

Exploring Uses and Gratification Theory in the Context of Social Media: Understanding Users' Motivation, Engagement, and Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: This study applies uses and gratifications theory to examine why young social media users participate, how they engage with content and other people, and how those experiences relate to satisfaction when their ideas are acknowledged. It distinguishes motivations from engagement and from a specific interpersonal gratification.

Methodology: A quantitative cross-sectional analysis used 251 records from respondents aged 16–30 years. Random-number selection was reported; Google and Microsoft Forms were shared by email and WhatsApp. The study instrument included 33 five-point statements covering use motives, self-esteem and support, personal growth, collaboration, comments and reactions, fear of missing out (FOMO), and interest and enjoyment. Descriptive statistics, internal-consistency estimates, Spearman correlations, Holm-adjusted group comparisons, and multivariable logistic regression were calculated from the SPSS-format data file.

Findings: Agreement that acknowledgment of one's ideas is satisfying was reported by 88.4% of respondents. In the adjusted model, collaborative insight (odds ratio [OR] = 2.33), community fulfillment (OR = 3.59), and comments and reactions (OR = 2.75) were linked to strong agreement. FOMO and interest and enjoyment were related to satisfaction in unadjusted analyses but were not independent predictors after adjustment.

Conclusion: The study concluded that reciprocal participation and social recognition are more strongly related to level of acknowledgment satisfaction than with the general degree of enjoyment for these participants. As the data were correlational and only one satisfaction measure was used, causal effects on overall satisfaction with the platform can be ruled out. Future studies will benefit from separate, validated gratification measures.

Keywords: Uses and gratifications theory, Social media, User motivation, Engagement, Satisfaction, Collaboration, FOMO.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Social media merges at the same time and space information and entertainment, self-expression, and social interaction. Consumers read or watch information, interact with others, create their own content, and engage with others around various shared interests (Obilor, 2023; Shabir et al., 2014; Safdar & Abbasi, 2020). Different forms of use contribute to an overall measure of time online; but they provide an incomplete explanation for why a person uses media and the individual's evaluation of the experience. The uses and gratifications theory (UGT) gives a theoretical structure to analyze what people want from media and what they think they receive (Katz et al., 1973; Ruggiero, 2000).

Previously, UGT studies examined how audiences select gratifications in mass media. But interactivity in digital environments may also influence what gratifications are possible (Shabir et al., 2014a; Shabir et al., 2015; Sundar & Limperos, 2013). There are also specific and important motivations on social media, including information, entertainment, opinion, expression, and social interaction (Whiting & Williams, 2013). So, a social media audience study must separate motivations from behaviors and gratifications.

This paper investigates these connections among a set of young social media users in a questionnaire dataset. We focus on the item measuring feelings of satisfaction if one's ideas are recognized on the internet. Though this measure is a more limited indicator of satisfaction than satisfaction with social media in general, it directly measures an important form of possible social gratification that of being recognized as contributors.

1.1 *Research Objectives*

1. Identify the motivations and perceived gratifications associated with social media use, including information, enjoyment, personal growth, social connection, and FOMO.
2. Describe patterns of social media engagement, particularly collaboration, comments, reactions, and differences across respondent groups.
3. Examine how engagement and gratification-related measures are associated with satisfaction when users' ideas are acknowledged on social media.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 *Uses and Gratifications as a Theory of Active Choice*

Uses and gratifications theory (UGT) starts with the proposition that social and psychological needs inform media expectations and selections. The consequences inherent in the use that users did not look for were also included by Katz et al., 1973. Its central question is not what is the frequency of media use, but rather what do people do with media? Palmgreen et al. (1980) refined this argument by distinguishing between "before-use" and "after-use" gratifications. If satisfaction is the goal, then that is the difference that matters: A reason for visiting a platform must not be taken as the benefit gained.

In the digital world, interactivity, demassification and a synchronicity are what reinvigorate UGT's relevance (Ruggiero 2000). Social media users can switch between viewing, producing, and responding in a single session; and their motives might shift as feedback occurs. Wang et al. (2012) conducted a longitudinal investigation of social media needs and gratifications, and the authors conclude that these are not static characteristics but change over time. Because of this, for the present study, motivation, engagement, and satisfaction are considered related but analytically distinct, and the one-time survey does not indicate the temporal ordering of these.

2.2 *Platform Affordances and the Shape of Gratification*

The features of an interface impact what its users can get. Sundar and Limperos (2013) built on UGT by defining gratifications of newer media technologies, such as agency, interactivity, and navigability. Rathnayake and Winter (2018) transformed the affordance perspective to develop a measure of

gratification associated with social media usage, and demonstrated its capacity for capturing and identifying the nuances between features. Evans et al. (2017) also made it clear that affordances are not technological effects, but relational possibilities for action. So, the same feature might be used to help people seek out information, to help them recognize others socially, or simply for entertainment, depending on the user and context. Treem and Leonardi (2013) recognized four affordances of social media: visibility, editability, persistence, and association. These properties can be significant and modifiable, lasting and interdependent. They provide conceptual support for comment and collaboration analysis to complement social media analysis. The present study does not measure specific interface affordances directly, however; they are interpreted rather than tested in the statistical model.

2.3 Motivations and Differences Across Platforms

There are multiple and concurrent motives for using social media. Whiting and Williams (2013) reported gratifications of social interaction, information seeking, entertainment, relaxation, opinion expression, and sharing. Both overlap and differences were found between Facebook motives and IM motives by Quan-Haase and Young (2010), suggesting that context of the communication plays a role. Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008) reported about friend-networking needs across MySpace and Facebook, and Joinson (2008) separated out some activities for looking-up contacts, keeping up with others, and viewing content. The results contradict the notion of a single, homogeneous social need for motivation.

The same argument is made in newer settings using comparative platform work. When it comes to motives and intensity, Alhabash and Ma (2017) discovered that there were distinct differences among the four social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, among college students. Sheldon and Bryant (2016) came out with a list of 5 motives of Instagram and correlated them to personal traits. For example, Chen (2011) associated with active use of Twitter with a desire to connect, and Bayer et al. (2016) referred to Snapchat as a place for small, fleeting social interactions. The combination of these studies indicates that people can connect in a range of very different activities and interaction rhythms.

Video-based platforms broaden the scope of potential gratifications. Montag et al. (2021) conducted a review of early empirical research on TikTok usage and psychological processes in the engagement of short videos. Falgoust et al. 2022 found the following reasons for participating in TikTok challenges in interviews with young adults: entertainment, convenience of communication, social interaction, support, information, and escape. The findings are relevant to the enjoyment and collaboration items in this present questionnaire but the survey did not ascertain which platforms respondents were using.

2.4 Content Consumption, Creation, and Participation

UGT needs to be considered as to what users do after they enter a platform. Shao (2009) differentiated consuming, participating and producing user-generated media, and various gratifications were attributed to each mode. Also relating to UGC, Leung (2009) identified a relationship between user-generated content and civic engagement, found that creating and posting content provides an agency beyond passive viewing. Smock et al., (2011) demonstrated that the use of Facebook forms a toolkit and is motivated to use in different ways. Thus, a total-use score may mask the extent of reading, reacting, posting, and/or working with others.

No matter how passive the behavior is, it is not a single experience. The research by Metzger et al. (2018) explored an ubiquitous use of social network sites (SNSs), namely profile browsing, and its effects. Even though browsing can help to develop awareness of social issues, it doesn't necessarily provide the exchange of acknowledgment that is required from comments or collaboration. The difference is relevant when considering the focus of this study on visible participation and satisfaction when their ideas are recognized by other people.

2.5 Social Connection, Feedback, and Community

Social connection is a possible gratification gained from involvement. Park et al. (2009) hypothesized that the kinds of gratifications people seek from Facebook groups and the social results they receive will differ from one another. Ellison et al. (2007) correlated the use of Facebook among students with forms of social capital, and Valenzuela et al. (2009) investigated the relationship between Facebook use, social capital, life satisfaction, trust and participation. These studies are correlational, and illustrate that the relationship and community factors may be why engagement may matter, not because of simply being exposed to it.

The quality of interaction is another distinction. Ellison et al. (2014) analyzed the processes of relationship maintenance and social capital that occur on Facebook. The interaction and feedback frequencies predicted perceived social support, according to Seo et al. (2016). Burke and Kraut (2016) found associations between well-being and type of communication and nature of social ties with Facebook use. Their work allows for the suggestion that recognition after comment or shared activity might be more satisfying than after using volume. The data available now is for a more restricted outcome satisfaction upon recognition of an idea.

2.6 Identity, Social Comparison, and Heterogeneous Needs

The significance of an activity can shift in response to individual and social context. Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) suggested belonging and self-presentation were key motivations for using Facebook. Kim et al. (2011) reported that there are cultural differences in the motivations for engaging in social network sites among American and Korean students and cautioned against a universal motive structure. Phua et al. (2017) demonstrated that social comparison, trust, tie strength and homophily may mediate engagement results in brand-following contexts. The results indicate that motivation is a context-sensitive phenomenon, rather than a catalogue of benefits of platforms.

Self-presentation is also involved in satisfaction. In a two-wave study, Reinecke and Trepte (2014) found that the authenticity of social network site communication is correlated to well-being. For some, an acknowledgment of their idea can be a rewarding response, if the recognition is in service of the authenticity and identity aspects of the idea, but there is no method or measure of authenticity and identity fit in the present survey. This observed satisfaction item should thus be understood as an interpersonal evaluation rather than an indicator of global satisfaction and well-being.

2.7 FOMO, Well-Being, and Unsatisfied Use

Motivation is capable of maintaining involvement even if the experience is not helpful. Przybylski et al. (2013) defined fear of missing out (FOMO) in terms of psychological needs and it was associated with social media behavior. Vogel et al. (2014) demonstrated the correlation between social comparison on social media and self-esteem. Verduyn et al. (2015) provided evidence of how passive Facebook use might negatively impact affective well-being, and Kross et al. (2013) identified decreases in subjective well-being over time with Facebook use in a sample of young adults. These studies warn against viewing high use or high frequency of checking as evidence of gratification.

There is a broader overall picture, not all of which is bad. In their study on loneliness (2016), Pittman and Reich highlighted some differences between “image-based” platforms and “text-based” platforms, in terms of social experience. Hunt et al. (2018) discovered that their sample of students who were experimentally given fewer social media use experienced decreased levels of loneliness and depression. Dhir et al. (2018) linked compulsive use and FOMO to social media fatigue and psychological distress, and Ferris et al. (2021) used UGT to investigate the impacts of social media addiction. These works collectively warrant the study of FOMO beyond enjoyment and satisfaction and give meaning to any link without implying a causal benefit or harm.

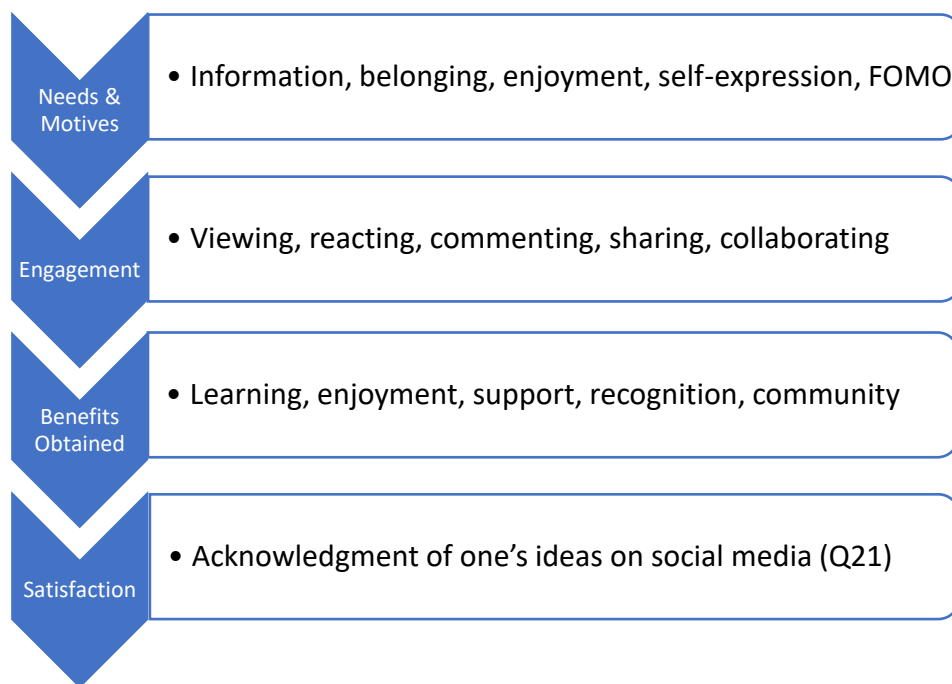
2.8 Synthesis and Research Gap

The literature indicates that a sequence of bringing needs to a platform, selecting activities that the platform enables, and assessing the experiences that follow will happen. It also demonstrates that satisfaction is related to type of interaction, type of relationship, and the discrepancy between desired and actual outcomes. However, much of this evidence is platform specific or focused on global health. The present survey provides a targeted examination of the relationship between collaboration, comments, FOMO and satisfaction about people's ideas. The analysis is based on cross-sectional self-report data and a single satisfaction item, and thus only aims to estimate associations within this sample and not a causal UGT pathway.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

The study-specific model in Figure 1 is based on a uses-and-gratifications path: individuals have needs, seek the expected benefits, select the activities, assess their received benefits, and report how satisfied they are with a specific experience. Platform characteristics and social relationships could influence each of these steps. In the present questionnaire, the empirical construct is satisfaction when ideas are recognized (Q21), which is different from the overall platform satisfaction. A cross-sectional approach models associations, not a causal path.

Figure 1: Study-specific uses and gratifications pathway



Note. Arrows represent proposed conceptual order, not tested causal effects. Platform affordances and social ties may influence every stage.

2.10 Exploratory Hypotheses

The following hypotheses translate the study objectives and conceptual framework into tests of association and group difference. No preregistration record was supplied, so the tests are interpreted as exploratory. The cross-sectional design does not test causal effects.

H1. Higher collaboration activity (Q19), collaborative insight (Q20), community fulfillment (Q22), and comments/reactions (Q23–Q26) are associated with higher satisfaction when respondents' ideas are acknowledged (Q21).

H2. Higher FOMO (Q27–Q30) and interest/enjoyment (Q31–Q35) are associated with higher acknowledgment satisfaction (Q21).

H3. FOMO and interest/enjoyment scores differ across age, qualification, and daily social media-use groups.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design, Sampling, and Participants

The study used a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to examine motivations, engagement, and acknowledgment satisfaction among social media users. The analytic sample comprised 251 usable questionnaire records from respondents aged 16–30 years: 16–20 years ($n = 35$), 21–25 years ($n = 115$), and 26–30 years ($n = 101$). According to the authors, eligible participants were selected by random sampling with a random-number generator. Questionnaire links hosted in Google Forms and Microsoft Forms were shared with selected participants through email and WhatsApp. The supplied materials do not identify the sampling frame, the number of people invited, or the number who did not respond. Thus, the selection probabilities and response rate cannot be independently verified. Collection dates and location were also not documented.

3.2 Questionnaire Development and Distribution

The questionnaire was created for this study using uses-and-gratifications theory; there is no provided version of this, the single survey instrument used, that states where items were drawn from, and that means it can be reported as a researcher-designed questionnaire for this study. The self-administered questionnaire, available via Google Forms and Microsoft Forms, was circulated via email and WhatsApp links; the respondents self-completed the records created. The analysis file does not state, which form platform or administration channel created each record; it cannot because of this be checked whether equivalence was achieved. No evidence was provided of a pilot test or expert content-validity check of the instrument.

3.3 Measures and Scoring

The instrument queried gender, age, qualification, and daily social media use, then presented 33 statements rated from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The planned domains were mixed use motives (Q3Q10), self-esteem and support (Q11 Q12 Q14), social comparison (Q13), personal growth (Q15Q18), collaboration (Q19Q22), comments and reactions (Q23Q26), FOMO (Q27Q30), and interest and enjoyment (Q31Q35). Domain scores were calculated as the mean of available items; the single invalid item value in each of Q9 and Q22 was omitted from its corresponding mean, while internal-consistency estimates used complete cases. The negatively framed Q13, which asks about dissatisfaction after seeing others' posts, was retained separately following exploratory content and internal-consistency review; the three-item self-esteem/support score is a post hoc refinement requiring independent validation. Q21 asks whether respondents feel satisfied when their ideas are acknowledged online. Because Q21 falls within the original collaboration group, it was excluded from any collaboration predictor in the regression model.

3.4 Reliability and Preliminary Validity

Table 1 presents the ranges of Cronbach's alpha and corrected item total correlations for each proposed summary group, as well as descriptive statistics. All these values measure internal consistency and some measure preliminary internal structure; by themselves they do not determine that the questionnaire is completely valid. And, the full correlation matrix of 33 items was examined using the Kaiser Meyer Olkin statistic, Bartlett's test of sphericity and parallel analysis. Since the proposed domain structure was not supported, the domain scores are interpreted as descriptive and exploratory. No content-validity index, expert panel rating, criterion-validity analysis or independent confirmatory sample is reported.

Table 1: Reliability and preliminary validity evidence for the study-specific questionnaire

Item group	Items	M	SD	α	Corrected item–total r
Use and mixed motives	Q3–Q10	4.13	0.47	.732	.328 to .579
Self-esteem and support	Q11, Q12, Q14	4.28	0.53	.697	.381 to .568
Personal growth	Q15–Q18	4.25	0.62	.709	.423 to .535
Collaboration	Q19–Q22	4.27	0.55	.689	.373 to .569
Comments and reactions	Q23–Q26	4.27	0.56	.664	.426 to .477
FOMO	Q27–Q30	4.23	0.63	.741	.490 to .593
Interest and enjoyment	Q31–Q35	4.31	0.58	.768	.517 to .586
Preliminary validity evidence					
KMO, 33 items	.900; the item correlations were suitable for exploratory factor assessment.				
Bartlett’s test	$\chi^2(528) = 2,598.3$, $p < .001$; the item correlation matrix differs from an identity matrix.				
Parallel analysis	Three factors suggested, compared with seven proposed summary groups; the proposed grouping was not confirmed.				
Other validation	No documented expert content review, criterion test, or independent confirmatory sample.				

Note. Scores range from 1 to 5. The self-esteem/support row is an exploratory three-item summary of Q11, Q12, and Q14; Q13 was retained separately because it concerns negative social comparison. The original four-item grouping, with Q13 correctly reverse coded, had $\alpha = -.015$; the revised three-item grouping has $\alpha = .697$. This is an item-selection change, not a sign change, and the revised reliability remains modest. Alpha and corrected item–total correlations used complete cases within each group ($n = 250$ or 251). Q21 is the satisfaction outcome and was not included in an adjusted collaboration predictor. For the 33 questionnaire items together, KMO = .900 and Bartlett’s $\chi^2(528) = 2,598.3$, $p < .001$; parallel analysis suggested three factors, fewer than the seven proposed summary groups. These checks do not establish full scale validity.

3.5 Data Management and Statistical Analysis

The file provided was in IBM SPSS Statistics (.sav) format. All statistics in this paper were re-calculated independently from that file by Python with pyreadstat for file read-in, scipy for tests, and stats models for regressions and factor checks. Responses on items, Q9, and Q22 that fell outside the 15 range were set to missing (one on each of Q9 and Q22), as were 2 daily-use responses. Demographic stats are frequencies and percentages; mean and standard deviations are used for items and the items' proposed domains; reliable factor and scale estimates are from cases with responses to all items in each group (250 or 251). Question Q21 about an acknowledgment satisfaction item is shown as a column in a regression as the consequence of each predictor, and is not included in a collaborative predictor.

Because Likert responses were ordinal and skewed to agreement, bivariate associations with Q21 were Spearman rank correlations; percentile CIs were based on 2,500 bootstrap resamples. Omnibus Kruskal Wallis comparisons across demographic and/or daily-use categories were followed up by Mann Whitney pairwise comparisons if significant. Holm correction was applied across the six correlations, across the 16 omnibus comparisons, within each follow-up pairwise family, and across the six substantive predictors. The primary adjusted model employed binary logistic regression with strong agreement to Q21 (a score of 5) versus strong disagreement/mild disagreement/mild agreement scores (scores 14) as the criterion. Q19 collaboration activity, Q20 collaborative insight, Q22 community fulfillment, Comments/reactions, FOMO, and Interest/enjoyment were entered simultaneously, with gender, age category, and qualification as covariates. Complete records of variables of the model were used ($n = 250$); HC3 robust standard errors yielded ORs with 95% CIs. The modeling was repeated with ordinal Q21 as the outcome and in a

sensitivity sample downward excluding identical-response and duplicate records, respectively; these analyses are described in Results. Two-sided tests had an off .05; design was cross-sectional so the relation is correlational.

3.6 Ethical Considerations and Informed Consent

The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles enshrined in the Declaration of Helsinki and applicable institutional and national guidelines governing research ethics. Ethical approval was duly obtained from the Institutional Research Ethics Committee/Review Board prior to the commencement of the study. All participants were adequately informed of the study's objectives, procedures, potential benefits and risks, as well as their rights and responsibilities as research participants. Participation was entirely voluntary, and participants were assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without incurring any penalty or adverse consequences. All data collected were handled with strict confidentiality and utilized exclusively for research purposes. To safeguard participants' privacy and maintain confidentiality, all personally identifiable information was removed or replaced with appropriate codes, thereby ensuring that participants could not be readily identified from the study data.

4. RESULTS

The tables align with the objectives and exploratory hypotheses as follows. Table 1 reports the proposed measures, descriptive scores, and reliability and preliminary validity evidence for Objective 1; it does not test a hypothesis. Table 2 describes the respondents for Objectives 1 and 2 and also does not test a hypothesis. Table 3 evaluates the unadjusted associations in H1 and H2 for Objective 3. Table 4 evaluates the group differences in H3 for Objective 2. Table 5 evaluates H1 and H2 after adjustment for gender, age category, and qualification for Objective 3.

Table 2: *Characteristics of respondents*

Demographics	Characteristic	n	%
Gender	Male	73	29.1
	Female	178	70.9
Age	16-20	35	13.9
	21-25	115	45.8
	26-30	101	40.2
	Matric or below	1	0.4
	Intermediate	48	19.1
Qualification	Graduation	63	25.1
	Master	81	32.3
	Above Master	58	23.1
Daily Social media use	1-2 hours	42	16.9
	3-4 hours	106	42.6
	> 4 hours	101	40.6

Note. N = 251. Two daily-use responses were invalid, so daily-use percentages are based on n = 249; other percentages are based on N = 251. Percentages may not total 100 because of rounding.

Table 2 demonstrates that women constituted 70.9% of respondents, and the largest age category was 21–25 years (45.8%). Among the 249 valid daily-time responses, 40.6% reported more than four hours of use. These distributions describe the sample and do not establish a representative population profile.

4.1 Motivations, Engagement, and Measurement Results

Table 1 shows that the three-item self-esteem/support summary had M = 4.28 (SD = 0.53) and modest internal consistency ($\alpha = .697$). It uses Q11, Q12, and Q14; the negatively framed social-comparison item Q13 is reported separately rather than being combined with these positive items. Interest and enjoyment had the highest other proposed group mean (M = 4.31, SD = 0.58), followed by comments and reactions

and collaboration (both $M = 4.27$). The acknowledgment satisfaction item itself had $M = 4.31$ ($SD = 0.75$); 88.4% agreed or strongly agreed. Internal consistency was higher for interest/enjoyment ($\alpha = .768$), FOMO ($\alpha = .741$), mixed use ($\alpha = .732$), and personal growth ($\alpha = .709$). The revised self-esteem/support score should be treated as exploratory because its reliability remains below conventional expectations and the item exclusion was data-informed. The structure checks also caution against treating all seven item groups as validated distinct factors.

4.1 Bivariate Associations with Acknowledgment Satisfaction

Table 3: Spearman correlations with acknowledgment satisfaction (Q21)

Predictor	n	ρ	95% CI
Collaboration activity (Q19)	251	0.305	[0.182, 0.429]
Collaborative insight (Q20)	251	0.402	[0.291, 0.507]
Community fulfillment (Q22)	250	0.378	[0.259, 0.488]
Comments/reactions	251	0.323	[0.204, 0.433]
FOMO	251	0.292	[0.163, 0.403]
Interest/enjoyment	251	0.218	[0.094, 0.346]

Note. All six correlations remained statistically significant after Holm correction (adjusted $p < .001$). Confidence intervals were estimated by bootstrap resampling. These are unadjusted associations.

Table 3 highlights that collaborative insight and community fulfillment had the strongest bivariate associations with acknowledgment satisfaction ($\rho = .402$ and $.378$, respectively). FOMO and interest/enjoyment were also positively correlated, but these correlations alone do not show that they contribute independently after related activities are considered.

4.2 Subgroup Comparisons

Table 4: Exploratory group comparisons that survived multiplicity adjustment

Outcome	Grouping	H	df	Adjusted p
FOMO	Age	14.37	2	0.009
FOMO	Qualification	26.05	3	< .001
FOMO	Daily use	12.37	2	0.023
Interest/enjoyment	Age	20.44	2	< .001
Interest/enjoyment	Qualification	29.45	3	< .001
Interest/enjoyment	Daily use	32.48	2	< .001

Note. Kruskal–Wallis statistics are shown. Holm adjustment was applied across 16 subgroup tests. Qualification combined the single matric-or-below respondent with the intermediate group. No subgroup test for Q21 remained significant after adjustment.

Table 4 Indicates that FOMO and interest/enjoyment varied across age, qualification, and daily-use categories after correction. Respondents aged 26–30 scored higher than those aged 21–25 on both FOMO ($M = 4.37$ vs. 4.11) and interest/enjoyment ($M = 4.48$ vs. 4.18) in Holm-adjusted pairwise tests. Those reporting more than four hours of daily use also scored higher than the 3–4-hour group on FOMO (4.37 vs. 4.15) and interest/enjoyment (4.51 vs. 4.17). These cross-sectional differences may reflect selection into use patterns as well as effects of experience.

4.3 Adjusted Association with Strong Acknowledgment Satisfaction

Table 5: Adjusted logistic regression predicting strong agreement with Q21

Predictor	Adjusted OR	95% CI	Holm p
Collaboration activity (Q19)	1.32	[0.84, 2.08]	0.693
Collaborative insight (Q20)	2.33	[1.45, 3.73]	0.002
Community fulfillment (Q22)	3.59	[2.06, 6.25]	< .001

Predictor	Adjusted OR	95% CI	Holm p
Comments/reactions	2.75	[1.31, 5.79]	0.031
FOMO	1.01	[0.50, 2.04]	1.000
Interest/enjoyment	1.11	[0.52, 2.38]	1.000

Note. $n = 250$; strong agreement = Q21 score 5 ($n = 113$) versus scores 1–4. Predictors were entered simultaneously; model also controlled for gender, age category, and qualification. Substantive predictor p values were Holm-adjusted across six tests. ORs correspond to a one-point increase in a 1–5 predictor. McFadden pseudo- $R^2 = .218$.

Table 5 illustrates that in the adjusted model, collaborative insight (OR = 2.33, 95% CI [1.45, 3.73]), community fulfillment (OR = 3.59, 95% CI [2.06, 6.25]), and comments/reactions (OR = 2.75, 95% CI [1.31, 5.79]) were associated with higher odds of strongly agreeing that acknowledgment of one's ideas is satisfying. The associations survived Holm correction. Collaboration activity, FOMO, and interest/enjoyment were not independently associated after adjustment. Results were similar after excluding three identical-response records and one duplicate response record ($n = 246$). An ordinal proportional-odds model gave a similar pattern for the leading social predictors, but its proportional-odds assumption was not supported (likelihood-ratio test $p = .014$); the binary model is therefore the main adjusted analysis.

4.4 Hypothesis Assessment

H1 received partial support: all four social participation and community indicators were positively correlated with Q21 (Table 3), while collaborative insight, community fulfillment, and comments/reactions remained associated in the adjusted model and collaboration activity did not (Table 5). H2 received bivariate support (Table 3), but neither FOMO nor interest/enjoyment retained an independent association after adjustment (Table 5). H3 was supported for the reported age, qualification, and daily-use comparisons after correction for multiple testing (Table 4). These assessments are exploratory and do not imply causal effects.

5. DISCUSSION

The results indicate that a specific interpretation of UGT in this sample is the interpersonal reaction to participation and the extent to which the participants feel acknowledged matches the level of satisfaction with the practice of participation. With all the input combined, Collaborative insight, community fulfillment, and commenting each remained an association, but FOMO and interest/enjoyment did not. This trend mirrors the notion that the gratifications that can be achieved through interaction can differ from the motives for using a platform that prompted the users to join the platform (Palmgreen et al., 1980). It also aligns with research stressing specific features and activities of social media platforms, not just social media use as a singular act (Smock et al., 2011).

The positive bivariate correlation between FOMO and the acknowledgment satisfaction must be taken with a grain of salt. The adjusted model suggested that there might be an independent association between FOMO and checking and social awareness (Przybylski et al., 2013), but their data did not support such a relationship. Likewise, with interest/enjoyment, it was strongly endorsed and was only associated with Q21 alone, but not in combination with the measures of social participation. This way, the difference between a justification for using social media and an evaluation of an individual interaction is practically helpful.

There is no causal relationship set by the model between commenting/collaboration and satisfaction. The respondents who already appreciate the acknowledgment might be more inclined to comment, and both types of comments could indicate a general willingness to agree with the survey statements. This result and some of the predictors are conceptually very similar and measured in the same questionnaire. These features might enhance observed connections. The results are to be interpreted as a sample of evidence of recognition and community experience.

5.1 Limitations

There are four main limitations to the analysis. The authors report using random-number generator and distribution by means of Google Forms and Microsoft Forms by email and WhatsApp, but there is no documentation of the sampling frame, the number of invitations sent, the location, when the data were collected, and the response rate; population coverage and external validity cannot be evaluated. Secondly, the variables are all measured at one point in time and therefore no causal conclusions can be drawn, nor can temporal order be determined. Third, satisfaction was assessed using only one item relating to ideas being given and does not capture satisfaction with a platform or the complete UGT distinction between sought and obtained gratifications. Fourth, there was some modest internal consistency: The three-item self-esteem/support summary ($\alpha = .597$) was improved after reviewing item behavior; agreement responses were very clustered around the top of the scale. There is a need for additional scale development and replication of this measurement issues.

6. CONCLUSION

Social media use and motivations among 251 respondents 16- to 30-year-olds, social media use was related to multiple described motives and modes of engagement. Highest levels of satisfaction in response to having an idea recognized was most strongly related to collaborative insight, sense of belonging and comments and reactions. This result demonstrates the ability of UGT to distinguish general motives for social media use from the gratifications derived from particular interactions. Research should measure gratifications sought, gratifications obtained and satisfaction with validated multi-item measures; report sampling procedures; and longitudinally track individual users to more directly examine this sequence.

6.1 Recommendations

- Use separate, validated scales for motivation, engagement, gratifications obtained, and satisfaction in future surveys.
- Study platform features such as visibility, feedback, recommendation systems, and collaboration tools as potential conditions of gratification.
- Collect longitudinal or experience-sampling data to establish whether changes in engagement precede changes in satisfaction.

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Conflict of Interest

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