CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE AT WORK TO SOCIAL CAPITAL AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING: A COMPARISON BETWEEN CHINESE AND THAI EMPLOYEES

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Management
International College
National Institute of Development Administration
2016

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August 2016

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis	Contribution of Social Media Use at Work to Social Capital and Knowledge Sharing: A Comparison between Chinese and Thai Employees
Author	Miss Ying Mei
Degree	Master of Management
Year	2016

Efficient knowledge sharing behavior within enterprises plays a key role in increasing organizations' competitive strength and productivity. Social media is a way that provides a broader knowledge sharing platform for organizations. However, different culture backgrounds may affect employees' attitude towards knowledge sharing. This research aims to explore how social media use at work affects knowledge sharing behavior under the cross culture values between Thai and Chinese employees. Social capital was introduced as mediating effects, indicated by trust, social networking and shared language. Convenient sampling was employed to collect data from Chinese multinational corporations, 198 Chinese and 155 Thai employees participated in this study, partial least square regression was used for analyzing. After analyzing the mixed data of the two countries, positive relationship between social media use at work and all mediating variables were discovered, further, these mediating variables were all positively related to knowledge sharing, the direct relationships between social media use at work and knowledge sharing was not found. Subdividing to the two countries, the results are not so consistent with what the study assumed. This research provides practical significance for multinational corporations on developing diversification knowledge sharing strategy based on multiculturalism context.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to express my sincere thanks to the people who have offered me valuable help in my thesis writing.

Firstly, I would like to give my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Assistant Professor Dr. Peerayuth Charoensukmongkol. Without his extraordinary patience, consistent encouragement, and valuable suggestions, this thesis would not be able to achieve successfully.

Then, I would like to give my sincere appreciation to all of the committee members, Assistant Professor Dr. Vesarach Aumeboonsuke and Associate Dean of Faculty of Business and Technology of Stamford International University Dr. Ake Choonhachatrachai for their constructive comments and suggestions.

Besides, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the International College of NIDA which awarded the scholarship to me and help me study in NIDA smoothly. I would like to especially thank the Dean of International College of NIDA, Associate Professor Dr. Piboon Puriveth, who give me the strong support in studying and thesis writing. I would also like to thank the secretary of International College Ms. Hathaikarn Mclaughlin, the education specialist Ms. Somjitt Thaetiang and other staff of International College, thank for their support.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have helped me during thesis writing. Especially the Thai and Chinese employees from multinational corporations, thank for helping me doing thesis questionnaires.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my parents, family members and friends. Without their understanding and support, I would not be able to complete my master degree study. Thanks again for their help.

Ying Mei

August 2016

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Social media is an interactive community established on the basis of internet and mobile platform technology that allows participates to share information (Cao, Vogel, Guo, Liu, & Gu, 2012; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Mayfeild, 2008). The rapid growth of using social media for the purpose of sharing information has stimulated a large number of academic interests (Osatuyi, 2013; Charoensukmongkol, 2016). So far, more and more scholars are concentrating on the influence of social media in organizations (Charoensukmongkol, 2015b). For example, several scholars provided evidence that social media use intensity at work is positively associated with employees' work performance (Moqbel, Nevo, & Kock, 2013; Charoensukmongkol, 2014). One particular area of outcome related to social media use at work, which is also the main focus of the present research, is knowledge sharing. Grant (1996) found that the knowledge about work is a precious resource, which needs to share widely in organizations. Knowledge sharing is an essential process, since it can transfer employees' knowledge to other employees who can use this knowledge to enhance work performance (Zhang, De Pablos, & Xu, 2014). Regarding prior research about the role of social media on knowledge sharing, Ma and Chan (2014) identified that the perceived online commitment can affect the individuals' knowledge sharing behavior. Panahi, Sirous, Watson, Jason, Partridge, and Helen (2012) also made a thorough inquiry into the link between social media and tactic knowledge sharing. Based on the findings of Ma and Chan (2014) and Panahi, Sirous, Watson, Jason, Partridge, and Helen (2012), the factors which affect social media's influence on knowledge sharing are desired to be further explored.

1.2 Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between social media use at work and knowledge sharing behavior with the introduction of social capital as a mediating variable. According to the social capital theory, social capital can be represented by structural, cognitive, and relational dimensions (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). To be consistent with the study of Cao et al. (2012) which is the pioneer work in this area, trust, social networking, and shared language are selected in this study to represent the three aspects of social capital. This research aims to investigate whether there is a positive relationship between social media use at work and the three mediating variables, and also intends to probe whether these three mediating variables are positively associated with knowledge sharing behavior. Moreover, the study aim to explore whether the contribution of social media use at work and knowledge sharing behavior tend to be differ between Thai and Chinese sample.

Knowledge sharing is embedded in a certain behavioral and cognitive context, however, most of the knowledge management literatures are prone to presume a rather general understanding of knowledge sharing (Michailova & Hutchings, 2006).In academic research, it is evident that cultures tend to play an important role in the success of a knowledge management effort (McDermott & O'dell, 2001). Not so many scholars investigate the role of social media on knowledge sharing behavior by comparing the two countries; only a few of them focus on this field. For example, Michailova and Hutchings (2006) conducted a comparative research of knowledge sharing between Russia and China. However, the comparison studies of knowledge sharing behavior between Thailand and China are rare. To add more literature in this field, a comparative study between China and Thailand will be carried out in this study. Though, both of Thailand and China are Asian countries, there are still some culture differences between them.

1.3 Research Contribution

This study extends the research of knowledge sharing influenced by social media use. Most of the previous studies are concentrated on one country, but this study did a comparative research between China and Thailand to investigate the effects of social media use on knowledge sharing. Generally speaking, social media is really popular in these two countries. According to the statistics online, in 2015, the total number of social media users in Thailand was about 20 million. According to the 37th Statistical Report on Internet Development in China (CNNIC), by the end of 2015, the number of net citizens in China has reached 629 million. Thus, it is essential to conduct a comparative social media research in both countries. Moreover, most of the previous studies choose students as research targets, this research selected employees from multicultural corporate as the research targets. As for the practical contribution, some companies thought the social media use at work is counterproductive, but the results from this research will more evidence about the benefits that social media use at work may provide.

1.4 Organization of the Contents

The paper is arranged as follows: in the first part, the study reviewed the literature on social media use at work, social capital, and knowledge sharing. Based on these reviews and theories, hypotheses will be proposed. In the second part, the study explained the methodology about how to collect, analyze and illustrate the data. Next, the results were summarized and explained in detail. In the last part, the research provided some implications to the multinational corporate. The limitations and future study suggestions are also expanded in this part.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Media

Social media was supported by computer technology, through the virtual communities and networks that social media built, people can create, share, or swith information they want (Buetter, 2016). Social media consist of a set of tools that enable people to connect, communicate and engage in social feedback. (Hemsley & Mason, 2012). Owing to the speedy rise of social media and their users, the demand for investigating the use of social media for work purpose has aroused (Jarrahi & Sawyer, 2012). More and more researchers and practitioners are focus on the social media use in workplace. For instance, Dreher (2014) mentioned at present, the participation of employees in social media is more important than ever before since they represent a corporation's corporate image and reputation.

On the one hand, some scholars summarized the negative side of using social media at work. For example, Leftheriotis and Giannakos (2014) pointed that the social media use inside corporations is criticized for reducing productivity since employees invest immeasurable time online for entertainment. Besides, social media are regarded as time-wasters and security traps by some scholars (Turban, Bolloju, & Liang, 2011). Studies also suggested that using social media at work can excessively lower the ability to focus on work (Sriwilai & Charoensukmongkol, 2015) and can lead to job burnout (Charoensukmongkol, 2015a). On the other hand, it may be seen as a source of performance stimulus (DiMicco, Millen, Geyer, Dugan, Brownholtz, & Muller, 2008). A lot of scholars focused on the positive side of using social media at work. For example, AT&T (2008) discovered that 65 percent of employees believed that they become more productive when they allowed using social networking sites in the workplace. Others also found the use of social networking sites by organization members result in better employee productivity through higher morale (Bennett,

Owers, Pitt, & Tucker, 2010). Leidner, Koch, and Gonzalez (2010) discovered that allow employees, especially the new employees access Facebook can induce retention and the commitment to the organization, because they can promptly contact family, friends, and other colleagues in the workplace, thus, it is possible to achieve a work-life balance. In recent study, Moqbel, Nevo, and Kock (2013) found that through the mediating effect of job satisfaction, the intensity of social media use was positively related to job performance and organizational commitment. In addition, Charoensukmongkol (2014) suggested that social media use at work may not necessarily produce the negative results of work, and he also demonstrated coworker support and job demands were positively related to social media use intensity. One particular benefits of social media use at work that has been investigated in prior research recently is in the area of social capital and knowledge sharing, which will be discussed next.

2.2 Social Capital

Social capital can be defined as the resources embedded in the relationship network of individual and organization, compromising both relationships among people and the resources embedded in the relationships (McFadyen & Cannela, 2004). More straightforward, social capital is the resources for people possess through their social interactions (Lin, 2008; Putnam, Feldstein & Cohen, 2004). It is also a kind of benefit derived from one's status in a social network, the number of ties one possesses, and a resource to maintain ties among people (Wellman & Wortley, 1990). On the society and organizational level, social capital represented the norms, networks, trust and mutual understanding that bind the community members and social networks together, and motivate the participators to take more effective actions to pursue the shared goals (Schuller, Baron, & Field, 2000).

Woolcock and Naragan (2000) mentioned that the definitions of social capital were multidimensional, different standards of analyses were included. So there are some different measures for social capital, receiving a single and true measure is probably not possible (Widén-Wulff & Ginman, 2004). For the purpose of this article, the conceptualization of social capital proposed by Nahapiet and Ghoshal(1998) was

used. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) proposed that social capital consisted of three dimensions including structural dimension, cognitive dimension, and relational dimensions. Firstly, structural dimension refers to the overall pattern of affiliations between actors; in other words, it is about "who you reach and how you reach them" (Burt, 1992). Network ties, network configuration and appropriable organization can be the three main facets to represent the structural dimension (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). The most important aspect of this dimension is the network ties between people (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Secondly, cognitive dimension refers to the resources that supplying shared representation, interpretations among parties (Cicoural, 1973). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) suggested two elements to represent the facets of cognitive dimension: shared language, and shared narratives. Thirdly, relational dimension means through historic mutual interactions, people have developed the personal relationships with others (Granovetter, 1992). This concept emphasizes the particular relations people possess; for instance, friendship and respect affecting their behavior (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998).

To be consistent with prior research, trust is chosen to represent the relational dimension of social capital because it can influence each person's subsequent behaviors in the networks (Lin, 2010). Misztal (1996) defined trust as a belief, which was from one's point of view, the results of a person's intended action would be appropriate. It also demonstrated the social relationship strength which was developed through a history of prior communications among individuals (Lin, 2010). Social networking was chosen to represent the structural dimension of social capital; it revealed the relationships that people established directly or indirectly, these relations can provide socioeconomic resources for individuals (Ganley & Lampe, 2009). Information channels that social relations formed can reduce the required time and investment that needed to gather information; therefore, social capital constitutes an important source of information benefits (Nahapiet & Ghosal, 1998). Lastly, shared language is chosen to represent the cognitive dimension of social capital, since it affected our perception and enhance our combination capability (Nahapiet & Ghosal, 1998).

2.3 Social Media Use at Work and Social Capital

It is obvious that the Internet can accelerate new connection because it supplies a new way for people to reach others (Ellison, Heino, and Gibbs, 2006). These new connections may bring an increase in social capital (Ellison, Steinfild, & Lampe, 2007). At present, social media is an indispensable connect tool in society, from employees' side, it is a more convenient online platform for colleagues to keep in touch with each other (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008). Social media also let employees communicate with each other whenever and wherever they want. In addition, employees can use social media to handle work issues within or outside an organization (Skeels & Grudin, 2009). For the company's side, some scholars proved that the members of organization using social networking site can improve organizational commitment (Leidner, Koch, & Gonzalez, 2010). Hampton and Wellman (2005) concluded that computer-mediated interactions had a positive relationship with community interaction and social capital. Valenzuela, Park, and Kee (2009) also certified that social network sites use for the purpose of searching news will be positively associated with social capital. The role of social media in supporting each dimension of social capital will be discussed next.

2.3.1 Social Media Use at Work and Trust

According to Gössling's (2004), trust can be defined as the strong belief that the performance of the interaction partner will behave as they expected, warrant and complete contracts as well as juridical enforcement are not needed in the interactions. Trust is also a highlighted factor in completing group work (Edmondson, Cook, & Kramer, 2004). It is valid in decreasing contracting transaction costs (Gössling, 2004). The more exact, complete, seasonable, and effective the interaction is, the more information can be shared during the communication. In the long run, mutual trust can be achieved and higher levels of teamwork can be accomplished at the same time (Ou & Davison, 2011). If a team lack of mutual trust, it will not function effectively (Panteli & Sockalingam, 2005). However, trust is hard to accomplish in distributed environment (Leidner & Jarvenpaa, 1999). In addition, mutual trust can't develop in duplicate interaction (Gössling, 2004). Social media allows communication effectively around common interests (Spannerworks, 2009). Instant messaging included in social

networking tools is characterized by immediate massages receipting, which also permits the communication efficient and effective (Ou & Davison, 2011). Further, the communication quality of social media is positively related to mutual trust. Quality communication can make the relationships between people more tightly and familiar; as a result, mutual trust can establish (Ou & Davison, 2011). The evidence about the role of social media use and work and trust is also found in the study of Cao et al., (2015). Based on all prior evidence, the following is hypothesized:

H1: Social media use at work has positive effect on trust.

2.3.2 Social Media Use at Work and Social Networking

Social networks could be defined as the direct and indirect relationships that people established (Ganley & Lampe, 2009). Social media could enhance social networking because it is widely applied to preserve and reinforce interpersonal relations (Cao et al., 2012). DiMiao et al. (2008) pointed that social media use at work can help employees build potential ties with each other. They also pointed the main reason that motivates employees using social media is that it could provide an easier and more comfortable way for employees to communicate with each other without the embarrassing caused by face-to-face interaction. Social media also offered a way for employees to create, maintain, and strengthen their interpersonal relations within the workplace (Jackson et al., 2007) Social media is an effective social networking platform, which was widely used to maintain and strengthen external relations and the relationships between colleagues (Cao et al., 2012). Social networking involved the unequivocal links between people, and shaped a complex network of relations (Cao et al., 2012). Social media had been considered more effective in forming working relationships because of its' spontaneous and informal interaction (Harden, 2012). Moreover, the problems aroused in workplace could be easily assimilated into the interaction process in social media (Farkas, 2007). Therefore, when a large number of individuals engaged in the communication, using social media in a workplace could be a supplement to the shortage of traditional communication (Cao et al., 2012). According to Cao et al. (2012), the structural characteristics of social media produced a new and subtly way of communication, which enlarged the depth and breadth of social networking. Therefore, the hypothesis is presented as following:

H2: Social media use at work has positive effect on social networking

2.3.3 Social Media Use at Work and Shared Language

Language is a tool that people use to communicate, ask questions, exchange information and conduct collective activities (Law & Chang, 2008). The definition of shared language is broader than the language itself (Tamjidyamcholo, Baba, Tamjid, & Gholipour, 2013). It handles the necessity of day-to-day interactions such as acronyms, subtle, and underlying assumptions (Lesser & Storck, 2001). In an online community, members commonly employ the symbols, terms, and narrative forms; these factors shape their shared language which allows them to communicate effectively with others (Tamjidyamcholo et al., 2013). Further, it can also stimulate individuals to get in contact with others and to access knowledge and information from them (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Social media encourage users to form communities rapidly; and thus, they can communicate effectively because of common interests (Spannerworks, 2009). Considering the aspect of building shared language, structuring and reserving common repository of collective memory is helpful (Lesser & Storck, 2001). Social media has high reprocess ability and can also maintain history maintenance, thus, former work that correlated to the historical interactions can be easily redetected (Cao et al., 2012). Besides, Cao, Guo, Liu, and Gu (2015) concluded that this media facture could provide a cognitive map for developing shared language among employee. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H3: Social media use at work has positive effect on shared language

2.4 Social Capital and Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge was considered as a notable asset, but an asset with problems in protecting its value and its intangibility (Boisot, 1995); it can be managed when conductors embrace and nurture the dynamics of knowledge creation (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). In organization, knowledge sharing plays a fundamental role, through which employees can mutually swap their knowledge, since mutual knowledge sharing behavior can contribute to knowledge innovation as well as the ultimate competitive advantage of the organization (Wang & Noe, 2010). The knowledge sharing practices

are also very important in protecting heritage, solving problems, and creating core competences (Tsu-Te Andrew Huang & Stewart, 2010).

Knowledge is seen as socially built and embedded in the social context (Lee, Vogel, & Limayem, 2003). In particular, social capital theory illustrates that knowledge sharing happens since it provides social benefits for both the sharer and the receiver (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Some knowledge management researchers have even mentioned that social capital is a critical mechanism for bringing knowledge flows (Kim & Lee, 2010). The social dynamics derived from interpersonal and group relationships are major determinants of knowledge sharing (Van den Hooff & Huysman, 2009). Therefore, the study proposes that social capital, as represented by trust, social networking, and shared language may have some effects on knowledge sharing behavior.

2.4.1 Trust and Knowledge Sharing

In social transaction, trust plays an important role in voluntarily sharing one's knowledge with others (Soliman & Spooner, 2000). Cao et al. (2012) also mentioned, in virtual communities, trust was very important in measuring the voluntary behaviors such as knowledge integration and contribution. Trust could increase the team cohesion and enhance the cooperation among team members (Krackhardt, 1999), and could also encourage the increased shared dialogue and communication (Schippers, Den Hartog, & Koopman, 2007). As to individuals, trust enabled them to exchange information freely which was the sticking point to the successful collaboration (Robert, Dennis, & Ahuja, 2008). As a result, when individuals trust each other, they may engage in more knowledge sharing (Szulanski, Cappetta, & Jensen, 2004). Thus, the following is hypothesized:

H4: Trust is positively related to knowledge sharing

2.4.2 Social Networking and Knowledge Sharing

In knowledge management practice, it is increasingly important to access knowledge from others through one's social networking, the better people know others the more likely that they can obtain knowledge from them (Borgatti & Cross, 2003). Social networking can connect the collaboration partners for combining and

exchanging knowledge (Cao et al., 2012). Individuals who established an extensive social network will actively involve in knowledge contribution (Chow & Chan, 2008). Close personal relationships will cultivate the organization members' sense of belonging, and ensuring reliability (Kim, Song, Sambamurthy, & Lee, 2012). Hence, in a harmonious team network, individuals can be more trusted and face less uncertainty, resulting in an increased willingness among individuals to share knowledge within the team (Yu, Tsai & Chin, 2013). Reagans & McEvily (2003) also put forward that social cohesion can apply a positive effect on knowledge sharing, mainly through influencing the willingness of individuals to dedicate time and effort to assist, as well as learn from others. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Social networking is positively related to knowledge sharing

2.4.3 Shared Language and Knowledge Sharing

Brown and Duguid (2000) mentioned that the main emphasized element of cognitive social capital was shared language. In particular, shared languages can encourage explicit knowledge sharing because it makes communications easy to engage in. Leana and Van Buren (1999) also posited that shared language can help team members communicate and cooperate effectively, and could also help them express and understand shared knowledge better. Meaningful knowledge sharing requires at least some shared understandings, for instance, shared language and mutual awareness of dealing with tasks (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Shared language improves the capacity of people to acquire and share information (Szulanski, 1996).In this regard, people are more willing to participate in the knowledge integration with those who share a common set of language and communication pattern (Cao et al., 2012). Similar knowledge structures provided a cognitive map for the different parties on where and how information should be organized, therefore, increased their efficiency of combining knowledge (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Therefore, the following is hypothesized:

H6: Shared language is positively related to knowledge sharing

2.5 Social Media Use at Work and Knowledge Sharing

In addition to the mediating role of social capital discussed earlier, the research also considers the direct linkage between social media use at work and knowledge sharing. The main fame of social media is that it encourages and emphasizes the contribution of users in creation and organization of knowledge (Tredinnick, 2006). According to Ellison and Boyd (2007b), within an organization, social media provides new features of promoting the dissemination of knowledge, it also creates the opportunities to move knowledge sharing process from intermittent to continuous as they allow individuals to participate in the ongoing dialogue through organizational activity streams (Ellison & Boyd, 2013). Social media also allow the knowledge sharing process switch from pre-constructed to emergent and unscheduled process (Majchrzak Faraj, Kane, & Azad, 2013). Yate and Paquette (2011) summarized two ways that social media facilitate knowledge sharing, one was by increasing knowledge reuse within staffs, and the other was by eliminating the reliance on formed liaison structures. Cao et al. (2012) mentioned that social media were the combination of various different media, so it can supply the ideal media capabilities for knowledge transfer. According to above, the following is hypothesized:

H7: Social media use at work is positively related to knowledge sharing

2.6 The Role of National Culture

In addition to the role of social media use at work on social capital and knowledge sharing as hypothesized earlier, this research also aims to explore whether the role of social media use at work tends to be the same or different between Chinese and Thai cultures. The meaning of culture is far-ranging. In the words of Hofstede (2001), culture is the collective mental programming of the human mind. Employees have their own culture values, so even in the same enterprise, the employees' value may vary due to different national culture beliefs. Culture model describes patterns of fundamental problems that have aftermath for the functioning of individuals and groups: the conception of self; relation to authority; primary dilemmas of conflict and coping with them (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). These basic problems can be

identified in Hofstede model (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede theory is widely accepted because the classification of culture is based on measuring a large number of countries. Besides, the dimensions are simple and straightforward (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). Therefore, Hofstede's culture model can provide researchers with more profound understanding of how people from different national cultures recognize knowledge sharing motivations and form their own attitude and intentions to knowledge sharing in different ways (Wei, Stankosky, Calabrese, & Lu, 2008). Thus, in this paper, the Hofstede culture dimensions are used.

The Hofstede model differentiates the cultures in the light of five dimensions: power distance; individualism/collectivism; masculinity/femininity; uncertainty avoidance and long-/short-term orientation.

2.6.1 Power Distance

Power distance is a dimension that was used to measure the distance between less and more powerful members in institutions and organizations of a country. High power distance score countries seem to pay more attention to hierarchy and organizational structure. In high power distance countries, organizational hierarchy tends to be more rigid and centralized, decision-making rights are centralized on higher-level managers. Supervision and rules seems to be the key elements in such organizations. As to low power distance culture, Shane (1992) summarized the characteristics of low power distance organizations tend to be more organic, have high information-processing capabilities and informal communication between supervisors and subordinate. Efrat (2014) claims, such organizations are inclined to decentralize the power and the structure is more flat, with control system mainly based on trust.

2.6.2 Individualism/Collectivism

Individualism can be defined as those who only take care of themselves and their immediate family members, whereas, collectivism is people who belonging to a group and were taken care by the group in exchange for loyalty (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). In individualistic culture, people are 'I'-conscious and presuming their values is valid for the whole world (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). In contrast, in collectivistic cultures, people are 'we'-conscious, their status is based on which system they belong

in, saving face is important, so this culture formed an indirect communication style (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010).

2.6.3 Masculinity/Femininity

Masculinity indicates the dominant gender-role patterns (Efrat, 2014). The governing values in a masculine society are success and achievement (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). In masculine societies, money, ego, performance, and achievement are emphasized (Hofstede, 2001). High-MAS societies exhibit a greater trend towards innovation and invention because of achievement triggers (Shane, 1993). In the opposite direction, femininity represented an attitude that prefers modesty and cooperation (Hofstede, 2001). The dominant values in a feminine society are quality of life and concerning others (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). In feminine society, there is a greater balance between women's and men's roles (Hofstede, 2001), and use compromise and negotiation to resolve the conflicts (Evans, Hackney, & Ray, 2014).

2.6.4 Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance defines as to what extent do people feel threatened by ambiguity and uncertainty and try to stay away from these situations (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). They also proved that high uncertainty avoidance culture need rules and formality to structure life, which means, the experts under this culture tend to search for a belief and truth. In high uncertainty avoidance society, organizational cultures prefer a highly regularized conception of management and a hierarchical organizational structure (Hofstede, 2001). Whereas, low uncertainty avoidance societies tend to be more open to diversity, change and new ideas (Efrat, 2014). People within this society have a more active attitude to health (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2002).

2.6.5 Long-/Short-term Orientation

Long-/short-term orientation refers to what extent does a society displays a future-oriented perspective instead of a short-term oriented concept (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). In the long-term-oriented cultures, the main values are honesty, learning, accountability and self-discipline (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). De Mooij and Hofstede (2010) also summarized the most important values within long term

orientation culture are perseverance, thrift, and having a sense of shame. People within this culture prefer invest in life-long personal networks (‘guanxi’), leisure time is not so important in this culture (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). As to business side, they also put forward that under this culture, the managers and staff own same ambition, and their concern is market position. In short-term-oriented cultures, the main values are rights, freedom, achievement, and consider of themselves (Hofstede and Minkov, 2010). People under this culture are more focus on pursuit of happiness (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010).

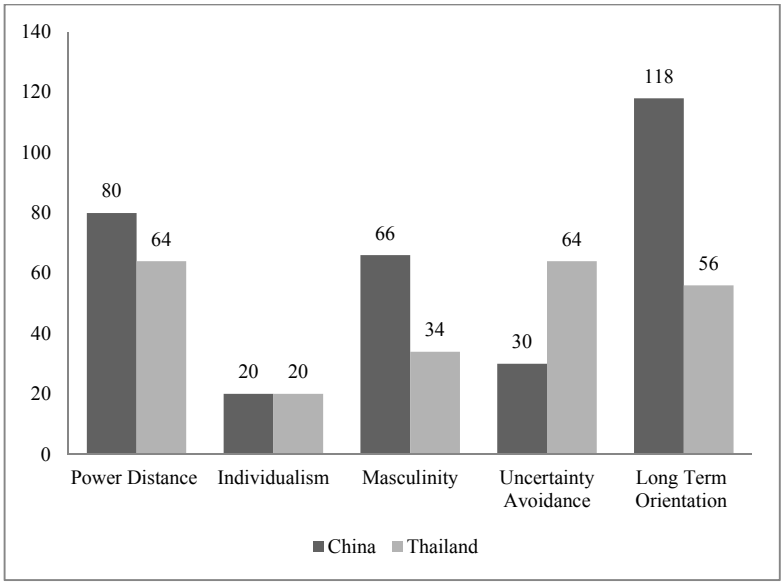

Figure2.1: Hofstede Culture Dimension between China and Thailand

2.6.6 Compare Thailand and Chinese Culture Dimension

As we can see the Figure 1, the power distance score of China is higher than Thailand (80 vs. 64), which means that the hierarchy and supervision are more rigid in Chinese culture. Thus, compared to Thai employees, Chinese employees are more prone to fear speaking openly and are less trust their coworkers, they also think tight control of their supervisors are more reasonable (Evans, Hackney, & Ray, 2014). About the uncertainty avoidance, China possesses lower uncertainty avoidance scores than Thailand (30 vs. 64). Under this circumstance, Chinese people think the ambiguous is more reasonable and acceptable compared with Thai people. In organizational settings,

the benefit of a strategic reciprocal strategy is uncertain, because there is a risk of getting valuable knowledge in return (Müller, Spiliopoulou, & Lens, 2005). Employees from low uncertainty avoidance culture are comfortable with ambiguous and more open to change, so even there are risks to sharing knowledge; they may more willing to take the risks compared to Thai employees. Based on this information, whether the role of social media use at work on social capital and knowledge sharing tend to be the same or different based on these aspects of culture differences need to be explored. This leads to the following research question:

RQ: Does the contribution of social media use at work on social capital and knowledge sharing differ or the same between Chinese and Thai employees?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample Collection

This research focus on the sample of employees from multinational corporations that have subsidiaries in Thailand and China. Convenient sampling method was used to obtain the data in this research. Self-administer questionnaire survey was used for data collection. At the beginning the employees of human resource department are contacted, and then let them distributed the questionnaire to other departments of the targeted companies. The original English version questionnaire was translated into Chinese and Thai by the native speaker. Two rounds of pilot study were conducted, the result show that the questionnaires can be clearly understood by the native speakers, no deviation was found. Total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to employees of Thai company and 155 questionnaires were returned; on the other hand, total of 250 questionnaires were distributed to employees to Chinese company, 198 questionnaires were returned. Thus, the response rates were 77.5% and 79.2% respectively. Table 3.1, 3.2 were the statistics description of the samples. Table 3.1 present the all sample statistics description, Table 3.2 represent the comparative statistics of Chinese and Thai sample.

3.2 Measures

The dependent variable knowledge sharing was measured using the five items developed from Ma and Yuen (2011). Sample items include “The advice I receive from other members using social media has increased my understanding” and “The advice I receive from other members using the social media allows me to improve the quality of similar work”.

The independent variable social media use at work was measured using the scale developed by Kankanhalli, Tan, and Wei (2005). It contains 3 items. The sample items include “I often use social media to obtain work-related information and knowledge” and “I regularly use social media to maintain and strengthen communication with colleges in my work”.

Social networking was measured using an adapted scale from Chow and Chan (2008). It consists three items. Sample items include “I have developed good relationships with my colleagues in the virtual community created by social media” and “I have built a social network with my colleagues in a virtual community created by social media”.

Trust was measured using Levin and Cross’s study (2004). Five items are included, sample items contain “I assumed that members in the virtual community created by social media would always look out for my interests” and “I felt like members in the virtual community created by social media cared what happened to me”.

Shared language was measured using a scale developed based on Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998). The scale consists three items, sample items involve “Members in the virtual community created by social media use understandable communication pattern during the discussion” and “Members in the virtual community created by social media use common terms or jargons”.

All issue items for social media use at work, trust, social networking, shared language, and knowledge were scored on the 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). All questions are summarized in the table 3.

The control variables included age, gender, and educational level and to what extent the employees use social media related to work. Age was measured in years, gender was measured as a dummy variable (females = 0; males 1), education was measured using ordinal scale *(*1 = below bachelor’s degree; 2 = bachelor’s degree; 3 = master’s degree; 4 = doctoral degree). The last variable to what extent social media use is related to work was measured using ordinal scale ranging from not related (1) to very related (5).

3.3 Analysis Strategy

This study employed the partial least-squares (PLS) regression to analyze the data. Compared to other structural equation modeling (SEM) techniques, smaller sample sizes were needed in PLS regression analysis (Chin & Newsted, 1999). It also integrated the traits of multiple regression and principal component analysis. In order to do the PLS analysis, the latest version WarpPLS version 5.0 was applied in this study (Kock, 2015). It offers a more stable and more features compared to previous versions.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Analytical Method

First, reliability test was measured by using composite reliability coefficients and Cronbach's alpha. The results were shown in Table 4.1 all the values of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability coefficients were exceeded the recommended value 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Thus, the reliability was confirmed. Secondly, the latent variables' convergent validity was tested applying factor loadings, the results are represented in Table 5, all of the results are more than the recommended value 0.5 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2009). Third, discriminate validity was tested using average variance extracted (AVE). In order to let the discriminate validity exist, each construct's square root of the AVE must more than other correlations related to that construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The results as shown in table 4.3 were all met what we expected. For the purpose of testing the possibility of multicollinearity that is to test whether variables in multiple regression models are highly relevant or not among indicators, the full Variance Inflation was performed. The full VIFs of this data varied from 1.178 to 1.485, all of them are satisfied the recommended value of 3.3 (Petter, Straub, & Rai, 2007).

4.2 Hypothesis Testing

The study use WarpPLS5.0 analysis to calculate the standardized coefficient, P-values and R-squared. Bootstrapping resembling method was used in PLS analysis with 100 subsamples as recommended by Efron (1979). The results were classified on the basis of different country; the consolidated data were also included. Table 3.7 and

3.8 represent the combined data of Thai and Chinese employees; Table 9 and 10 are the comparative data of the two countries.

In accordance with the data results, the hypotheses were summarized whether support or not as following:

Hypothesis 1 predicted a positive link between social media use at work and trust. The results for the combined sample of Thai and Chinese, as shown in the first column of Table 4.4, revealed a positive and significant relationship between these two variables (β=.392; $p<.001$). Thus, hypothesis 1 was supported for the combined sample. In the first and the second column of Table 4.5, the results also supported a positive and significant relationship between these two variables in the Chinese sample (β=.384; $p<.001$) and the Thai sample (β=.398; $p<.001$).

Hypothesis 2 predicted a positive link between social media use at work and social networking. The results for the combined sample of Thai and Chinese, as shown in the second column of Table 4.4, revealed a positive and significant relationship between these two variables (β=.681; $p<.001$). Thus, hypothesis 2 was supported for the combined sample. In the third and the fourth column of Table 4.5, the results also supported a positive and significant relationship between these two variables in the Chinese sample (β=.688; $p<.001$) and the Thai sample (β=.529; $p<.001$).

Hypothesis 3 predicted a positive link between social media use at work and shared language. The results for the combined sample of Thai and Chinese, as shown in the third column of Table 4.4, revealed a positive and significant relationship between these two variables (β=.426; $p<.001$). Thus, hypothesis 3 was supported for the combined sample. In the fifth and the sixth column of Table 4.5, the results also supported a positive and significant relationship between these two variables in the Chinese sample (β=.499; $p<.001$) and the Thai sample (β=.260; $p<.01$).

Hypothesis 4 predicted a positive link between trust and knowledge sharing. The results for the combined sample of Thai and Chinese, as shown in the first row of Table 4.6, revealed a positive and significant relationship between these two variables (β=.242; $p<.001$). Thus, hypothesis 4 was supported for the combined sample. In the first row of Table 4.7, the results also supported a positive and significant relationship between these two variables in the Chinese sample (β=.178; $p<.01$) and the Thai sample (β=.408; $p<.001$).

Hypothesis 5 predicted a positive link between social networking and knowledge sharing. As shown the second row of Table 4.6, a positive and significant relationship between these two variables was statistically significant in the combined sample (β=.169; p<.05). Also as shown in second row of Table 4.7, the results revealed a positive and significant relationship between two variables of Thai sample (β=.281, p<.01). However, as shown in the second row of Table 4.7, a positive relationship between these two variables was not statistically significant in the Chinese sample (β=.125, p=.108). Thus, hypothesis 5 was not supported only for the Chinese sample.

Hypothesis 6 predicted a positive link between shared language and knowledge sharing. The results are only supported in the combined sample and Chinese sample. As shown in the third row of Table 4.6, a positive and significant relationship between these two variables was statistically significant in the combined sample (β=.360; p<.001). Also, as shown in third row of Table 4.7, a positive and significant relationship between two variables was statistically significant in the Chinese sample (β=.496; p<.001). However, as shown in the third row of Table 4.7, the positive and significant relationship between these two variables was not statistically significant in the Thai sample (β=.138; p=.084). Thus, hypothesis 5 was not supported only for the Thai sample.

Hypothesis 7 predicted a positive relationship between social media use at work and knowledge sharing, but the results of all sample data as well as the Chinese and Thai sample data can't certify the positive relationship between them. As shown in the fourth row of Table 4.6, the positive and significant relationship between two variables is not statistically significant in the combined sample (β=.049; p=.205). Also as shown in the fourth row of Table 4.7, the positive and significant relationship between two variables is not statistically significant in both of Chinese and Thai sample (Chinese: β=.081; p=.116; Thai: β= -.097; p=.154). Thus, hypothesis 7 was not supported.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Results Summary

The purpose of this study is to delve into the relationship between social media use at work and knowledge sharing. Through observing the results by comparing the results between Chinese and Thai sample, the positive relationships between social media use at work and all mediating variables trust, social networking, and shared language are supported. These results are consistent with Cao et al., (2012)'s research. In their research, the similar results are found under the university students' backgrounds. The research also found supports about the role of social media use at work on social capital and knowledge sharing in employees' sample. The research also found the three mediating variables were all positively related to knowledge sharing. These findings are consistent with Kim, Song, Sambamurthy, and Lee (2012)'s research, they found structural, relational and cognitive social capital have the positive relationship with knowledge sharing. However, as the results described, the direct relationship between social media use at work and knowledge sharing is not discovered.

When separate the model analysis for Thai and Chinese samples, there are some inconsistency in the findings. In accordance with the results of Chinese sample, the positive relationship between social networking and knowledge sharing is not supported. Since China is a relatively high power distance country (80) than Thailand, which means the hierarchy and supervision are rigid. The members of communities created by social media in workplace are loosely connected and all employees are included in the superior-subordinate relationship. Chinese employees prone to fear speaking openly and hard to trust others. As a consequence, the social networks between employees are difficult to establish, further, knowledge transfer is not an easy

thing without mutual trust. According to the results of Thai sample, no direct relationship was found between shared language and knowledge sharing. Thailand is a high uncertainty avoidance country compared to China (64 vs. 30). The employees under this culture background cannot tolerate uncertainty situation. If uncertainty exists, it would be a barrier for communicating and forming shared language, so as to the knowledge sharing behavior.

5.2 Research Contribution

First, the research provides the contribution to prior studies on the role of social media use at work on knowledge sharing. The previous studies mainly focus on social media use at work affects knowledge sharing from the perspective of one country or from different continent, because culture differences are notable in these culture. This article conducts an inter-regional and cross-cultural research between two Asian countries, which will enrich the knowledge sharing literature. Second, this article also confirms that the social media use at work can affect the employees' knowledge sharing behavior via some mediation effects. Trust, social networking, and shared language can be the mediating variables in the future research. Third, this research proves the role of social media use at work is found to explain the social media, which in turn explains the knowledge sharing. Practically, according to the comparison research on Chinese and Thai employees, the multinational corporate especially the Chinese corporate which have subsidiaries in Thailand, they should emphasize on making different social media use policies to motivate the employees according to their culture backgrounds. As to the Thai employees, the corporate should consider avoiding the uncertainty situations, and provide a relatively stable work environment for the employees, in order to motivate the employees' enthusiasm. For the Chinese employees, the corporate should consider decrease power distance and make the structure of organizations more flat.

5.3 Limitation and Future Study Suggestion

First, convenient sampling was used in this study. Because the sample was not selected randomly, sampling bias can be possible (Waksberg, 1978). Because this study only collected data from four province of china and two province of Thailand, so the future study can extend the sample size and collect data from other regions to further develop this research. Second, the self-reported survey may also appear some bias (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2001). Third, the other variables related to corporate culture also have effect on knowledge sharing behavior (Shao, Feng, & Liu, 2012) are not considered in this study. Fourth, the types of social media applications are different between Thailand and China. Facebook and Line are popular in Thailand and these applications cannot use in China, the most popular social media applications in China are Wechat and QQ. This phenomenon may influence the analysis results.

In the future study, first, the sample size can be extending and the data can be collected from other regions to develop this research. Second, this study only use power distance and uncertainty avoidance to explain the reason why social networking and shared language are not related to knowledge sharing in Chinese and Thai sample, other Hofstede's culture dimension is not considered. So, in the future study, the other dimension can be explored to explain the reason.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

To summarize, detailed arguments suggested the relationship between social media use at work and knowledge sharing is indirectly explained by trust, social networking and shared languages. The cross-culture analysis also illustrates the difference between Thai and Chinese employees' knowledge sharing behavior, which provides an empirical evidence for corporations to build a culture-based social media use policy. The score of power distance in Chinese culture is high, thus, the hierarchy seems rigid in this culture. As to the Thai culture, the score of uncertainty avoidance is higher, so the employees who possess this culture may cannot tolerate uncertainty situations.

So when the multicultural corporations have employees from these two culture, the managers must take the different culture backgrounds into consideration, make different social media use strategies to motivate them sharing knowledge with each other. As to Chinese employees, the high power distance should take into consideration in making social media use policy. Which means, the rigid hierarchy may limit the employees using social media to share knowledge, thus, the manager should give the employees more freedom to use social media at work and the managers should also decentralize the rights to employees. Regarding to the Thai employees, uncertainty situations may obstruct their knowledge sharing. So the manager should avoid uncertainty factors in making social media use policy.

Table 3.1 All Samples Statistics Description:

Characteristics	**Descriptive Statistics**
Nationality	Thailand: 155 (44%) China: 198 (56%)
Marital Status	Single: 287 (81%) Married: 66 (19%)
Gender	Female: 217 (61%) Male: 136 (39%)
Education	Below Bachelor's degree: 11 (3%) Bachelor's degree:171 (49%) Master's degree: 163 (46%) Doctoral degree: 8 (2%)
Type of Job	Part time: 14 (4%) Full time: 339 (96%)
Work Experience(years)	0-3: 218 (62%) 4-6: 71 (20%) 7-10: 28 (8%) 11-15: 21 (6%) Over 16: 15 (4%)
Are you allowed to use social media at work?	Allowed: 323 (92%) Not allowed: 30 (8%)
To what extent the social media use related to work?	Not related: 32 (9%) Just a little: 73 (20%) Moderate: 98 (28%) Pretty much: 105 (30%) Highly related: 45 (13%)

Table 3.2 Comparative Statistics Description: Chinese and Thai Sample

Characteristic	**Descriptive Statistics**	
	Chinese Sample	Thai Sample
Age	Mean: 27.47 Standard deviation: 6.020	Mean: 29.68 Standard deviation: 5.595
Marital Status	Single: 150(76%) Married: 48(24%)	Single: 137(88%) Married: 18(12%)
Gender	Female: 131(66%) Male: 67(34%)	Female: 86(55%) Male: 69(45%)
Education	Below bachelor's degree: 8(4%) Bachelor's degree: 101 (51%) Master's degree: 84(42%) Doctoral degree: 5 (3%)	Below bachelor's degree: 3(2%) Bachelor's degree: 70(45%) Master's degree: 79(51%) Doctoral degree: 3(2%)
Type of Job	Part time: 12(6%) Full time: 186(94%)	Part time: 2(1%) Full time: 153(99%)
Work Experience (years)	0-3: 144(73%) 4-6: 28(14%) 7-10: 5(3%) 11-15: 10(5%) Over 16: 11(5%)	0-3: 74(48%) 4-6: 43(28%) 7-10: 23 (15%) 11-15:11 (7%) Over 16: 4(2%)
Social media use at work	Allowed: 172(87%) Not allowed: 26(13%)	Allowed: 151(97%) Not allowed: 4(3%)
Social media use related to work	Not related: 30 (15%) Just a little: 56(28%) Moderate: 33(17%) Pretty much: 39(20%) Highly related: 40(20%)	Not related: 2(1%) Just a little: 16 (10%) Moderate: 65 (42%) Pretty much: 66 (43%) Highly related: 6(4%)

Table 3.3: Measurement Scales

SOCIAL MEDIA USE AT WORK (Kankanhalli et al., 2005)
SW1: I often use social media to obtain work-related information and knowledge.
SW2: I regularly use social media to maintain and strengthen communication with colleges in my work.
SW3: At work, social networking sites have become part of my daily routine.
TRUST (Levin and Cross, 2004)
TRU1: I assumed that members in the virtual community created by social media would always look out for my interests.
TRU2: I assumed that members in the virtual community created by social media would go out of their ways to make sure I was not damaged or harmed.
TRU3: I felt like members in the virtual community created by social media cared what happened to me.
TRU4: I believed that members in the virtual community created by social media approached their jobs with professionalism and dedication.
TRU5: Given members in the virtual community created by social media track record, I saw no reason to doubt their competence and preparation.
SOCIAL NETWORKING (Chow and Chan, 2008)
SN1: I have developed good relationships with my colleagues in the virtual community created by social media.
SN2: I have built a social network with my colleagues in the virtual community created by social media.
SN3: I have cultivated ties with my colleagues in the virtual community created by social media.
SHARED LANGUAGE (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998)
SL1: Members in the virtual community created by social media use common terms or jargons.
SL2: Members in the virtual community created by social media use understandable communication pattern during the discussion.
SL3: Members in the virtual community created by social media use understandable narrative forms to post messages or articles.
KNOWLEDGE SHARING (Ma and Yuen, 2011)
KS1: The advice I receive from other members using the social media has increased my understanding.
KS2: The advice I receive from other members using the social media has increased my knowledge.
KS3: The advice I receive from other members using the social media allows me to complete similar tasks more efficiently.
KS4: The advice I receive from other members using the social media allows me to improve the quality of similar work.
KS5: The advice I receive from other members using the social media allows me to conduct similar tasks with greater independence

Table 4.1 Composite Reliability Coefficients and Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Indicators	**SW**	**TRU**	**SN**	**SL**	**KS**
Composite Reliability	0.879	0.900	0.918	0.882	0.933
Cronbach's Alpha	0.826	0.860	0.867	0.799	0.909

Notes: *SW= social media use at work, TRU= trust, SN= social networking, SL= shared language, KS= knowledge sharing

Table 4.2 Factor Loadings

ITEMS	**SW**	**SN**	**TRU**	**SL**	**KS**
SW1	0.824				
SW2	0.881				
SW3	0.880				
SN1		0.893			
SN2		0.873			
SN3		0.899			
TRU1			0.799		
TRU2			0.827		
TRU3			0.785		
TRU4			0.804		
TRU5			0.791		
SL1				0.818	
SL2				0.877	
SL3				0.838	
KS1					0.840
KS2					0.843
KS3					0.896
KS4					0.887
KS5					0.817

Notes: *SW= social media use at work, TRU= trust, SN= social networking, SL= shared language, KS= knowledge sharing

Table 4.3 Correlations among Latent Variable and Discriminant Validity Indicators

VA	NA	GEN	AGE	EDU	TW	SW	SN	TRU	SL	KS
NA	(1)									
GEN	.109*	(1)								
AGE	-.205***	-.064	(1)							
EDU	-.079	-.071	.006	(1)						
TW	-.151**	-.085	.090	.108*	(1)					
SW	.230***	.001	-.085	-.012	.275***	(.862)				
SN	.269***	-.007	-.097	-.071	.164*	.681***	(.889)			
TRU	.040	-.009	-.075	-.020	.235***	.434***	.611***	(.801)		
SL	.159**	.139	-.089	.008	.111*	.431***	.487***	.505***	(.845)	
KS	.248***	.040	-.073	-.014	.185***	.473***	.572***	.568***	.611***	(.857)

Notes: *Spearman correlation coefficients are reported; square roots of average variance abstracted are in parentheses.
VA=variables; NA=nationality; GEN=gender; EDU=educational level; TW=to what extent do you think social media use is related to work; SW= social media use at work, TRU= trust, SN= social networking, SL= shared language, KS= knowledge sharing

Table 4.4 All Samples Standard Coefficient and R-squared (1)

	Dependent Variable		
	Trust (1)	**Social Networking (2)**	**Shared Language (3)**
Social Media Use at Work	0.392***	0.681***	0.426***
Control Variables			
Gender	-0.003	-0.016	0.138**
Age	-0.054	-0.039	-0.045
Education	-0.030	-0.062	0.022
Social media use is related to work	0.135*	-0.015	0.007
R-square	0.206	0.470	0.208

Notes: *** p<.001; ** p<.01; * p<.05,

Table 4.5 Chinese and Thai Sample Standard Coefficient and R-squared (1)

	Dependent variable					
	Trust		**Social Networking**		**Shared Language**	
	Chinese sample (1)	**Thai sample (2)**	**Chinese sample (3)**	**Thai sample (4)**	**Chinese sample (5)**	**Thai sample (6)**
Social Media Use at Work	0.384***	0.398***	0.688***	0.529***	0.449***	0.260**
Control Variables						
Gender	0.039	-0.080	0.025	-0.127*	0.212*	-0.001
Age	-0.086*	0.028	-0.060	0.079	0.019	-0.135*
	0.009	-0.131*	-0.024	-0.170*	0.064	-0.050

Table 4.5 (continued)

	Dependent variable					
	Trust		**Social Networking**		**Shared Language**	
	Chinese sample (1)	**Thai sample (2)**	**Chinese sample (3)**	**Thai sample (4)**	**Chinese sample (5)**	**Thai sample (6)**
Education						
Social media Is related to work	0.094	0.191*	-0.038	0.171*	0.009	0.070
R-square	0.182	0.305	0.462	0.453	0.246	0.127

Notes: *** p<.001; ** p<.01; * p<.05,

Table 4.6 All Samples Standard Coefficient and R-squared (2)

	Dependent Variable
	Knowledge Sharing
Trust	0.242***
Social Networking	0.169*
Shared Language	0.360***
Social Media Use at Work	0.049
Control Variables	
Gender	-0.015
Age	0.019
Education	0.004
Social media use is related to work	0.066
R-square	0.522

Notes: *** p<.001; ** p<.01; * p<.05,

Table 4.7 Chinese and Thai Sample Standard Coefficient and R-squared (2)

	Dependent Variable	
	Knowledge Sharing	
	Chinese Sample	**Thai Sample**
Trust	0.178**	0.408***
Social Networking	0.125	0.281**
Shared Language	0.496***	0.138
Social Media Use at Work	0.081	-0.097
Control Variables		
Gender	-0.080*	0.084
Age	0.014	-0.040
Education	0.002	0.038
Social media use is related to work	0.079	0.019
R-square	0.560	0.435

Notes: *** p<.001; ** p<.01; * p<.05

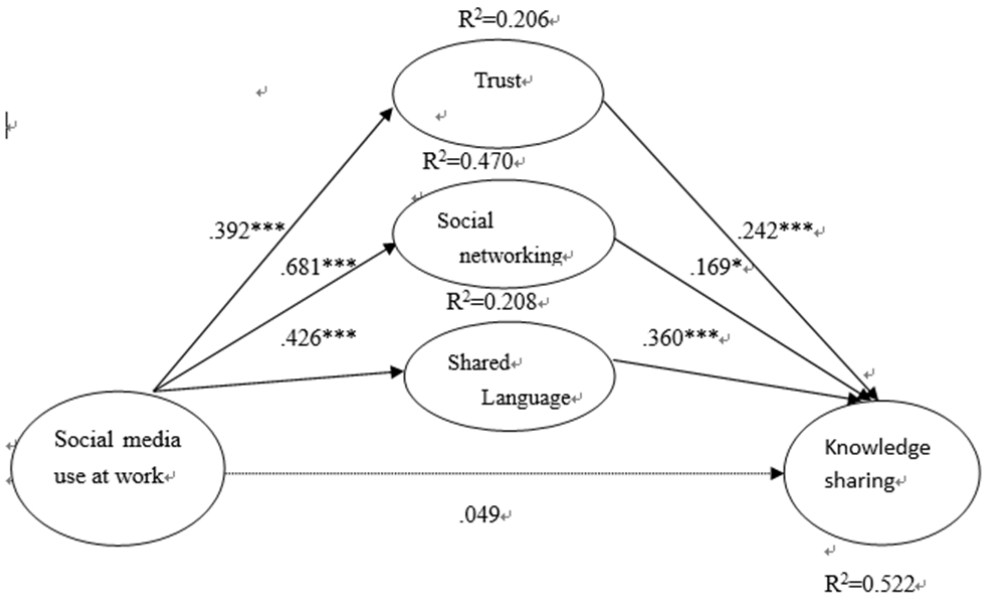

Figure 4.1: PLS Results of All Samples**:** Chinese and Thailand, Notes: *** p<.001; ** p<.01; * p<.05, solid lines represent significant results.

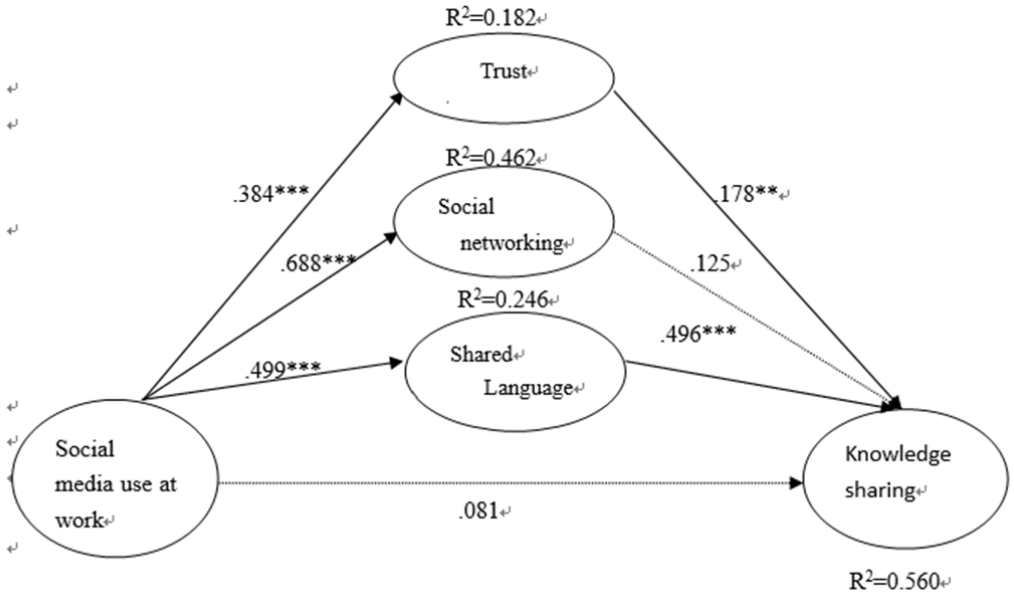

Figure 4.2: PLS Results of Chinese Sample, Notes: *** p<.001; ** p<.01; * p<.05, solid lines represent significant results.

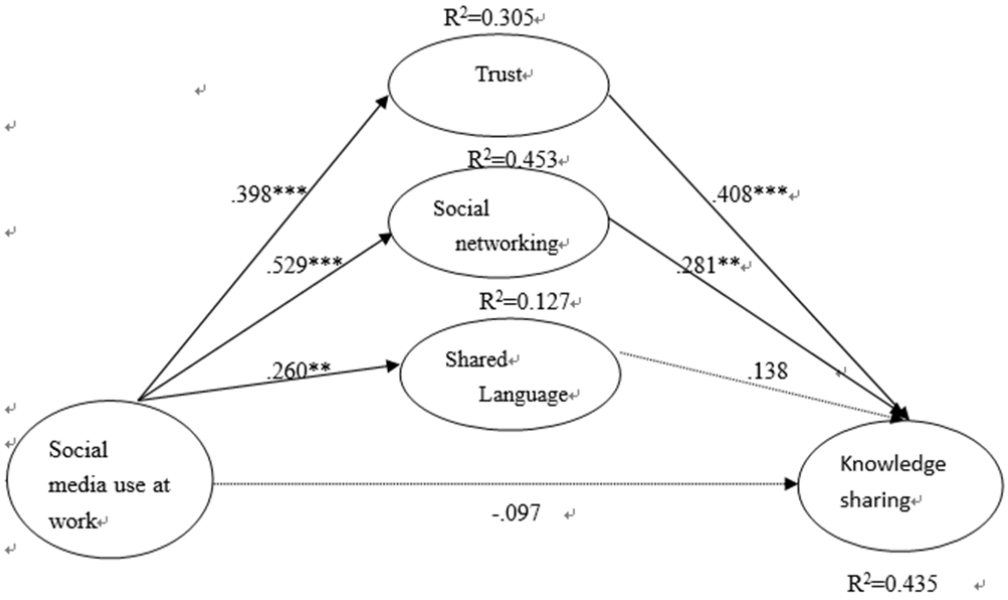

Figure 4.3: PLS Results of Thai Sample, Notes: *** p<.001; ** p<.01; * p<.05, solid lines represent significant results.

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