

# Do You Regret Using Social Media? Understanding the Role of Dark Side of Social Media in Regret and Discontinuance Behavior

TREO Talk Paper

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## Abstract

Social media is designed to support interpersonal communication via Internet-based platforms. Despite the popularity of social media sites, social media providers have been trapped in difficult situations because of users' discontinuance behavior in the past several years. People are spending less time on social media apps. A survey shows that Instagram saw the biggest year-over-year drop, with usage down 23.7% in the first quarter of 2016 comparing with 2015, and Twitter was down 23.4%, Snapchat 15.7% and Facebook 8% (Taylor, 2016). In addition, three big social media platforms were discontinued in 2016 (Smarty, 2017).

The discontinuance behavior corresponds to the final termination phase in the information systems life cycle, following the adoption and usage phases (Furneaux and Wade, 2010). However, little attention has been paid toward examining this stage. Our study aims to provide an explanation of the social media discontinuance behavior. Several practical studies have shown that the social media discontinuance behavior was directly or indirectly caused by the negative effects of social media sites, such as information overload and private information disclosure (Zhang et al., 2015). These negative effects are considered parts of the dark side of social media. In literature, the dark side of social media is an under-explored area of research (Kefi and Perez, 2018). Although the number of users who are engaged in such activities is relatively small, these behaviors have caused other social media users to feel disappointed, unsafe, or even scared. This further triggers users' regret to have used the social media platforms. Finally, these users may discontinue the use of social media as a result of the regret.

Regret, which is an aversive emotional reaction elicited by a discrepancy in the outcome values of chosen versus unchosen actions, is found to be one of the main constructs to predict behavioral intentions in consumer behavioral research. However, in the IS research arena, regret is a relative new construct, and only a few theories on customer regret have been adopted to e-commerce context. According to a YouGov Omnibus survey in 2015, more than half of American users have social media regret.

In our study, regret is hypothesized to be influenced by the dark side of social media, that include social surveillance, cyberbullying victimization, information overload, and narcissism of others. Regret can further influence dissatisfaction and discontinuance intention. In addition, the relationship between the dark side of social media and regret is moderated by privacy control, valence of using social media, and tie strength. Our study will advance the theory on IS discontinuance by proposing and testing propositions. Specifically, we combine theoretical perspectives from literature in consumer behavior, dark side of social media, social network analysis, to information privacy. In practice, our findings can provide new notions on how to develop features to reduce discontinuance intention and behavior from providers' perspective. From users' perspective, they can help users make informed decisions about their involvement with social media platforms.

## References

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