

Publication trends related to Uses and Gratification Theory on social media

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ABSTRACT

This analysis aims to analyze publication trends related to the Uses and Gratification Theory and social media in Scopus Journal Articles from 2019-2021. The Uses and Gratification Theory analyzes the genuine social and psychological needs that generate expectations for social media use. Nearly 50 years after, the Uses and Gratification Theory in today's research is often used in social media. According to the result, most Uses and Gratification Theory articles came from the USA, followed by China, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, and India. Meanwhile, the top five most used keywords are social media (n=130), uses and gratifications (n=68), uses and gratifications theory (n=41), Facebook (n=26), and uses and gratification theory (n=18). To conclude, these number shows the trends of publication related to Uses and Gratification Theory, mostly about social media spanning from 2019-2021. Facebook is the social media most often mentioned, but in the future, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok, as younger media, could be used as an alternative research object. It also suggested the theme of fake news and its spread, entertainment satisfaction, the rise of mobile entertainment today, and artificial intelligence in media use.

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1. Introduction

Social media has become a communication tool that is growing according to human needs. Suddenly, everyone quickly uses the device to suit their hobbies and needs and also to gather information [1][2]. Chesher stated that social media that is accessed using smartphones is individual, resulting in everything taken using this device being directly related both from the point of view and the user experience in their daily lives [3]. Internet and social media are, without question, become one critical source of information on almost everything [4]. It has been a subject of extensive research that covered areas such as trends [5], sentiment [6], misinformation [7] and others. With these new habits of communication, the research about social media has become larger too, and there's many method to analyze the phenomena on social media.

One of the theories that are used and compatible in today's condition is Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT), which has been modified over 50 years. Compared to other theories, UGT is unique for analyzing social media phenomena because it has relevance with digital media related to everyday life and has the variety of needs and the audience required to be active [8].

A review of previous research primarily suggests that UGT specify in these five categories such as includes the following components including information [9], relaxation [10], convenience [11],

entertainment [12], and social interaction [13]. But then, Kaur et al., in their research, added one category called financial benefit, which means platform users will get bundling or cheaper packages to make it more affordable to them [14]. All these years, the research about UGT mainly discussed these categories and aimed to know how the audience chooses media for their needs. In recent research in 2019, UGT used to understand how people use apps for food delivery orders. This study found eight gratifications that had never been mentioned before in the five categories of UGT such as convenience, societal pressure, customer experience, delivery experience, a search of restaurants, quality control, listing, and ease-of-use [15]. Other research in 2022 about UGT in the context of online photo sharing on Instagram. The result reveals seven gratifications: disclosure, peer influence, trend influence, self-promotion, diversion, habitual pastime, and social interaction [16]. Further research using UGT to study the reasons why teenagers always use social media [17] and also study the effect of social media use [18].

Recent studies on UGT have always wanted to know the reasons behind audience use of media but have never explored how UGT has been used so far. This research will try to trace what analysis was carried out during 2019-2022 to find a result that can conclude which themes scholars have not explored. The author gathers the data from Scopus (<http://www.scopus.com>) with limitations on Social Media and UGT. Publication trends related to these two themes can be used as a mapping and reference for other researchers developing ideas in response to these patterns. The aim of this article is to mapping the trends, and then would like to analyze which country did the most research related to Uses and Gratification Theory and find gaps within the mapping for future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Uses and Gratification Theory

The media theory in the early days suggested that the audience was passive; hence the theory was called Hypodermic Needle Theory, which mimics the doctor who injects a vaccine into the patient. Firstly introduced in 1944, the Uses and Gratification Theory focused the study on finding the reason behind every choice of audience related to particular media. On the progress in 1954, UGT was used as a tool to examine needs and motivation. Still, later in 1964, it was used to investigate audience intention to watch specific programs on TV and to understand how audiences view the mass media.

Uses and Gratification later developed in the early 1970s that describe the significant social theory about how and why people choose specific media platforms to meet their requirements. Katz views every audience as an active user and always have a reason to use media to satisfy their need. Uses and Gratification theory want to explains why people satisfy certain need and how they do it [19]. This theory suggests that people freely and consciously choose their type of platform usage to meet their necessities [20][21]. The current study aims to explore UGT for two main reasons. First, UGT is always used to understand the audience's reasons and motives for their choice of media but very rarely uses mapping so that it becomes less known which countries and what themes predominate. Second, UGT and social media have been highly intertwined in recent years. So that with this mapping, further research on UGT and social media will be known for further research.

2.2. Bibliometrix

Bibliometrix is an open-source tool for executing comprehensive scientific literature as it counts as science mapping analysis. It was programmed inside R software to facilitate statistical and graphical packages as an integrated piece. We have designed and produced an R-tool for comprehensive bibliometric analyses [22]. Boyack and Klavans argue that science mapping works to combine classification with visualization [23]. This argument is strengthened by Medina & Leeuwen, who state that science mapping uses bibliometric methods to examine how disciplines, fields, specializations, and individual papers are related. Science mapping produces a spatial representation of findings similar to geographic maps and provides data visualization [24]. The aim is to create a representation of the research area's structure by partitioning elements (documents, authors, journals, words) into different groups. Visualization is then used to create a visual representation of the classification that emerges [25].

3. Method

This research is an analytical bibliometric study of publication trends related to the Uses and Gratification Theory and social media. The database was retrieved from Scopus (<http://www.scopus.com>) on 4/9/2022, with the limitation year from 2019 to 2022. Then, the data were analyzed with the R-based software. Biblioshiny app [22] can be downloaded freely from: <https://bibliometrix.org/>. The software uses for data processing and also visualizing with some graphics, and the author needs to describe the data based on the visual. The database also contains information for up to 328 articles and must be a journal article in English. These analytical methods are called the science mapping approach consisting of bibliometric search, scientometric analysis, and qualitative discussion [26].

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Annual Scientific Production and Three-field plot analyses

Figure 1 shows the Annual Scientific Production based on data taken from Scopus in the 2019-2021 timespan.

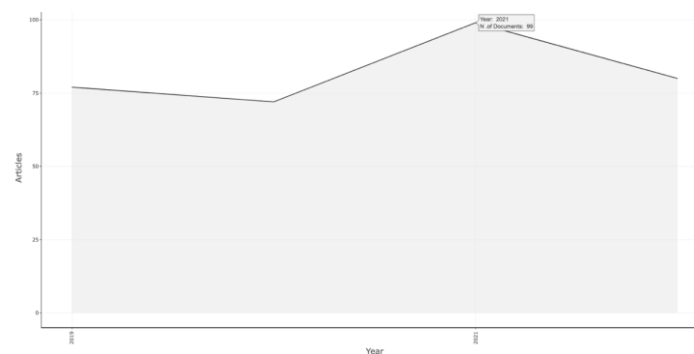


Fig. 1. Annual Scientific Production

Figure 2 shows a three-field plot correlation divided into three parts: author, author's country, and keywords from the articles.

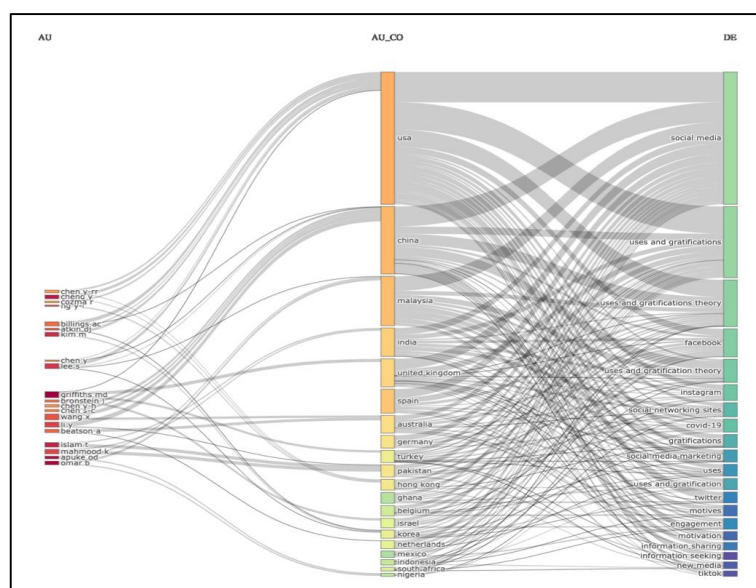


Fig. 2. Three-field plot correlations related to Uses and Gratification Theory on Social Media.

Based on Fig. 1, the highest year of article production is in 2021, at the number of 99 articles, a growth of 1,28% from 2020 with 72 articles. The 2022 year shows that Scopus already have 80 articles published even though the year is not finished yet, so there is a big chance to surpass the 2021 publication related to social media and UGT.

Using a three-field plot analysis, Fig. 2 shows the correlations between the three units set under certain conditions, which are author, author's country, and keywords. These three-field plot analyses all use set number 20 that displays the most emerging author, author's country, and keywords in 2019-2021. The size of each rectangle indicates these three categories connected by grey associated with each element in each list. On the left side, we have the author's name, and in the middle (AU_CO) is the focal point of this three-field plot. Between 2019 and 2021, the top 5 countries are shown, with the USA having the most articles, followed by China, Malaysia, India, and the U.K. Furthermore, Fig. 1 illustrates the five most frequently published themes related to social media and UGT in Scopus Journal, represented by a green rectangle (D.E.). Social media takes the most keywords from this diagram (n=292); this may cause that UGT has been known for its use to analyze social media theme research. Uses and Gratification come second, third, and fifth; even though there are differences in the mention, it can be said that these three keywords are still in the same scope. Facebook is tucked between the keywords in the fourth position (n=62). With this stat, we can see that social media research has an increasing trend from year to year, along with the rising number of social media users [27]. The larger the rectangle indicates, the more research themes appear; thus, this study described a popular research theme. Indonesia, the author's country and also the fourth most significant social media user, does not contribute many articles about the UGT study, so this is one of the gaps that researchers in Indonesia can explore.

4.2. The Author's Contribution

From the data shown in figure 3, analyze who the top 15 authors influenced the articles related to social media and UGT research. According to the data, Buhalis D [28] ranks first with a total of 199 citations, and uniquely, this article discusses tourism and hospitality, not discussing social media but having a tremendous impact on the development of UGT research. The second most cited is Apuke O [29] with the research about fake news on Covid-19 that was shared between social media users with 187 citations. Next is Abbas J [30] on the third most cited document, with 151 quotations for the research about the impact of social media on learning behaviour and sustainable education in Pakistan.

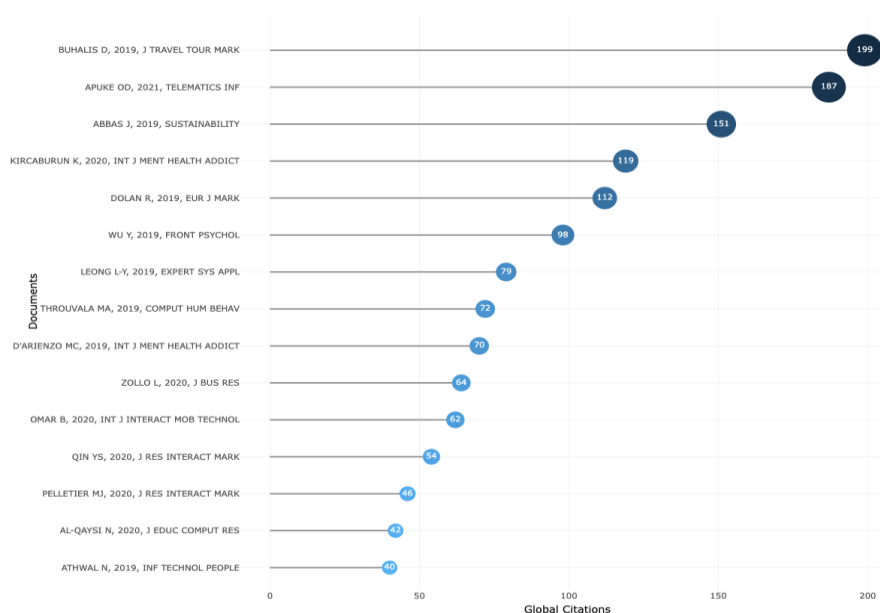


Fig. 3. Author's most globally cited documents.

Kircaburun's [31] study on UGT related to social media problems among university students, which also analyses the five personality traits and motives for using social media in this research with 119 citations, came in the fourth most cited document. Finally, Dolan's research titled A framework

for engaging customers through social media content [32] has 112 mentions as the top five most cited documents globally. Based on this data, we can see that 3 out of 5 most cited documents globally are about social media and UGT. Indeed, this discovery is extraordinary that the author receives many citations in the future year, which will continue to rise.

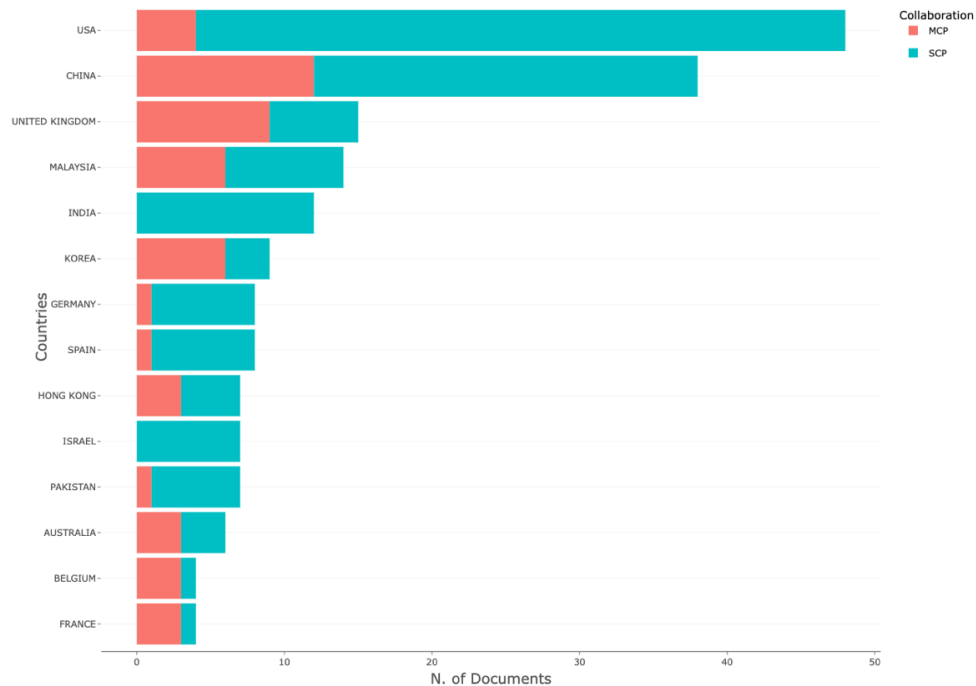


Fig. 4. Single country publications and multiple country publications

The other aspect of the author that needs to look at is the writing collaboration. Fig. 4 shows Single Country Publications (SCP) and Multiple Country Publications (MCP) in the Scopus articles related to social media and UGT research. This will indicate international communication between researchers in a scientific discipline between countries. Furthermore, the advanced technology encourages the author to contact another author in a country with a high level of collaboration to research in the same field. According to the database, the top five countries with the most SCPs are the USA, China, India, Malaysia, and Germany. Meanwhile, based on the MCP data, China has the most MCP with 12 articles, the United Kingdom has 9 articles, Malaysia and Korea have 8 articles, and the USA has 4 articles. USA is the most SCP article but came fifth on MCP; this indicates that articles from the USA rarely include the author from another country, and this gap may be complete in the future.

4.3. The Most Frequent Keywords and Future Research Based on The Journal's Aim Scope

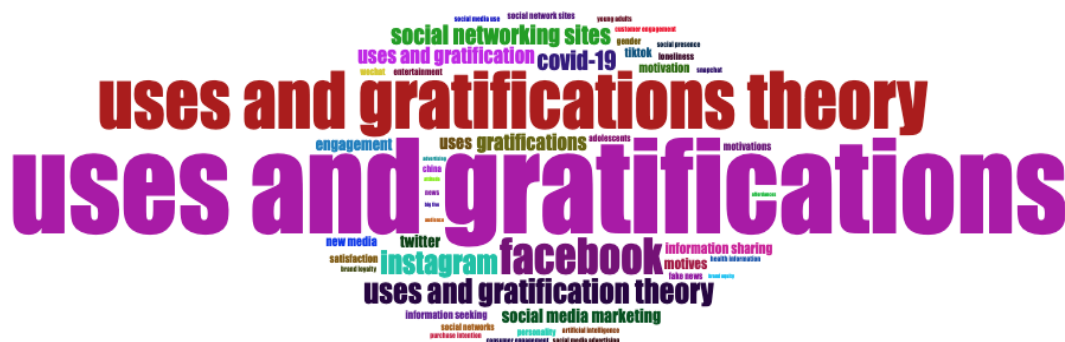


Fig. 5. The most used keywords of 2019-2021 publication

According to Fig. 5, the most popular words were social media ($n = 130$), uses and gratifications ($n = 68$), uses and gratifications theory ($n = 41$), Facebook ($n = 26$), and uses and gratifications theory ($n = 12$). In other words, the most common topics for publication in the Scopus related to UGT research were social media, UGT, and Facebook. This ensures that this social media and UGT have a very high use on publication.

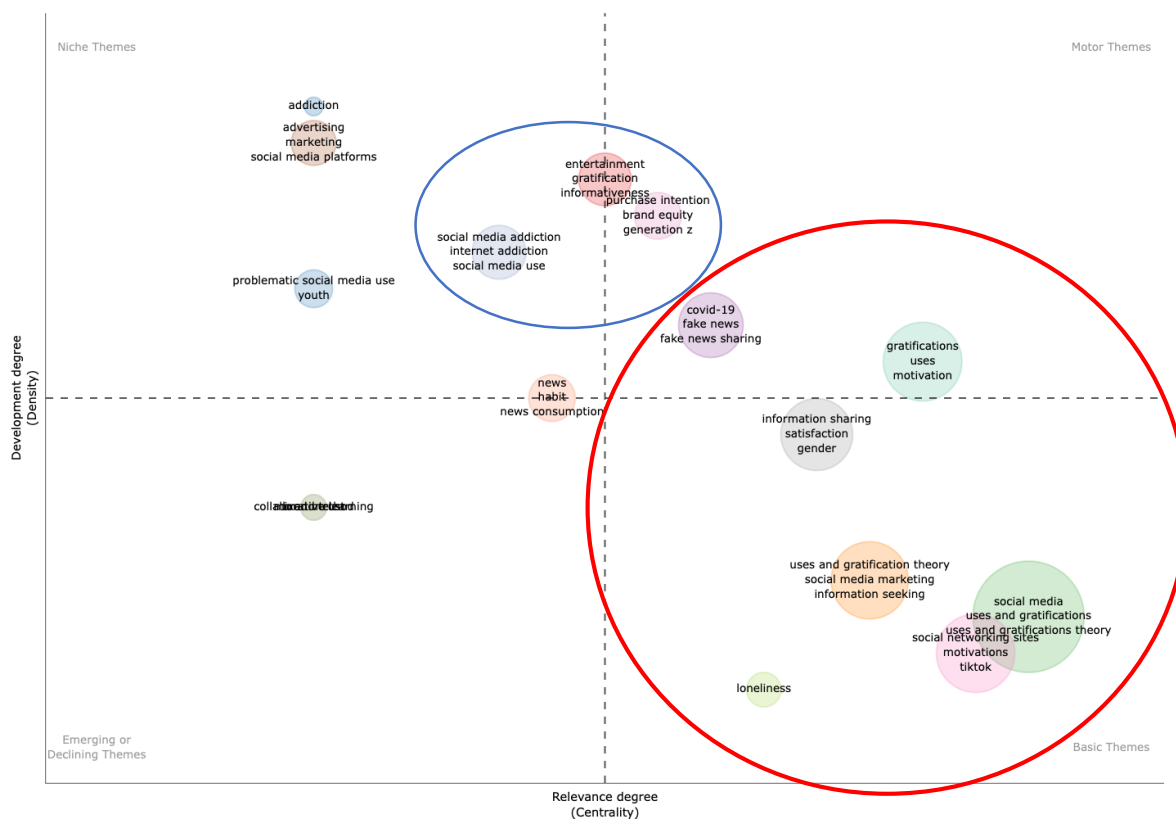


Fig. 6. Thematic Map Analysis

The research topic in the red circle is the most used theme in 2019-2021 publication and can be developed in the future. Fig. 6 shows many possibilities that can be explored, namely social media addiction, brand equity, entertainment, gratification, social media use, and many more. For recommendations for future research, we can move from the basic theme that is mostly about UGT, Information seeking, and move to the motor/niche themes in the blue circle. The theme suggested in the blue circle is about fake news and its spread, also theme about entertainment satisfaction is influenced by the rise of mobile entertainment today, and social media use and/or addiction related to today's phenomena.

The research results show that the USA still dominates the UGT study. Waisbord stated that the study of communication is still well-known for being white people's study in the context of the UGT study, which is proven by the first rank, which is dominated by the USA [33].

But even so, China, India, and Malaysia, as countries from Asia, are starting to show that studies on UGT are no longer only controlled by the US. Also, the theme that is not yet explored is still having a wide range, from news to entertainment satisfaction, and also addiction and problematic in social media use by youth could be the theme that emerges in the coming years.

5. Conclusion

Based on the data, the most productive year of article production is 2021, with the number of 99 articles, a growth of 1,28% from 2020 with 72 articles. Most Uses and Gratification Theory articles came from the United States of America, as the third largest user of social media surprisingly leads in the field of UGT research. As the first and second most social network users, China and India came

second and fifth in this research, U.K. and Malaysia in third and fourth place [34]. Indonesia, the fourth most significant social media user, does not contribute many articles about the UGT study, so this is one of the gaps that researchers in Indonesia can explore. In conclusion, Facebook is the social media most often mentioned. As we know, they are the most significant social media used all around the world [35]. Meanwhile, the top five most used keyword are social media (n=130), uses and gratifications (n=68), uses and gratifications theory (n=41), Facebook(n=26) and uses and gratification theory (n=18). In the future, we can expect younger social media such as Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok to be used as alternative research objects. And finally, as stated by Zyoud et al., bibliometric analysis is proven to be an excellent tool to map published literature on a particular subject and, simultaneously, reveal research gaps in a certain topic [36]. In addition, future research is recommended with the theme of fake news and the spread of fake news because one of the uses of media is related to news/ fake news, entertainment satisfaction, and also addiction and problematic in social media use by youth

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