บทความสังเคราะห์งานวิจัย

Parasocial Interaction via Social Media:

Social Media Motivation and Parasocial Interaction Predicting Engagement

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In the web 2.0 era, social media is the most popular platforms that people use to associate, interact, and establish a relationship with each other. Besides friends and family, social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Line, Twitter, and YouTube also allow users to communicate with their beloved media personalities, such as celebrities, actors, singers, athletes, politicians, net idols, or even YouTubers by subscribing to them. With more intimate information about lives and works of the media figures given away via social media continually, media figures and media users can develop parasocial interaction. Parasocial interaction (PSI) is an illusionary experience that is used to explain how media audiences feel like they know their favorite media personalities or have a sense of friendship with them (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Rubin & Perse, 1987).

The main purposes of this research were to examine the influence of social media motivation and parasocial interaction on the attitudinal and behavioral engagement and to investigate the differences in genders and age groups and parasocial interaction. The uses and gratifications theory was used as a theoretical framework in this study.

The data collection used both paper-based and online questionnaires. Overall, there were 744 participants in this study. Purposive sampling was used to collect the data from participants who were Internet users, using social media platforms (Facebook, YouTube, Line, Instagram, and Twitter), and followed their favorite media figures. The measurement

involved five main sections: Social media motivation, parasocial interaction, attitudinal engagement, and behavioral engagement, and demographic and social media usage information.

The results showed that Facebook was the social media site that the participants spent time the most to keep up with their favorite media figures (158 minutes), followed by YouTube (116 minutes), Line (95 minutes), Instagram (70 minutes), and Twitter (50 minutes).

As for the relationship between social media motivation and attitudinal and behavioral engagement, the results confirmed that attitudinal engagement and behavioral engagement were affected by social media motivation and parasocial interaction. Participants who used social media for relationship maintenance, relaxation, new friendship, pass time, entertainment, and peer influence, and parasocial interaction were more likely to have attitudinal engagement with their favorite media personalities. In addition, those who used social media for relaxation, entertainment, peer influence, and parasocial interaction were also more likely to have behavioral engagement with their favorite media personalities The results also indicated that some social media motives including relaxation, entertainment, and peer influence were more likely than other motives to predict parasocial interaction and engagement.

In addition, the results indicated that the level of parasocial interaction is different among genders and age groups of the audiences. Younger groups (18-32) were more likely to engage in parasocial interaction than those who were older (33-45 and more than 45). This also confirmed a notion of parasocial interaction and demonstrated that young generations preferred using social media for parasocial interaction with their favorite media figures. Nonetheless, the results showed no gender differences and parasocial interaction.

Keywords: social media motivation, parasocial interaction, engagement, demographics