A Study of Motives, Usage, Self-presentation and Number of Followers on Instagram

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Abstract

Instagram, a burgeoning social networking site developed dramatically among adolescents in Hong Kong. This study investigates the relationship between motives, usage, self-presentation and number of followers on Instagram by applying the use and gratification theory as well as the impression management approach. A total of 181 undergraduate students from the City University of Hong Kong were recruited for the quantitative survey. It was found that motives were positively associated with both use and self-presentation, while the number of followers was also clarified to have a positive correlation with Instagram use and self-presentation. No significant causal relationship was examined between motives and the number of followers.

Introduction

Instagram is a worldwide online social networking site that provides a platform for people to share photos and videos with others. It was launched around three years ago on 6th October 2010 and acquired by Facebook in 2012 (Instagram 2014). Instagram consists of 200 million monthly active users and a total of 20 billion photos have been shared on Instagram within these three years. Instagram is available at both the Apple store and the Google Play Store in app versions without any charge, and the web version of Instagram can be accessed through the internet. Since Instagram was originally produced as an app, the functions in the app version are more comprehensive than in the web version, so most users utilise the Instagram service via their smart phones. Instagram was also designed to link with other social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Flickr, so users can share their photos on those social media sites through Instagram. As Instagram is a simple, convenient and user friendly social networking site, it has become famous in Hong Kong in recent years, especially among teenagers. Instagram was regarded as the second most common type of new media used by the majority of adolescents in Hong Kong after Facebook. The effects of Instagram were not inferior to the effects of Facebook on teenagers when concerning the situation in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, due to the fact that Instagram is a relatively new social networking site, there are very few studies focusing on Instagram compared with other social networking sites. It was therefore necessary to explore Instagram further.

Literature Review

Instagram Usage and Social Capital
Instagram usage is defined as the activities in which users are engaged on Instagram. Activities include: "Leave "Comment" on friends' posts", ""Like" friends' posts", "Upload photos", "Upload videos", "Tag friends in posts", "Put #Hashtags" on posts", Use "#Hashtags" to search for things and "View online shop pages". The "Like" and "Comment" buttons were both available under every post on Instagram. People can click on the "Like" button to show their approval or agreement and the "Comment" button to express their textual opinions on the particular posts that are put up by the other users. Instagram also allows users to share photos and videos. When the users edit a photo or video for uploading, they can tag their friends in the post by typing their Instagram user names in the "Tag people" blank space.

The "#Hashtag" was a new and unique function that only appeared on Instagram, and could be used to link posts with similar characteristics. For example, if users take a photo in the City University of Hong Kong, they can add hashtags such as "#CityU", "#University" or "#Hong Kong" to describe the features of the photo. The hashtags serve as a keyword for people to use when searching for specific posts, since if users click on a hashtag, all other posts using the same hashtag will be linked and shown on a page. For example, if users click on the hashtag "#CityU", then all posts on Instagram that had included the hashtag "#CityU" will be shown on the page. Users can also type the keyword of the tag in the "Search" blank, and the result will be the same as clicking on the hashtag. It is notable that all words can become a hashtag by adding "#" in front of them, so that users were free to create new hashtags by themselves.

There are also many online shops on Instagram that sell different products, such as fashion, cosmetics and daily commodities. Users can check out the online shop pages and look for information about different products.

Social capital can be created with the use of social networking sites (SNSs). Social capital is defined as the resources accumulated in the relationships between people via social interaction (Coleman, 1988; Lin, 2001; Putnam, 1995, Steinfield, et al., 2012). According to Ellison et al. (2007), social networks can be maintained and increased by using social networking sites. Bonding and bridging capital are the two typical types of social capital associated with the use of SNSs (Putnam, 1995). Bonding capital refers to strong cohesive bonds or close-knit ties between homogenous groups of people such as family members and close friends who share common identities like values, religions and interests, and bridging capital links heterogeneous group members who came from different backgrounds such as social status, and generations with a weak and diffuse connection. The activities on Instagram can serve as a means of building social capital online. Activities which deal with existing friends or family members can help to generate bonding capital and the activities that concern networking with new people or

unknown others could be used to construct bridging capital on the other words.

Motives for Instagram Use

Motives are the general orientation that affect the action of people in order to satisfy their wants and needs (Papacharissi, and Rubin, 2000). Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) examined five motives for internet use: interpersonal utility, passing time, information seeking, convenience and entertainment. Apart from Papacharissi & Rubin (2000), similar motives were also identified for SNS use in the studies of Leung (2009), Pempek, et al. (2009), Urista, et al. (2009) and Sheldon (2008). The motives for using social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter can be classified as information seeking (cognitive), entertainment (diversion), social connections (maintaining relationships, social interaction, companionship), passing time and self-expression (identity). Escape, mood management and narcissism were also investigated as motivations for using social media (Gülnar and Balcı, 2010; Yang and Kang, 2006 and Cha, 2010).

Information seeking, interpersonal communication (interpersonal utility), self-expression and escape motives were adopted in the current study, as these four motives are the most familiar in explaining the use of social networking sites. The information seeking (cognitive) motive means to obtain or search information through SNSs. The interpersonal communication motive, also as known as the social connection motive, implies orientation of social interaction as well as relationship maintenance with others. Thirdly, the self-expression motive was defined as the display of personal image and identity using SNSs, in other words, the aim of using the SNSs was to convey oneself, including hobbies, interests, ideas and feelings, to other people. Finally, the escape motive allows people to get away from their reality and loneliness, to forget their problems or worries temporary when using the SNSs.

Self-presentation (Impression Management)

People can decide what image they want to present on Instagram by uploading different photos or videos that highlight specific characteristics in order to maintain a positive impression in front of others (Ellison, Heino and Gibbs, 2006). According to Goffman (1959), self-presentation is based on a "dramaturgical approach" where people presenting their own image is similar to acting on stage. To be specific, self-presentation involves the performance of the personal image that individuals wished perceived by other people. Self-presentation is also known as impression management which indicates that an individual would act intentionally to regulate the impression of themselves according to different situations, in order to shape an appropriate image to gain approval from others (Vohs, et al., 2005; Leary, 1993; Schlenker and Pontari, 2000). In the current study, the concepts of self-presentation and impression management will be used interchangeably.

There is a variety of taxonomy for self-presentation, with reference to different scholars. Jones and Pittman (1982) classified self-presentation strategies for face-to-face

interaction into five categories, including self-promotion, ingratiation, supplication, exemplification and intimidation. On top of this classification, Lee et al., (1999) generated a self-presentation tactics scale by adding seven additional types of self-presentation: excuse, justification, disclaimers, self-handicapping, apology, entitlement and blasting, as well as changing the title from self-promotion into enhancement for measuring different self-presentations that appear in everyday life. Self-presentation was first introduced for face-to-face interaction but previous studies like those of Dominick (1999) and Wong (2012) had applied the self-presentation tactics to internet use and Facebook use, and the results supported the idea that self-presentation could also be observed in online communication.

This study focuses on ingratiation, supplication and enhancement for expressing self-presentation as adopted by Instagram users, as those were the three most common types of self-presentation observed in online interaction (Dominick, 1999). Ingratiation is the tactic of presenting a likeable image (Jones and Pittman, 1982). It is used to enhance the interpersonal attraction of an individual so as to achieve their goal of being liked by other people. Common features of ingratiation include paying positive compliments, showing care, encouragement and consideration to others, conveying a positive personality (e.g. friendly, kindness) and also doing things that people would agree with (Jones and Pittman, 1980). People who appear weak and seek help from other people are employing supplication (Jones and Pittman, 1982). The purpose of supplication is to gain support, care and sympathy from others by showing helplessness or a lack of ability to complete certain tasks. Supplication gives a relatively negative impression within those three methods of self-presentation. Lastly, enhancement (self-promotion) involves displaying a knowledgeable and skilled impression in front of others by underlining ones own talents, competence, and intelligence. Achieving awards, for example, is one of the behaviours that show an individual is successful and presents an enhanced image (Jones and Pittman, 1982).

Followers on Instagram

Differently from Facebook, the relationship between users was not identified as that of "Friends" but regarded as "Followers" (Instagram, 2014). If someone want to view other users' posts, they need to click the "Follow" button on that user's page in order to access the photos or videos that posted by that user. Two possibilities are then be considered, the first is that the user has no privacy setting, that is, once someone clicks on the "Follow" button, the button changes into "Following", so that any new photos or videos uploaded by that user are shown on the home page or anyone following them. that the other situation is that a user has privacy controls; if someone presses the "Follow" button, the system automatically sends a following request to that user, and that users' posts can only be seen when they have accepted the request. However, it is notable that Followers

is a unilateral concept, which means the person being followed may not be a reciprocal Follower on that account, the number of Followers and those Following are not the same for most Instagram users.   The number of Followers could reflect the scope of a user's social network, more Followers implies a wider social network.

Empirical Literature Review

Motives and Instagram Usage

The relationship between motives and the use of SNSs has been examined by several scholars.   For example, Krisanic (2008) showed that the information motive and connection motive (interpersonal communication motive) were positively associated with Facebook use, as Facebook users could satisfy needs such as obtaining useful information and interacting with other people by using Facebook, so they tend to use Facebook more frequently.   The time spent on Facebook was also positively correlated with the self-expression motivation and virtual companionship escape motive (Gülnar, et al., 2010; Dhaha and Igale, 2013).   Those studies indicated that the four motives adopted in the current study are related to the use of social networking sites.

Self-presentation and Number of Followers

Kim, et al. (2011) explained that both positive self-presentation and number of friends are positively associated with subjective well-being on Facebook, and this implies there is also a correlation between positive self-presentation and the number of Facebook friends. It is obvious that positive images can gain more attention and approval from others than negative images, and therefore, it was assumed that there was a correlation between self-presentation and the number of Followers on Instagram, especially in positive impressions.

Instagram Use and Number of Followers

A study by Pettijohn, et al. (2012) supported the idea that Facebook intensity, also known as Facebook usage, was positive correlated to the total number of Friends on Facebook among US college students.   This meant that more frequent Facebook use, meant a greater number of Facebook Friends.   A similar result was found by Hampton et al. (2012), which showed that there was a positive relationship between the size of a Friends' list on Facebook and their engagement in different kinds of Facebook activities in 977 American adults.   Joinson's study (2008) also found that the frequency of visiting Facebook was a positive and significant predictor of the number of Facebook friends.   It was thus believed that the Instagram use was correlated to the Number of Followers on Instagram.

As mentioned before, there are few past studies focused on Instagram due to the its short period of establishment compared to other social networking sites like Facebook.

Empirical research that considers the relationship between motives for use and self-presentation on social networking sites is also lacking. Tt is therefore worth examining the relationships between motives, usage, self-presentation and number of Followers on Instagram.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to identify the Instagram use pattern, motives for using Instagram, and self-presentation on Instagram, as well as to examine the relationship between those variables and the popularity of Instagram among students in the City University of Hong Kong.

Research Questions

1)   Do specific kinds of motives affect the use of Instagram?
2)   Are the types of self-presentation based on particular kinds of motives?
3)   How does use influence the number of Followers on Instagram?
4)   Are the types of self-presentation correlated to Instagram usage?
5)   What is the relationship between self-presentation and number of Followers on Instagram?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Students who have a stronger motives for using Instagram will have a higher frequency of Instagram usage

Hypothesis 2: The stronger a self-expression motive, the more self-presentation on Instagram

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between use and number of Followers on Instagram

Hypothesis 4: The greater the ingratiation self-presentation, the more Followers
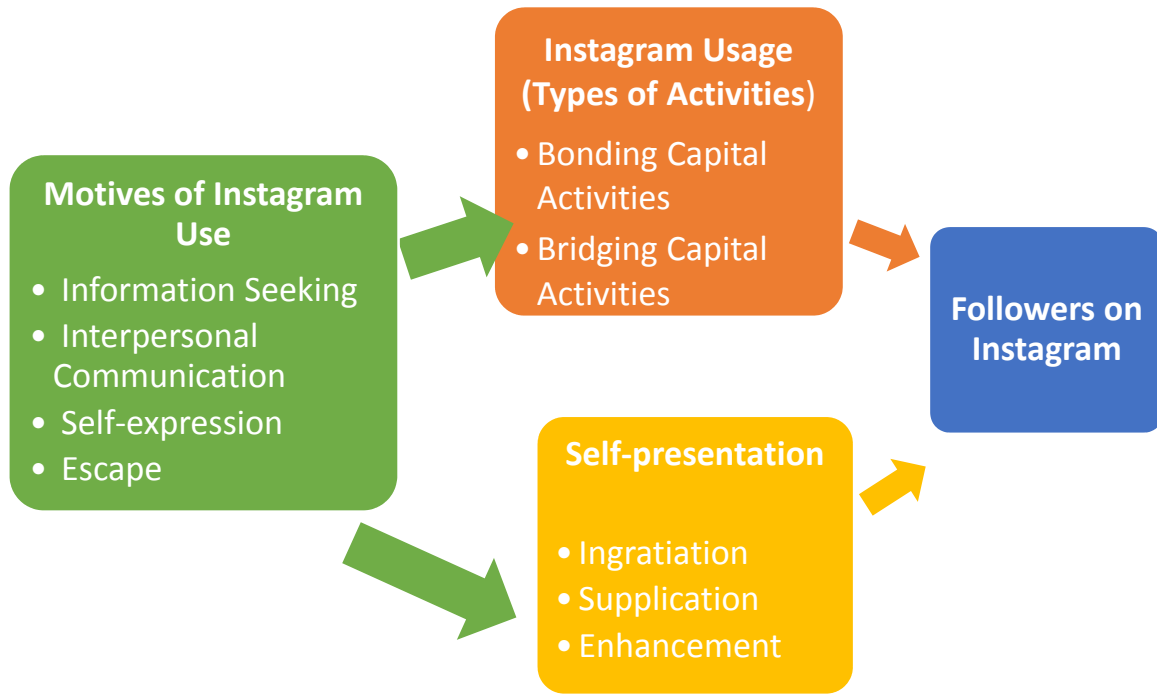
Theoretical Framework

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework Model

Impression Management (Self-presentation Tactics)
Impressions of individuals are shaped through the interaction process, both face-to-face communication and computer-mediated communication (Zhao, et al., 2008). The latter can be accessed via the use of social networking sites. Self-presentation tactics are defined as the behaviours that individuals use to manipulate personal impressions of the desired image of themselves (Lee et al., 1999). Goffman (1959) suggested that people tend to maintain a positive image in front of others, therefore, impression management is employed in order to help individuals express themselves in a favourable way. Past studies of Facebook found that there was a close relationship between the number of Facebook friends and how an individual presented themselves on Facebook: their self-presentation (Walther et al., 2008). Therefore, similarly to Facebook, self-presentation on Instagram is believed to be associated with the number of Followers on Instagram.

Use and Gratification Theory
The use and gratification theory plays an important role in mass media communication. It was used to study how individuals utilise media to satisfy both social and psychological

needs (Katz, et al., 1974). It was assumed that the audience could extract gratification through the use of media, and the selection of behaviour in media use was goal-directed and motivated. In other words, individuals would use particular types of media or engage in specific kinds of behaviour that they believed could fulfil their wants and needs. Katz, et al. (1974) underlined the relationship between needs and gratifications in the use and gratification approach, in which needs could be fulfilled by media use, and gratifications generated by media use could also reconstruct certain needs.

Several scholars adopted the use and gratification approach to examining the motivations for using the social networking sites. For example, Raake and Bonds-Raake (2008) found that the reasons for using SNSs (Facebook and Myspace) were social interaction, information seeking, friendship maintenance with existing friends and making new friends among the college students. Dhaha, and Igale (2013) explored six gratifications on Facebook among Somali youth, which were self-description of own country, pastimes, virtual companionship escape, interpersonal habitual entertainment, information seeking and self-expression. Brandtzæg and Heim (2009) investigated how individuals used SNSs to satisfy needs such as information seeking, social interaction, entertainment and showing personal identity. Seeking friends, support, information, convenience and entertainment were reported in Kim, Sohn and Choi's (2011) study as the reasons for SNS use. According to Smock, et al. (2011), it was clear that different motives would cause different patterns of usage behaviour; for example, leaving comments on Facebook was predicted by the entertainment, social interaction and companionship motive, while status-update was predicted by the motive of expressive information sharing (self-expression).

To employ use and gratification theory in the case of Instagram, individuals use Instagram to fulfil their needs, in other words, to satisfy motives such as information seeking, interpersonal communication (social interaction/connection), self-expression and escape, and eventually extract gratification from their Followers since the number of Followers can reflect the size of a social network as well as the attention and support that individuals can receive on Instagram.

Methodology

Research Design

A quantitative research method was employed in current study. A survey was conducted using a self-administered and anonymous questionnaire which was typed in English and paper-printed.

Participants

A total of 213 undergraduate students of the City University of Hong Kong were surveyed in this study. Of those 213 respondents, only 181 respondents were Instagram users. As the target population was the students who have an Instagram account, the sample size of this study was 181 Instagram users. The sample consisted of 41% males (n=74) and 59% females (n=107). Participants were from different years of study, of which 35% (n=63) were Year 1 students, 24% (n=44) came from Year 2 and the proportions of Year 3 and Year 4 students was 21% (n=38) and 20% (n=36) respectively. Participation was on a voluntary basis.

Sampling

Since the Gateway Education course involved students from different years and colleges, questionnaires were mainly distributed before the Gateway Education courses at the City University of Hong Kong in order to make the sample more representative. A minority of the questionnaires were distributed in sociology courses and student residences which is classified as convenience sampling. The proportion of those two sampling methods was around 3:1.

Data Collection

The relevant data was collected from 17th March to 4th April 2014, for a period of about three weeks, by survey. The time for completing the whole questionnaire was approximately five to ten minutes.

Measurement

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire can be divided into five parts: Instagram Usage, Motives for Instagram Use, Self-presentation, Number of Followers and Demographic Information, as in the theoretical framework model of this study (see Appendix 1).

Instagram Usage

This part concerned the circumstances of Instagram use, such as the duration of using Instagram and the average time spent using Instagram. More specifically, the frequency

level of engaging in seven typical Instagram activities such as "Leave "Comment" on friends' posts" in the past three months was also examined using a 7-point frequency scale "1=Never (0 time)", "2=Very rarely (only 1-2 times)", "3=Rarely (once a month)", "4=Occasionally (a few times a month)", "5=Sometimes (once a week)", "6=Frequently (a few times a week) and "7=Very Frequently (Everyday)". Questions such as "In the past 3 months, how often do you "Like" friends' posts on Instagram?" were therefore asked in this part. Higher scores implied more frequent usage. It was noted that respondents who had only used Instagram for less than three months were not applicable to answer the questions about the frequency of engagement in Instagram activities because they were relatively new users of Instagram so they were not able to show the Instagram use on a regular basis.

Motives for Instagram use
The motives scales, which combined and was modified from the internet motive scales of Papacharissi and Rubin (2000), Choi, Dekkers, & Park, (2004) and Jiyoung Cha (2010), was used to identify the different motives for using Instagram. Four main motives were measured in this part and all scales were reliable in the original studies: the Information Seeking motive (Cronbach's alpha =0.87); Interpersonal Communication motive (Cronbach's alpha=0.84); Self-expression motive (Cronbach's alpha=0.76) and Escape motive (Cronbach's alpha=0.83). There were 17 items measured by a 5-point scale from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". For example, Question "I use Instagram to get up-to-date information for products and services" was asked to examine the Information Seeking motive; "I use Instagram to keep in contact with friends" belonged to the Interpersonal Communication motive; "I use Instagram to express my own feelings" was under the Self-expression motive; and "I use Instagram to forget the problems or troubles that I am facing" represented the Escape motive. In this section, higher scores meant a greater orientation to that particular kind of motive.

Self-presentation
The types of self-presentation on Instagram were measured by the modified scales from Lee et al. (1999) and Wong, (2012). Those scales were reliable: the original Cronbach's alpha for Ingratiation, Supplication and Enhancement were 0.80, 0.63 and 0.76 respectively. A 7-point scale varying from "Never" to "Very Frequently" was adopted for assessing the frequency of the three types of self-presentation. For instance, the question "How often do you present yourself as helpful to others on Instagram?" was used to investigate ingratiation self-presentation; "How often do you seek help on Instagram?" was classified as supplication self-presentation and "How often do you show that you are successful on Instagram?" indicated enhancement self-presentation in the questionnaire. Similarly to the motive scales, higher scores in this part implied a greater orientation on that specific type of self-presentation.

Number of Followers
Respondents were required to answer the question "How many Followers do you have in total?" by choosing from 21 options, from "1=0-50", "2=51-100" to "20=951-1,000" and "21=more than 1,000". The options would converted into actual numbers using the mid-point of those options, for instance, 25 would be represent the option "0-50", and for the option "more than 1000", the estimated number "1500" was assigned for recoding.

Demographic Information
Personal information including gender, age, year of study, college of study, religion and monthly household income was asked in the last section of the questionnaire.

Pilot Test
The pilot test proceeded on 10th March 2014. A total of 20 undergraduate students in the City University of Hong Kong were invited to complete the questionnaire in advance, of whom ten studied in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, six were from the College of Business and four studied in the College of Science and Engineering. Adjustments were made to the questionnaire after receiving comments from those students. The revised items including font size and wording in order to ensure clarity of context. In general, the feasibility of the questionnaire is supported.

Data Analysis
SPSS 20.0 was used for the analysis of all collected data. The hypotheses testing involved all four major variables mentioned in the theoretical framework model. Descriptive statistics were adopted for the remaining variables that did not show in the model, such as demographic information, which are classified as supplementary variables that help to generate a better understanding of current study. Apart from the descriptive statistics, reliability tests and factor analyses were conducted to examine the consistency of the scales, and a Pearson Correlation coefficient analysis, Chi-square Test and Multiple Regression analysis were employed to explore the relationship between the four major variables.

Findings

Descriptive Statistics
Demographic Data
A total of 181 respondents with Instagram accounts were recruited for the current study (see Table 1). All the respondents were undergraduate students in the City University of Hong Kong.   There were more female respondents (59.1%) than male respondents (40.9%) and most of the respondents (84%) were aged from 18-22 years old.   The distribution of the years of study among respondents was quite even, and consisted of 34.8% Year 1 students, 24.3% Year 2 students, 21% Year 3 students and 19.9% Year 4 students.   The majority of the respondents (92.2%) came from the Colleges of Business, Liberal Arts and Social Science, and Science and Engineering, which are the three main colleges and contain the largest number of students at City U.   Religion and monthly household income variables were not the main focus of this study since they were not correlated with the four major variables in the framework model.   The display of this data only helps to provide clearer background information about the respondents.

Table 1.
Frequency of Demographic Information (N=181)

Demographic Variables	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	74	40.9
Female	107	59.1
Age		
17	2	1.1
18	33	18.2
19	41	22.7
20	18	9.9
21	24	13.3
22	36	19.9
23	20	11.0
24	5	2.8
25	2	1.1
Year of Study		
Year 1	63	34.8
Year 2	44	24.3
Year 3	38	21.0
Year 4	36	19.9
College of Study		
Business	54	29.8
Liberal Arts and Social Science	78	43.1
Science and Engineering	35	19.3
Creative Media	7	3.9
Energy and Environment	3	1.7
Others	4	2.2
Religion		
Protestant	28	15.5
Catholicism	10	5.5
Buddhism	7	3.9
Taoism	0	0
None/Free-thinker	131	72.4
Others	5	2.8
Monthly Household Income		
$10,000 or below	67	37.0
$10,001-$20,000	36	19.9
$20,001-$30,000	36	19.9
$30,001-$40,000	12	6.6
$40,001-$50,000	11	6.1
$50,001-$60,000	5	2.8
$60,001-$70,000	3	1.7
$70,001-$80,000	2	1.1
$80,001-$90,000	1	0.6
$90,001 or above	8	4.4

Amount of Instagram Usage

According to Table 2, the majority of the respondents (75.7%) had used Instagram for 3 to 24 months. The 10 respondents who had used Instagram for less than 3 months (5.5%) were regarded as new users who were not applicable to provide their frequency of Instagram usage on a regular basis. Table 3 shows that over half the respondents (58.6%) used Instagram every day.

Table 2.
Frequency of Duration of Instagram Use (N=181)

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Less than 3 months	10	5.5
3-6 months	34	18.8
7-12 months	31	17.1
13-18 months	36	19.9
19-24 months	36	19.9
25-30 months	23	12.7
31-36 months	3	1.7
More than 3 years	6	3.3
N/A	2	1.1

Table 3.
Frequency of Average Usage of Instagram (N=181)

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Less than one month	8	4.4
Once a month	12	6.6
2-3 times a month	7	3.9
Once a week	11	6.1
A few times a week	26	14.4
Everyday	106	58.6
Not Applicable	10	5.5
N/A	1	0.6

Summary of Descriptive Statistics, Factor Analysis and Reliability Test of four major variables

Instagram Usage (Types of Activities)

It was found that ""Like" friends' posts" was the Instagram activity that students carried out most frequently (M=5.26), followed by the "Leave "Comment" on friends' posts" (M=3.65) and "Upload photos about yourself and friends" (M=3.58) (see Table 4). To make it simple, the three sub-items about uploading photos and uploading videos were added together and formed two variables: "Upload photos" and "Upload videos" for further relevant analysis about Instagram activities. A factor analysis was employed to

distinguish the activities on Instagram into two factors that explained a total of 59.1% of variance (see Table 5). The first explained 42.3% of variance and included activities such as Leave "Comment" on Friends' Posts, "Like" Friends' Posts, Upload Photos, Upload Videos and Tag Friends in posts. It was labelled as "Bonding Capital Activities" since those activities aimed to interact with existing friends and hence help to build bonding capital on Instagram. On the other hand, another factor contained activities such as Put "#Hashtags" Under Posts, Use "#Hashtags" to Search Things and View Online Shops pages, which explained 16.8% of variance. The second factor was called "Bridging Capital Activities" due to the fact that those activities were used to communicate with the people who were not known and to explore new things, which were in a sense related to the construction of the bridging capital. When these two factors were compared, students were found to engage more in the bonding capital activities (M=3.40) than the bridging capital activities (M=2.80) (see Table 6).

Table 4.

Mean Scores and Standard Deviation (SD) for Instagram Activities (N=171)

Items	Mean	SD
1. Leave "Comment" on friends' posts	3.65	1.532
2. Like friends' posts	5.26	1.400
3. Upload photos about yourself and friends	3.58	1.494
4. Upload photos about yourself only	3.27	1.556
5. Upload photos about friends only	2.78	1.453
6. Upload videos about yourself and friends	2.02	1.465
7. Upload videos about yourself only	1.78	1.245
8. Upload videos about friends only	1.76	1.194
9. Tag friends in posts	3.09	1.721
10. Put "#Hashtags" under posts	2.29	1.710
11. Use "#Hashtags" to search things	2.70	1.844
12. View online shop pages	3.41	1.765

Table 5.
Factor Analysis of Instagram Activities

Types of Instagram Activities	Components	
	Bonding Capital Activities	Bridging Capital Activities
1. Leave comments on friends' posts	.629	-
2. Like friends' posts	.569	-
3. Upload photos	.818	-
4. Upload videos	.802	-
5. Tag friends in posts	.754	-
6. Put "#Hashtags" under posts	-	.775
7. Use "#Hashtags" to search things	-	.898
8. View online shops' pages	-	.593

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations

Table 6.
Mean Scores and Standard Deviation (SD) for Types of Instagram Activities (N=171)

Items	Mean	SD
Bonding Capital Activities	3.40	1.138
Bridging Capital Activities	2.80	1.437

Motives for Instagram Use

A Principal Component Analysis was used to investigate the factor loading of the motives for Instagram use (see Appendix 2). The result showed that the four motives for Instagram use, Information Seeking, Interpersonal Communication, Self-expression and Escape, explained a total of 64.5% of variance. According to Table 7, students mostly used Instagram based on the Interpersonal Communication motive (M=3.55), such as to find out what other people were doing and to stay in contact with friends. The self-expression motive also played an important role in Instagram use (M=3.18), such as when students want to express their own feelings through Instagram (see Appendix 2).

Table 7.
Mean Scores and Standard Deviation (SD) for Types of Motives (N=181)

	Items	Mean	SD
Information Seeking motive	4	2.92	.829
Interpersonal Communication motive	4	3.55	.818
Self-expression motive	4	3.18	.897
Escape motive	3	2.71	.909

Self-presentation

According to the factor analysis (see Appendix 3), the items on the self-presentation scale were classified into three types of self-presentation: Ingratiation (6 items), Supplication (4 items) and Enhancement (5 items).   The results showed that Ingratiation (M=3.37) was the most popular self-presentation adopted by the students (see Table 8), and they mostly present themselves with Ingratiation by leaving "Comments" on friends' posts to express caring via Instagram (M=3.87) (see Appendix 3).   Supplication was the least favourite type of self-presentation on Instagram (M=2.50) and seeking help was the least frequent action that students used on Instagram (M=2.30) (see Appendix 3).

Table 8.
Mean Scores and Standard Deviation (SD) for Types of Self-presentation (N=181)

	Items	Mean	SD
Ingratiation	6	3.37	1.249
Supplication	4	2.50	1.154
Enhancement	5	2.79	1.286

Number of Followers on Instagram

Table 9 shows that most (78%) students have less than 300 Followers on Instagram.

Table 9. Frequency of Number of Followers (N=181)

Items	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
0-50	30	16.6
51-100	29	16.0
101-150	28	15.5
151-200	21	11.6
201-250	17	9.4
251-300	17	9.4
301-350	7	3.9
351-400	10	5.5
401-450	3	1.7
501-550	6	3.3
501-550	2	1.1
551-600	3	1.7
601-650	1	0.6
701-750	2	1.1
751-800	2	1.1
901-950	1	0.6
More than 1,000	2	1.1

Reliability Test

The reliability test showed that the level of internal consistency was satisfied for all the scales of current study (see Table 10) since the Cronbach's Alpha of all scales (including sub-scales) was over 0.6. As the scales used in this study were combined and modified from the standardised scales in the previous studies, all the scales were regarded as reliable and could be used for analysing the relationship between the four major variables.

Table 10.
Reliability Test of All Scales

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Instagram Use	8	.774
(sub-scale) Bonding Capital Activities	5	.748
(sub-scale) Bridging Capital Activities	3	.699
Motives for Instagram Use	15	.873
(sub-scale) Information Seeking Motive	4	.784
(sub-scale) Interpersonal Communication Motive	4	.844
(sub-scale) Self-expression Motive	4	.855
(sub-scale) Escape Motive	3	.752
Self-presentation	15	.954
(sub-scale) Ingratiation	6	.908
(sub-scale) Supplication	4	.899
(sub-scale) Enhancement	5	.925

The Pearson Correlation test was adopted to examine the relationship between the four major variables and a Multiple Regression Analysis was used to investigate the predicting power of the variables.

Results for the relationship between motives and usage on Instagram

Tables 11 to 15 below show the relationship between motives and usage on Instagram. Hypothesis 1 was tested.

Hypothesis 1: Students who have stronger motives for Instagram use will have a higher frequency of Instagram usage

There was a positive correlation between all four motives for Instagram and total Instagram usage (frequency of all Instagram activities) (see Table 11). In particular, the stronger motives of Information Seeking ($r = .361$, $p < .01$), Interpersonal Communication ($r = .341$, $p < .01$), Self-expression ($r = .363$, $p < .01$) and Escape ($r = .208$, $p < .01$), the more frequent the usage of Instagram. Therefore Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 11.

Correlation between Motives and Total Instagram usage

	Motives for Instagram use			
	Information Seeking	Interpersonal Communication	Self-expression	Escape
Total Instagram Usage	.361**	.341**	.363**	.208**

N=167

*Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Likewise, a Pearson Correlation test was also employed to investigate the relationship between the four kinds of motives and the two types of Instagram activities (Bonding Capital Activities and Bridging Capital Activities). Similar results were found (see Table 12). The Bonding Capital Activities were positively related to all four motives, while the Bridging Capital Activities was also positively correlated to all motives for Instagram use except the Escape motive (r = .112).

Table 12.

Correlation between Motives and Types of Instagram activities

		Motives for Instagram use			
		Information Seeking	Interpersonal Communication	Self-expression	Escape
Bonding Activities	Capital	.300**	.350**	.347**	.212**
Bridging Activities	Capital	.341**	.180*	.244**	.112

N=167

*Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Regression Analysis was applied to test whether there was a causal relationship between motives and usage on Instagram. The motives model explained 17.9% variation of the bonding capital activities and 14.3% variation of the bridging capital. The results showed that both bonding capital activities and bridging capital activities could be positively predicted by the Information Seeking motive (B = 5.015, p < .05; B = 4.622, p < .001) and the Self-expression motive (B = 5.736, p < .05; B = 2.508, p < .05) (see Table 13 and Table 14).

Table 13.
*Multiple Regression of **Bonding Capital Activities** on Motives*

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Information Seeking Motive	5.015	.166	2.021	.045
Interpersonal Communication Motive	5.139	.162	1.745	.083
Self-expression Motive	5.736	.204	2.350	.020
Escape Motive	.321	.009	.105	.917

Note: R^2=.179, F(166)=8.808, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
Dependent Variable: Bonding Capital Activities

Table 14.
*Multiple Regression of **Bridging Capital Activities** on Motives*

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Information Seeking Motive	4.622	.327	3.905	.000
Interpersonal Communication Motive	-.567	-.038	-.404	.687
Self-expression Motive	2.508	.191	2.154	.033
Escape Motive	-1.190	-.068	-.812	.418

Note: R^2=.143, F(166)=6.780, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
Dependent Variable: Bridging Capital Activities

For further information, the Multiple Regression Test was also adopted to test the predicting power of motives for all Instagram activities (see Table 15). As seen in the table, all significant results could interpret the motives as having a positive prediction on Instagram activities. It was found that the Information Seeking motive was a predictor of "Use "#Hashtags" to search things" (B=1.536, p<.01) and "View online shops' pages" (B=2.277, p<.001); Interpersonal Communication motive could predict "Leave Comment on friends' posts" (B=1.190, p<.05), "Like friends' posts" (B=2.370, p<.05) and "Tag friends in posts" (B=1.063, p<.05); Self-expression had a prediction power on "Like friends' posts" (B=1.912, p<.05), "Upload photos" (B=2.145, p<.05) and "Put "#Hashtags" under posts" (B=1.397, p<.01); and lastly Escape motive was a predictor of "Upload videos" (B=1.618, p<.05).

Table 15.
*Multiple Regression of **Instagram Activities** on Motives*

Dependent Variables	Independent Variables				
	Information Seeking	Interpersonal Communication	Self-expression	Escape	R^2
Leave Comment on friends' posts	-	B=1.190 *p<.05	-	-	.113
Like friends' posts	-	B=2.370 *p<.05	B=1.912 *p<.05	-	.171
Upload photos	-	-	B=2.145 *p<.05	-	.091
Upload videos	-	-	-	B=1.618 *p<.05	.081
Tag friends in posts	-	B=1.063 *p<.05	-	-	.116
Put "#Hashtags" under posts	-	-	B=1.397 **p<.01	-	.080
Use "#Hashtags" to search things	B=1.536 **p<.01	-	-	-	.093
View online shops' pages	B=2.277 ***p<.001	-	-	-	.145

N=166
*Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001*

Results for the relationship between motives and self-presentation on Instagram

Tables 16 to 19 certify the relationship between motives and self-presentation and identify whether self-presentation on Instagram could be predicted by particular kinds of motive. Hypothesis 2 was tested.

Hypothesis 2: The stronger the self-expression motive, the more self-presentation on Instagram

According to Table 16, all three types of self-presentation were significantly and positively related to all four kinds of motives. That meant the stronger the motive, the more self-presentation via Ingratiation, Supplication and Enhancement.

Table 16.
Correlation between Motives and Self-presentation

	Self-presentation		
	Ingratiation	Supplication	Enhancement
Information Seeking Motive	.391**	.400**	.323**
Interpersonal Communication Motive	.493**	.311**	.379**
Self-expression Motive	.621**	.399**	.470**
Escape Motive	.362**	.427**	.385**

N=172
*Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Multiple Regression Analysis was also conducted to see if there was a causal relationship between certain kinds of motive and self-presentation. As seen in Tables 17, 18 and 19, the motives model explained 45.5% variation of Ingratiation (R^2=.455, F (174) =35.449, p<0.01), 30.8% variation of Supplication (R^2=.308, F (174) =18.890, p<0.001) and 28.0% variation of Enhancement (R^2=.280, F (174) =16.546, p<0.05). Information Seeking (B=.414, p<.01) and the Self-expression motive (B=.988, p<.001) were positive predictor of Ingratiation. The motives of Information Seeking (B=.347, p<.001), Self-expression (B=.341, p<.001) and Escape (B=.461, p<.001) could positively predict the self-presentation of Supplication. The motives of Self-expression (B=.463, p<.001) and Escape (B=.344, p<.05) had a significant prediction effect on Enhancement. It was found that only the self-expression motive had a significant prediction effect on all three types of self-presentation, which meant that a stronger self-expression motive would cause more self-presentation on Instagram. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Table 17.
*Multiple Regression of **Ingratiation** on Motives*

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Information Seeking Motive	.414	.182	2.841	.005
Interpersonal Communication Motive	.311	.134	1.840	.068
Self-expression Motive	.988	.468	6.775	.000
Escape Motive	.210	.075	1.161	.247

Note: R^2=.455, F(174)=35.449, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
 Dependent Variable: Ingratiation

Table 18.
*Multiple Regression of **Supplication** on Motives*

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Information Seeking Motive	.347	.247	3.429	.001
Interpersonal Communication Motive	-.060	-.042	-.509	.611
Self-expression Motive	.341	.264	3.395	.001
Escape Motive	.461	.265	3.606	.000

Note: R^2=.308, F(174)=18.890, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
 Dependent Variable: Supplication

Table 19.
*Multiple Regression of **Enhancement** on Motives*

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Information Seeking Motive	.187	.119	1.622	.107
Interpersonal Communication Motive	.133	.083	.994	.322
Self-expression Motive	.463	.319	4.023	.000
Escape Motive	.344	.179	2.414	.017

Note: R^2=.280, F(174)=16.546, *p<.05
 Dependent Variable: Enhancement

Results for the relationship between Instagram Usage, Self-presentation and Number of Followers

Tables 20 to Table illustrated the relationship between Instagram Usage, Self-presentation and Number of Followers. Hence, Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4 were tested.

There was a positive correlation between total Instagram usage and all three types of self-presentation on Instagram (see Table 20). The Pearson Correlation coefficient (r) was .440 for Ingratiation, .346 for Supplication and .322 for Enhancement. Similar results were also found in the correlation test between bonding capital activities, bridging capital activities and self-presentation, in which bonding capital activities and bridging capital activities were also positively related to all three types of self-presentation (see Table 21).

Table 20.

Correlation between Total Instagram Usage and Self-presentation

	Self-presentation		
	Ingratiation	Supplication	Enhancement
Total Instagram Usage	.440**	.346**	.322**

N=166

*Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table 21.

Correlation between Types of Instagram activities and Self-presentation

	Self-presentation		
	Ingratiation	Supplication	Enhancement
Bonding Capital Activities	.435**	.345**	.323**
Bridging Capital Activities	.257**	.195**	.176*

N=166

*Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
*   *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between usage and number of followers on Instagram

As seen in the following Tables 22 and 23, the number of Followers was positively associated with total Instagram usage (r = .365, p< .01). To be specific, the number of Followers was also found to be related to both bonding capital and bridging capital activities (r = .361, p<.01 and r =.217, p<.01). This indicated that the more frequent the usage of Instagram, the more Followers on Instagram. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Table 22.
Correlation between Total Instagram Usage and Number of Followers on Instagram

	Number of Followers
Total Instagram usage	.365**

N=171
*Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table 23.
Correlation between Types of Instagram activities and Number of Followers

	Number of Followers
Bonding Capital Activities	.361**
Bridging Capital Activities	.217**

N=171
*Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The results of the multiple regression test showed that bonding capital (B=.708, p<.001) was a significant positive predictor of the number of Followers on Instagram (see Table 24). The two types of Instagram activity models accounted for 13.6% variation in Number of Followers (R^2=.136, F (170) =13.197, p<0.01). This suggests that higher frequency use of bonding capital activities would lead to a greater number of Followers.

Table 24.
Multiple Regression of **Number of Followers** on Types of Instagram activities

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Bonding Capital Activities	.708	.327	4.151	.000
Bridging Capital Activities	.384	.082	1.047	.297

R^2=.136, F(170)=13.197, p<0.01
Dependent Variable: Number of Followers

Hypothesis 4: The more Ingratiation self-presentation, the more number of followers

The results suggested that there was a positive correlation between the number of Followers and all three types of self-presentation on Instagram. The Pearson correlation coefficient was .350, .246 and .242 for Ingratiation, Supplication and Enhancement respectively (see Table 25). Moreover, based on Table 26, the self-presentation model explained 12.3% variation of the number of Followers (R^2=.123, F (175) =8.025, p<0.01) and only Ingratiation had a significant prediction effect on the number of Followers (B=10.800, p<.001). This showed that students who employed more Ingratiation self-presentation on Instagram, would have a larger number of Followers. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Table 25.
Correlation between Self-presentation and Number of Followers

	Self-presentation		
	Ingratiation	Supplication	Enhancement
Number of Followers	.350[**]	.246[**]	.242[**]

N=176
*Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table 26.
*Multiple Regression of **Number of Followers** on Self-presentation*

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Ingratiation	10.800	.368	3.325	.001
Supplication	.592	.012	.099	.921
Enhancement	-1.603	-.037	-.291	.771

R^2=.123, F(175)=8.025, p<0.01
Dependent Variable: Number of Followers

Multiple Regression Analysis was applied to distinguish which variable had a stronger predicting power on the number of Followers. According to Table 27, by using all variables as independent variables, the model accounted for 20.7% variation of number of Followers (R^2=.207, F(161)=4.403, p<0.01) and only Bonding Capital Activities was found to be a significant positive predictor of the number of Followers (B=.592, p<.01). Since the motives showed no significant relationship with the number of Followers, and concerned a relatively small sample size in the current study, motive variables were excluded in another set of multiple regression analysis (see Table 28). After excluding the motive variables, the R^2 was slightly decreased, and the model explained 19.8% variation of number of Followers (R^2=.198, F (165) =7.901, p<0.01). Similar results were disclosed in this set of models, the number of Followers only had a causal relationship with the bonding capital activities (B=.561, p<.01). It should be noted, however, that the significant level of Ingratiation increased and could predict the

number of Followers at the margin (B=6.449, p=.058). Therefore, it was concluded that engaging more in bonding capital activities would increase the number of Followers.

Table 27.
*Multiple Regression of **Number of Followers** on Motives, Instagram Activities and Self-presentation*

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Information Seeking Motive	4.552	.068	.769	.443
Interpersonal Communication Motive	-1.224	-.018	-.179	.858
Self-expression Motive	-.731	-.012	-.118	.906
Escape Motive	-.622	-.007	-.086	.932
Bonding Capital Activities	.592	.259	2.967	.003
Bridging Capital Activities	.384	.077	.930	.354
Ingratiation	6.522	.221	1.673	.096
Supplication	-1.307	-.027	-.203	.839
Enhancement	.764	.017	.135	.893

R^2=.207, $F(161)$=4.403, p<0.01
 Dependent Variable: Number of Followers

Table 28.
*Multiple Regression of **Number of Followers** on Instagram Activities and Self-presentation*

	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Bonding Capital Activities	.561	.248	2.970	.003
Bridging Capital Activities	.433	.087	1.118	.265
Ingratiation	6.449	.219	1.906	.058
Supplication	.558	.012	.093	.926
Enhancement	.036	.001	.007	.995

 R^2=.198, $F(165)$=7.901, p<0.01
 Dependent Variable: Number of Followers

Additional Findings

The relationship between the duration of Instagram use and the number of Followers on Instagram was also investigated via the Chi-Square Test. The result illustrated that there was a significant and positive correlation between the duration of Instagram use and number of Followers, which suggested that students who use Instagram for longer periods would have more Followers (see Table 29).

Table 29. *Chi-Square Test between Duration of Instagram Use and Number of Followers on Instagram (N=179)*

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	161.303	112	.002

a. 125 cells (91.9%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.

For a deeper understanding of Instagram, some questions related to Facebook were also asked. It was reported that almost all the Instagram users, except two, also had a Facebook account, but only 23% of them were always linked to both Instagram and Facebook, which meant that the posts on Instagram would also be shown on Facebook. About 34% of respondents were never linked on Instagram and Facebook and approximate 41% were selectively linked on these two social networking sites; they would link Instagram and Facebook only when they posted something that they did not mind all their Facebook friends seeing (see Table 30). When compared with Facebook, students agreed that they like to use Instagram because Instagram was more simple and user friendly (M=3.02) (see Table 31), and because students can say or do things that they did not want all their Facebook friends to know (M=2.88).

Table 30.

Linkage between Instagram and Facebook (N=179)

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Always link up	42	23.2
Selectively link up	75	41.4
Never link up	62	34.3

Table 31.

Mean Scores and Standard Deviation (SD) for Reason of more likely use on Instagram than Facebook (N=176)

Items	Mean	SD
Because my parents don't use Instagram	2.38	1.402
Because Instagram is more simple and user friendly.	3.02	1.128
Because I have a closer relationship with the friends on Instagram than Facebook.	2.69	1.206
Because I can say or do things that I do not want my parents to know	2.38	1.269
Because I can say or do things that I do not want all my Facebook friends to know	2.88	1.372

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree

Discussion

General Discussion

Instagram has been launched for only about three years and it has become popular in Hong Kong since 2012, so students have mostly used the Instagram for 3 to 24 months (i.e. 2 years). The results also showed that most students used Instagram every day and this indicated that the use of Instagram has become part of their daily routine and influenced their daily life. The period using Instagram was not long among the students so the majority of students had few (0-300) Followers on their Instagram account due to the positive correlation between duration of Instagram use and number of Followers on Instagram, as shown in the result. The result was consistent with that in Joinson's (2008) study, which stated that the longer time someone was registered, the more friends they would have on Facebook. It was clear that the number of Followers was accumulated according to the period of Instagram use. This study also produced a similar result to the study of Wong (2012), where "Like" friends' post was the activity in which students had the highest frequency of participation on SNSs.

The students were mostly motivated to use Instagram by the Interpersonal Communication motive, which was consistent with Spiliotopoulos and Oakley's (2013) study and the research of Alhabash et al. (2012), which both indicated that social connection was the motivation for the majority of people adopting Facebook use.

The results showed that Ingratiation was the most popular form of self-presentation among participants on Instagram, the second most common type was Enhancement and the least common was Supplication. This result was the same as that examined in Dominick (1999) and Wong (2012). It was clear that people tend to present a positive image such as Ingratiation and Enhancement rather than negative impression like Supplication (appearing weak) on SNS.

Motives and Usage on Instagram

According to the results, Instagram activities were derived from particular kinds of motives. For example, the Interpersonal Communication motive could predict actions such as leave comment on friends' posts, like friends' posts and tag friends in posts and this was consistent with Smock et al. (2011), which showed that the social interaction motive was a significant and positive predictor of the use of comments on Facebook. It was clear that the above activities could connect people with their friends online, and people could still interact with their friends through the use of the comment and tag function on Instagram. Like friends' posts, upload photos and put "#hashtag" under posts were positively associated with the self-expression motive. It was reported that people could share things and express their feelings by uploading the best photos and show their preferences by liking posts from the others. The "#hashtag" was a new function that only appeared on Instagram. This function provided a link between

different users in the way that users could put special labels under their posts. Those labels served as the hyperlink that connected posts with the same "#hashtag" underneath. In other words, the "#hashtag" was regarded as additional description through which users could explore themselves in public (including exiting friends and strangers). Smock, et al. (2011) also showed that the status update on Facebook had a positive correlation with expressive information sharing motive, and the expressive information motive shared a similar features with the self-expression motive. The Information Seeking motive was a positive predictor of use "#hashtag" to search things and view online shops' pages. It was clear that those two activities helped users to acquire information and knowledge on Instagram in order to fulfil the needs in seeking information; for instance, users could obtain information about different products and services by viewing online shop pages. It was, however, surprising that uploading videos was associated with the Escape motive and there was still no evidence that showed these two variables were related; future study might further investigate these two variables.

In general, all motives were correlated with Instagram usage, especially for the Information Seeking and Self-expression motives. The result was consistent with previous studies (Krisanic, 2008 and Gülnar, et al., 2010). Those studies noted that the information seeking motive and the self-expression motive were positively related to the frequency of Facebook use. The importance of the self-expression motive was emphasised in this study. According to the use and gratification theory, if a media could satisfy individual's needs, they would tend to engage more in that media. In this case, individuals could fulfil their motives by participating in different activities on Instagram, therefore, a stronger motive implied a higher frequency of Instagram use.

Motives and Self-presentation on Instagram

This study examined the relationship between motives and self-presentation on Instagram, since this was lacking relevant literature. The results illustrated that all motives were related to all types of self-presentation positively. It was noted that only self-expression motive was a significant and positive predictor of all three types of self-presentation. This can be explained by impression management theory. Individuals adopt self-presentation tactics to present themselves as the desired image by which they wanted to be perceived by the others. Since the self-expression motive was to express and share things about oneself, and the way that someone presents themselves can influence the perception others have of them, impression management strategies were necessary as a technique to control an individual's self-image on Instagram. Of the four motives, therefore, only the self-expression motive had a significant prediction effect on all three types of self-presentation. Surprisingly, the other two motives - information seeking and escape motive - were also found to have a relationship with the three types of self-presentation separately. These were not the main focus of the current study, however, and further analysis might obtain more information in a future study.

Instagram Usage, Self-presentation and Number of Followers on Instagram

There was a positive relationship between Instagram usage and the number of Followers on Instagram which meant the more frequent the use of Instagram, the more Followers on Instagram. This result was consistent with previous studies (Joinson, 2008 and Pettijohn, et al., 2012) which indicated that the number of friends on Facebook are positive related to the frequency of Facebook use. Of three types of self-presentation, Ingratiation was identified as a positive predictor of the number of Followers on Instagram, meaning that the more the students present themselves as likeable and attractive on Instagram, the more Followers they would have. Clearly, individuals tend to portray a positive image than a negative image on SNSs. The explanation for this phenomenon is that the SNSs contained many interpersonal interactions in the context, and it would be more socially beneficial for individuals to maintain a likeable impression in front of others (Cunningham, 2013). For example, in the case of Instagram, ingratiation self-presentation would help individuals gain more Followers, which means that more attention, caring and support could be received by the individual in terms of the number of Followers.

To be specific, according to the multiple regression result, by making all major variables independent variables and the number of Followers as the dependent variable, only the bonding capital activities were found to have a significant positive effect on predicting the number of Followers, and ingratiation self-presentation was marginally significant after excluding the motive variables. In fact, the bonding capital activities contained the majority of common activities on SNSs, such as leave comment, upload photos and videos as well as like friends' posts. It was noted that if a user had more Followers, it would be more likely for them to obtain attention, listeners and support from the others. Gratification would be generated from those attentions to the user and that meant the user could satisfy their social and psychological needs by using Instagram. They therefore tend to engage more in Instagram activities so as to gain more Followers and extract more gratification. In other words, based on the use and gratifications theory, when people have found that they can obtain gratification and fulfil their needs on Instagram, they engage in higher frequency use.

To be clear, considering all significant results, the theoretical framework model would be modified as shown below:
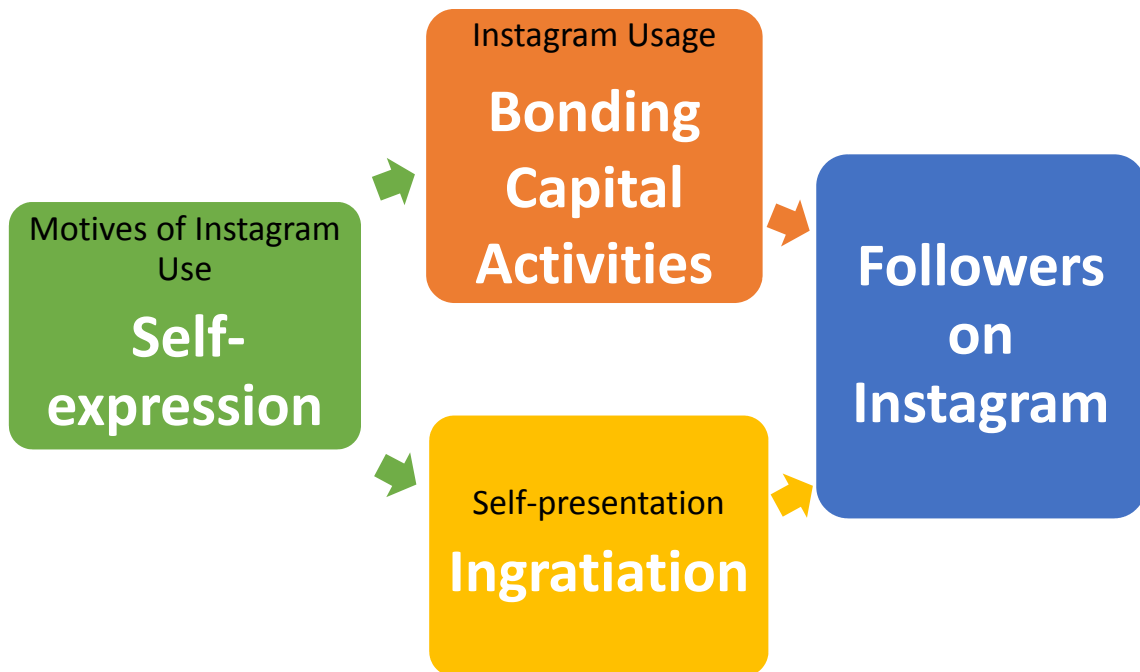
Figure 2. Modified Theoretical Framework Model

Limitations
There were a few limitations that need to be noted in this study. First of all, the sample size (N=181) was relatively small. In addition, some non-random sampling methods like convenience sampling were adopted in order to collect sufficient data within the data collection period. For these two reasons, the results in the current study might not represent the whole situation of Instagram usage among CityU students. The survey in the current study was only conducted within the City University of Hong Kong so it is not applicable to apply the result to the whole society of Hong Kong. A generalisation problem thus exists. Secondly, since there were lack of literature that focused on Instagram, the scales adopted in the current study were modified from those studies using internet or other social networking sites like Facebook, or Myspace as a main focus. In this case, the measurements might not be accurate for Instagram as the scales were not initially designed for investigation of Instagram. Lastly, there were assumptions behind this study, for example, motives and self-presentation are assumed to be stable among respondents when these two variables might fluctuate subject to other external factors.

Implications for Future Research
A mixed approach that consisted of both quantitate and qualitative research methods is recommended for future study. Participant observation might employed to further examine the appearance of self-presentation among different users by capturing features of the posts that users had uploaded on Instagram.

The privacy setting on Instagram should be taken into consideration in future study because it may be a possible factor that affects the number of Followers. Users can change the setting to "private" on their accounts in order to control the Followers of their account by rejecting or accepting follower requests from others. In this situation, the number of Followers will be subject to user preferences.

Finally, some relationships between motives and self-presentation were not fully explained in the current study, such as the information seeking motive and supplication, which still do not have empirical evidence in support. Future study may therefore follow this direction to generate a better understanding of Instagram, as Instagram is becoming well-known in Hong Kong, especially among adolescents in recent years.

Conclusion

To conclude, the relationship between four major variables – motives, usage, self-presentation and number of Followers on Instagram - were examined in this study. It was found that motives for Instagram use were positively related to Instagram usage and self-presentation, and the number of Followers was also positively correlated with Instagram usage and self-presentation. There was no direct causal relationship between motives and number of Followers on Instagram. The self-expression motive played an essential role in predicting Instagram usage and self-presentation on Instagram, while the bonding capital activities and ingratiation self-presentation were the predictors of the number of Followers, and the causal relationships between variables as shown in the theoretical framework model were supported in this study.

Acknowledgements

Biographic Note

Cheung Ting Ting is the 2014 graduate of Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours) in Applied Sociology at City University of Hong Kong.

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