answer the research question, **“Which needs do Thai baby boomers try to satisfy by social media usage?”**, followed by sub-research questions as follows:

1. What needs do Thai baby boomers intend to satisfy by social media usage?
2. What kind of social media do Thai baby boomers use to satisfy their needs?
3. What are the results after Thai baby boomers use social media and what kind of gratification or experience do they obtain?
4. What level of needs are satisfied by social media usage?

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Methodology Justification

The purpose of this research is to examine the insight of Thai baby boomers' uses and gratifications in social media by using the Uses and Gratification theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as frameworks for this research. This research explores reason of social media usage in Thai baby boomers, understands those behaviors and identifies which needs are satisfied by social media usage. Therefore, qualitative methodology is appropriately applied to this research by using semi-structured interviews to collect data.

This research focuses on baby boomers. They are born between 1946 and 1964 which is 13.7% of the total Thai population. In the coming years, this group will become the aging population in Thailand and will be an important group for researchers and marketers. This research focuses only in Bangkok because the internet structure in the capital city of Thailand is better than in other provinces. Moreover, users in Bangkok have higher average internet usage hours when compared with others at about 53.8 hours per week. This is higher than the average in other countries wherein usage hour in the municipal area is around 47.7 hours per week (Wayuphap, 2015).

To explore Thai baby boomers' insights and answer the research question, a qualitative methodology is employed in the form of an exploratory research. Eriksson and Kovalaine (2016) mentions that data analysis and collection that use the qualitative research approach are sensitive to the culture and social context. Therefore, they propose that researchers try to understand the issue holistically (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016). An exploratory study, however, is used to find out what is happening or to

explore insights that are useful for researchers to understand the issue or problem (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012).

3.2 Research Strategy

The study is conducted using the cross-sectional design as the research strategy used to understand more about the relationship between Thai baby boomers and social media regarding why they use and what they obtain from social media usage. Within the business research concept, cross-sectional design is often classified as a social survey design that it is tightly connected to people's mind. Moreover, the cross-sectional design allows researchers to study more than one variation at a single point of time (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Therefore, cross-sectional design can suitably be adopted as a research design to explore and answer the research question in this study which aims to study the type of needs that Thai baby boomers try to satisfy by social media usage.

3.3 Research Approach: Semi-structured Interviews

To answer the research question, the conceptual framework combines two theories: the Uses and Gratification theory and the Hierarchy of Needs. There are four main sections to study as follows:

1. To know the needs that motivate social media usage in Thai baby boomers.
2. To explore the kind of social media that Thai baby boomers use to satisfy their needs.
3. To study the results after social media usage in Thai baby boomers and the kind of gratification or experience obtained.

4. To understand the extent to which needs are satisfied by social media usage.

Therefore, semi-structured interviews are adopted as the research approach. Eriksson and Kovalaine (2016) states that semi-structured interviews are used when the researcher has a list of questions to be covered. In other words, it is used when the researcher may omit some topics and focus on a specific context by encouraging interviewees to answer further questions relating to the topic. Moreover, the order of the questions depends on the flow of the conversation and researchers can add additional questions depending on the situation (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016).

3.4 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used in this research is non-probability samplings which are the purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling technique enables researchers to use their judgment to select respondents who will best help answer the research questions and meet the objectives of the study (Saunders et al., 2012). Therefore, the Researcher selected representatives from one occupation in a particular area who are teachers aged from 52 to 70 years old and working at a high school in Bangkok. The reason for the choice is, first, teachers in Thailand have a high education with at least a bachelor's degree. Second, high school teachers work closely with students, who are generation Z or the generation that grew up with technology. In other words, the students are digital natives who are stereotyped as tech savvy and globally connected (Chandler, 2015).

The Researcher submitted an explanatory statement which is a letter of consent to the school director to gain permission to carry out the research at the school. Then, the Researcher collected data from 18 respondents by using the snowball sampling

technique as it was difficult to identify the target respondent that the Researcher wanted to interview. Bryman and Bell (2011) states that the snowball sampling technique shall be used when it is difficult to identify the population who are qualified as desired by the researcher (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

No.	Age	Sex	Specialization	Education level	Status
R1	59	Female	English	Bachelor's degree	Single
R2	52	Female	Health Education	Bachelor's degree	Married
R3	53	Female	Business	Bachelor's degree	Single
R4	59	Female	Technology	Bachelor's degree	Married
R5	59	Female	Thai	Bachelor's degree	Married
R6	53	Female	Sociology	Bachelor's degree	Married
R7	52	Female	Chemistry	Master's degree	Married
R8	57	Male	Physical education	Bachelor's degree	Married
R9	59	Female	Computer	Bachelor's degree	Married
R10	53	Female	Thai	Bachelor's degree	Married
R11	61	Female	English	Master's degree	Married
R12	55	Female	English	Bachelor's degree	Divorced
R13	58	Female	English	Bachelor's degree	Married
R14	53	Female	Mathematics	Bachelor's degree	Married
R15	58	Female	Mathematics	Bachelor's degree	Married
R16	59	Female	Biology	Bachelor's degree	Married
R17	56	Male	Biology	PhD.	Married
R18	56	Female	Mathematics	Bachelor's degree	Married

Table 5: Respondent Characteristics

Before the interview, the Researcher asked screening questions to get the most accurate data from representatives. All data collected from the semi-structured interviews were audio recorded which is useful for the Researcher during the data

analysis process. Bryman and Bell (2011) mentions that a voice recorder is an important equipment that qualitative researchers can use to analyze data because if researchers take notes during the interview, they may easily lose track (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

3.5 Limitation

Due to limited time and resources, this research collects data from only one group of people, from one occupation and in one area. They are 18 teachers from one high school in Bangkok, Thailand which is a small sample when compared to the number of baby boomers in Thailand. Therefore, the characteristics and background of these respondents may differ from other Thai baby boomers.

3.6 Ethical Issues

With regards to the ethical issues, the Researcher considered personal right aspects, therefore, all personal data of the respondents and name of the organization are not disclosed. Moreover, before starting the interview, the Researcher asked approval and permission from all the interviewees. All respondents were informed that the conversation would be recorded by a voice recorder and will be transcribed for this research.

Chapter 4: Findings

Results from the semi-structured interviews of 18 respondents are divided into four parts as per the conceptual framework which is: What are the needs that contribute to social media usage in Thai baby boomers? What type of social media do Thai baby boomers use to satisfy their needs? After Thai baby boomers use social media, what kind of gratification or experience do they obtain? And what levels of needs are satisfied by social media usage? The purpose is to answer the research question about the type of needs that Thai baby boomers try to satisfy by social media usage? Also, a thematic analysis is employed to this study.

4.1 Needs that contribute to social media usage in Thai baby boomers

4.1.1 Reasons they start using social media

In the question about the reasons why they start using social media, 14 out of 18 respondents state that they were persuaded by their friends and family. Therefore, they want to connect with their friends and family via social media. Moreover, 6 of the 14 respondents who are influenced by friends and family, are curious as to why people around them using social media.

“I wanted to talk to my friends because it was a new trend and I wanted to try it. At that time, I wondered why people around me seem addicted to social media. They use it everywhere when walking and traveling on the sky train. I wanted to know why. Also, I wanted to know whether I will be like them or not if I use it.”

(R1)

“Because of my friends, both my high school friends and my colleagues use it, so I wanted to join their group. I wanted to use it.” (R13)

Moreover, 2 out of the 14 respondents who answered that their friends and family persuaded them to use social media, have another reason which explains that using social media can save cost.

“My friends invited me to use. They said “let’s use it to get information. It is easier than in the past”. Information can now spread everywhere and the most important thing is that it is free of charge.” (R17)

As for the rest, 3 out of 18, start using social media because it relates to their jobs.

“I started using it because I am a computer teacher, so I have to use it to teach students.” (R7)

“I want to be trendy because I saw my students use it. If I do not use it, I will not understand what they are doing.” (R10)

4.1.2 Expectations from social media usage

For questions regarding expectations from social media usage, the Researcher analyzes the motivation in social media usage. Moreover, the researcher can analyze gratification obtained from social media usage because people are satisfied by social media usage when the results from the use are higher than their expectations (Gibbs et.al.,2014).

A majority of the respondents, 9 of 18, say that they expect to gain higher convenience when using social media to communicate such as connecting with long-lost friends and acquiring the latest news and information.

“I expect to see more of the world, and I want to easily connect with other people.” (R12)

While the rest of the respondents have the following expectations: To be trendy, is answered by two respondents. To use it for their career is replied by two respondents. To save on mobile phones bills is answered by one respondent.

“I think that we are in this era so we should know about the things that happen in this era even though we and this type of media are born in a different period.” (R11)

“In the beginning, my purpose was for education. I expect to use it for my students to submit their homework. I am a Biology teacher, when I ask them to do an experiment and record a video, they can post it on my Facebook wall or send it privately to my Facebook inbox.” (R16)

Nevertheless, 4 out of 18 respondents do not expect anything from social media usage.

4.1.3 Situation and setting when using social media

All respondents use social media in their free time. They use social media both in workplaces, when they don't have class and at home, before bed. Moreover, 3 out of 18 respondents use social media in the morning to update news and information.

“Normally I use it during my free time, but mostly I use it at night because there are no people, no work and I think that it is a relaxing activity.” (R10)

4.1.4 Main purpose of social media usage

For the main purpose of social media usage, 12 of 18 respondents use it to communicate with friends and family, while 5 out of all the respondents use it to update interested news and information. Nevertheless, only one respondent use it for entertainment and to play online games.

“I use the Line (application) to send messages to my family and friends. I use it to keep in touch with them.” (R2)

All the respondents prefer to read, follow or chat with friends rather than to use social media to post or share contents. They need privacy and don't want to share personal contents with others. They will share or post contents when they read or see good stories that they want to share with their loved ones. Furthermore, they will post contents when they are on a trip or eat something delicious and want to update that experience to their friends and family.

“Nowadays, I use it because of its benefits. I do not use it to show off. It depends on my feelings. Sometimes, if I do not feel anything, I will not post. I think we are mature adults. If I was a teenager and someone broke my heart, I will surely post a lot of content. But now, I find that it is nonsense to allow other people to know what is happening to you. I think we should only post good content like

when I cook, and I want to share the moment with my friends. I want them to have delicious meals like me.” (R12)

4.2 Type of social media that Thai baby boomers use to satisfy their needs

All the respondents use the Line application to communicate with their family, friends, and colleagues. Moreover, they also use the Line application to read news, play games and for working purposes. 16 of 18 respondents also use the Facebook application to connect with other people and to update news and information. 2 respondents who do not use Facebook because they think that Facebook is too complicated for them.

Nevertheless, respondents highlight that Line and Facebook help them keep in touch with friends and family members especially long-lost friends whom they find difficult to meet face to face. Moreover, the two applications also allow access to the latest news and information. This keeps them up to date and makes them understand what is happening in the society. Lastly, they mention that their career can develop when using Line and Facebook as communication channels. They can connect to other teachers and students, acquire knowledge as well as learn new teaching techniques.

“Line is for communicating with friends, but if you want to see more of the world, Facebook is better.” (R17)

4.3 Gratification that Thai baby boomers obtain from social media usage

4.3.1 First impressions when start to use social media

17 of 18 respondents were excited and had a positive attitude when they started using social media for the first time. They think that it is an innovation in their life and

some of them used to be addicted in the beginning. Only one respondent had a bad impression when she started using social media because of a technical problem. She didn't feel comfortable using it.

"I was very glad to see my long-lost friends whom I have not met for 30 years."

(R3)

"I was unhappy because I got a lot of messages from my friends and I think that it is too much. Somedays I get more than 20 messages, and I have to check all of them just to later find out that some messages are computer viruses. I was very scared, so I stopped using Facebook with my PC at home. It was only until recently that Facebook became mobile-friendly, so I started using Facebook again." (R10)

4.3.2 Attitude after social media usage

From questions regarding attitude towards social media usage, the Researcher can analyze satisfaction after social media usage in Thai baby boomers.

Thai baby boomers' attitude towards social media is classified into three levels which are positive, neutral and negative. Most of the respondents, 15 out of 18, have positive attitudes toward social media. Interestingly, even though they have positive attitudes, they often still think about the disadvantages.

"I think it's good. At least I can get information from social media which is more updated and faster than from newspapers. Moreover, I can contact my friends whom I can rarely meet face to face and gain a better understanding about teenagers such as, What they are talking about or what they are interested

in. So, I don't become an old-fashioned person. However, one must always be careful when posting content on Facebook.” (R11)

There are two respondents who have negative attitudes after using social media because of physical problems. Also, they think social media impact relationships with their family members.

“The hours that I use social media have decreased because I think it doesn't fit me. Why do I have to waste time typing? If I want to talk to someone, calling them over the phone is faster and more convenient for me because I am old.” (R15)

“I have not addicted anymore because of my eyesight condition and the relationship with my family. That was why I had to gradually reduce (social media) usage.” (R16)

Another respondent feels neutral after using social media. Although she used to be addicted when initially introduced to social media, she thinks that the new features don't fit her any longer.

“I think I feel quite neutral about it. In the earlier period, I was excited and had fun learning new things. Although there are currently new features on Facebook such as Live where I can post real time videos but I don't want to use it because I want to have my space. I don't want to share every moment of my life with others.” (R7)

4.3.3 Gratification obtained from social media usage

The highest gratification that respondents obtained from social media usage is the convenience in both one and two-way communication. This is receiving news and information as well as chatting with other people respectively. 16 out of 18 respondents obtain convenience while communicating in various aspects such as keeping in touch with long-lost friends and contacting colleagues. Moreover, four respondents felt happy and entertained when they use social media.

“I am divorced, and I live with my son. I think social media is my friend and it helps me make friends. I think that if people do not use it, they will be lonely. I think it is like a doll. When I was young, I always talk to my doll but it may not be aware that I am speaking to it. While, if you post or use social media, people know what you are thinking and you also know what other people are talking about.” (R12)

4.4 Needs satisfied when Thai baby boomers use social media

4.4.1 Social media satisfy their initial expectation

All the respondents say that their first expectation is satisfied by social media. They have gotten many advantages from social media usage. However, 6 of 18, also mention some disadvantages from social media usage. They say that although social media satisfies their expectation it also impacts their family relationship or other offline relationships as well as their eye condition. Although social media provides convenient communication, it can also destroy face to face relationships.

“For educational purposes, it is very good because my students enjoy it and they concentrate more in class. Also, I can easily connect with my friends and family. However, I think that there are two sides, good and bad. In the initial stage, I was addicted. I felt upset when I cannot use it but after I experienced health problems because of an accident I gradually reduce the use of social media. Moreover, I think it destroys my family relationship. My husband said that when I arrive home I concentrate only on my mobile phone. He does not use social media. When I reduce usage time, my relationship improves because when I arrive home, I sit in the living room and watch television with the family instead of sitting in a separate corner of the room.” (R16)

4.4.2 Present reason for using social media compared to the beginning stage

There are two types of the respondent, those who increase and those who decrease social media usage. For respondents who increase social media usage, in the beginning, they had only one purpose for using social media but, at present, they have various purposes. As for people who decrease social media usage, although they use to use many social media application or functions, at present, they have reduced activities on social media. The main reason is that they feel uncomfortable and realize that social media does not fit their lifestyle but they keep using social media only for certain reasons.

“I use it to read news, find information, contact other people and use it for my job. I can adapt some content from the British Council page to use in my class.”

(R11)

“In the beginning, I was quite addicted to Facebook but then I had some problem with my mobile phone. I think Line is simpler and more private so I changed to use the Line application. Also, I don’t want everyone to see the contents that I share.” (R2)

3 out of 18 respondents start to use social media to shop online but still use offline payment process. They follow online shops on Facebook then add their Line ID where they can discuss and order the products. After that, they will transfer money at banks as they don’t use credit cards to shop online.

4.4.3 Potential to stop using social media

All the respondents say that they can stop using social media but if they have a choice they want to continue using social media.

“I can’t stop using it. I think it is the 4th necessity in my life. My mobile phone must be with me at all times. It’s part of my life. It seems that I am addicted. If one day I do not have it, I must have other things to do such as working or marking the final papers for my students. If I am very busy every day, I think I can leave my phone. However, I will use it before I go to bed so maybe I can’t stop using it. We are in the digital era. We can’t refuse to enter the digital world. I look forward to new technologies in the future.” (R12)

Chapter 5: Analysis

Results from the qualitative research show that there are three needs that Thai baby boomers try to satisfy by using social media: psychological, safety and belonging needs. From the conceptual framework, this study can be analyzed to four parts as follows:

5.1 Needs contributing to Thai baby boomers' social media usage

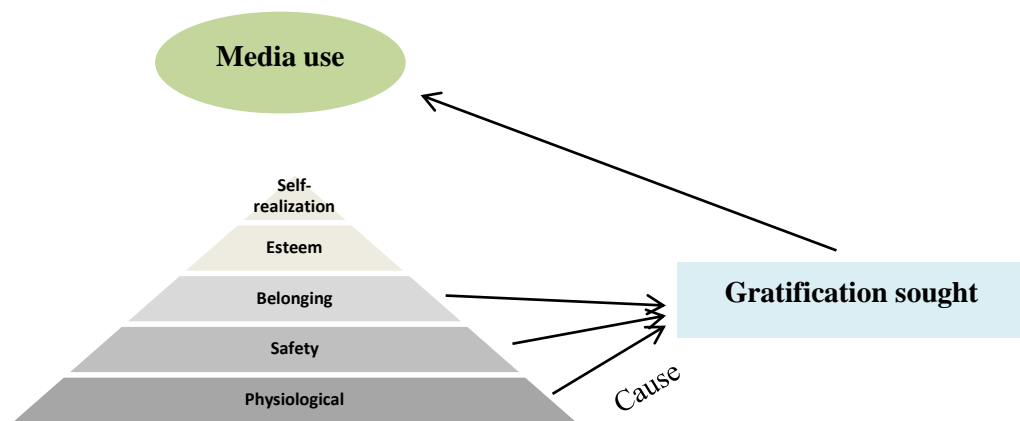


Figure 4: Needs contributing to media usage

Adapted from ((Blumler & Katz, 1974) and (Maslow, 1943 as cited in Kang & Jung, 2014))

The first conceptual framework aims to study the needs contributing to the start of social media usage in Thai baby boomers. Referring to the framework, the needs that contribute Thai baby boomers to use social media is safety and belonging needs.

Most Thai baby boomers are motivated by the belonging needs when they start to use social media. Belonging needs contribute to three impulses: affinity impulse, personal utility impulse, and curiosity impulse which causes Thai baby boomers to use social media. For affinity impulse, people express their affinity via social media (Tuten & Solomon, 2015). Thai baby boomers want to maintain relationships with their friends and family especially with their high school friends or relatives whom they can rarely meet face to face. Therefore, they use social media as a channel to keep such relationships. This conforms to the research conducted by Madden (2010) which reveals that elderly people use social media because it helps them to reconnect with people in the past (Madden, 2010). For personal utility impulse, Thai baby boomers start using social media because they just want to try. This means that they want to be up to date and understand what is happening in the society. Moreover, they use social media when they feel lonely. This relates to the study of Vošner, Bobek, Kokol, & Krecic (2016) that says that social media can reduce loneliness (Vošner, Bobek, Kokol, & Krecic, 2016a). For curiosity impulse, some respondents start using social media because they notice that people around them use it which means that they want to be part of the society.

Furthermore, safety needs contribute to personal utility impulse as well as contact comfort and immediacy impulse which triggers Thai baby boomers to start using social media. For personal utility impulse, Thai baby boomers use social media to save on their communication cost because they can contact other people both via personal and group chats for free. This conforms to the study of Bo Xie et al. (2013) about the motivation that causes elderly people to use social media is that it is a low-cost communication channel (Bo Xie et al., 2013). Moreover, because some teachers

teach technology to their students so they need to learn how to use social media. This concerns the contact comfort and immediacy impulse, as social media can reduce the generation gap (Madden, 2010). As a result, Thai baby boomers use social media as a channel to contact their students because it is more convenient to contact younger generations via social media.

Nadkarni & Hofmann (2012) mentions that the primary needs which motivate people to use social media are belonging and esteem needs (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012). However, for Thai baby boomers, esteem needs don't motivate them to start using social media. This is because the main reasons that they start using social media were to connect with friends, update trends and relate it to their jobs. Moreover, conforming to Niemelä's study which reveals that when baby boomers are in groups they don't worry about technology (Niemela-Nyrhinen, 2007), the Researcher also found that most Thai baby boomers start using social media because of influences from friends, family, and co-workers.

Table 6: Needs contributing to Thai baby boomers' social media usage

Media impulse Needs	Affinity impulse	Personal utility impulse	Contact comfort and immediacy impulse	Altruistic impulse	Curiosity impulse	Validation impulse
Physiological						
Safety		√	√			
Belonging	√	√			√	
Esteem						
Self-realization						

5.2 Type of social media that Thai baby boomers use to satisfy their needs

The main social media tools that Thai baby boomers use to satisfy their needs are Line and Facebook application. This is similar to the 2015 report on Thai internet user profile that Line and Facebook are the most popular social media application among Thai baby boomers (Wayuphap, 2015)

It can be observed that Line and Facebook have common services which cover all zones of social media.

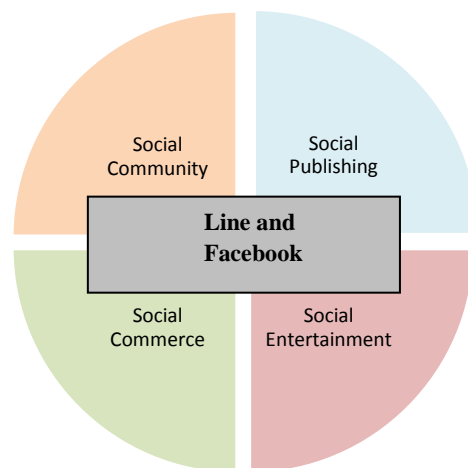


Figure 5: Line and Facebook in social media zones

Adapted from (Tuten & Solomon, 2013; Tuten & Solomon, 2015))

The social communication zone is the main zone that Thai baby boomers use social media. They use Line and Facebook for both personal and work aspects in private and group chats. Thai baby boomers prefer to use Line rather than Facebook because the function is simpler, so it is easier for them to use it as their communication channel. Moreover, Line is more private which is an important element that drives Thai baby

boomers away from Facebook. Although Facebook has privacy settings, Thai baby boomers find it too complicated, therefore, they prefer Line.

Both Line and Facebook applications provide services in the social publishing zone, but Thai baby boomers prefer to use Facebook to update news and information. This is because there is a function on Facebook which is the Facebook fan page which allows people, companies, or organizations to create their area to publish contents, videos, and pictures. Therefore, Thai baby boomers can read the news and update their interest via Facebook. Thai baby boomers rarely post personal contents, pictures and videos on Facebook because they need privacy.

In the social commerce zone, although some Thai baby boomers start to use Facebook and Line to shop online, their payment is still processed via offline transactions. They use social media only to update new items such as in online catalogs. Once they contact the online shop via instant messenger on either Line or Facebook, they will use the ATM or other traditional payment methods to process payment. They do not use credit cards for online payment because they do not trust the online payment system.

For social entertainment, Thai baby boomers use Line to play online games. Line games not only provide entertainment to Thai baby boomers but also provide an opportunity to interact with other people because Line games users must send requests to their friends to pass certain stages.

5.3 Gratification obtained from social media usage

Table 7: Gratification obtained from the activities on social media

	Purpose	Gratification obtained from social media usage.
1	Social Interaction	+, -
2	Information Seeking	+
3	Pastime	+
4	Entertainment	+
5	Relaxation	+, -
6	Communicatory Utility	+, -
7	Convenience Utility	+

Whiting and Williams (2013) mentions that there are seven purposes when people decide to use social media to satisfy their gratification (Whiting & Williams, 2013). In Thai baby boomers, they use social media for every purpose, and all of them are satisfied by using social media. This will be explained as follows:

5.3.1 Social Interaction ranks as the top reason why Thai baby boomers use social media. They obtain gratification from social media because they use it as the main communication channel to contact their friends, family, and co-workers. Social media also destroys offline communication such as face to face communication. For example, when family members are having dinner together but some of them concentrate on their mobile phone and ignore other people sitting next to them.

5.3.2 Information Seeking is ranked as the second highest activity that Thai baby boomers use to obtain gratification. This is because social media provides updated news and information which is faster than other media such as television and newspapers. Some respondents stop reading news from the newspaper because it is slower than the news on social media. Moreover, social media users can select to receive specific news

or information that they are interested in which is different from other types of media such as newspapers or television where users are not in control.

5.3.3 All Thai baby boomers use social media in their free time or when they feel lonely. Hence, social media serve as a Pastime activity.

5.3.4 Thai baby boomers who are social media users obtain enjoyment, fun, and happiness from using social media. This is because Thai baby boomers use social media to play online games or watch videos which are enjoyable and fun.

5.3.5 Thai baby boomers' stress level can be reduced by using social media. For example, when they use social media to do things they love such as watch football and chat with loved ones. However, Thai baby boomers may also become more stressful when they are faced with technical problems that they do not know how to solve. Moreover, they also become more stressful when they share incorrect news and information or rumors. Initially, they think that all news on social media is true but after they find out that it is not, they feel stressful because people who are teachers should be credible, reliable and news that they share should be true.

5.3.6 Social media provides information for Thai baby boomers to talk and share with others. For example, they will share information to health-conscious friends about how to eat bananas to gain the best benefit. Therefore, Thai baby boomers can satisfy their gratification regarding Communicatory Utility. Moreover, as some information on social media is inaccurate because everybody can freely post anything, therefore, Thai baby boomers rarely post content on social media.

5.3.7 Thai baby boomers' Convenience Utility gratification is satisfied from using social media because when they use social media they have better communication channels for their work and personal life.

5.4 The needs satisfied by social media usage

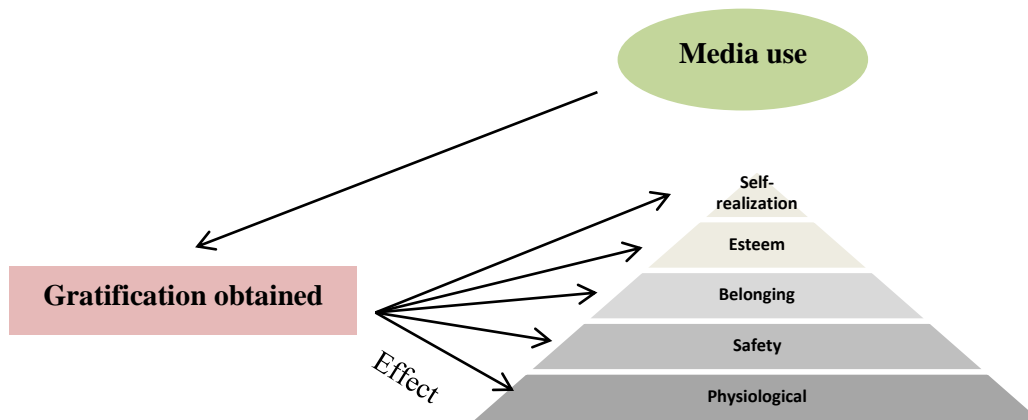


Figure 6: The needs satisfied by social media usage

Adapted from ((Blumler & Katz, 1974) and (Maslow, 1943 as cited in Kang & Jung, 2014))

5.4.1 Social Interaction

Gratification regarding social interaction that Thai baby boomers obtain satisfies their safety and belonging needs. Thai baby boomers use social media to contact with friends and family and to keep in touch with them, so their belonging needs are satisfied. Also, they use social media for their work such as to contact with colleagues and students, so their safety needs are satisfied. In the findings, using social media as a communication channel in Thai baby boomers is different from the report: *Overcoming Generational Gap in the Workplace* by United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (2009) and Chandler (2015) which mentions that baby boomers contact other people by using the telephone (Chandler, 2015), (United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, 2009). On

the other hand, as social media satisfies belonging needs, it damages the relationship with people who do not use social media. It seems that people who do not use social media do not belong to their group.

5.4.2 Information Seeking

Gratification from using social media for information seeking satisfies three levels of needs which are physiological, safety and belonging needs. Thai baby boomers search information about their friends and family via social media and use social media to update news and information to know what is happening in the society. Therefore, the belonging needs are satisfied. Secondly, they search new knowledgeable contents and adapt them to their teaching courses or to develop their career. Moreover, they search information for their health which conforms to Ractham & Techatassanasoontorn (2014) which reveals that Thai baby boomers use social media to satisfy the health aspect (Ractham & Techatassanasoontorn, 2014). Furthermore, as communication costs are minimized when chatting via social media, their safety needs are satisfied. Lastly, they search for new products via social media to satisfy their physiological needs.

5.4.3 Pastime

Thai baby boomers use social media to satisfy their belonging needs during free time and when they are lonely. They use social media to chat with other people, read news and article as well as to watch videos.

5.4.4 Entertainment

Thai baby boomers enjoy and obtain happiness when they play social media games which are games that require interaction with other people to gain scores (Tuten & Solomon, 2013). Also, Thai baby boomers watch videos shared on social media. Therefore, their belonging needs are satisfied because they can interact with other people and update news that makes them better understand situations in the society.

5.4.5 Relaxation

Physiological and belonging needs in Thai baby boomers are satisfied when they obtain relaxation. Their stress level relieves when they talk with loved ones or do things they love. This is when the belonging needs are satisfied. Furthermore, when stress level decreases, their overall condition is better, so their physiological needs are also satisfied.

5.4.6 Communicatory Utility

Social media provides news and information which contribute to both personal and work satisfaction in Thai baby boomers. Therefore, their belonging and safety needs are satisfied. However, when they share incorrect information, their belonging and safety need satisfaction level decreases because wrong information may affect their relationship with friends and co-workers.

5.4.7 Convenience Utility

Gratification for convenience utility in Thai baby boomers is satisfied at three levels of needs which are physiological, safety and belonging needs. With convenience in communication, they don't have to walk from one building to another to contact co-

workers. With this convenience, physiological needs are satisfied. Secondly, it helps their career path development. Using social media as a communication channel to connect with students and search new knowledge satisfies safety needs. Finally, Thai baby boomers can keep in touch with their friends especially long-lost friends and family, so belonging needs are satisfied.

Table 8: Needs satisfied by social media usage in Thai baby boomers

	Gratification obtained	Physiological needs	Safety needs	Belonging needs	Esteem needs	Self- realization needs
1	Social Interaction		√	√		
2	Information Seeking	√	√	√		
3	Pastime			√		
4	Entertainment			√		
5	Relaxation	√		√		
6	Communicatory Utility		√	√		
7	Convenience Utility	√	√	√		

In this study, Thai baby boomers don't use social media to satisfy esteem and self-realization needs which conforms to the research of Ractham and Techatassanasoontorn (2014) which shows that older Thai people use social media for “community, consumer, family, health, and work” to satisfy their overall life (Ractham & Techatassanasoontorn, 2014, p.9). Moreover, as Thai baby boomers have stronger collectivism characteristics when compared to younger generation such as generation Y and X who have more individualism characteristics (Murphy et al., 2010), therefore, Thai baby boomers satisfy three levels of needs: physiological, safety and belonging needs when using social media.

Moreover, needs satisfied by social media usage in Thai baby boomer may not be the initially expected or intended needs. For example, in the beginning, they may just want to talk to their friends who contribute to the belonging needs but afterward, they also use it for work which satisfies their safety needs. This is another reason that most Thai baby boomers are satisfied when using social media as the gratification level that they receive are higher than expected (Gibbs et al., 2014).

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Implication

6.1 Conclusions

The purpose of this study is to gain insights about Thai baby boomers and social media by focusing on the needs that Thai baby boomers try to satisfy from social media usage. The following are the conclusions that answer the research questions.

6.1.1

Belonging needs are the majority needs that trigger Thai baby boomers to start using social media. Friends, family, and co-workers are key influencers that lead to the start of social media usage in Thai baby boomers. Moreover, safety needs also lead Thai baby boomers to use social media as it relates to their jobs.

6.1.2

Line and Facebook applications are the social media tools that Thai baby boomers use to satisfy their needs. Line is mainly used for communication while Facebook is used for seeking news and information.

6.1.3

Every purpose of social media usage among Thai baby boomers are satisfied. For social interaction, relaxation and communicatory utility, social media can increase and decrease the Thai baby boomers' gratification level.

6.1.4

There are three levels of needs satisfied when Thai baby boomers use social media. Belonging needs are ranked as the highest needs that are satisfied by using social media followed by safety and physiological needs respectively.

6.1.5

Although social media satisfies Thai baby boomers' needs most of them are still concerned of the disadvantages of social media usage such as health conditions, relationships, and privacy. Some of them used to be addicted to social media in the initial stage, but after they realize the drawbacks, they reduce social media usage.

6.2 Implications

6.2.1 Social media application developer

This study suggests three concerns for social media application developers. First, user-friendly, simple platforms and multi-functionality are important criteria for social media usage in Thai baby boomers. Therefore, application developers should design the applications to fit them. Second, due to their health conditions especially their eye conditions, applications should be produced under these health concerns. The size of fonts or colors should be considered to promote longer usage hours. Finally, as belonging needs are the highest needs satisfied by social media usage in Thai baby boomers, therefore, developers should develop functions that provide opportunities to interact with friends and family members.

6.2.2 Marketers

From this study, the Researcher proposes guidelines and cautions for marketing via social media for Thai baby boomers as follows:

1. In online marketing for Thai baby boomers, their friends and family are key concerns.
2. Using only traditional advertising such as on television, newspapers may not match the lifestyle of Thai baby boomers today because they also receive news and information from social media.

3. Trust is an important aspect that Thai baby boomers consider when shopping online. Although they have started to shop online payments are still processed offline because they do not trust the online payment system. Also, they do not use credit cards to shop online.

4. Online marketing campaigns can be more effective if they show the benefits of social media that can satisfy belonging, safety and physiological needs.

6.2.3 Academic implication

According to current literature, the most important reason for social media usage by older people is to connect with their family (Vošner et al., 2016c) and friends (Madden, 2010). The result of this study shows that Thai baby boomers do not use social media only for personal purposes, but also for their work life.

Current literature states that belonging needs and esteem needs motivate people to use Facebook (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012), this study shows that the Thai baby boomers are not motivated by esteem needs to use Facebook. They are rather motivated to satisfy their belonging needs social needs, safety needs, and physiological needs.

6.3 Limitations and suggestions for further research

Due to limited resources and time when collecting data for this research, sampling used in this research is relatively small and limited to one occupation. Therefore, this research may not be used as a generalized implication. For further researches, data can be collected from various occupations to further understand common and different insights of social media usage among Thai baby boomers in different careers.

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Appendix

Appendix1: Semi-structured interview question (English version)

Screen questions

1. Do you use Social media?
2. How old are you?
3. How many hours do you use social media per week?

List of interview questions

How long have you used Social media?

1. Which needs contribute Thai baby boomers use social media?
 - 1) Why do you use social media?
 - 2) What is your expectation for using social media?
 - 3) Normally when and where do you use social media? Which situation?
 - 4) If you can choose only 1 activity for using social media what do you want to do? Why?
2. What kind of social media do they use?
 - 1) What kind of social media do you use?
 - 2) How many social media do you use? Elaboration more on each.
 - 3) What kind of device do you use for social media using?
3. What kind of gratification do they obtain from using social media?
 - 1) What did you feel when you use social media at the first time?
 - 2) Now, what do you feel when using social media?
 - 3) What do you obtain from using social media?
4. What level of needs is satisfied by using social media?
 - 1) Do you think, Social media can satisfy your first expectation or not? Why?
 - 2) Nowadays, does the reason for using social media different from the previous period? Why?
 - 3) Do you think you can quit from using social media? Why?

Appendix2: Semi-structured interview question (Thai version)

คำถามคัดกรอง

1. ตอนนี้ใช้ Social Media ี่เปล่า
2. ตอนนี้อายุเท่าไรคะ
3. เล่น Social Media สัปดาห์ละกี่ชั่วโมง

คำถามสำหรับการสัมภาษณ์

1. ความต้องการอะไรที่ทำให้เริ่มใช้ Social media

- 1) ทำไมถึงเริ่มใช้ Social media
- 2) ครั้งแรกหวังว่าจะได้อะไรจากการใช้
- 3) ปกติแล้วจะเล่น Social media ตอนไหน ที่ใด และเพื่อทำอะไรคะ เล่าสถานการณ์ให้ฟังหน่อย
- 4) ถ้าเกิดเลือกได้แค่อย่างเดียว จะใช้ Social media ทำอะไร /ทำไม

2. ประเภทของ Social media ที่ใช้

- 1) ตอนนี้ใช้ Social Media อะไรบ้าง
- 2) แล้วใช้อันไหนทำอะไรบ้าง แล้วทำไมถึงต้องใช้อันนั้น
- 3) แล้วเล่นผ่านอะไร /ทำไม

3. ความพึงพอใจใดที่ได้รับจากการใช้ Social media

- 1) หลังจากที่ใช้ครั้งแรกรู้สึกยังไง
- 2) แล้วตอนนี้รู้สึกอย่างไรบ้าง
- 3) คิดว่าได้อะไรจากการที่ใช้ Social media

4. ความต้องการขั้นใดที่ได้รับการตอบสนองจากการใช้ Social media

- 1) หลังจากใช้ Social media คุณคิดว่าสามารถตอบสนองความต้องการหรือความคาดหวังที่คิดไว้ได้รึ
- 2) แล้วเหตุผลที่ใช้ Social Media ทุกวันนี้คืออะไร แตกต่างไปจากตอนแรกหรือเปล่า/ทำไม
- 3) ตอนนี้คุณคิดว่าคุณสามารถเลิกใช้ Social media ได้รึเปล่า/ทำไม

Date: 12 September 2016

To
Mr. Jinnapat Piboonwitthamrong, Director
Triam Udom Suksa Nomklao School
Bangkok, Thailand

Subject: Request to be a part of an academic research

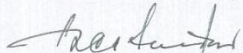
Ms. Sirikarn Thongpithukwong, one of my MBA students at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Japan, is conducting research for her final year thesis. The aim of the research is to understand why the Thai baby boomers generation use social media and to what extent social media satisfies their needs. I am hopeful that the results of the research will provide valuable information to businesses and government policy makers.

We are seeking the assistance of teachers from Triam Udom Suksa Nomklao School who are willing to be interviewed for this research. It is absolutely their own decision whether they would like to take part in the study or not. If they do decide to participate in this research, we guarantee that the information they provide will be dealt with strict confidentiality and will be used solely for academic thesis or journal articles. The data will only be accessed by research-qualified staff and will be kept in a secure environment.

If you or the interviewees have any queries or wish to access the information that have been provided at a later date, we would be glad to provide a copy of the result to you. Please contact me via e-mail at alhaidar@apu.ac.jp or Ms. Sirikarn at sirith15@apu.ac.jp. My other details are given below.

I look forward to your kind cooperation.

Professor Ali Haidar (PhD)


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