



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Use Facebook at Work!?

**Facebook as a strategic communication channel in
four Swedish municipalities**

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Abstract

Social Media has transformed strategic communication and the way organizations communicate. The opportunities Facebook can provide are many and today almost 90 % of Swedish municipalities use Facebook. However, in most municipalities the opportunities are not fully taken advantage of and resources allocated to using the communication channel are to an extent discarded. In order to examine how municipalities can improve their Facebook usage, this study aimed to identify the influencing factors for successfully using the communication channel. Therefore, the study examined reasons to why some municipalities were more successful in using Facebook as a strategic communication channel. In order to examine this, theories in strategic communication, Technology Acceptance Model and Foundational Positions Model were applied. Four Swedish municipalities were chosen for analysis in order to compare more and less successful cases. Qualitative content analysis was conducted on interviews with the administrators of the municipalities' Facebook account and the municipalities' Social Media Policies. The study concluded that the municipal administrator's acceptance and engagement of the communication channel explained the level of success. In addition, a comprehensive social media policy, including clear guidelines and goal-setting, was required in order to take advantage of the opportunities Facebook can provide. Awareness of the target group and time spent on Facebook was also proved to be an influencing factor regarding the level of success.

Key words: Strategic communication channel, Facebook, Technology Acceptance Model, Foundational Positions Model, Swedish municipalities, Social Media Policy

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1 Introduction

Social media has spread like a wildfire across the world in the last decade, and with more than one billion users Facebook is the number one social media forum (Facebook 2013). It is not only for private matters that social media is used, but also for organizational purposes as well as in strategic communication (Meredith 2012). In fact, social media is said to transform strategic communication and the way businesses and organizations communicate (Raunier et al. 2014:7). Social media has also become more evident in the public sector; today almost 90% of Swedish municipalities use Facebook in their everyday work (Stockenstrand 2014a). The benefits for public authorities to use social media are many, such as transferability into municipal activities and increasing the citizens dialogue (Bertot, Jaeger & Hansen 2012:31; Picazo-Vela 2012). A study conducted by the Swedish Associations of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL 2012) found that the major reason to use social media is to create a closer connection with the citizens. Social media was also used as a communication channel for opportunities such as news spreading, branding purposes, and to a lesser extent also crisis communication, internal communication, external environment monitoring, recruitment and live streaming (ibid).

However, the organizational purposes are often not fulfilled among Swedish municipalities, for this reason the opportunities the communication channel can provide are not fully utilized. In addition, the number of followers of the municipalities' main page remains low compared to the number of citizens in the region (Kreafor 2013). The strategies and purposes for how to use it vary and many authorities have no clear policy of how it should be used and with what purpose. For this reason, new tools are needed in order to manage social media (Kavanaugh et al. 2012:483). As using social media is rather new, the ideas, purposes and functions of its usage are constantly changing. The employees have to strategically consider how it should be used, how to manage the communication in order to take advantage of the opportunities and evaluate

whether the results are useful (ibid). These strategies are often formulated in social media policy documents.

Because of the fact that the trend of using social media in the public sector is increasing, and that the outcomes of using it remains low, the interest for this subject has increased in a variety of academic fields (Klang & Nolin 2011; Johnson-Avery & Wooton-Graham 2012; Bertot et al. 2012; Bonson et al. 2012). Macanamara and Zerfass (2012) examined the conflict of openness and management process of social media in organizations. They conducted interviews with social media specialists and compared organizations in Europe with organizations in Australasia. The study concluded that only 20-23% of the organization had a social media strategy for how and why to use the communication channel. Furthermore, the absence of a strategy for using social media results in a loss of control of organizational communication and public relations (ibid).

Studies have also focused on the legal restrictions the public sector encounters when administrating social media for organizational purposes (Bertot, Jaeger & Grimes 2010, Bonsón et al. 2012; Johnson-Avery & Wooten-Graham 2013). Bertot et al. (2012) examined social media use by government agencies and identified opportunities and challenges with focus on the regulatory framework and the way social media adapts to this. The opportunities were such as improving decision-making and problem solving. The challenges concerned privacy, security and social inclusion. This study examined US government agencies, and hence the legal system for USA (ibid). A majority of the studies in this field have been conducted on US cases, whereas less has been done in other countries. Despite the fact that the usage of social media in the Swedish public sector is largely widespread, few studies regarding this area have been conducted. Nonetheless, Klang and Nolin examined in 2011 how Swedish municipalities approach the complexity between transparency and interaction in the policy documents for using social media. The study found that policy documents varied in a level of abstraction, to what extent the guidelines were clear and structured, and to what extent social media was seen as an administrative problem or as a resource for the municipality (Klang & Nolin, 2011). However, it was not examined which effects the strategies had on the municipalities' social media usage. It was also not explained which strategies were successful for reaching the intended purposes of

social media. Therefore this study aimed to fill this research gap through identifying which factors affected the outcome, i.e. what strategies fulfill reaching the policy goals and purposes of using social media. Furthermore, the existing literature on social media in the public sector largely focuses on legal restriction and strategic policies for social media, but choose not to examine the actual use, frequency of the activity and outcome. Also, these studies adapted a quantitative approach, which do not concern an in-depth understanding on the social media use and outcome. This study aimed to bring new knowledge into the existing literature by qualitatively examining how the strategic communication and policies for social media relates to the actual use and outcome.

It is not only the strategic policy that foretells the outcome. Social media is an information technology that is used by administrators in municipalities. According to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), technology usage could be explained by the individual's attitude towards the technological tool. Studies have found that this was also true when it comes to social media as a technological tool (Rauniar et al. 2014:6). Hence, when studying what factors affect the usage of social media, the individual user has to be taken into consideration. In this study the administrator for the municipality's official Facebook page.

Consequently, the usage of Facebook in municipalities has to be examined by the individual attitude towards the communication channel together with an analysis of the type of Social Media Policy. This study aimed to research the field of social media as a strategic communication channel in Swedish municipalities. As Facebook predominantly is the most common social media forum, also in Swedish municipalities, the study has been limited to focus on this communication channel (Stockenstrand 2014a). The purpose was to gain new information in what strategies are effective for increasing the opportunities that Facebook provide. In addition, the research aimed further to examine to what extent the administrators acceptance of the communication channel affects the outcome. In order to reach new information on strategic communication when using social media in the public sector the following research question was formulated:

- Why are some municipalities more successful in using Facebook as a strategic communication channel?

In order to answer this research question, an identification of more or less influencing factors affecting the actual use of Facebook among Swedish municipalities was required. The study also needs to examine what makes a successful case and identify social media policies which increases the outcome and to what extent the administrator affects the outcome.

This research question requires a qualitative approach with a small number of cases. Theories focusing on social media usage in the public sector will be applied in order to guide the analysis of the empirics and reach conclusions in how some municipalities are successful in their social media usage. The data will be collected through semi structured interviews with the communications officer being in charge of the Facebook page in a municipality and by identifying their social media policies.

Throughout the study focus were on the perspective from the municipalities, more specifically, the administrator of the Facebook page. The perspective of the citizens was beyond the scope of this thesis. It was not relevant for the overall purpose. The aim was instead to examine which categories could explain the actual outcome of using Facebook in the municipality, in order to explain how a municipality becomes successful.

The reminder of this study proceeds as follows. The following chapter will provide a literature review of social media in the public sector together with the theoretical framework in strategic communication and the theoretical models. Thereafter, chapter three consists of the methodological framework; most similar system design, semi-structured interviews and content analysis. The empirics and case selection will also be presented in this chapter. Chapter four presents the results of the study. The fifth chapter includes a discussion of the findings in the empirical material. Conclusions and suggestions for future research are presented in chapter six.

2 Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the theories which have laid the foundation for the study will be presented. First, backgrounds of social media and strategic communication in the public sector have been accounted for. The theoretical models that have been applied to the analyses are presented next. These are Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Foundational Positions Model (FPM).

2.1 Social Media in the Public Sector

Social media has created a new way to communicate between people (Bonsón et al. 2012:123). Today almost 90 % of the Swedish municipalities use Facebook (Stockenstrand, 2014a). Therefore, the outcome of how the municipalities choose to strategically communicate through their Facebook page is of importance.

Social media has had a rapid dissemination among the population in recent years (Bertot et al., 2012:31). Organizations from government departments to small business are adopting social media as a communication channel (Macanamara & Zerfass 2012:287). In this study social media is defined according to Kavanaugh et al. (2012:482) as “internet-based applications designed to facilitate social interaction and for using, developing and diffusing information through society”. Social media has the design of a many-to-many interaction in a constant dialogue (Bertot et al., 2012:30). Henceforth leading to large groups geographically dispersed interacting with each other. Producing valuable information, solve challenging problems, gain insight as well as seeing different perspectives through discussion (Benkler 2002; Brabham 2008; Bertot et al, 2012:30). These are opportunities that municipalities can take advantage of; however, to what extent this is accomplished was of importance to examine, therefore this study was needed.

Social media has also lead to new services, these includes everything from pace of interaction, type of content being shared (e.g., videos, images, text),

monitoring the data and so forth (Hansen et al., 2011; Bertot et al, 2012:30). How one chooses to use social media channels and policies around them can be critical for their success or failure (Preece, 2000; Maloney-Krichmar & Preece, 2005; Bertot et al, 2012:30). Therefore, this study will examine the social media policies to see what effects the differences in these could have on their social media activity.

Facebook is one of the most popular social media forums worldwide and it has grown rapidly in the past decade (Delaney, 2013:87). From the year of 2005 to 2009 the traffic to Facebook's website doubled each year (ibid), today Facebook has over 1 billion users (Facebook 2013). It has become a household name reaching dominance in cultures all over the world (Delaney, 2013:87). In addition, Facebook has evolved to a large extent since it was founded, but the main functions of having a profile, share information and communicate with your "friends" still remains (ibid:88). Due to the fact that it is such a widely used forum it is an important communication channel for public authorities to use, in order to increase the contact with citizens. In what ways this is pursued is therefore important to explore.

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL) have studied Swedish municipalities and their social media usage. They examined the trend of using social media in Swedish municipalities, which municipalities had a main page for Facebook and if they had a written policy document about what guidelines to follow regarding their social media activity (SKL 2012). A majority did not have a guideline or a Social Media Policy for how and with what purposes it should be used (Stockenstrand 2014a;2014b). This examination laid the foundation for this study as it raised questions in how social media policies affected the actual usage of Facebook.

Using social media in Swedish municipalities is not required. However, when used, the legal system has to be followed. In order to help the municipalities with legal restrictions the government commissioned the committee *E-delegation* in 2010 to develop and distribute guidelines of how public authorities should use social media. The purpose of this was mainly to interpret and inform authorities about which legal restrictions they would have to follow, particularly considering the law of transparency of all public material (E-delegationen 2010:2). This document is supporting and guiding the municipalities for how to use social media

in their organization. However, it does not include the benefits of using social media or which strategies to apply in order to best extract these. For this reason, the purpose, strategies and social media policies vary to a great extent among Swedish municipalities. How this influences the outcome and the efficiency of the actual use were examined. To what extent municipalities could use Facebook strategically to take advantage of the opportunities were also essential to investigate.

2.2 Strategic Communication in Social Media

Social media forums are used by Swedish municipalities as a new strategic communication channel. A research problem has been found regarding why municipalities succeed differently in using Facebook and taking advantage of the opportunities as Facebook provides.

A study made by Kavanaugh et al. (2012) showed that local governments use social media without considering their actual audience and who in the organization should monitor their communication. The result also showed that new strategies are needed to help government and citizens to process and use the big amount of data generated by social media. Kavanaugh et al. (2012) points out the importance of using strategies to process social media data, it does however not study the use and effects of strategic communication (ibid). Thus, proving the need for this study to examine the municipalities' strategic communication policies, and what strategy leads to a successful communication with the citizens.

In this study strategic communication is defined according to Hallahan et al. as (2007:3) "the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission". These missions are described as the essence of strategic communication (ibid:4). Clear missions, including goal-setting, leads to more engagement from the administrators in how to communicate strategically (Hallahan et al. 2007:4). Nowadays organizations put a lot of effort in how to allocate resources regarding strategic communication (ibid). It is important to emphasize that not only corporations, but also activist organizations as well as social and citizen movements use strategic communication to reach their goals (ibid). Most of the Swedish municipalities who use social media do not have a strategy for social

media, and those which do exist vary to a large extent (Stockenstrand 2014b). It was therefore essential to examine how the strategies are formulated. It was also essential to compare it with the outcome of using social media. As such, new insight was found in this study regarding how municipalities could improve their social media usage and take advantage of the opportunities.

Organizational and strategic communication is a broad research field, examining the various processes in how people interact in complex organizations (Hallahan et al. 2007:7). Strategic communication narrows the scope by placing more focus on how the organization itself presents and promotes their organization through the intentional activities of its leaders, communication practitioners and employees (ibid). Thus, it does not exclude the organizations use of relationship building or networks in the strategic process (ibid). The usage of Facebook in municipalities was therefore of importance to examine, how the communication channel could be used to fulfill the overall organizational purposes. Facebook is a communication channel that facilitates these purposes, such as providing an insight for the citizens in the organization.

Organizations working with communication in social media describe the importance of building relationships, openness to dialogue and creating trust (Carlsson 2009:35). Social media is built on multipath communication in contrast to the more common one-way communication; therefore, these parts are particularly important as social media is part of a social conversation (ibid). Organizations today must consequently be more available, searchable and interesting for those who want to access the information (ibid:37). To what extent this is applicable for Swedish municipalities in improving their social media usage, will be examined in this study. An organizations' involvement in social media concerns IT and marketing, but as much it concerns customer service, internal communication and other matters (Carlsson 2009:121). The activities are based on concerns such as transparency towards the general public, internal decision making and allocation of resources etc., which often requires managerial decisions (Carlsson 2009:121). Carlsson (2009:124) refers to six concepts crucial for the strategic planning; these are *goal-setting, intended users, customized content, choice of media and activities, implementation, monitoring and evaluation*. These concepts have been taken into consideration when analyzing the social media policies in order to determine their strategic orientation.

Strategic communication theory will be applied when examining how municipalities exert their communication in order to investigate different approaches in communicative strategy of using Facebook. As described by Hallahan et al. (2007) and O'Hair (2011), it is crucial to have a distinct goal in the organization, as well as formulating the purposes and how to reach them through a strategically planned communicative act. The goals and missions for the social media planning in the municipalities will therefore be examined to see if one approach were more successful than another.

Swedish municipalities' social media policy documents have been examined by Klang and Nolin (2011). Social media policies from 26 Swedish municipalities were examined focusing on how social media policies were structured, how they differed, and their approach against legal restrictions. It was found that the Perceived Usefulness of social media in public administration vary to a large extent. Two images in the policy documents were identified. First, social media policy was seen as a disciplining problem or as an opportunity. The second image concerned the platforms for communication; the social media policies were based on more or less clear guidelines. These two images were then illustrated in a model called Foundational Positions Model (ibid). The study did not investigate which effect policy documents have on the administrator for the Facebook page. The aim of this study was therefore to apply this theory and examine to what extent the policy documents could create an efficient usage of Facebook.

As described in the introduction of this study, the strategy is not the single factor affecting the outcome. Also the person administrating the forum has an effect on the outcome. This will be examined using Technology Acceptance Model, presented in the following section.

2.3 Theoretical Models Explaining Facebook Usage

In order to research what affects the outcome of using social media in Swedish municipalities, the analysis needed to include an examination regarding the behavior of the official administrator of the Facebook account. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) for Facebook allows for this.

TAM was originally developed by Davis in 1986 to examine how the use of new technology relates to the individual attitude towards the tool (Rauniar et al. 2014:6). The model has been applied by many researchers in various fields due to its effectiveness and easiness in predicting usage of new technologies (Rauniar 2014:8; Lee et. al. 2003; Hoof et. al. 2005). TAM builds on an earlier model in social psychology which explains behavior through intentions, the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). While the Theory of Reasoned Action focuses on individuals' intentions and perception, TAM adapts this theory further through focusing on technology acceptance. The main assumption in this model describes that technology usage behavior could be explained by individual attitude and Perceived Usefulness of the technology. This has been based on measuring perceived Ease of Use, Critical Mass, the capabilities and Perceived Playfulness (Rauniar et al. 2014:6). This will be further explained in section 2.3.2. TAM has since been deployed to research different technology tools, most recently it was extended for researching the usage of Facebook (ibid:10). This model will therefore be used to examine what affects municipalities Facebook usage.

Previous studies mostly have examined TAM from an individualistic and quantitative perspective, leading to a more general result. This study therefore takes a qualitative approach leading to a more in-depth analysis to examine the underlying factors of Facebook usage. TAM was used to identify the influencing factors for how municipalities became successful in using Facebook.

Facebook have increased dramatically in numbers of users since it was founded in 2004 (Facebook 2013). According to Rauniar et al. (2014:10), the positives attitude towards Facebook should be a result of the users' positive attitude of the communication channel. The TAM model has therefore been used to examine if the individual attitude towards Facebook could be a function of the level of success in using Facebook.

In difference to individual usage of Facebook, the administrator for a municipality is affected by official principles and policies of the municipality as well as legal restrictions and regulations. Therefore, TAM has been developed in order to apply it on public authorities. The social media policies will be examined using the Foundation Positions Model (Klang & Nolin 2011).

In the revised Technology Acceptance Model for this thesis, the category Trustworthiness (TW) has been excluded. This category was not relevant for this study because it regards private use and confidentiality matters. As this thesis regards public usage, this category was not relevant. Instead the Actual Use of Facebook is affected not only by the administrator’s attitude but also by the official strategy; the Social Media Policy (SMP). This category has therefore been added to the model. The analysis of SMP will be presented in the following

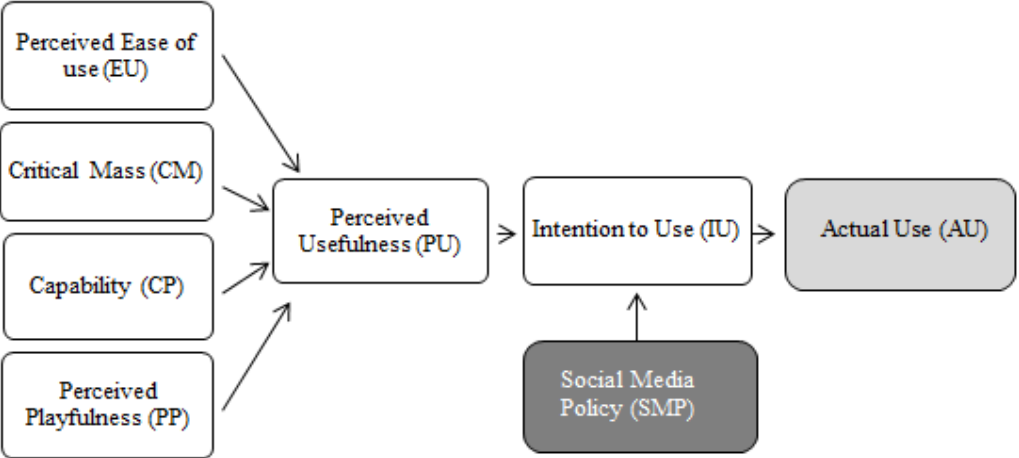


Figure 1. Revised Technology Acceptance Model for Facebook in Municipalities (Raunier et al. 2014)

2.3.1 Categories in Technology Acceptance Model

The revised TAM for Facebook in municipalities is illustrated in Figure 1. This study has used the definitions of the categories, provided by Rauniar et al. (2014). The categories have been adapted to measurable entities when analyzing the empirics.

Ease of Use (EU) concerns the degree of effortless work when using the communication channel. To what extent the administrator finds Facebook easy or difficult to use will be examined. The usability has been compared to problems and complexities expressed by the administrator.

Critical Mass (CM) concerns pressure from the surroundings to use social media. The perceived pressures from the citizens and other public authorities to use social media have been examined for this category. In addition, the level of

awareness of the Critical Mass has also been researched, examining to what extent the administrator refers to the target group.

Capabilities (CP) refers to Facebook's features in relation to work tasks. The aim here was to examine to what extent the public authority use Facebook to fulfill everyday work tasks. Regarding the technological features Facebook provides, such as posting links, creating event and post pictures etc.

Perceived Playfulness (PP) refers to whether the communication channel is seen as joyful to use. Questions regarding the enjoyment of using Facebook at work were asked and negative attitudes towards using the communication channel were also examined.

These four categories could affect the *Perceived Usefulness* (PU). The extent to how the public authority finds the channel relevant to perform work tasks were examined, along with the possibilities and opportunities the administrator expresses.

In the revised TAM for this thesis, the category *Social Media Policy* (SMP) has been included in order to analyze the relation between strategy and the Intention to Use Facebook. It is expected that there is a relation between SMP and IU. In addition, it is assumed that the design of the strategy will affect the outcome. In this regard, different strategies will be compared in relation to the Actual Use of Facebook. This allows for an identification of what type of SMP is most effective when using Facebook for organizational purposes.

PU and SMP could affect *Intention to Use* (IU). This includes the individual's intention to use social media for work related tasks, such as goals and purposes.

Finally, IU affects *Actual Use* (AU), which is the actual frequency of using Facebook. According to (Carlsson 2009:92), Facebook can be evaluated by measuring by number of followers and posts. This study will also include resources allocated to using Facebook such as work time spent on using Facebook in order to present a collected overview on the municipalities' activities on Facebook.

This study will apply this model to the empirical material in order to examine which factors are more or less influencing for the success of using Facebook.

2.3.2 Categories in Foundational Positions Model

In order to examine the Social Media Policies, this study has applied the Foundational Positions Model (FPM), developed by Klang and Nolin (2011) explained above in section 2.2. The model, illustrated in Figure 2, was applied in order to categorize and identify the strategies for social media in the municipalities for this study. This allows for an insight in how the municipalities structure their work. It also allows for a comparative analysis of the policy documents in the four municipalities.

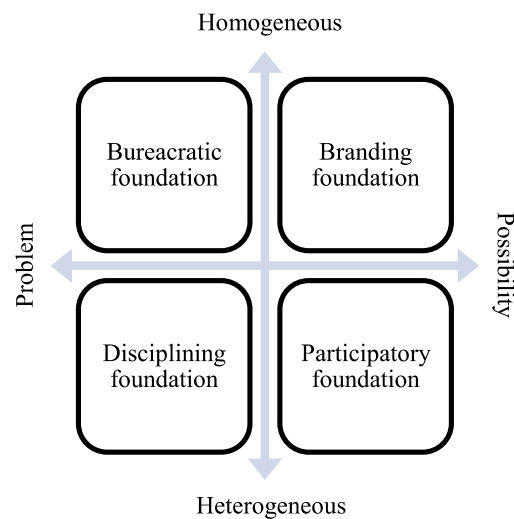


Figure 2. Foundational Positions Model in Social Media Policies (Klang & Nolin 2011)

FPM consists of four groups and four categories. The aim of this study was to examine Social Media Policies (SMP) according to the categories in order to classify them in one of the four groups. The categories are placed on a vertical and a horizontal scale in the model; these scales form four groups. On the horizontal scale the SMPs will be examined according to the extent of problem or possibility formulated in the SMP. *Problem* means issues associated with the usage of Social Media, such as legal restrictions and other issues that needs to be controlled, regulated and disciplined. The level of *Possibility* in the SMPs will be examined according to opportunities and goals included in the SMPs, such as branding, supply information and increasing the citizens dialogue. On the vertical scale the SMPs have been examined to determine whether they are Homogeneous or Heterogeneous. *Homogeneous* means that the SMP consists of clear guidelines

and instructions of how to use social media and the purposes are clearly stated. *Heterogeneous* means that the SMPs consist of general guidelines, such as advices and recommendation of how to use social media, the purposes are not clearly stated (Klang & Nolin 2011).

The analysis of the categories placed the SMPs into one of the four groups. First, *Bureaucratic foundation*; the social media policy is homogeneous and described as a problem. The strategies are typically straight forward with the aim to regulate and create a clear guideline for how to manage these communication channels (ibid).

Second, in *Branding foundation* the social media policy is homogenous and described as a possibility. The guidelines are typically clear with the aim to create visibility and transparency. Furthermore, there is often a focus on branding and supplying information to the public (ibid).

Third, in *Disciplining foundation* the social media policy is Heterogeneous and described as a Problem. Social media is labelled as a complex communication channel which can be problematic in terms of legal restrictions. Goals and ideas are less prioritized in relation to the legal restrictions. These policies often refer to the legislative system, the principle of freedom of access and E-delegation (ibid).

Fourth, in *Participatory foundation* the social media policy is Heterogeneous and described as a possibility. Although legal restrictions are addressed, focus lies on the possibilities this communication channel can create with emphasis on participation, democracy, increasing citizens' dialogue and quality of services.

Content analyzes method was used to analyze the policy documents. The method how this was conducted will be presented in the following chapter (ibid).

3 Method

In this chapter the methodological framework is presented, it is divided into four sections. First, Most Similar System design is presented, the method used for the case selection. Four municipalities were chosen in the case selection, and the social media policies for the respective cases were identified. Second, the data was collected by conducting semi structured interviews with the administrator for Facebook. Third, the interviews and social media policies were examined through content analysis. Fourth, the chapter finishes with accounting for why the study reaches high reliability and validity.

3.1 Most Similar System Design

In order to research why some municipalities are more successful in using Facebook as a strategic communication channel, a comparative research design was required. Furthermore, a research design that locates the influencing factor(s) that affect the outcome was also necessary. Comparative research is commonly conducted through Most Similar System Design or Most Different System Design (Esaiasson 2012:101,104) A Most Similar System design functions to identify the influencing factor(s), and was therefore required for answering the research question in this study (ibid:103).

A Most Similar System design requires cases that have different values on the outcome, which this study includes as they had different values in their actual use of Facebook. In addition, the cases also need to include similar structures (ibid). The cases in this study have been chosen based on similarities and factors in demographic, geographic and organizational structure. In this regard, external reasons that affect the outcome based on dissimilar conditions can largely be avoided and the categories are more comparable between the cases. Consequentially, the influencing factor(s) can be found. Nevertheless, finding cases that are entirely equal is fundamentally impossible (ibid). However,

municipalities with similar contexts have been found, and factors used for case selection will be further presented in the following section, 3.2.

A Most Similar System design is more useful for answering the research question in this study than a Most Different System Design. This type of study functions better for developing new theories rather than explaining a certain phenomenon based on existing theories. In this study existing theories was used (Chapter 2). Furthermore, in a Most Different System design the outcome is of similar value and cases that are different will be examined in order to identify which influencing factor affects the outcome. Yet again, it is difficult to find cases that are entirely different. However, this study argues that it is more likely to find similar structures than opposite ones. In addition, there could be a combination of influencing factors that affects the outcome; a Most Different System design fails to examine this (Esaiasson 2012:105ff.). Most Similar System design allows for an analysis on more influencing factors and how these correlate. Also, more new knowledge will be reached on the phenomenon in question in general.

This study holds two fundamental assumptions about academic research that affected the way the research was constructed and how the conclusions were drawn. First, it adapted an ontological approach as the authors believed that there is a reality independent of the beholder. Second, an epistemological approach in that the authors believed that through structural observations rightful knowledge about the reality can be reached (Esaiasson 2012:19).

3.1.1 Case Selection

Swedish municipalities have been chosen for analysis in this study since the trend of having a Facebook page has increased during recent years (Stockenstrand 2014a). In addition, this has not been widely covered by academic research in Sweden.

The outcome of using social media in Swedish municipalities varies to a large extent, in order to find out what affect this outcome the research needs to include *more* and *less* successful cases. Simultaneously, this study requires an in-depth analysis which examines a number of factors in a qualitative matter. Four municipalities have been chosen in a preliminary study, presented below.

Based on the Most Similar System design four most similar cases have been found on the grounds of similar geographical, demographic and structural factors in order to exclude external differences that could explain the different outcomes in actual use of social media. Sweden includes 290 municipalities in 20 counties (Westlund, 2013). The municipalities are divided into nine groups after structural characteristics such as size of population and economic structure. The municipalities chosen for this study belong to the group *suburban municipalities to large cities*; this group includes 38 municipalities which are situated near to a large city. In these municipalities more than 50% of the population commutes to another municipality, the most common destination is a large city (ibid). Sweden has three large cities. This study has chosen suburban municipalities from the two largest cities Gothenburg and Stockholm in order to compare potential differences between these two areas. The number of citizens are similar between the cases, varying from 35 853 to 68 509. The municipalities in Sweden vary from 2 422 to 2 135 865 (SCB 2013).

They study furthermore assumed that conditions for these municipalities are similar and therefore a good ground for a comparative analysis in a Most Similar System design. In the Stockholm area there are 20 suburban municipalities, in Gothenburg 10 (SKL 2011; Westlund 2013).

The theoretical framework chapter consisted of two theoretical models that were identified to study Facebook usage in Swedish municipalities. The models required a study of the user's acceptance towards Facebook and an analysis of the Social Media Policy. In order to create a comparative ground for the analysis, the study needed to examine the attitude of the administrator responsible for the official Facebook page and the Social Media Policy (SMP). However, not all municipalities have a SMP, and not all municipalities have an official page for the municipality on Facebook. On the basis of the study *Social Media in Municipalities, County Councils and Region*¹ (SKL 2012), four municipalities was found that filled the requirements of a social media policy and an official Facebook page in the Stockholm region. In the Gothenburg region two

¹ Translated from Swedish: "Social medier i kommuner, landsting och regioner" (Kull, M. 2014.04.07)

municipalities were found². The identified municipalities were Järfälla Kommun, Sundbybergs Stad, Lidingö Stad and Tyresö Kommun from the Stockholm region, and Mölndals Stad and Partille Kommun from the Gothenburg region.

In order to reach in-depth information about the causal relation between the influencing factors and the outcome of using Facebook, interviews was needed. This was conducted with the administrators responsible of Facebook in the selected municipalities. For this reason, the following steps were taken for the six identified municipalities. First, the service centers at the municipalities were called in order to get in contact with the Communication Manager for the municipality. Second, this person was asked who was responsible for Facebook in their municipality. Third, when in contact with the communicator with head responsibility for social media this person was asked to take part of this study. One municipality decided to abstain³.

Only interviewing the administrator of the Facebook page could be seen as a limitation of the study, since it can create a subjective perspective of the usage. Interviewing all concerned actors in the municipality could lead to a more objective result. However, that is beyond the scope of the research as it requires an extensive study. For this reason, the most relevant actors, the administrators, were selected. This also coincides with Technology Acceptance Model which examines the personal perception of using Facebook.

Thereafter, a preliminary examination of the number of followers of each Facebook page was done. The number of followers was divided by number of population. The examination found that *Lidingö Stad*, *Järfälla Kommun*, *Mölndals Stad* and *Partille Kommun* had similar results (0,9 – 1,2 % of the citizens followed their municipality on Facebook) and in Tyresö 11,7%. This created an indication of the level of success rate of using social media in the municipalities. In a later stage of the analysis more factors will be included in order to examine the success rate. In order to have identical conditions, i.e. two municipalities for each region, for Stockholm and Gothenburg a random selection were done of the Stockholm municipalities with similar values on the followers. Thereby, *Lidingö Stad* was

² Stockholm region: Lidingö Stad, Järfälla Kommun, Sundbyberg Stad, Tyresö Kommun.
Göteborg region: Partille Kommun, Mölndals Stad

³ Sundbyberg Stad abstained

excluded from the study. Finally, the municipalities *Järfälla Kommun*, *Tyresö Kommun*, *Partille Kommun* and *Mölnads Stad* were selected for this study, see table 1. When contacting the communicator responsible for social media, they were asked if the social media document found on the SKL homepage for social media was the latest updated version. These were then used for the analysis (see *Järfälla Kommun 2013*, *Mölnads Stad 2010*, *Partille Kommun 2010*, *Tyresö Kommun 2013*).

Table 1. The selected municipalities

Municipality	Administrator Facebook page	Translation of social media policy title	Number of pages SMP
Järfälla Kommun	Communicator Järfälla	<i>'Social Media – rules and instructions for Järfälla municipality'</i> (Järfälla Kommun 2013)	15
Mölnads Stad	Communicator Mölnadal	<i>'Mölnads city's recommendations for Social media – from monolog to conversation'</i> (Mölnads Stad 2010)	4
Partille Kommun	Communicator Partille	<i>'The municipality and social media – advice to employees in Partille municipality'</i> (Partille Kommun 2010)	2
Tyresö Kommun	Communicator Tyresö	<i>'Guidelines for the usage of Social Media'</i> (Tyresö Kommun 2013)	5

3.2 Semi Structured Interview

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which will be applied for answering the research question, requires an examination in personal attitude, opinions and experiences of the communication channel Facebook. The sampling method interviews allows for this as it is used for collecting data on opinions and experiences of the interviewee (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006:319; Kvale 2007:1). Surveys could also be applicable as a research method, as these also could be used to collect personal opinions (Treadwell 2011:123). However, surveys have the disadvantage of being unable to reach qualitative in-depth

information as the questions are formulated with limited response options (ibid). In this sense, semi structured interviews are more useful as it allows for the possibility of asking additional questions to the answers and hence reach more in-depth information. Interviews also have the advantage of exploring how the interviewee understands and experience a phenomenon, in this case Facebook, in their everyday work (Kvale 2007:9). Through asking questions about the activity of using Facebook, knowledge is constructed in an inter-action fashion between the interviewer and the interviewee (ibid:1).

Interviews could be carried out in a number of different ways; with more or less structured and planned questions. In order to allow for a qualitative approach semi structured interviews have been chosen for this study. In a semi structured interview questions are prepared based on a number of themes that wishes to be covered (Kvale 2007:65). In this research, the themes were based on the theoretical model, and questions were prepared to cover all categories on Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (see Appendix: Interview questions). The Social Media Policy (SMP) will be analyzed separately, and few questions were devoted to this category.

Semi structured interviews are based on questions having a broader range, where the interviewer has discretion in how the questions will be asked (Treadwell 2011:165). The interviewer could also choose to drop or add some questions during the interview as they could be considered less or more important for the research (ibid). This allows for a flexibility of the interview. When unexpected new information is found the researcher has the opportunity to further explore these during the interview (Kvale 2007:65). In a fully structured interview this would not have been possible, as the questions would have been designed prior to the interview and have to follow a decided order (Treadwell 2011:165).

An interview is designed with a series of questions in order to collect information being of interest for the researcher (Treadwell 2011:164). The questions could be formulated in varied ways. One way to approach the interviewee is to use specific questions where the answers to the question are limited to “yes” and “no” (ibid). On the other hand the questions could be formulated in a more opened minded sense, where the researcher can act unaware about the subject, leading to more open-ended questions (ibid). Since the aim of

this study was to identify the attitude of the interviewee towards Facebook as a communication channel, open ended questions was primarily chosen.

After the municipalities were selected in the case selection procedure, they were sent a short description of the interview (Appendix: Email: Description of interview). The interview followed the suggestions on a semi structured interview by Kvale (2007:55-60). On the day of the interview the authors began by briefly introducing the subject and procedure of the interview (Kvale 2007:55). The interview started with some *introductory questions* (ibid:61) where the interviewee was asked to describe their role as a social media administrator and communicator at the municipality. *Follow up* and *probing questions* were used additionally to get the interviewee to further explain a certain topic (ibid:61). The majority of the questions were of *descriptive form* to collect qualitative information about the attitude towards Facebook (ibid:58).

The questions were formulated in a way that was easy to understand, academic language was avoided and the questions were mainly of descriptive form (ibid:57). The reason for this was to avoid ambiguous answers and different interpretations of the questions among the interviewees. The questions followed a pre-decided order and were asked with the same formulation to all interviewees. However, in a semi structured fashion, additional questions were asked when the interviewer found it necessary to ask the interviewee to further explain the subject.

One limitation of using interviews is the risk of influencing the respondents in different ways. In order to avoid such inconsistencies, all interviews were carried out in similar environments and a majority of the questions were asked equally. The following four aspects were taken into consideration.

First, the setting is of great importance when conducting an interview; each setting has its advantages and disadvantages (Treadwell, 2011:164). In this regard, the interviews were carried out in similar situations; three of the interviews were in the office of the interviewee and one in a group room of a library. Even though one interview differed, the environment was equal and it was assumed that it did not affect the respondent in a different way. Second, noise and external influences that could affect the interviewee was avoided through carrying out the interviews in a closed room. Third, conducting the interview in the researcher's office might also influence the person being interviewed. It might pressure the

person to feel the need to provide answers they assume the researcher are looking for (ibid). The questions were hence formulated in a way that focused on the attitude and experience of the interviewee rather than knowledge questions of a certain topic. In this sense there are no “wrong” answers to the questions, which put less pressure on the interviewee. Fourth, there were 26 planned questions that were asked with the same formulation to each respondent (Appendix: Interview questions). This allowed for a similar basis for all respondents and a comparative ground regarding the analysis. Due to the semi structured fashion additional questions were asked in order to explore new information and allow them to explain and develop the answers.

Audio recording was used to tape the interviews to avoid missing information and concentrate on the answers and questions. It was taken into consideration that the interviewee might be nervous by not knowing what will happen to the recorded interview, or might decide to “talk for the record”. Meaning what they say while being recorded is different from what that had said “off the record” (Treadwell, 2011:164). All the interviews took 42-49 minutes. The interviews were thereafter transcribed and resulted in 4772 to 7197 words. The method for analyzing the interviews is presented in the following section.

3.3 Qualitative Content Analysis

In order to study the Technology Acceptance Model in the transcribed interviews and the Foundational Positions Model in the Social Media Policies, the study required a method that allowed for a systematic examination of the texts.

Kvale (2007:104) divides methods for analyzing interviews into two fields. First, analysis focusing on meaning and what is said. Second, analyses which focuses on language and how meaning is expressed. This study aimed to identify occurrences according to the categories from TAM and categorize the SMPs according to FPM. In this regard, focus laid on what is in the text, rather than the meaning behind the language. Therefore, an analysis focusing on meaning is applicable for this study. According to Kvale (2007:106), there are three main approaches for analysis focusing on meaning; *meaning interpretation*, *meaning condensation* and *content analysis*. Meaning interpretation involves going beyond

what is directly said. The aim is to interpret structures and relations that are not directly obvious in the text (Kvale 2007:107). In meaning condensation long statements are compressed into shorter formulations in order to construct an overview over the text (ibid:106ff). Content analysis is a method which systematically examines the content of large amounts of texts. By coding and categorizing the content, generalizations can be made which allows for a comparison between the texts (Kvale 2007:105; Treadwell 2011:178; Cohen et al. 2013:563). As the first two mentioned methods falls short in providing a comparative ground and are less systematic, content analysis have been chosen as a method to analyze the texts. Content analysis provides a determined and systematic set of procedures which allows for a reliable and verifiable examination of the texts (Cohen et al. 2013:563). Any written material can be used in content analysis; therefore it was suitable for examining both the transcribed interviews and the policy document (ibid).

Conducting a content analysis involved a number of steps which includes analyzing the text, find themes and patterns in the text and drawing conclusions. The coding and categorizing is a vital part in a content analysis as these works to provide an overview over the text (Kvale 2007:105). Categories are often derived from theories but can also be constructed inductively (Cohen 2013:559). In this study the categories are based on the theoretical models. Two coding schemes were constructed based on TAM for the interview transcripts and FPM for the social media policies. The texts were then deductively analyzed and codes according to the categories were identified. While categories entail a systematic conceptualization, the codes are more specific and consist of key words which belong to the categories. The codes were attached to a segment in the text in order to identify the core content and allow for measuring the level of manifestations of each category and comparison between the cases (Kvale 2007:105).

The study adapted a deductive approach when analyzing the data. Deduction means that the researcher analyses data based on previously constructed theories, in this sense leads the theory the observations. This is more appropriate for this study than induction, which starts at observation and leads into a theory (Cohen et al. 2005:4). The reason for this is that this study aimed to apply the Technology Acceptance Model and the Foundational Positions. The study will then be able to draw conclusions on to what extent the theory is supported. In addition, deduction

can lead to a more specific analysis as it is limited to a number of variables drawn from the theory. It is therefore more structured than induction which is important for the epistemological approach (Treadwell 2011:25).

This study followed the seven steps on content analysis by Treadwell (2011:179). First, a research question on communication content was formulated, (Chapter 1). Second, the content was analyzed, the trend and purpose of using Facebook in Swedish municipalities as well as previous studies in this field was studied (Chapter 2). Third, the cases were selected and sampling done through conducting interviews and identifying social media policies (Chapter 3.2;3.3). Fourth, units for coding were selected using the theoretical models, and fifth, a coding scheme was developed (Table 3 & 4). The coding scheme was divided by categories, in the TAM and the FPM, including the codes. Sixth, the texts were analyzed with focus on the attitude expressed according to the codes and categories. Examples of the content analysis are presented in Appendix (Exemplification of the Content Analysis). In *Data reduction* a segment of the text was analyzed and translated into English. A pattern was identified to this segment (*Identify patterns*) and coded according to the coding scheme. Seventh, the levels of manifestation of each code and category in the texts were then shown in the coding scheme, presented in Results, chapter 4. All the measurements and results are interpreted as a comparison between the four cases.

3.4 Reliability & Validity

When conducting a research it must be ensured that measures are valid and reliable (Treadwell 2011:78). Cohen et al. (2013:179) describes qualitative data analysis through honesty depth, the amount of data received and the value of the data. In order to create a reliable and valid result the study conducted interviews with four municipalities where the number of cases was considered sufficiently to give a fair representation. The interviews covered the main issue of the study combined with more specific questions to create a depth when examining the result.

When establishing validity of the study the objective of the research is important to consider. This is conducted by defining peoples' perspectives and

examining how these contribute to the study (Cohen et al. 2013:181). The study examined why some municipalities were more successful than others in using Facebook as a strategic communication channel. *Successful* in this study was explained as the outcome of using Facebook as a strategic communication channel.

Success is a complex concept as it requires an interpretation of the concepts meaning. The way the concept is interpreted will impact the findings and hence the conclusions. It was therefore important to clarify how the concept is utilized and measured in the study. Measuring the concepts requires a standpoint of what success entails. In this study it has been measured by the outcome of Actual Use when using Facebook; including allocated resources for using the channel, number of posts, and number of followers to the page. Additional or other factors could be included to measure the concept. However, these are assumed to be the most applicable for this study since they measure the actual usage of Facebook which the Technology Acceptance Model requires.

The perspectives and attitudes of the administrator responsible for the official Facebook page were hence interviewed. This allowed for collecting the perspectives from the persons being in charge off the official Facebook page. Hence, the data were collected from primary sources to ensure the validity for the research.

There are various forms of validity, the ones presented below are considered applicable for this study in order to account for why this study reaches high validity.

External validity refers to the possibility of generalizing the data to ensure that it can be applied to a broader population (Cohen et al. 2013:186). The main objective is not to make generalizations in a qualitative study. The importance lies in how well the study provides a distinct, detailed and profound description so as to others can decide whether they find the study generalizable to another situation or not (ibid). In a qualitative research it is argued that interest lies in how generalizable the settings, people and situations are (ibid). This study concerns 4 municipalities out of 290 municipalities in Sweden. This could create limitations to the conclusions as the generalizability could be questioned. However, the external validity has been secured in this study through the method being used, i.e. through reliable theory widely used in studying communication technology. The

population for this study concerned suburban municipalities. Consequently, the results are most generalizable for similar cases. The study provided theories and models applicable for municipalities in general. Therefore, the conclusions could to an extent also be generalizable to other public institutions.

Content validity, described as the way to ensure that the questions measure what the study intend to measure, i.e. the researched area need to reflect the knowledge required for a given area (Cohen et al. 2013: 188). The foundation for this study was Facebook usage in Swedish municipalities, with the applied theories Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Foundational Positions Model (FPM) for social media policy. These theoretical areas gave the research breadth and depth for the specific focus of the study. The content validity was secured by the theories together with the study from SKL showing municipalities' activity on Facebook. This covered the main issues and later on the interviews with the right person concerned, gave more depth to the study. The questions asked to the respondents were based on the TAM model with questions measuring the categories which constitute the model.

Reliability is defined as the possibility to conduct a study all over again and get the exact same results as the previous study (Cohen et al. 2005:117). If similar results do not occur again, the reliability of the study is questionable (Treadwell, 2011:79). On the other hand, Cohen et al. (2013:202) stresses the difficulty in exactly repeating a study, referring to the strength of reliability in a qualitative study.

To ensure reliability in this study, the analysis of the texts based on content analysis is exemplified in a table (see Appendix: Exemplification of the content analysis). This allowed for an overview of how the material was interpreted and how the text was coded and categorized. This was done to give a future researcher the possibility to repeat the study. The study was systematically conducted which were shown throughout the study through well explained concepts and descriptions of how the work has been carried out. The case selection process was clearly structured with the same selection process to get similar cases. However, as Cohen et al. (2013:202) describes, there is a difficulty in exactly repeating a study, which has to be taken into consideration as the subsequent studies might not examine exactly the same cases, and the circumstances could have changed.

4 Results

In this chapter the results from the collected data are presented, all results and rankings are measured by comparing the data from the four cases. The chapter is divided into three sections. First, the level of success measured by the Actual Use of Facebook is presented. Second, results from the interviews are presented, based on the Technology Acceptance Model. The chapter ends with presenting results from the analysis of the Social Media Policies proceeded from Foundational Positions Model. The results are presented in tables with an explanatory description of how the empirics were interpreted.

4.1 Actual Use of Facebook

The Actual Use (AU) was measured by the amount of posts written by the municipality on the Facebook page and the amount of resources measured in time spent on Facebook per week by the administrator. However, the numbers of “likes”, hereafter referred to as followers, were also presented. This was done to present an indication of how successful the municipality was in increasing the contact with the citizens. The percentage of followers allows for a comparative ground that could indicate differences in successful rate between the four cases.

Table 2. Findings for Actual Use of Facebook

	Järfälla	Möln dal	Partille	Tyresö
Posts 1 – 4.2014	71	47	107	93
Hours / week	~ 2,5 h	~ 5 h	~ 8 – 10 h	~ 5 – 10 h
Likes⁴	855	613	608	5 412
Citizens⁵	68 509	61 734	35 853	43 803
Likes / citizens	1,2%	1,0%	1,7%	12,3%

⁴ Data collected: 2014.04.28. (Järfälla Kommun 2014; Möln dals Stad; Partille Kommun 2014; Tyresö Kommun 2014)

⁵ (SCB 2013)

From the examination of the AU of the four municipalities was concluded that Partille had the highest number of posts between 01.01.2014 and 28.04.2014. Tyresö had a slightly less amount of posts, followed by Järfälla and finally Mölndal (Järfälla Kommun 2014; Mölndals Stad 2014; Partille Kommun 2014; Tyresö Kommun 2014). The time allocated on using Facebook was also included in order to examine what effect it could have on the outcome. Since Tyresö had a much higher amount of followers in addition to the second highest number of posts, this municipality has been classified as the most successful case. Partille was ranked the second most successful case as it had a slightly higher percentage of followers compared to Mölndal and Järfälla. Although Järfälla and Mölndal had similar amount of followers divided by the population, Järfälla had more posts and was therefore regarded as a slightly more successful case compared to Mölndal.

4.2 Facebook Acceptance as a Communication Channel

The findings of the content analysis on the transcribed interviews according to TAM are presented in Table 3. The table consists of the categories in TAM. The categories are abbreviated in the text, the explanation of the abbreviation could be found in the table, e.g. Ease of Use (EU). The categories were divided into codes in the table. These were used to identify trends in the transcribed interviews. The codes were measured by level of positive or negative attitude towards the particular code, ranked by comparison between the four cases on a scale from *low* to *high*. *High* (H) indicated a very positive attitude towards the code, with the respondent continuously indicating a positive attitude towards the phenomenon. *Low* (L) indicates an absence of, or a negative attitude on that code. The variables *medium low* (ML), *medium* (M) and *medium high* (MH) measure the values between *high* and *low*. An exemplification of the interpretation on the empirics is presented in Appendix (Exemplification of the content analysis).

Table 3. Findings for Technology Acceptance of Facebook

Categories:	Codes:	Järfälla	Mölnadal	Partille	Tyresö
Ease of Use (EU)	Ease	H	MH	MH	H
	-Difficulty	M	M	M	H
	Total	MH	M	MH	H
Critical Mass (CM)	Pressure citizens	N/A	M	M	M
	Pressure public institutions	L	L	L	L
	Target group	MH	M	M H	H
	Total	M	M	M	M
Capabilities (CP)	Features	MH	MH	MH	H
	Work duties	H	MH	H	H
	Total	MH	MH	MH	H
Playfulness (PP)	Positive	MH	MH	MH	H
	-Negative	M	MH	H	H
	Total:	M	MH	MH	H
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	Total:	M	M	M H	H
Intention to Use (IU)	Total:	M	M	M H	H

Ease of Use

The first category in the model concerns the Ease of Use (EU), i.e. to what extent the administrators found Facebook easy to handle as a communication channel. The codes Ease or Difficulty indicated the level of difficulty or ease expressed regarding Facebook usability. Ease was examined by positive comments of the respondent regarding Facebook's usability. Difficulty was examined by negative comments, complexity and problems from the respondents regarding Facebook's usability. The category was divided into these two codes since all the administrators answered that they found Facebook easy to administrate, however the difficulties by using Facebook were expressed differently. In this regard, the perceived difficulties affected the Ease of Use. In order to get a valid and comprehensible result for the total Perceived Usefulness the negative code in this category, difficulty, had to be reversed, i.e. high on the scale is low difficulty of

Facebook. In this sense is the scale from low to high equal to the attitude, in order to examine the relations between the categories EU, CM, CP and PP compared to PU. The administrators were also asked during the interview to rank EU from one to five (question 3.4, see 8.1 Appendix: Interview questions). This was seen as a clear indicator towards the attitude together with other aspects that were brought up.

The content analysis showed that the administrator from Järfälla regarded Facebook as a communication channel fairly easy to use, and consequently ranked it as a four on question 3.4. The administrator also mentioned obstacles and frustration regarding the functions of Facebook, thus this code was ranked as *medium*. The average value on the category was therefore identified as *medium high*. The administrator from Mölndal was also ranked *medium* on the average of the category. The EU was ranked as three and a half by the respondent on question 3.4, hence rating *medium high*. The administrator mentioned some difficulties with the different functions provided, hence the *medium* ranking on difficulty.

The administrator from Partille was ranked as *medium high*, based on the respondents' attitude towards Facebook's usability where the respondent ranked it as three plus on question 3.4, in combination with the overall attitude towards Facebook's Ease of Use, which was positive. The administrator from Tyresö got the ranking *high*, based on the positive attitude regarding the EU expressed during the whole interview, together with the ranking four to five on question 3.4.

Critical Mass

Critical Mass (CM) concerned the perceived amount of pressure from the surroundings to use Facebook, such as the citizens and other public authorities. This was examined by the codes Pressure citizens and Pressure public institutions. It was the perceived pressures being measured for this code, not the actual pressure which would require an examination from the perspective of these actors. This is not relevant in the study as the TAM focuses on examining the personal attitude towards the communication channel. The CM was also examined by the awareness of the target group; how much they considered their target group when administrating the Facebook account.

The administrator from Järfälla could not estimate the pressure from the surroundings and the result was therefore not applicable, hence *N/A* in the table. In combination with *medium high* ranked on CM as the administrator mentioned Facebook as a good communication channel for news to appeal and reach a broader target group. The final result for CM was therefore ranked *medium*. The administrator from Mölndal was ranked *medium* on CM. This as the respondent mentioned perceived expectations from the citizens and how they observed other municipalities to see how they progressed with their Facebook page. The administrator from Partille described how they sensed expectations from the citizens to be available on Facebook, mostly as more and more questions were asked by the citizens on this forum. Facebook was also seen as a channel to reach new target groups, and new possibilities were created through it. Administrator from Partille was therefore ranked *medium* on CM.

The administrator from Tyresö continuously mentioned how they kept what is interesting for the citizens in mind when posting on Facebook and often received positive feedback for their quick response on followers' questions. Regarding pressure from the citizens and other public authorities the administrator from Tyresö explained that they were one of the first municipalities starting a Facebook page and therefore felt no pressure in the beginning. Nowadays they are more aware of the other municipalities and have a constant overlook, which automatically leads to some influences. The administrator from Tyresö was therefore ranked *medium* on CM.

Capabilities

The Capabilities (CP) concerns Facebook's features in relation to work tasks, i.e. how well Facebook helps the administrators in their daily work as a communicator. The category was divided into the codes Features and Work Duties. Features indicated the number of features the municipality used when administrating Facebook. Work Duties, to what extent the features were seen as an efficient communication channel to use for performing the work tasks and duties. All respondents mainly used the same features and argued that publishing posts through pictures and links was the most used and efficient channel.

The administrator from Tyresö was the only municipality which used advertising as a tool to reach more citizens, hence the rating *high*, compared to

medium high for the other cases. The respondent from Mölndal talked about seeing Facebook as a communication channel to get the citizens to visit their homepage, but also to invite to a dialogue with the citizens. The administrator from Partille pointed out that Facebook gives them a bigger spread on their information. The respondent also argued that if Facebook had not existed, the traffic to their homepage probably would have been higher, but with a different form of dialogue. The administrator from Partille was therefore ranked *medium high* on features.

The administrators from Järfälla, Partille and Tyresö expressed that Facebook and their features allowed them to follow statistics for their Facebook page. The features could distinguish what the citizens liked to get an indication for their interest, which were seen as a very useful for the communication channel. This tool was not used by the administrator from Mölndal, but another staff member in the municipality used this tool to observe the Facebook page and the followers. The administrators from Järfälla, Partille and Tyresö argued that the features on Facebook were at help to preform work duties; Capabilities was therefore ranked *high*. The administrator from Mölndal answered that the features could help to preform work duties, but not always, hence the rating *medium high*.

Playfulness

Playfulness (PP) measured whether the respondent found Facebook joyful and fun to use in their daily work. The respondents were asked to rank to what extent they found the fool amusing or boring to use (question 3.12, in 8.2 Appendix: Interview questions). The two codes Positive and Negative explained the respondent's attitude towards Facebook. Equal to the code -Difficulty in the EU are the scale reversed here for negative playfulness, high means little or low negativity.

The result showed that the administrator from Järfälla had a positive attitude towards Facebook; the respondent ranked it as a four on a scale from one to five, where five was seen as truly joyful (question 3.12). Despite that, troubles with some functions were mentioned through the interview, and therefore the result for playfulness compared to the others was ranked *medium*. The administrator from Mölndal ranked Facebook as a four on PP (question 3.12). The respondent explained that it was useful since it went quick and smooth to post on “the wall”,

as a result from that it became fun to use. When there was struggle with the functions the administrator described that it became less fun to use. Consequently, the administrator from Mölndal was ranked *medium high*.

The administrator from Partille ranked the PP for Facebook as a four (question 3.12), mostly due to the ease in response from the citizens. The negative aspect mentioned was the limited resources allocated, which could create problems. Hence, the administrator from Partille was ranked *medium high* on PP. The administrator from Tyresö expressed the most joy for Facebook compared to the other municipalities. The respondent ranked it as a four on the scale and expressed the joy in receiving direct feedback from the citizens (question 3.12). The total PP was therefore ranked *high*.

Perceived Usefulness

Perceived Usefulness (PU) was measured through identifying instances of expressed opportunities and overall usefulness, present as well as in the future, of using Facebook in the municipality. This is reported in the final row of the table.

The administrator from Tyresö expressed many purposes and opportunities of using Facebook, such as an increased citizen's dialogue, post news quickly and feedback from the citizens. This was also expressed by the remaining cases, however to a lesser degree. The administrator from Mölndal started the Facebook page in the first place with the purpose to get access to "Mölndals stad" as a Facebook name, but also to initiate to a dialogue with the citizens in Mölndal. The administrator from Partille saw it as a complement to their official web page and as a way to highlight various news and activities. The administrator from Järfälla saw it as a brand building function, where information and news can be mediated. The administrator from Järfälla also expressed an uncertain future of Facebook in general, and stated that "Facebook will not exist forever, and no one believes so either"⁶. The other cases expressed foremost positive opportunities for the future, the administrator from Mölndal expressed the increasing citizens dialogue, to get something in return from the citizens was something the administrator from

⁶ Translated from Swedish: "...för Facebook kommer ju inte vara för evigt och det är det ingen som tror heller" (Kull, M 2013.05.08)

Tyresö stressed and the administrator from Partille speculated in using several Facebook pages for different purposes in the future.

Intention to Use

PU is related to the Intention to Use (IU). IU concerns the respondent's intention to use social media for work related tasks and is measured by purposes expressed as well as the attitude towards these.

The administrator from Tyresö expressed Facebook as a helpful communication channel in their daily work. It contributed to an enhanced citizen's dialogue and was also seen as a valuable marketing channel to display Tyresö municipality, hence the ranking *high*. The administrator from Partille was discussing the effects of using Facebook and explained that it was difficult to control the dialogue taking place on the Facebook page. They were however positive to Facebook as a useful communication channel in their daily work, hence the ranking *medium high*. The administrator from Järfälla was also positive to Facebook as a communication channel in their daily work. The respondent expressed it as "Yes if you say that my work task is to strengthen the brand Järfälla, then yes!"⁷ This shows a positive attitude towards Facebook. However, the respondent expressed less purposes with using Facebook, compared to Partille and Tyresö, hence the ranking *medium*. The administrator from Mölndal expressed that it could facilitate their duties but not always, hence the ranking *medium*.

As a complement to the IU the Social Media Policies (SMP) were added to the TAM model, the impact the policies have on the respondents and the IU will be further described in the following section.

4.3 Social Media Policy

The findings of the content analysis of the social media policies for the four municipalities are presented in table 4. The table is divided by the categories in

⁷ Translated from Swedish: "Ja om man säger att min arbetsuppgift är att stärka varumärket Järfälla. Så ja!" Larsson, M. 2013.05.08)

the Foundational Positions Model and the codes that are used to identify the trends in the text. The codes are measured according to what extent these were prominent in the document. The ranking was equal to the procedure of measuring for TAM, on a scale from *high* to *low* (see 4.2). An exemplification of the interpretation on the empirics is presented in Appendix (Exemplification of the content analysis).

Table 4. Findings for Foundational Positions on Social Media Policy

Categories:	Codes:	Järfälla	Mölnadal	Partille	Tyresö
Homogeneous	Clear Guidelines	MH	M	ML	H
	Clear purposes	H	L	L	H
	Total	H	L	L	H
Heterogeneous	General Guidelines	ML	MH	M	L
	Unclear Purposes	L	H	H	L
	Total	L	H	H	L
Problem	Legal Restrictions	H	M	MH	L
	Disciplining	H	M	M	M
	Total	H	M	M	ML
Possibility	Opportunity (OP)	MH	L	L	MH
	Branding (B)	MH	L	L	L
	Supply Information (I)	MH	L	L	H
	Citizens Dialogue (CD)	ML	ML	ML	H
	Total:	MH	L	L	H
Classified:		Bureaucratic /Branding foundation	Disciplining foundation	Disciplining foundation	Branding foundation

Homogeneous & Heterogeneous

For the first category, Homogeneous, two codes were examined in the Social Media Policies (SMP) for each municipality; Clear guidelines and Clear purposes. Clear guidelines were examined by the formulations in the SMP regarding how to use social media tool. Clear purposes included to what extent the purposes of using social media were formulated. The SMP for Tyresö was mainly constructed by clear guidelines consistently throughout the document. There were many

instructions of how social media should be used and handled; therefore Tyresö got the rating *high* on clear guidelines. Furthermore, the purposes of why Tyresö should use Facebook, and other social media forums, were also clearly stated in the document. In this regard, Tyresö was ranked *high* on both codes. Järfälla also had clearly stated purposes and was therefore ranked *high* for this code, the guidelines were mainly clear in SMP, however, less clear than Tyresö, therefore it was ranked *medium high*. The SMPs for Tyresö and Järfälla were therefore classified as Homogeneous. Mölndal and Partille were graded *low* on clear guidelines and clear purposes. The SMPs included guidelines of general character focusing on, for example, situations to consider before creating a social media account. Furthermore, the purposes were not clearly stated, instead the document included the instruction to formulate a purpose and strategy and identify the target group before starting a social media forum. Consequentially, the SMP for Partille and Mölndal were categorized as Heterogeneous.

Problem & Possibility

The category Problem was examined by the codes Legal restrictions and Disciplining. Legal restrictions include formulations referring to legal acts which affect the social media usage, such as *E-delegationen* and *the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act*. Disciplining includes formulations regarding how social media needs to be controlled and handled, for instance through other plans and strategies for the municipality, regarding ethical issues or rules and restriction of procedure. Järfälla had two pages with laws that concerned social media, it was also referred to in other parts of the document, hence the ranking *high*. The document also included many examples which can be identified as disciplinary, such as how to handle inappropriate comments from citizens and responsibility issues for the staff in the municipality. Mölndal and Partille both ranked *medium* on legal restrictions and disciplining. Both referred to *the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act*, but it was not formulated in detail how this affected the social media usage. Partille also referred to other legal acts ⁸, hence the rating *medium high*. A few examples of disciplining character were also found in the

⁸ The fundamental law on freedom of expression, the act on copyright in literary and artistic works, and the personal data act (Partille 2010:2).

SMPs for Mölndal and Partille. Partille included instruction regarding secrecy and referred to the municipality's information policy. The SMP for Mölndal included instructions of who to report to and the responsibility for information and the organization. The disciplining formulations were however less evident compared to Järfälla, hence the ranking *medium*. Tyresö SMP includes indirect references to legal acts, such as copyright and registration on documents. However, it is limited and therefore ranked *low*. The SMP included disciplining restrictions comparable to Mölndal and Partille, hence the rating *medium*.

The fourth category Possibility was examined by the codes Opportunity, Branding, Supply information and Citizens dialogue. As the purpose of using social media was not stated in Mölndal and Partille's SMP, little or no formulation was found on these codes. However, both SMPs included the word *dialogue* as a function of social media, which indicates citizens dialogue, hence the rating *medium low*. Järfälla listed the purposes in the introduction of the SMP, they were therefore clearly stated but not described further, hence the rating *medium high*. For Tyresö the purposes for using social media was described in more detail and the specific purposes for Facebook was also formulated, hence the rating *high*.

Foundational Positions

Järfälla was categorized as Homogeneous and possibility according to the foundational position model and the SMP was therefore classified as a *Bureaucratic Foundation*. However, since Järfälla also reached high on the category Possibility, it is located close to the *Branding foundation*, hence the classification *Bureaucratic/Branding Foundation*. The SMP for Mölndal and Partille was categorized as Heterogeneous and as a Problem, hence the classification *Disciplining Foundation*. The SMP for Tyresö was classified as Homogeneous and as a Possibility, hence the classification *Branding Foundation*.

5 Discussion

In this chapter the results are discussed based on the theoretical framework. The more and less influencing factors that explained the most successful case in Facebook usage are discussed and identified. The chapter is divided into sections according to conclusions drawn from the results; 'Technology Acceptance Determines Success', 'Usability and Enjoyment Determines Success', 'Target Group Influences Success', and 'Social Media Policy Influences Success'.

5.1 Technology Acceptance Determines Success

The empirical examination of the administrators' acceptance of Facebook based on the Technology Acceptance Model follows the outcome of the Actual Use of Facebook. The analysis of the empirics showed that there was a relation between the categories, which confirms TAM. This means that the categories in TAM influence the outcome of using Facebook more. As demonstrated in table 3, a high value in the first part of the model (EU, CP, CM, PP) leads regularly to a high value on the respective steps of the model (PU, IU, AU). PU always had an effect on IU. Differences among the categories have however been identified, these are presented in the following section 5.2. The conclusions are also illustrated in Figure 3. This model includes the influencing categories for Actual Use, hence, success in Facebook usage. The arrows illustrates influence, a dotted outline of a box illustrates a less influencing relation, whereas bold outline illustrates a more influencing relation.

The most successful case, Tyresö, reached the highest value on the categories in the first step of the model and the highest on PU, IU and AU. PU was ranked *medium high* for Partille, which have been identified as the second most successful case. Järfälla and Mölndal was ranked *medium* on PU which coincides with the findings in AU (Table 2), these were the least successful cases of using Facebook in this research. The respondent from Mölndal explains, "Regarding all

the settings for Facebook, I sometimes experience them as quite difficult.”⁹ This example was interpreted as a concerned attitude towards Facebook which affected the EU and consequently the PU. Therefore, concerned attitude affects the outcome of using Facebook, i.e. AU.

When examining the factors within the first step of the model (EU, CM, SP, PP), additional conclusions could be drawn on which factors are more and less influencing for the outcome. This will be presented in the following section.

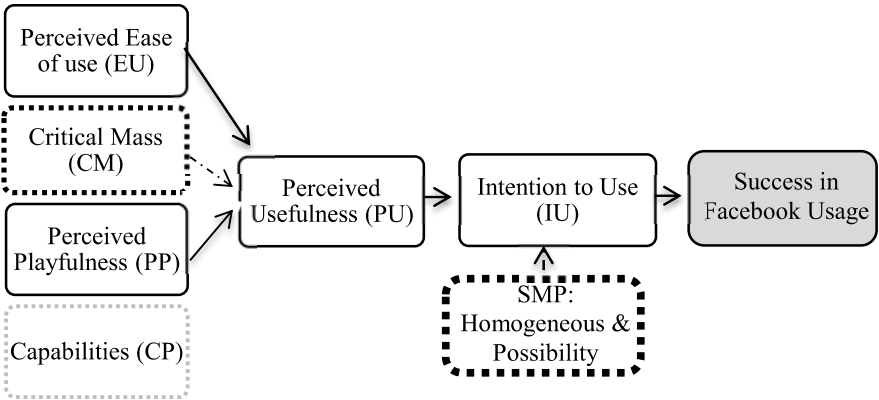


Figure 3. Factors explaining success in Facebook usage in the four municipalities

5.2 Usability and Enjoyment Determines Success

Ease of Use (EU) and Perceived Playfulness (PP) has been determined as the two most influencing categories in TAM. These are therefore illustrated with bold outlines in Figure 3. These are the two categories which are remarkable in the findings. A high value of EU and PP resulted in a high value of PU, IU and AU, which means that these two categories are more influencing for the outcome. The values for Critical Mass (CM) and Capabilities (CP) do not follow the same logic, as the ratings were more random in relation to PU. It was concluded that if an administrator associate less problems and complexities with the communication channel, the municipality will be more successful in using Facebook as a strategic

⁹ Translated from Swedish: ”Alltså just när de gäller inställningar så tycker jag de kan vara ganska svåra...” Larsson, M 2014.05.14

communication channel. A high Ease of Use and Playfulness can together be seen as a high engagement, a positive attitude to use the channel.

It was found that shared responsibility created problems which affected the Facebook usage negatively. The respondent from Mölndal cooperated with up to ten people from different departments which administrated the official Facebook account. Järfälla, Partille and Tyresö had one administrator being responsible for and handled the Facebook page. This is one factor to why Mölndal was ranked *medium* on the category for EU, compared to *medium high* to *high* for the other cases. Presumably when one person handled the Facebook page, greater EU was experienced, as for Mölndal sharing the responsibility experienced less EU.

The level of success has also been explained in relation to how long the Facebook page has existed. Tyresö was ranked *high* on EU, and launched their Facebook page in 2009 (Tyresö 2014). Mölndal was ranked *medium* on EU, and launched their Facebook page in 2012 (Mölndal 2014). It could therefore be assumed that municipalities experienced difficulties in the early stages of starting the Facebook page. Järfälla started their account in 2010, which could explain why the administrator experienced a higher Ease of Use administrating the page, compared to Mölndal (Järfälla 2014).

The administrator from Tyresö expressed some problems in the initial stages of launching the Facebook page: “In the beginning there were some difficulties because there were no guidelines available.”¹⁰ Due to the fact that it was a new communication channel to handle might have affected the attitude towards Facebook as a new communicative channel in the early stages. However, today the municipalities experienced ease with administrating the channel. The exception was Mölndal, who still were in the initial stages and experienced difficulties. The administrator from Mölndal explains: “Now, when it comes to all the settings, I think they can be quite difficult. (...) It could have been easier, and it's a lot of rights that controls here and there “¹¹. As time passes it will be easier for administrators to use Facebook. If there is a lack of experience in using

¹⁰ Translated from Swedish: ”I början var det lite svårt för då fanns det inte några riktlinjer.” Larsson, M 2014.05.16

¹¹ Translated from Swedish: ”Alltså just när det gäller alla inställningar så tycker jag att de kan va ganska svåra, (...) De hade kunnat vara enklare, och det är ju mycket med rättigheter som styr hit och dit ” Kull M. 2014.05.13

Facebook as a new communication channel EU remains low. This has been confirmed by the respondent from Tyresö “My colleagues do not think it is fun if I have vacation. It’s that, if you don’t do a thing every day it becomes more difficult.”¹² This example illustrates how the lack of experience from the colleagues results in a low EU and a negative attitude, affecting the PU.

A second finding regarding time, not brought up by the theories, showed that time affected the number of followers. Tyresö, which is the most successful case, also had the account for the longest amount of time out of the four cases. This allows for a longer time to attract citizens to the Facebook page. Tyresö had been using Facebook for four years and seven months and Partille, which started the account in 2011, for three years and five months (Partille 2014). Nevertheless, Partille does not follow the same progress and development as Tyresö. It is hence not expected that Partille will have the same number of followers as Tyresö after the same amount of time of using Facebook. This conclusion could therefore not alone explain the outcome of attracting followers. The SMP was also shown to have an effect on the level of success. This will be presented further in section 5.4.

A third finding regarding time was the hours spent weekly on using Facebook. This resulted in a higher amount of posts and a higher number of followers. The first was an obvious finding, the latter more interesting. Maintaining a critical approach observing the statistics of the relation between posting and number of followers could be of importance. A high number of posts do not guarantee a high number of followers. As explained by Tyresö: “Thus, what kind of posts we have, if we have boring or too many posts they will stop liking us, and that is very clear. Because we can follow the statistics when they stop liking us.”¹³ This shows that the statistical tool is important to use in order to get an overview of how followers respond to the Facebook activity. Partille did not keep the same critical approach, prioritizing the statistical tool to the same degree. “However, it is difficult to recoup, I do not have much time to sit statistically and look at how it develops and

¹² Translated from Swedish: ”Mina kollegor tycker inte det är kul om jag har semester. Det är ju det där om man inte gör någonting varje dag så är det svårare” by Kull. M. 2014.05.13

¹³ Translated from Swedish: ”Alltså vad vi har för inlägg, för har vi tråkiga inlägg eller för många så slutar de gilla oss, och det märks väldigt tydligt. För vi kan följa statistiken när de slutar gilla.” Larsson, M. 2014.05.13

who the target group is and stuff like that.”¹⁴ In conclusion, it is important to distribute the time spent of Facebook to strategically use Facebook efficiently. A lack of critical approach could lead to a loss of control of the communication channel (Macanamara & Zerfass 2012:200). The example of Partille gives this impression.

A fourth finding regarding time was the relation between time resources and engagement. The number of hours allocated to use Facebook was decided by the municipality. It was found that the possibility to allocate more time to using the communication channel generated a higher engagement by the administrator, hence a higher AU. As previously mentioned, Tyresö and Partille allocated the highest amount of time to using the channel (Table 2). This generated a higher Ease of Use and Playfulness. The engagement is thereby influenced by the amount recourses, in terms of time, allocated by the municipality to using Facebook.

Another unexpected finding showed that liking and identification with the municipality affected the number of followers. According to the administrator from Tyresö, the citizens follow the municipality on Facebook for the reason: “Tyresö residents are proud to be from Tyresö. (...) I think it's a statement that one likes Tyresö”¹⁵. The administrators from Järfälla and Mölndal gave similar responses. Mölndal’s administrator mentioned identity creation and Järfälla’s argued that liking the municipality on Facebook is interlinked with liking the municipality in general. Hence, proudness and identification with the municipality could presumably be weaker in Mölndal and Järfälla, compared to Tyresö. This could explain the difference in number of followers between them. This indicates that if there is a higher tendency of the citizens to like and to identify with the municipality, it is more likely that they follow the municipality on Facebook.

Perceived Playfulness (PP) was found to be a more influencing factor regarding the AU. PP affected the level of success in using Facebook. It is to an extent expected that the respondents receives a high value on PP since they are all

¹⁴ Translated from Swedish: ”Däremot är det svårare att räkna hem, jag har inte så mycket tid att sitta statistiskt och titta på hur det utvecklas och vilka målgrupperna är och sådär” Kull, M. 2014.05.13

¹⁵ Translated from Swedish: ” Tyresöborna är stolta över att vara från Tyresö. (...) Jag tror det är markering att man gillar Tyresö. (Kull, M 2014.05.13)

assigned the duty to administrate the Facebook account, hence the equal rating on the code *Positive* (Table 3.). However, it is the absence of negative comments that explains the outcome, code *-Negative* in the table. Little or no negative attitude was found in the content analysis of the respondents from Tyresö and Partille, the two most successful cases, compared to Järfälla and Mölndal which expressed some negative opinions of Facebook. As explained by the respondent from Järfälla about the function of administrating Facebook “You cannot get it in a good way and it bothers me because it gives me a constant flow of everything and it annoys me.”¹⁶ As such, it is not a positive attitude that affects the outcome, instead, the level of problems being associated with the communication channel. Furthermore, it was notable that Tyresö, which was identified as the most successful case, expressed a higher positive attitude compared to the respective respondents. In sum, PP affects PU, and is therefore a more influencing factor for the outcome.

In conclusion, the outcome of using Facebook is explained by a positive engagement, determined by the absence of problems, complexities, negative attitude regarding the Ease of Use and Playfulness.

5.3 Target Group Influences Success

It has been found that Critical Mass (CM) influences the level of success in Facebook usage. However, as the ratings are random in relation to the outcome AU, they cannot be determined as explanatory factors. CM has therefore been determined as a less influencing factor, illustrated with a dotted line in Figure 3. The content analysis of the category Capabilities, measured by the codes Features and Work Duties, resulted in equal rating for the four cases and could therefore not explain the different outcomes of AU. Therefore no arrow has been drawn from this category in Figure 3.

The findings indicated a weak relation between CM and PU. Pressure from citizens and public institutions were perceived equal for all municipalities, and

¹⁶ Translated from Swedish: “Det går inte att få det på ett bra sätt och det stör mig, för det gör att jag får ett konstant flöde av allt och det irriterar mig”. Larsson, M. 2014.05.16

could therefore not explain the differences in outcome. The reason for this could be that they are all affected by the same or similar public institutions, which creates an equal pressure on them to use Facebook. Also, since the municipalities are proven equal in the Case Selection, based on Most Similar System Design (section 3.1 and 3.2), this generate a similar pressure and expectation from the public authorities and the citizens.

The code *Target Group* had an influencing effect on PU for the cases Mölndal, Partille and Tyresö. As explained by Tyresö, who kept the target group in mind when posting on Facebook, “From Facebook, we send out notices to the personal accounts of the users, and then it must be interesting to the users, otherwise they will stop liking us.”¹⁷ The exception which disconfirms the influencing effect between CM to PU was Järfälla as there was no relation between these categories. The *medium high* ranking for Järfälla on Target Group could be explained by the SMP which includes the intended target group. It could be interpreted that the SMP could have affected the administrator to think strategically regarding the target group when using Facebook, even though it did not affect the personal PU of Facebook.

In conclusion, the category CM had an influence on PU, and hence the AU. However, it cannot be determined as an explanatory factor since awareness of the target group does not always affect the outcome.

5.4 Social Media Policy Influences Success

Three different classifications for the SMP in the four examined municipalities were found from the content analysis; Disciplining foundation (Mölndal and Partille), Branding foundation (Tyresö). The Foundational position for Järfälla was unclear since it had a high value on both Problem and Possibility, and was therefore classified as Bureaucratic/Branding Foundation, leaning more towards Bureaucratic Foundation. Since Tyresö and Partille have been identified as the

¹⁷ Translated from Swedish: ” Från Facebook skickar vi ut meddelanden in I det personliga flödet till användarna och då måste det vara intressant för användarna, annars slutar de gilla oss” Kull, M 2014.05.15

most successful cases, it could be expected that these types of social media policies are most efficient in generating a high outcome of AU. However, since no similarities were found between these two cases compared to Järfälla and Mölndal, this conclusion cannot be drawn.

Nevertheless, Tyresö was identified as more successful compared to Partille. Therefore, Branding foundation should be the best type of SMP to become successful in Facebook usage. Järfälla has a similar SMP compared to Tyresö, it was only slightly more leaning towards Problem than Possibility. Järfälla had a much lower value on the number of followers compared to Tyresö. Henceforth, Branding foundation cannot alone explain the level of success in Facebook usage. Tyresö had a higher value on PU, compared to Järfälla. Consequently, the personal acceptance and PU together with the Branding position of the SMP explains a successful case. Social Media Policy, which includes the categories Homogeneous and Possibility, is therefore illustrated in Figure 3 as an influencing factor.

Trends have been observed in the content analysis of the respective SMPs based on FPM. Tyresö and Järfälla were rated Homogeneous, and Mölndal and Partille Heterogeneous on the vertical scale of the FPM. The clear guidelines in the Homogeneous cases were thoroughly formulated with clear instructions of how to use social media. The Heterogeneous cases were more based on general strategies on how to use social media. Also the name of the SMP in the respective cases gave this impression. The title for Mölndals SMP was "*Mölndals city's recommendations for Social media – from monolog to conversation*"¹⁸. Partille's SMP is named "*The municipality and social media – advice to employees in Partille municipality*"¹⁹. These include the words *recommendations* and *advice* which has a more general tone. This has been compared to the SMP for Tyresö "*Guidelines for usage of social media*"²⁰ and "*Social Media - rules and*

¹⁸ Translated from Swedish: "Mölndals stad rekommendationer kring Sociala meder – från monolog till konversation" Kull, M. 2014.05.09

¹⁹ Translated from Swedish: "Kommunen och sociala medier – råd till anställda i Partille kommun" Kull, M 2014.05.09

²⁰ Translated from Swedish: "Riktlinjer för användning as sociala medier" Kull, M 2014.05.09

instructions”²¹ for Järfälla municipality. This indicated a more strict approach of how social media should be used in Järfälla and Tyresö, since they include the terms *guidelines for usage* and *instructions*.

The length of the document also coincides with the trend on Homogeneous vs Heterogeneous and the level of ambiguity in the guidelines. Järfälla’s SMP consisted of 15 pages, Tyresö 9, Mölndal 8 and Partille 2. Indeed, the SMP becomes more informative when the document is longer. The reason why Tyresö were a more successful municipality might be due to the more structured and detailed policy. This allows for a critical and a goal minded approach. According to Carlsson (2009), Hallahan et al. (2007) and O’Hair (2011), this is crucial for a successful strategy. Comparing Tyresö to Partille, where Partille does not include goal setting in their SMP, could result in a lower amount of followers. Despite of this, Järfälla had a comprehensive SMP but was not one of the most successful cases. This shows that the personal acceptance of Facebook, which is lower from Järfälla in comparison to Partille, affects the outcome of the AU more than a comprehensive SMP. In addition, even though the social media policies do not include guidelines and goal-setting, a strategic thinking has been identified when interviewing the administrators. The study has shown that formulating the strategies in the Social Media Policies could lead to a more successful outcome.

A difference has been identified between Tyresö and the other cases on the category Problem in the FPM. Tyresö had a SMP which included few references to legal restrictions and disciplining factors. The other municipalities had formulated a more restricted approach in the SMP document. This compared to outcome AU indicated that a less restricted approach leads to a higher level of success, since Tyresö is the most successful case. A restricted approach leads to a loss in the advantages of social media (Klang & Nolin 2011), which this study confirms through examining Facebook.

No relation was found between Possibility and AU, which disconfirms that this factor was influencing the outcome. However, the fact that Tyresö and Järfälla included possibilities in the SMP shows that they have a more comprehensive SMP, since goal setting is a crucial concept in strategic

²¹ Translated from Swedish: ”Sociala Medier - regler och anvisningar för Järfälla kommun” Kull. M 2014.05.09

communication. This affects the IU and could be a reason to why Tyresö is more successful in using Facebook compared to Mölndal and Partille. The reason to why Järfälla still does not become successful in using social media was explained by the lower rating in accepting the communication channel, as fewer possibilities were expressed by the respondent from Järfälla regarding Facebook usage. “They [SKL] would like to talk about it as a forum for dialogue, and I see it more as a forum”²² This quote indicates that the respondent has a more restricted view on the possibilities Facebook provides. On the contrary Partille see more possibilities in using Facebook to increase the citizens’ dialogue “However we answer to questions coming in and we have some dialogue, I think it's positive with the citizens’ dialogue.”²³

Geographical trends have been identified as the municipalities in the Gothenburg region and the municipalities in the Stockholm region include many similarities in their SMPs. It could therefore be assumed that municipalities are influenced by municipalities in the region. This has also been confirmed in the interview by all the respondents who expresses that they observe other municipalities’ usage of Facebook. As explained by the respondent from Partille when asked if they are influenced by other municipalities: “Yes (...) I like many of our surrounding municipalities, because I think it's very important to keep an eye on them.”²⁴ Furthermore, The Stockholm region municipalities launched their Facebook pages 1 and 2 years earlier than the Gothenburg region municipalities. This presumably also affected the approaches in the policy documents. Tyresö and Järfälla have updated their documents since they started, the present ones are from 2013 in comparison to Mölndal and Partille where the latest version was from 2010. It could thereby be interpreted as the Stockholm regions are more successful at using Facebook as a strategic communication channel according to FPM. Even though this study have shown that Partille is more successful compared to Järfälla since they have a higher value on AU.

²² Translated from Swedish: ”Och de [SKL] vill prata om det som ett dialogforum, och jag ser det som att det är ett forum.” Larsson, M. 2014.05.16.

²³ Translated from Swedish: ”Men däremot svarar vi löpande på frågor som kommer in och vi har en viss dialog och de märker vi, jag tycker det är positivt med medborgardialogen.” Kull, M. 2013.05.14

²⁴ Translated from Swedish ” Ja (...) Jag gillar ju flera utav våra kranskommuner, för jag tycker det är väldigt viktigt att ha den kollen, “Kull, M 2014.05.16

6 Conclusion

This study identified one municipality that successfully used Facebook as a strategic communication channel and three less successful municipalities. The study concluded that in order to become successful in using Facebook as a strategic communication channel the three following factors were required. First, a strong engagement from the administrator in the municipality is essential as it leads to an increased perceived usefulness of Facebook. A successful case has an administrator which experiences the channel as easy and joyful to use. Moreover, the municipality is positive to using Facebook as an additional communication channel to spend time and resources on. A less successful case associated more problems towards the channel. Second, a comprehensive Social Media Policy includes clear guidelines and goal-setting. The social media policies for less successful cases did not include purposes and instructions of why and how Facebook should be used. Third, target group awareness was proved to be an influencing factor regarding the level of success. A successful municipality constantly keeps the attended target group in mind when administrating Facebook. Less successful cases were less focused on the target group and their interests.

In addition to these findings, the study identified time as an aspect affecting the level of success in using Facebook as a strategic communication channel. The success increased the longer the Facebook page had been used by the municipality. Spending a large amount of time on Facebook also resulted in a more comprehensive social media policy, a higher engagement when using the communication channel, and a higher amount of followers.

Additional studies on this topic are recommended since it can broaden the knowledge of how municipalities better can utilize Facebook as a communicative channel. It is suggested that a similar study is applied on more cases in order to further increase the reliability of the conclusions in this study. Furthermore, the effects of using Facebook are important to explore, such as to what extent the citizens dialogue could increase through Facebook.

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Appendix

E-mail: Description of Interview

Vår studie fokuserar på kommuners användning av Facebook och hur de via sin huvudsida på Facebook kommunicerar med kommunens invånare. Frågorna kommer beröra kommunes strategi gällande sociala medier, hur verktyget uppfattas som ett effektivt strategiskt medel gällande de mål som satts upp. Studien utgår från kommunikationsansvariga på kommunen och kommer inte beröra hur kommunens invånare upplever användandet av Facebook.

Några av de ämnen som kommer beröras under intervjun är:

Vad är kommunens syfte/mål med att använda Facebook? Uppfylls dessa?

Vad ser ni för möjligheter/begränsningar med att använda Facebook?

Hur ser dialogen ut med kommunens invånare via Facebook?

Vilka strategiska riktlinjer finns gällande kommunikationen som sker på Facebook?

Interview Questions

1. Introducerande, allmänna frågor

1.1 Först kommer jag att ställa ett par allmänna frågor om din roll som administratör för Facebook, och det huvudsakliga dokument som ni använder som guide för Facebook. Men huvudsakligen kommer frågorna fokusera på din personliga uppfattning om din arbetsroll som administratör för kommunens huvudsida på Facebook, och hur Facebook används som ett verktyg för extern kommunikation i kommunen. Min tanke är att se detta lite som en allmän dialog, så är de något du vill lägga till eller undrar över gör gärna det.

- 1.2 Beskriv din roll som administratör för Faceook på kommunen.Är det fler personer än du som administrerar Facebooksidan?
- 1.3 I vilka syften använder kommunen Facebook. Från det viktigaste syftet, kan du ge ett konkret Ex.
- 2.4 Upplever du att dessa syften uppfylls? Vilka mer/Vilka mindre?
- 2.5 När skapades er Facebooksida?
- 2.6 På vems initiativ startades en huvudsida på Facebook för kommunen?
- 2.7 Hur mycket tid lägger ni ner på facebook? Timmar i veckan.
- 2.8 Hur stor del av era följare är skrivna i kommunen? (vad tror du?)

2. Policy/strategi - från kommunens perspektiv

- 2.2. Har ni alltid era riktlinjer tillgängliga/ i åtanke då ni publicerar inlägg på Facebook?
- 2.3. (Mölndal) Miniguiden i dokumentet. Är den generellt applicerbar i ditt dagliga arbete på fb?
- 2.4. (Följer ni de riktlinjer som finns i ert huvuddokument för Facebook? Kan du ge ett konkret ex på när du haft det i åtanke.)
- 2.5. Perceived Usefulness (PU) of the tool which means the degree to what extent the public authority finds the tool relevant to preform work tasks.
- 2.6. Kan Facebook hjälpa er i ert dagliga arbete som kommunikatör på kommunen för att utföra era arbetsysslor? Skicka ut frågeformulär ex..
- 2.7. Vem har skrivit strategidokumentet? Har du varit delaktig, hur?

3. TAM – från ett personligt perspektiv

- 3.1. Det här är den enda frågan om ditt privata användande. Använder du facebook privat?
- 3.2. Hur lång tid tar det att skriva ett nytt inlägg? (inte svara på inlägg)
- 3.3. Föredrar du att använda/inte använda facebook framför andra kommunikationskanaler? På grund av svårighet..etc? Jämför med hemsidan. Beskriv situation där ni använt en annan kommunikationskanal.
- 3.4. På en skala från 1-5 hur upplever du Facebooks användarvänlighet? 1=Väldigt svårt 5= Väldigt enkelt.

- 3.5. På en skala från 1-5, finns det förväntningar från invånarna på kommunen att använda/vara tillgänglig på facebook? Utveckla gärna ditt svar, ge gärna ett ex.
- 3.6. På en skala från 1-5, finns det förväntningar från andra kommuner, SKL, landstinget, staten att använda Facebook? Utveckla gärna ditt svar, ge gärna ett ex.
- 3.7. Påverkas ni av andra kommuners Facebookanvändande? Isf hur? (Fråga sedan) Närliggande kommuner.
- 3.8. Tror du att andra kommuners användande av Facebook har varit en anledning till att ni har Facebook?
- 3.9. Följande tre frågor fokuserar på de tekniska funktionerna Facebook erbjuder. Vilka olika funktioner använder ni? Bilder, videoklipp, länka till andra sidor, privata meddelanden, vänner etc..
- 3.10. Vilken funktion upplever ni vara mest effektiv? För att skapa/upprätthålla en dialog.
- 3.11. Förenklar dessa funktioner era arbetsuppgifter i relation till era syften med användandet av Facebook?
- 3.12. Hur uppfattar du Facebook, är det roligt/tråkigt att använda Facebook? På en skala från 1-5 hur rankar du de? 1=Väldigt tråkigt 5=Väldigt roligt. Ge exempel på (1) när du tycker det är trevligt och (2) när det är krångligt.

4. Avslutande frågor

- 4.1. Vad upplever ni ger mest nytta med att använda Facebook? Kan du berätta hur de har utvecklats med tiden. Vad tror du påverkar följarnantalet? Varför vill dessa personer följa just din kommun?
- 4.2. Då har jag inga fler frågor, är det något mer du vill tillägga eller fråga om innan vi avslutar?

Exemplification of the Content Analysis

Table. Exemplification of coding the interviews according to TAM

Excerpts from the data material with marked meaningful unit (Data reduction)	Translation to english	Underlying meaning (Identify patterns)	Coding	Category
"Det går inte att få det på ett bra sätt och det stör mig för det gör att jag får ett konstant flöde av allt och det irriterar mig." (Respondent Järfälla)	"You cannot get it in a good way and it bothers me because I get a constant flow of everything and it annoys me."	Expresses difficulties with the tool	-Difficulty	Ease of Use
"På ett sätt är det de, men det är också att få ut information till fler målgrupper genom fler kanaler." (Respondent Partille)	"In a way it is, but it is also about getting information out to more target groups through additional channels."	The target group kept in mind	Target group	Critical Mass
"Vi har ju t.ex en webbenkät varje år (...) folk är väldigt trötta på att fylla i enkäter över huvudet, men då la vi faktiskt ut den på Facebook (...) och de gjorde att vi dubblade antalet som faktiskt besvarade denna enkäten och det tror jag är en draghjälp" (Respondent Mölndal)	"We have for example a web survey each year (...) people are very tired of filling out surveys, but we actually posted it on Facebook (...) and made us double the number who actually answered the questionnaire and I think that is a boost	Expresses positive attitude of the tools features	Features	Capabilities
"Nu är det ju inte tävling, det är jag som är väldigt tävlingsinriktad, det var lite roligt att gå om dem faktiskt." (Respondent Tyresö)	"It is not competition, it's me who is very competitive, it was a bit of fun to beat them actually."	Expresses positive attitude	Positive playfulness [PPP]	Playfulness
"Det är ett forum där de finns möjlighet att lyfta olika verksamheter" (Respondent Partille)	"It is a forum where it is possible to raise different activities"	Expresses opportunities in using Facebook	Perceived Usefulness	Perceived Usefulness
Alltså det är ju en varumärkesbyggande funktion (...) det är ju en kanal där vi kan förmedla de nyheter vi vill.	Now, there's a brand building function (...) it's a channel where we can convey the news we want.	Expresses purposes of using Facebook	Intention to Use	Intention to Use

Table. Exemplification of coding the social media policies according to FPM

Excerpts from the data material with marked meaningful unit (Data reduction)	Translation to English	Underlying meaning (Identify patterns)	Coding	Category
"Personangrepp, reklam, hets mot folkgrupp, intrång i upphovsrätt eller annat som strider mot lag hör inte hemma där. Sidans administratörer har ansvar för att radera sådana inlägg och vid behov anmäla inlägget till Facebook." (SMP Tyresö)	"Personal attacks, advertising, incitement to racial hatred, infringement of copyright or otherwise conflicting with the law do not belong there. Site administrators have the responsibility to delete such posts and if necessary report the post to Facebook"	Clear instruction of how to act	Clear guidelines	Homogeneous
"Om ni upptäcker felaktigheter eller kritik, kontakta närmaste chef och diskutera om ni ska agera eller bemöta kritiken" (SMP Mölndal)	"If you discover errors or criticisms, please contact your manager and discuss whether you act or respond to the criticism"	No clear instructions of how to act	General guidelines	Heterogeneous
"Tyresö kommun närvarar i sociala medier för prova nya sätt att nå olika målgrupper, ge service och sprida kommunal information. (...) Vi vill också få in och tillvarata synpunkter från medborgarna" (SMP Tyresö)	"Tyresö municipality attends social media to try new ways to reach different target groups, give support and disseminate local information. (...) We also want to get in and utilize feedback from citizens'."	Many purposes with using social media	Opportunity, Supply information, Citizens Dialogue	Possibility
"Lagen om ansvar för elektroniska anslagstavlor – BBS-lagen. (...) Den som öppnar upp forum ansvarar för att vissa meddelanden med olämpligt innehåll tas bort, det vill säga en skyldighet att hålla uppsikt" (SMP Järfälla)	"Act on Responsibility for Electronic Bulletin Boards - BBS Act. (...) Anyone who opens up the forum is responsible for some messages with inappropriate content will be removed, that is an obligation to observe"	Refers to how a legal act affect Facebook	Legal restriction	Problem
"Om olika uppfattningar råder om innehållet i ett socialt media som kommunen står som avsändare för, har informationsenheten mandat att avgöra hur innehållet ska hanteras."	"If different opinions prevail on the content of a social media forum which the municipality is the sender of, the information department has the mandate to determine how the content should be managed."	Existing structures determines the usage of social media	Disciplining	Problem