Abstract

The relationship between psychological factors (such as self-esteem, loneliness and social

anxiety) and the pattern of Internet usage among adolescents has been widely studied.

However, little is known about Hong Kong adolescents' behaviors and motives of using

different popular online communication tools. To address this gap, this study examined the

psychological factors and communication motives associated with Hong Kong adolescents'

behaviors in online communication tools. A total of 192 Hong Kong adolescents completed

an online questionnaire measuring their specific usage, reasons and preferences toward two

commonly used online communication tools (i.e., MSN Messenger and Facebook).

Psychological measures (including loneliness, interaction anxiousness, self-esteem) and

online communication motives were also included in the survey. Result showed that

loneliness, interaction anxiousness and low self-esteem were negatively associated with the

use of Instant Messaging on MSN and social connection functions on Facebook. However,

loneliness and interaction anxiousness with high communication motives predicted different

pattern of behavior in MSN Messenger and Facebook. Results and limitation were discussed

and further directions on examining psychological variables with behaviors within those

communication tools were suggested.

Key words: Psychological factors, communication motives, MSN, Facebook, adolescents