Suppressor Effect of Social Media Disorder on the Relationship between Social Media Use and Networking Behavior in the Workplace

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The huge expansion in the use of social networks led us to think about how companies should manipulate the use of these media for their own benefit. This article first aims to establish the relationship between two main variables: the social media use (SMU) as an independent variable and the network behavior (NB) as a dependent variable whose organizational consequences have been largely established by the literature, and then to explore the effect of a third variable: the social media disorder (SMD) on this relationship in the context of the United Arab Emirates.

Key Words: social media use; networking behavior; social media disorder

The Network can be defined as "a set of actors or nodes along with a set of ties of a specified type that link them" (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011). Network research is today an emerging paradigm in organizational research that has observed an exponential growth in the research on social networks (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011). The research on networks theory in the domain of human resource management discipline has demonstrated considerable outcomes such as career success (Wolff & Moser, 2009), attitudes towards workplace politics, self-esteem, extraversion (Forret & Dougherty, 2014), creativity (Zhou, Shin, Brass, Choi, & Zhang, 2009; Burt, 2004), and so on. Although, the existing research helped establish the legitimacy of networking theory by reporting significant outcomes variables related to Social Capital promises (Borgatti & Foster 2003), yet a less important focus has been made on the antecedents of networking itself, revealed by the lack of established relationships aiming at explaining the emergence of these networks and their proliferation.

Besides, the statistics show that 2.07 billion is the average number of monthly active users of Facebook as of September 30, 2017 (www.newsroom.fb.com) and 330 million, the number of monthly active users of Twitter by the third quarter 2017 (www.statista.com). These statistics, illustrating the huge expansion of the online social media use, drive the thinking that instead of restricting the use of such communication channels, companies should manipulate the use of private social media channels between co-workers for the organization benefits. Nevertheless, the number of studies examining the positive impact of SMU on the coworkers' behavior at the workplace remains modest (Hanna, Kee, & Robertson, 2017). Particularly, the relationship between SMU and NB requires further research

attention due to its positive individual outcomes such as career satisfaction, salary growth and job performance (Gibson, Hardy, & Buckley, 2014; Wolff & Moser, 2009; Thompson 2005; Forret & Dougherty, 2001) and career success of well-connected individuals and employee's access to information (Gibson et al., 2014).

The scope of this paper is to consider the role of social media in creating and maintaining social networks among employees in the workplace. Thus, The Social media is thought as a networked communication platform in which participants, using uniquely identifiable profiles, can publicly articulate connections that can be viewed and traversed by others, and can consume, produce and interact with user-generated content provided by their connections on the site (Liu, Kirschner & Karpinski, 2017). Users can access Social media on different platforms (mobiles or computer devices) and for different activities (Banyai et al., 2017). The five worldwide most popular social media platforms and apps displayed by the literature, and used in the current empirical study, are Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram, Youtube, LinkedIn and Twitter (Van Den Eijnden et al. 2016; Kietzmann et al., 2011).

Furthermore, in this paper, will be explored the effect of the Social Media Disorder (SMD) on the networking behavior and on the relationship between the SMU and the NB. SMD is intended here as the result of compulsive use of social media (Griffiths et al., 2017).

1. THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

1.1 Social media and Social media use

Social media refers to the collective of online communication channels and computer-mediated technologies dedicated to community-based (Thompson & Bluvshtein, 2008). The use of these channels facilitates the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Social media is normally confused with social networks. However, both are significantly different concepts. The latest is basically assumed as an act of social engagement established around human relationships that predates the emergence of internet connection. However, social media is a way everyone can create, transmit, or share information

and ideas with a broad audience on social networking sites via internet connection. Thus, we consider that social media is a tool that allows people belonging to a social network connect together and build online communities.

Throughout this paper, the social network is thought as a social structure made up of a group of individuals interacting in a given pattern. Using the social network analysis framework, the social network perspective aims at analyzing these structures and identifying the said patterns. (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

One of the important factors affecting the social networks nowadays is the use of the social media, which involves users' networking behavior and emotional connection, and the integration of this use in their daily social lives to build social capital (Verra et al., 2012). The Social Media Use (SMU) can thus be defined as the degree to which social media is integrated into the social behavior and daily routines of users and the importance of an emotional connection to this use (Jenkins-Guarnieri et al. 2013 p.39).

1.2 Networking and Networking Behavior

Before advancing the study, it is important to educate the readers about the different concepts and classifications related to the networking used in the management framework. In the literature, networking is usually defined as "a set of interrelated behaviors consistently shown by individuals, aimed at building, maintaining and using informal relationships that possess the potential benefit of facilitating work-related activities of individuals by voluntarily granting access to resources and maximizing common advantages" (Wolff, & Moser, 2009, p.197). On the other hand, networking behavior, which is the focus of the current study, basically refers to "a unified, integrated and goal-directed behavior which occurs both inside and outside of an organization, focused on creating, cultivating and utilizing interpersonal relationships" (Gibson et al., 2014 p. 150). The same concept is also apprehended as individuals' attempts to develop and maintain relationships with others who have the potential to assist them in their work or career (Forret & Dougherty, 2001).

It seems relevant at this level to highlight two distinctions drawn by the literature regarding the concept of networking: internal vs external and formal vs informal. The internal networking emphasizes the interaction with others inside the organization boundaries, whereas external networking focuses on the interaction with outsiders such as clients and suppliers (Forret & Dougherty, 2001). However, the literature has shown that internal networking has a relatively higher importance for career success than external networking (Wolff & Moser, 2009). Further, the research has also shown that external networking is associated with negative outcomes like turnover (Gibson, et al., 2014). Thus, in this study, we will focus on internal networking behavior as a healthy business indicator.

The research has also distinguished between formal and informal networks. The informal and formal networks can be distinguished based on different characteristics such as an emphasis on individuals' goals, vs organizational goals; unstructured and spontaneous vs structured and planned communication; lateral vs vertical hierarchy and physical, professional and social proximity vs formally related offices regarding communication basis (Waldstrom, 2001). Some authors refer to the informal networks as social networks and define them as the pattern or structure of associations amongst a set of actors in a network (Porter, Woo, & Campion, 2016; Monghan, Lavelle & Gunnigle, 2017). Although these two network categories may coexist and complete each other, the performances of organizations are rather determined by the informal structure (Krackhardt, 1993; De Toni & Nonino, 2010). Thus, the focus of this study lies on informal networks.

Furthermore, whereas a vast amount of literature focused on the consequences of networking behavior such as turnover (Porter et al., 2016), creativity (Burt, 2004), career success, job satisfaction (Wolff & Moser, 2009), few studies have been published on the causes of network emergence or change over time (Borgatti & Foster, 2003). Considering NB as a dependent variable, this study attempts to enhance the understanding of the factors precursor to the emergence and evolution of the networking behavior.

1.3 Network theory or theory of networks

Despite a significant criticism (Salancik, 1995), the social networking analysis has gained increasing attention of the researchers in the organizational research (Borgatti & Foster, 2003). The organizational research on networking has distinguished between two main domains of social network analysis: the network theory and the theory of networks. The first one refers to "the mechanisms and processes that interact with network structures to yield certain outcomes for individuals and groups", the second refers

to "the processes that determine why networks have the structure they do". As the current research aims at investigating the effect of social media use as antecedent to the emergence and evolution of the networking behavior, this study finds its theoretical foundation in the second domain of social network analysis: the network theory (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011).

1.4 Social media use and social media disorder

When analyzing Social Media or Internet Disorder, many authors identify addiction as problematic and pathological behavior resulting from the overuse of social media. SM addicted means for an individual, to be overly concerned about SM, to be driven by a strong motivation to log on to or use SM and to devote so much time and effort to the SM (Schou, Andreassen, 2015). This addiction can be determined by a range of symptoms including Mood modification, salience, tolerance, withdrawal symptoms, conflict, and relapse, increased by depression and anxiety. (Griffiths, 2005; Banyai et al., 2017; Primack, et al., 2017). Moreover, some studies used the psychology field to explore the relationship between personality characteristics and social media addiction through namely the Big-five personality model. They talk about an online social network obsessive-compulsive disorder resulting from the positive feelings obtained from the sense of connectedness and establish a full mediation relationship between SMU and SMD. (Andreassen, 2015; James et al., 2017)

1.5 Social Media Use and Networking Behavior: A Novel Insight

Therefore, as per the NB definition, in this study, we remain at an individual level of analysis (vs organizational level) and we hypothesize that the use of SM in the workplace is positively associated with networking behavior in that the use of these channels facilitates the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks (Kietzmann et al., 2011) inside the organization aimed at building, maintaining and using informal relationships that facilitate work-related activities of individuals within the workplace (Wolff & Moser, 2009; Porter, Woo, & Campion, 2016). NB being considered as our dependent variable.

The use of private Social media channels is central to the organizational lives of most managers, staff, and employees, but the implications of social media use on psychological adjustment are not well

understood. In most studies, social media can refer to internet applications that enable users to generate and exchange content with others (Kaplan, and Haenlein, 2010). The use of Social media is becoming increasingly more prominent in our lives. More and more individuals, groups, and organizations are joining and using social media networks as a primary means for communication (Jenkins-Guarnieri, Wright, & Johnson, 2013).

In this study, we attempt to explain the positive relationship between Social Media Use and Networking Behavior to extend the existing scholarship about positive outcomes of social media usage. Contrary to the negative assumptions of the uses of social media within the workplace, McAfee, 2009 claimed that social media can promote positive dynamics at the workplace by reinforcing positive connections between colleagues using different social media. Similarly, Browning, Morris, and Kee, (2011) found that using social media can be a form of engagement for organization members. They argued "By engaging in dialogue with other members, sharing information, building public goods, and becoming engaged, individuals involve themselves substantively and symbolically in the sense-making activities of the organization and move closer together in the sense of a more common understanding and a greater sense of belonging to the organizational community" (Browning, Morris, and Kee, 2011 p.572).

Based on previous arguments, we hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: Social Media Use is positively associated with networking behavior.

1.6 Social Media Disorder and Networking Behavior

Ryan at al. (2014) recognize that the field of SMD is relatively young and transmit the definition of Peng, Kim, and LaRose (2010) who define Social Network Sites addiction as a failure to regulate usage, which leads to negative personal outcomes. The majority of preliminary studies in this field focused primarily on Social Media addiction amongst teenagers, adolescent and emerging adults, and considered that for this age group, the use of Social Media is outright thought as a way of being and that the excessive use of these social network sites may lead to addiction (Griffiths, 2005; Peng, W et al., 2010; Griffiths & Kuss, 2011; Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). More recent research revealed noticeable differences in terms of social and psychological well-being associated with SMU, amongst young and mature

adults, and demonstrated that the latest group are more vulnerable in that the use of social media has detrimental consequences on their well-being (Teo, and Lee, 2016; Griffiths & Kuss, 2017). Vanucci, Flannery and Ohannessian, 2017 establish the link between "higher daily social media use" and anxiety and stress. Other studies highlighted the effect of the risks of the misuse of such electronic systems in the workplace on organization productivity and reputation (Cilliers, 2013). In the current study, we will focus on the relationship between the SMD and the NB among employees in the workplace. Networking behavior being considered as a unified, integrated and goal-directed behavior which occurs inside the organization, focused on creating, cultivating and utilizing interpersonal relationships earlier in this paper as a healthy business indicator. And we suppose that the existence of Social Media Disorder in the company hinders the emersion of NB.

Hypothesis 2: SMD is negatively linked to Networking Behavior.

1.7 Suppressor Effect of Social Media Disorder

Social media disorder is a negative construct that involves the failure of an individual to regulate the use of social media resulting in negative individual outcomes (Ryan et al., 2014). One of such negative likely personal outcome may reduce the networking capacity. Thus, we consider the SMD as a suppressor variable and we suppose that SMD existence disturbs the establishment of a positive link between SMU and NB.

Hypothesis 3: SMD suppresses the effect of SMU on NB such that the relationship between SMU and NB is weaker in the presence of SMD.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Design, Procedure, and Sample

The unit of analysis consisted of working professionals enrolled in executive education programs in a private Higher Education Institution (HEI) located at Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Ethical approval for data collection from the unit analysis was obtained from the "Research Department" of the HEI. The consent of students was obtained through a cover letter that also ensured the confidentiality

of the data obtained through the questionnaire. The students were accessed in the classrooms and were requested to complete the questionnaire. The students were provided a briefing about filling the questionnaire. Different rating anchors for each measure were used to avoid common method bias (Podsakoff, et al. 2003). The data were collected using a paper-pencil questionnaire through a purposive sampling method. Particularly the respondents were requested to rate their networking behavior during the last two weeks. The respondents were requested to participate in the study. Initially, 300 respondents agreed. In total, 170 completed questionnaires were returned. The response ratio was 78%. After removing 36 incomplete surveys, 134 complete valid responses were used for data analysis purpose.

2.2 Measures

3.1.1 Independent Variable: Social Media Use

Social Media Use was measured using a 10-item scale developed by Jenkins-Guarnieri, Wright, and Johnson (2013). The sample item was: 'I feel disconnected from friends when I have not logged into social media'. One of the items in the scale was reverse so we removed this item. The reliability of the scale (croanbach alpha) was 0.895.

2.2.2 Suppressor Variable: Social Media Disorder

Social Media Disorder was measured using a 9-item scale developed by van den Eijnden, Lemmense and Valkenburg (2016). The sample item was: 'During the last month, have you often felt bad when you could not use social media?' The reliability of the scale (croanbach alpha) was 0.857.

2.2.3 Dependent Variable: Networking Behavior

Networking having been referred to as "a set of actors connected by a set of ties" (Borgatti & Foster 2003). These ties have been categorized into two basic types: state-type ties and event-type ties. The state-type ties characterized by their continuity and persistence over time. This type of ties is characterized as in terms of strength, intensity, and duration, which can be distinguished as kinship ties, role-based ties, cognitive and affective ties. On the other hand, the event-type ties have transitory nature and can be counted over periods of time. This type of ties can be characterized in terms of frequency of occurrence of interactions and transactions (Borgatti & Halgin 2011). In order to be more

comprehensive, in this study we measured networking behavior through a scale that contains both statetype and event-type ties.

Networking Behavior was measured using a 12-item scale developed by Forret, and Dougherty (2010). The sample item was: 'Within the last month, how often have you given business contacts a phone call to keep in touch? The reliability of the scale (croanbach alpha) was 0.917.

2.2.4 Control Variables

We controlled for the effect of business networking on the networking behavior of the employees. The business networking was measured using 6-items scale developed by (Lau and Bruton, 2011; Yiu et al., 2007). We requested the respondents to provide us the rating of how close they are with different categories of people and stakeholders (e.g. government officials). The respondents provided their ratings on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'not at all' to 'extremely familiar.' The reliability of the scale was 0.88.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

3.1 Analytical Strategy

We conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS to examine the factorial validity of the measures used in the current study. The fit indices used to analyze the adequacy of the model included chi-square minimum difference (CMIN/DF), Comparative fit indices (CFI), Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). An ideal model fit requires that the value of CMIN/Df should be less than 3, the value of CFI should be greater than 0.90 and the value of RMSEA must be less than 0.05. The initial CFA model did not demonstrate an adequate fit. After removing four items of social media disorder scale due to the loading on social media usage and removing four items of social media use and 8 items of networking behavior scale due to factor loadings less than 0.40, the three-factor CFA model (i.e., social networking, networking behavior and social media disorder) indicated good fit with the data as the obtained values were extremely close to the model fit values (CMIN/Df = 1.593; CFI = 0.88; RMSEA = 0.066). We used the standardized regression weights and the correlations obtained

from the final CFA model to interpret the convergent and discriminant validity using an excel sheet developed by James Gaskin (http://statwiki.kolobkreations.com/index.php?title=Main_Page). The values of the critical ratio (CR), Average Variance Explained (AVE), MSV and the correlations demonstrate statistical evidence for the discriminant and convergent validity of the scales used in the current study (Refer to table 1 Discriminant and Convergent Validity of the Scales.)

3.2 Hypothesis Testing

Finally, we examined the statistical results for the hypothesized relationships of the current study using a structural regression model. This structural regression model contained social media use as an independent variable, networking behavior as a dependent variable, social media disorder as a suppressor variable and business networking as a control variable. The results of this structural regression model demonstrated that social media use was positively associated with social media disorder ($\beta = 0.521$; p < .001). This result supports the first hypothesis (H1) of the study. The second hypothesis of the current study stated that social media disorder is negatively associated with networking behavior. However, the statistical results of the study demonstrated that the association of social media disorder with networking behavior was positive and insignificant ($\beta = 0.263$; p > .05). Although these results did not demonstrate statistical support for the second hypothesis (H2) of the current study yet this satisfied a key condition of the suppressor effect that the suppressor variable is not significantly associated with the dependent variable.

The key objective of this study was to examine the suppressor effect of social media disorder on the relationship between social media use and networking behavior. Contrary to the mediator or confounding variables, a variable can be called as a suppressor when its statistical removal results in an increase in the magnitude of the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variables (MacKinnon, Krul and Lockwood, 2000).

To examine this condition of the suppressor effect, we examine the direct relationship between social media use and networking behavior by testing a separate structural regression model. This structural regression model (CMIN/Df = 1.593; CFI = 0.88; RMSEA = 0.066) demonstrated that the direct relationship between social media use and networking was positive but insignificant (β = 0.07; p > .05).

Further, the results also demonstrated that the direct effect of social media use on networking behavior reduced and became negative in presence of social media disorder (β = -0.12; p > .05). The total difference in the beta coefficient of the relationship between social media use in the presence of social media disorder and in the absence of social media disorder was -0.19(-0.12 - 0.07). In order to check the significance of this difference between direct effect in the presence of social media disorder and in the absence of social media disorder, we performed Sobel test (Sobel, 1982). The results demonstrated that the difference in the coefficient for direct effect in presence of social media use and in the absence of social media use was significant (t= 2.255; Standard error = 0.061; p<0.05). This represented that the direct effect of social media use on networking behavior increases upon the removal of social media disorder (β =0.07; p > .05). This represents that social media disorder suppresses the effect of social media use on networking behavior. This supported the third hypothesis (H3) of the current study.

4. DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

4.1. Discussion and Theoretical Implications

The existing research has supported significant contribution of social media usage for organizational members in managing their professional collaborations. The negative affective consequences of social media usage reported in the recent stream of research (e.g. anxiety (Vannucci, et al., 2017), depressive symptoms (Nesi & Prinstein, 2015), negative self-evaluation (Andreassen, Pallesen, & Griffiths, 2017); van den Eijnden, et al., 2016) outweigh the positive affective outcomes of SMU (Ryan, et al., 2014; Hanna, et al., 2017). These conflicting findings demonstrate a need to understand the conditions underwhich SMU brings positive and/or negative consequences. Particularly, there is limited research has examined the situtaions under which a negative social media outcome may suppress/mitigate the effect of social media usage on some positive organizational outcomes. Unfortunately, existing research has paid little attention to this aspect. This investigation has offered its theoretical contribution in four important ways.

First, based on network theory (Borgatti & Halgin 2011), this study has tested a hypothetical model that offered a psychological explanation about the conditions of social media disorder under which the effect

of social media use on networking behavior of employees is mitigated. Some recent investigations have emphasized on internal individual characteristics(e.g. individuals' motivation Lai, 2019) as boundary conditions which may regulate the positive or negative consequences of SMU. However, the studies have largely ignored those key aspects of an individuals' internal psychological characteristics which define the pattern of their behaviors regarding SMU. SMD is based on addiction(van den Eijnden, Lemmens, & Valkenburg, 2016) that may determine the behavioral pattern of a social media addicted individuals. By advancing research on SMU and networking behavior (a positive outcome of SMU), this study has theoretically contributed to the existing research on SMU by introducing SMD as a boundary condition that may suppress/mitigate the positive relationship between SMU on networking behavior. In a sample of 134 UAE national employees, this study found a significant suppressor effect of social media disorder on the relationship between social media usage and networking behavior of employees such that the relationship weakens significantly under the conditions of high social media disorder. This finding advances social media usage literature by providing an explanation about the conditions under which the positive outcomes of SMU may be suppressed.

Second, although not a theoretically significant contribution, yet, this study has also found the positive relationship between SMU and SMD. This finding confirms the existing perspective that SMD is an outcome of excessive use of social media (van den Eijnden, Lemmens, & Valkenburg, 2016). This finding explains that how social media usage leads to negative psychological issues. Deriving the statistical results from a sample of United Arab Emirates, this study has theoretically contributed in the existing research by highlighting the social media use as a significant predictor of social media disorder. Supporting the view of Peng et al. (2010), the current study has confirmed that the overindulgence in the social media leads towards an addiction and/or disorder. Social media disorder (Ryan et al., 2014) is a relatively new concept which represents an individual's addiction to the social network sites (Peng, et al., 2010). These findings demonstrate that the excess use of social media is fatal for the psychological health of an individual although it is not directly affecting their networking behavior.

Third, this study has found an insignificant association between social media disorder and networking behavior. This finding is opposite to our expectations because we expected a negative association between social media disorder and networking behavior. This result explains that social media disorder is not a significant contributor towards the networking behavior among the professionals. This finding may represent that networking behavior is not specific to social media. Hence, SMD or an addictive or excessive use of social media is not a necessary condition for networking behavior of an individual. These findings comply with a the results of a recent study that has found that demonstrated that facebook deactivation reduced social media activities among US facebook users while increasing their offline activities like watching TV and socializing with family and friends (Allcott, Braghieri, Eichmeyer, & Gentzkow, 2019). This demonstrates that offline activities like socializing with friends (Allcott et al., 2019) may have a more significant role in networking behavior of an employee as compared to the online social media usage.

Fourth, some theorists (McAfee, 2009; Cameron & Spreitzer, 2013) have supported significant role of social media usage for stimulating positive connections among the organizational members at the workplace. However, the current study has found an insignificant positive association between Social Media Use and Networking Behavior. Hence, this study does not support a significant direct positive association between social media usage and networking behavior. This finding brings our attentions toward a different direction, particularly, towards some missing connection (like tendency of establishing interpersonal relationships and personality attributes (openness)) through which the direct association between social media usage may be indirectly linked to networking behavior.

4.2 Practical Implications and Future Research

This study offers some practical implications and future research recommendations based on its findings. There is a general understanding that, perhaps, networking behavior may be an organizationally desired behavior only and the companies may encourage the use of social media to enhance networking behavior among their employees. The significant relationship between SMU and NB demonstrates that SMU may appear an organizationally desired practice for organizational members to enhance networking behavior of their employees. However, an insignificant relationship between SMD and NB demonstrates that the organizational members need to encourage SMU to a specific limit because an excessive use of SMU turns into SMD that may no longer encourage networking behavior.

While the researchers may investigate the nature of relationship between SMU and NB (i.e. linear vs non –linear), using some longitudinal research designs, to identify the limit to which the SMU doesn't turn into SMD and keeps on contributing to the NB of employees positively. Based on Allcott's (2019) findings that facebook deactivation enhances offline activities like socializing with family and friends, we believe that offline social media activities may have a more significant effect on networking behavior of employees as compared to the online social media activities. Hence, recommend that future research may compare the effect of online SMU with the effect of offline social media activities on networking behavior. Hence, the type of social media activities may be introduced as a moderator between SMU and NB.

Conclusion

To summarize, through this research, our goal was to establish a relationship between two main variables: Social Media Use as an independent variable, and Networking Behavior as a dependent one, and to show the suppressor effect of a third variable: Social Media Disorder. The empirical study confirmed that social media usage is positively associated with both social media disorder as well as the networking behavior. Similarly, this study has also confirmed that social media disorder suppresses that effect of social media usage on networking behavior of employees.

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TABLES

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	SMU	NBM	SDM	BN
SMU	0.859	0.504	0.286	0.861	0.710			
NBM	0.873	0.635	0.558	0.894	0.073	0.797		
SDM	0.792	0.664	0.286	0.919	0.535	0.357	0.815	
BN	0.882	0.601	0.558	0.888	0.071	0.747	0.226	0.775

Table 1: Discriminant and Convergent Validity of the Scales