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Title	A study on motives, usage, self-presentation and number of followers on instagram
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Citation	Cheung, T. T. (2014). A study on motives, usage, self-presentation and number of followers on instagram (Outstanding Academic Papers by Students (OAPS)). Retrieved from City University of Hong Kong, CityU Institutional Repository.
Issue Date	2014
URL	<a href="http://hdl.handle.net/2031/7521">http://hdl.handle.net/2031/7521</a>
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City University of Hong Kong

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

Submitted to

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

Department of Applied Social Studies

For Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours)

Applied Sociology

By

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May 2014

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## **Acknowledgement**

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Dr. Alfred Choi, my final year project supervisor, for his constructive, useful advices and patient guidance during the research progress. His valuable supports inspired me to come up with several innovative ideas and helped me to overcome the difficulties.

I would also like to thank my family and friends, for their encouragements and full supports throughout the study.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my classmates and all the respondents, for their useful suggestion and enthusiastic participation in this study.

## **Abstract**

Instagram, a burgeoning social networking site that developed dramatically among adolescents in Hong Kong nowadays. This study is to investigate 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 City University of Hong Kong were recruited for the conduction of quantitative survey. It was found that motives was positively associated with both usage and self-presentation while the number of Followers also clarified to have a positive correlation with Instagram usage and self-presentation. However, no significant causal relationship was examined between motives and number of Followers.

## Introduction

Instagram is a worldwide online social networking site that provided a platform for people to share photos and videos with others. It was launched around 3 years since 6<sup>th</sup> October 2010 and acquired by Facebook in 2012 (Instagram 2014). Instagram consisted of 200 million monthly active users and there were totally 20 billion photos have been shared on Instagram within this 3 years. Instagram is available on both Apple store and Google Play Store for the App version without any charge while the Web version of Instagram can be accessed through the Internet. However, since Instagram was produced as an App at the beginning, the functions in App version was more comprehensive than in the Web version so most of the users utilize the Instagram service via their smart phones. Instagram was also designed to link with other social media like Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Flickr, etc, so users can share their photos on those social media through Instagram. As Instagram is simple, convenient and user friendly social networking site, it was becoming famous in Hong Kong in recent years, especially among teenagers. Instagram was regarded as the second common type of new media that majority of adolescents used 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 was a relatively new social networking site, there were only very few studies focusing on Instagram compared with other social networking sites. Therefore, it was necessary to have a further exploration on Instagram.

## Literature Review

### *Instagram Usage and Social Capital*

The Instagram Usage was defined as the activities the users engaged in on Instagram. Activities included “Leave “Comment” on friends’ posts”, “Like” friends’ posts”, “Upload photos”, “Upload videos”, “Tag friends in posts”, “Put #Hashtags” under posts”, Use “#Hashtags” to search things and “View online shops’ pages”. Both “Like” and “Comment” button were available under every posts on Instagram. People could 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 put up by the other users. Instagram also allowed users to share photos and videos. When the users was editing a photos and videos for uploading, they could tag their friends inside the posts by typing their Instagram user names in the “Tag people” blank.

In addition, the “#Hashtag” was a new and unique function only appear on Instagram, which can be used to link the posts with similar characteristics on Instagram. For example, if the users take a photo in City University of Hong Kong, they can put hashtags like “#CityU”, “#University” or “#Hong Kong” to describe the features of the photo. The hashtags was served as a keyword for people to search specific posts since if users click on a hashtag, all other posts that used the same hashtag would be linked and showed on the page. For example, if users click on a hashtag “#CityU”, then all posts on Instagram that had included the hashtag “#CityU” will be showed on the page. Users could also type the keyword of the tag in the “Search” blank, the result will be the same as clicking on the hashtag. It was notable that all words can become a hashtag by adding “#” in front of the words so the users were free to create any new hashtags by themselves.

Furthermore, there were plenty of online shops on Instagram that selling different products like fashions, cosmetics and daily commodities, etc. Users could check out the online shops’ pages and look for the information about different products.

Social capital could be formed with the usage of social networking sites (SNSs). Social capital was defined as the resource accumulated in the relationship among people via social interaction (Coleman, 1988; Lin, 2001; Putnam, 1995, Steinfield, et al., 2012). According to Ellison et al. (2007), social network could be maintained and increased by using the social networking sites. Bonding and bridging capital were the two typical types of social capital that associated with the use of SNSs (Putnam, 1995). Bonding capital was refer to strong cohesive bond or close-knit ties between homogenous groups of people such as family members and close friends that shared common identities like values, religions and interests, etc, while the bridging capital linked the heterogeneous group members that came from different backgrounds like social status and generation with a weak but diffuse connection. The activities on Instagram could be served as a mean for building the social capital online. The activities which deal with existing friends or family

members could help to generate bonding capital and the activities that concerning the network towards new people or unknown others could be used to construct bridging capital on the other words.

### *Motives of Instagram Use*

Motives were the general orientation that affect the action of people in order to satisfy their wants and needs (Papacharissi, Z., and Rubin, A. M., 2000). Papacharissi and Rubin (2000) examined 5 motives for internet use: Interpersonal Utility, Pass Time, Information Seeking, Convenience and Entertainment. Apart from Papacharissi & Rubin (2000), similar motives were also identified in SNSs use in the studies of Leung (2009), Pempek, et al. (2009), Urista, et al. (2009) and Sheldon (2008). The motives of using social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter could be classified into Information Seeking (cognitive), Entertainment (Diversion), Social Connection (Maintaining relationship, Social Interaction, Companionship), Passing Time and Self-expression (Identity). Besides, Escape, Mood management and Narcissism also investigated as the motivations of using social media (Gülнар and Balcı, 2010; Yang and Kang, 2006 and Cha, 2010).

Information Seeking, Interpersonal Communication (Interpersonal Utility), Self-expression and Escape Motives had been adopted in current study as these 4 motives are the most familiar motives that explaining for the use of the social networking sites. Information seeking (cognitive) motive meant to get or search information through the SNSs. Interpersonal communication motive, also as known as social connection motive which implied the orientation of social interaction as well as relationship maintenance with others. Third, Self-expression motive was defined as showing personal image and identity by using the SNSs, in other words, the aim of using the SNSs was to convey oneself, including hobbies, interests, ideas and feelings to other people. Lastly, the Escape motive allowed people to get away from the reality and loneliness, to forget the 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 highlighting specific characteristics in order to maintain a positive impression in front of others (Ellison, Heino and Gibbs, 2006). According to Goffman (1959), the self-presentation was based on a “dramaturgical approach” that people presenting their own image was similar to the acting on stage. To be specific, self-presentation was the performance of personal image that individual desired to be perceived by the other people. Self-presentation was also known as impression management which indicated that individual would act intentionally to regulate the impression of oneself according to different situation in order to shape an appropriate image to get the approval from others (Vohs, et al.2005; Leary, 1993; Schlenker and Pontari, 2000). In current study, the concept of self-presentation and impression management will be used interchangeably.

There were a variety of taxonomy on the self-presentation with reference to different scholars. Jones and Pittman (1982) classified the self-presentation strategies on 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 7 additional types of self-presentations: Excuse, Justification, Disclaimers, Self-Handicapping, Apology, Entitlement and Blasting as well as changing the title of Self-promotion into Enhancement for measuring different self-presentations that appeared in everyday life. The self-presentation was first introduced on the face-to-face interaction but previous studies like Dominick (1999) and Wong (2012) had applied the self-presentation tactics on the Internet use and Facebook use and the results supported that the self-presentation could also be observed in the online communication.

This study focused on Ingratiation, Supplication and Enhancement for expressing the self-presentation that adopted by the Instagram users as those three were the most common types of self-presentation that can be observed in the online interaction (Dominick, 1999). Ingratiation was the tactic that presenting a likeable image (Jones and Pittman, 1982). It was used to enhance the interpersonal attraction on individual so as to achieve the goal of being liked by other people. The common features of Ingratiation were saying positive compliment, showing care, encouragement and considerate to others, conveying

positive personality (e.g. friendly, kindness) and also doing something that people would agree with (Jones and Pittman, 1980). Secondly, people who appear weakness and seek help from the other people was employing Supplication (Jones and Pittman, 1982). The purpose of Supplication was to gain support, care and sympathy from others by showing helpless or lack of ability to complete certain tasks. Supplication expressed a relatively negative impression within those three self-presentation. Lastly, Enhancement (self-promotion) was to display a knowledgeable and skilled impression in front of others by underlining oneself talents, competence, and intelligence. For example, achieving awards was one of the behaviors that can show the individual was successful and present an enhancement image (Jones and Pittman, 1982).

### *Followers on Instagram*

Different from Facebook, the relationship between users was not identified as “Friend” but regarded as “Followers” (Instagram, 2014). If you want to view other users’ posts, you need to click the “Follow” button on that user’s page in order to access the photos or videos that posted by that user. Then, two cases would be considered, one is that user had no privacy setting, that is, once you click on the “Follow” button, the button would change into “Following”, so that any new photos or videos uploaded by that users would be showed on the home page as long as you are following him/her. Another case was that user had privacy control, if you press the “Follow” button, the system would automatically send a following request to that user, and you would be available to see that users’ posts only when his/her accepted your request. However, it was notable that Followers was a unilateral concept, which meant the one who you are following may not be the Follower of your account, the number of Followers and Following of an Instagram user was not the same in most of the cases. The number of Followers could reflect the scope of social network of the user, the more Followers implied a wider social network.

## ***Empirical Literature Review***

### *Motives and Instagram Usage*

The relationship between motives and the usage of SNSs have been examined by several scholars. For example, Krisanic (2008) showed that the information motive and connect motive (interpersonal communication motive) were positively associated with the Facebook use as the Facebook users could satisfy their needs like getting useful information and interacting with other people through using Facebook so they tend to use Facebook more frequently. Besides, the time spent on Facebook was positively correlated with the self-expression motivation and virtual companionship escape motive (Gülner, et al., 2010; Dhaha and Igale, 2013). Those studies indicated that the 4 motives which adopted in current study were related with the usage of social networking site.

### *Self-presentation and Number of Followers*

Kim, et al. (2011) mentioned that both positive self-presentation and the number of friends were positive associated to the subjective well-being on Facebook and this implied there was also a correlation between positive self-presentation and the number of Facebook friends. It was obvious that positive images can gain more attention and approval from others than the negative images, therefore, it was assumed that there was a correlation between the self-presentation and number of Followers on Instagram, especially from the positive impression.

### *Instagram Usage and Number of Followers*

In the study of Pettijohn, et al. (2012), it was supported that Facebook Intensity, which also known as Facebook usage, was positive correlated to the total number of Friends on Facebook among US college students. That meant the more frequent Facebook usage, the more number of Facebook Friends. Similar result was found in Hampton, et al. (2012) research, it showed that there was a positive relationship between the size of Friends’ list on Facebook and the engagement in different kinds of Facebook activities in 977 American adults. Furthermore, Joinson’s study (2008) also investigated that the frequency of visiting

Facebook was a positive and significant predictor of the number of Facebook friends. Hence, it was believed that the Instagram Usage was correlated to the Number of Followers on Instagram.

As mentioned before, there is only extremely few past studies focused on Instagram due to the short establishment period of it when compared to other social networking sites like Facebook. In addition, there is lacking of empirical research that considering the relationship between motives of use and self-presentation on social networking site. Therefore, it is worth to examine 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 usage pattern, motives of using Instagram, the self-presentation on Instagram as well as examine the relationship between those variables and the popularity on Instagram among the students in City University of Hong Kong.

## Research Questions

- 1) Does the specific kinds of motives affect the usage on Instagram?
- 2) Is the types of self-presentation based on the particular kinds of motives?
- 3) How would the usage influence the number of Followers on Instagram?
- 4) Is the types of self-presentation correlated to the 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 of Instagram use will have a higher frequency of Instagram usage

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

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

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

## Theoretical Framework

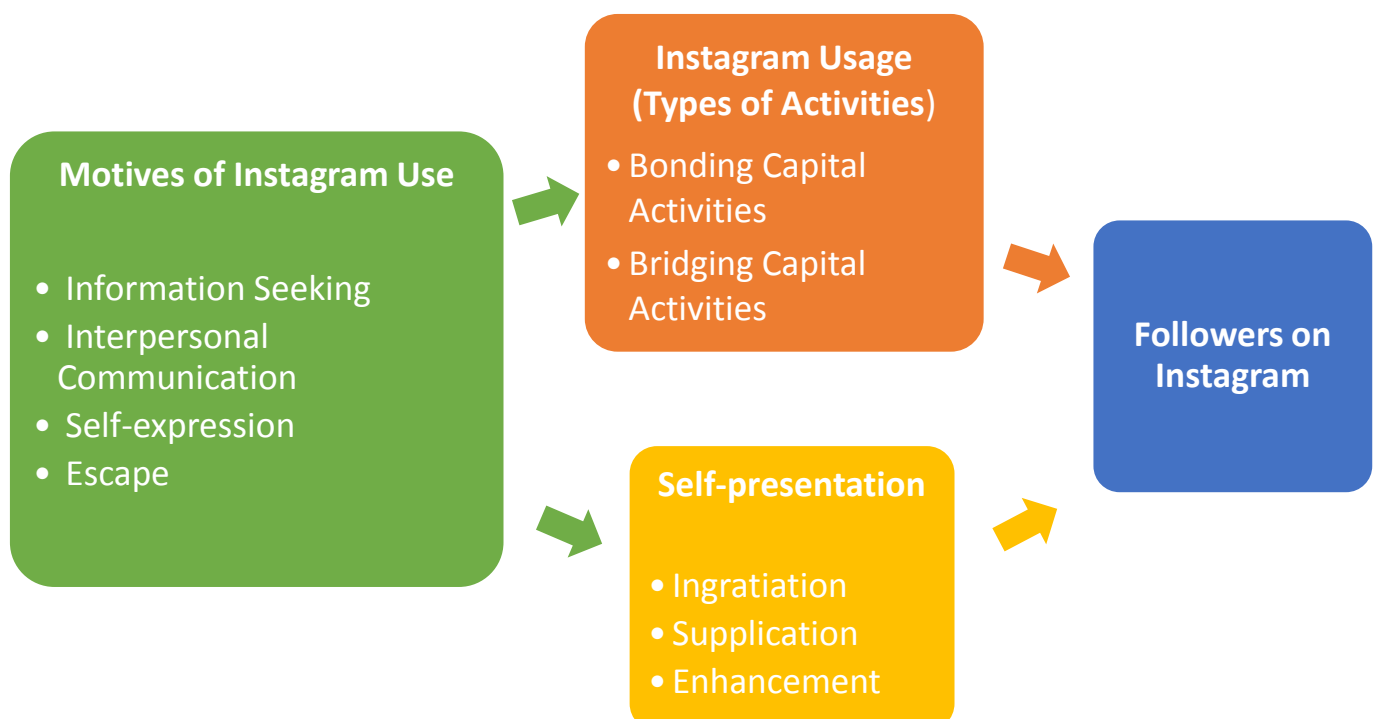


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework Model



### ***Impression Management (Self-presentation tactics)***

Impression on individual was shaped through the interaction process, both face-to-face communication and computed-mediated communication (Zhao, et al., 2008). The latter could be accessed via the use of social networking sites. Self-presentation tactics was defined as the behaviors that individual used to manipulate personal impression as the desired image of themselves (Lee et al., 1999). Goffman (1959) mentioned that people tend to maintain a positive image in front of the others, therefore, the impression management was employed in order to help individual expressing themselves in a favorable way. Past studies on Facebook investigated that there was a close relationship between the number of Facebook friends and how the individual present themselves on Facebook, i.e. the self-presentation (Walther et al., 2008). Therefore, similar with Facebook, the self-presentation on Instagram is believed to associate with the number of Followers on Instagram.

### ***Use and Gratification Theory***

Use and Gratification Theory played an important role on the mass media communication. It was used to study how individual utilize media to satisfy both social and psychological needs (Katz, et al., 1974). It was assumed that the audience could extract gratifications by the use of media and the selection of behaviors in media use was goal-directed and motivated. In other words, individual would use particular types of media or engage in specific kinds of behaviors that they expect 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, gratifications generated in media use can also reconstruct certain needs.

Several scholars adopted the Use and Gratification approach to examine the motivations of using the social networking sites. For example, Raake and Bonds-Raake (2008) found out that the purposes of using SNSs (Facebook and Myspace) were Social interaction, Information Seeking, Friendship Maintenance with existing friends and making new friends among the college students. Besides, Dhaha, and Igale (2013) explored 6 gratifications on Facebook among Somali youth, which were Self-description of own country, Pass time, Virtual companionship escape, Interpersonal habitual entertainment, Information Seeking and Self-expression. In addition, Brandtzæg and Heim (2009) investigated that the individual used SNSs to satisfy needs such as information seeking, social interaction, entertainment and showing personal identity. Furthermore, seek friends, support, information, convenience and entertainment were mentioned in Kim, Sohn and Choi's (2011) study as the purposes of SNSs use. According to Smock, et al. (2011), it was clear that different motives would derive different patterns of usage behaviors, for example, the use of leaving comment on Facebook was predicted by the entertainment, social interaction and companionship motive, while the status-updates was predicted by the motive of expressive information sharing (Self-expression).

To employ Use and Gratification Theory in the case of Instagram, individual uses Instagram to fulfil their needs, in other words, to satisfy their motives such as Information Seeking, Interpersonal Communication (social interaction/connection), Self-expression and Escape, and extract gratification from the Followers eventually since the number of Followers can reflect the size of the social network as well as the attention and support that individual can receive on Instagram.

## **Methodology**

### ***Research Design***

Quantitative research method was employed in current study. Survey was conducted by using 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. Within those 213 respondents, only 181 respondents were Instagram users. As the target population was the students who have Instagram account, the sample size of this study was those 181 Instagram users. The sample consisted of 41% of male (n=74) and 59% of female (n=107). Participants were come from different years of study, in which 35% (n=63) were Year 1 students, 24% (n=44) came from Year 2 and the proportion of Year 3 and Year 4 students was 21% (n=38) and 20% (n=36) correspondingly. Participation was on a voluntary basis.

## *Sampling*

Since the Gateway Education courses involved students came from different years and colleges, questionnaires were mainly distributed before the Gateway Education courses in City University of Hong Kong in order to make the sample more representative. Minority of the questionnaires were distributed in Sociology courses and Students Residence which was classify as convenience sampling. The proportion of those 2 sampling methods was around 3:1.

## *Data Collection*

The relevant data was collected from 17<sup>th</sup> March to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014, which was lasted for about 3 weeks by conducting the survey. The time for completing the whole questionnaire is approximately 5 to 10 minutes.

## *Measurement*

### *Questionnaire Design*

The questionnaire can be divided into 5 parts, Instagram usage, Motives of Instagram use, Self-presentation, Number of Followers and demographic information by referring to the theoretical framework model of this study (see Appendix 1).

### *Instagram Usage*

This part was concerning the circumstances of using Instagram, for example the duration of using Instagram and the average time spent on using Instagram were included. Besides, to be more specific, the frequency level of engaging in 7 typical Instagram activities like “Leave “Comment” on friends’ posts” in the past 3 months was also examined by 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)”. Therefore, questions such as “In the past 3 months, how often do you “Like” friends’ posts on Instagram?” was asked in this part. The higher the score implied a more frequent usage. It was noticed that the respondents who only use Instagram for less than 3 months were not applicable to answer those questions about the frequency of Instagram activities engagement because they were relatively new users of Instagram so they were not available to show the Instagram usage on a regular basis.

### *Motives of Instagram use*

The motives scales which combined and modified from the Internet motive scale in Papacharissi and Rubin (2000), Choi, J., Dekkers, A., & Park, S. (2004) and Jiyoung Cha (2010) is used to identify different motives of using Instagram. Four main motives were measured in this part and all scales were reliable in the original studies: 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 which 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 for examining the Information Seeking motive; “I use Instagram to keep on contact with friends” was 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 problem or troubles that I am facing” represented Escape motive. In this section, the higher the score meant the more orientated on that particular kind of motive.

### *Self-presentation*

The types of self-presentation on Instagram was measured by the modified scales from Lee, et al (1999) and Wong, W. (2012). Those scales were reliable, the original Cronbach’s alpha of Ingratiation, Supplication and Enhancement were 0.80, 0.63 and 0.76 correspondingly. A 7-point scale varied from “Never” to “Very Frequently” was adopted for assessing the frequency of the three types of self-presentation. For instance, Question “How often do you present yourself as helpful to others on Instagram?” was used to investigating the Ingratiation self-presentation; “How often do you seek help on Instagram?” was classified as the Supplication self-presentation and “How often do you show that you are successful on Instagram?” indicated the Enhancement self-presentation in the questionnaire. Similar to the motive scales, the higher the score in this part implied the more orientated on that specific types of self-presentation.

### *Number of Followers*

Respondents were required to answer the question “How many Followers do you have in total?” by choosing within 21 options, from “1=0-50”, “2=51-100” to “20=951-1,000” and “21=more than 1,000”. The options would convert into actual number by using the mid-point of those options, for instance, 25 would be represented for the option “0-50”, and for the option “more than 1000”, an 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 was proceeded on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2014. A total of 20 undergraduate students in City University of Hong Kong were invited to complete the questionnaire in advance, in which 10 of them were studied in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, 6 of them came from the College of Business and 4 of them were studied in the College of Science and Engineering. Adjustments were made on the questionnaire after receiving those students’ comments. The revised items including front size and wordings in order to ensure the 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 4 major variables that mentioned in the theoretical framework model. Descriptive statistics was adopted for the remaining variables that did not shown in the model, such as demographic information, which classified as supplement variables that help to generate a better understanding of current study. Apart from the Descriptive statistics, Reliability test and Factor analysis were conducted for examining the consistency of the scales while Pearson Correlation coefficient analysis, Chi-square Test and Multiple Regression analysis were employed for exploring the relationship between those 4 major variables.

## Findings

### *Descriptive Statistics*

#### *Demographic Data*

A total of 181 respondents who have Instagram account had been recruited in current study (see Table 1). All of the respondents were the undergraduate students in City University of Hong Kong. There were more female respondents (59.1%) than the male respondents (40.9%) and most of the respondents (84%) were aged from 18-22 years old. The distribution of the year of study among respondents was quite even, which consisted of 34.8% Year 1 students, 24.3% Year 2 students, 21% Year 3 students and 19.9% Year 4 students. Besides, majority of the respondents (92.2%) came from the College of Business, Liberal Art and Social Science and Science and Engineering, which were the 3 main colleges that contained the largest number of students in City U. In addition, the religion and the monthly household income variables were not the main focus of this study since they were not correlated with the 4 major variables in the framework model. The display of these data were only help to providing a clearer background information of those respondents.

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

Demographic Variables	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	74	40.9
Female	107	59.1
<i>Age</i>		
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
<i>Year of Study</i>		
Year 1	63	34.8
Year 2	44	24.3
Year 3	38	21.0
Year 4	36	19.9
<i>College of Study</i>		
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
<i>Religion</i>		
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
<i>Monthly Household Income</i>		
\$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, majority of the respondents (75.7%) used Instagram for 3 to 24 months already. For the 10 respondents who used Instagram for less than 3 months (5.5%) were regarded as new users who were not applicable to provide frequency of Instagram usage at a regular basis. In Table 3, it showed that over half of 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 on 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 4 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 3 sub-items about upload photos and upload videos were added up together and formed two variables: “Upload photos” and “Upload videos” for further relevant analysis about Instagram activities. Besides, a factor analysis was employed to distinguish the activities on Instagram into 2 factors that explained a total of 59.1% of variance (see Table 5). The first one 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 labeled 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 like Put “#Hashtags” under posts, Use “#Hashtags” to search things and View online shops’ pages, which explained 16.8% of variance. The second factor was named as “Bridging Capital Activities” due to the fact that those activities were used to

communicate with the people who you do not know and explore new things, which in the sense were related to construction of the bridging capital. Compared these 2 factors, 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 shops' 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 Comment 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 of Instagram Use*

A Principal Component Analysis was used to investigate the factor loading of the motives of Instagram Use (see Appendix 2). The result showed that the 4 motives of Instagram use: Information Seeking, Interpersonal Communication, Self-expression and Escape, explained a total of 64.5% of variance. Furthermore, according to Table 7, students used Instagram mostly based on the Interpersonal Communication motive (M=3.55), such as to check out what everyone else is doing and to keep contact with friends. Self-expression motive also play an important role on the Instagram usage (M=3.18), like 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 in the self-presentation scale were classified into 3 types of self-presentation: Ingratiation (6 items), Supplication (4 items) and Enhancement (5 items). Besides, the results showed that Ingratiation (M=3.37) was the most popular self-presentation that adopted by the students (see Table 8), and they mostly present themselves as Ingratiation in the way of leave “Comment” on friends’ posts to express caring on Instagram (M=3.87) (see Appendix 3). In addition, Supplication was the least favorite self-presentation on Instagram (M=2.50) and seek help was the least frequent action that students proceed 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 illustrated that most (about 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 in all the scales of current study (see Table 10) since the Cronbach’s Alpha of all scales (including sub-scales) were over 0.6. As the scales used in this study were combined and modified from the standardized scales in the previous studies,

all the scales were regarded as reliable and could be used for analyzing the relationship between the 4 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 of 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

Pearson Correlation test was adopted to examine the relationship between 4 major variables and the Multiple Regression Analysis was used to investigate the predicting power of variables.

### ***Results for the relationship between Motives and Usage on Instagram***

The below Table 11 to Table 15 displayed the relationship between Motives and Usage on Instagram. Hypothesis 1 was tested.

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

There was a positive correlation between the all 4 motives of Instagram and total Instagram usage (frequency of all Instagram activities) (see Table 11). Particularly speaking, the stronger motive on 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 usage of Instagram. Therefore Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 11. Correlation between Motives and Total Instagram usage

	Motives of 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, Pearson Correlation test also employed to investigate the relationship between the 4 kinds of motives and the 2 types of Instagram activities (i.e. Bonding Capital Activities and Bridging Capital Activities). Similar results were conducted (see Table 12). The Bonding Capital Activities was positively related to all 4 motives while the Bridging Capital Activities was also positively correlated to all motives of Instagram use except the Escape motive ( $r = .112$ ).



Table 12. Correlation between Motives and Types of Instagram activities

	Motives of Instagram use			
	Information Seeking	Interpersonal Communication	Self-expression	Escape
Bonding Capital Activities	.300**	.350**	.347**	.212**
Bridging Capital Activities	.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).

Furthermore, 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 details, Multiple Regression Test also adopted for testing the predicting power of motives towards all Instagram activities (see Table 15). From the table, all significant results could interpreted the motives had positive prediction on Instagram activities. It was found that 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				R <sup>2</sup>
	Information Seeking	Interpersonal Communication	Self-expression	Escape	
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&lt;.05, \*\*p&lt;.01, \*\*\*p&lt;.001

### **Results for the relationship between Motives and Self-presentation on Instagram**

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

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

According to Table 16, all 3 types of self-presentation were significantly and positively related to all 4 kinds of motives. That meant the stronger the motive, the more self-presentation on 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).

Besides, Multiple Regression Analysis also conducted to see if there was a causal relationship between certain kind of motive and self-presentation. Refer to Table 17, 18 and 19, the motives model explained 45.5% variation of Ingratiation ( $R^2=.455$ ,  $F(174)=35.449$ ,  $p<.01$ ), 30.8% variation of Supplication ( $R^2=.308$ ,  $F(174)=18.890$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and 28.0% variation of Enhancement ( $R^2=.280$ ,  $F(174)=16.546$ ,  $p<.05$ ). For Ingratiation, Information Seeking ( $B=.414$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and Self-expression motive ( $B=.988$ ,  $p<.001$ ) were the positive predictor of it. Moreover, the motive 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. For Enhancement, the motive of Self-expression ( $B=.463$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and Escape ( $B=.344$ ,  $p<.05$ ) had a significant prediction effect on it. It was stated that only Self-expression motive had significant prediction effect on all 3 types of self-presentation, which meant the 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*

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

There was a positive correlation between the total Instagram usage and all 3 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 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 3 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*

From the following Table 22 and Table 23, the number of Followers was positively associated with the 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 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).

In addition, 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 2 types of Instagram activities model accounted for 13.6% variation of Number of Followers ( $R^2 = .136$ ,  $F(170) = 13.197$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This claimed that the higher frequency use on bonding capital activities would lead to a more 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*

Results illustrated that there was a positive correlation between the number of Followers and all 3 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 reflected that students who employed more Ingratiation self-presentation on Instagram, the number of Followers of them would be more. 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

Furthermore, Multiple Regression Analysis was applied for distinguish which variable has a stronger predicting power on the number of Followers. According to Table 27, by putting all variables as independent variable, 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 concerning a relatively small sample size in 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, the model explained 19.8% variation of number of Followers ( $R^2=.198$ ,  $F(165)=7.901$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Similar result disclosed in this set of model, the number of Followers only had causal relationship with the bonding capital activities ( $B=.561$ ,  $p<.01$ ). However, it should be noted 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 be investigated by 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 claimed that students who use Instagram for longer period would have a more number of 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 expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.*

To have a deeper understanding on Instagram, some questions related to Facebook were also asked. It was reported that almost all the Instagram users, except two of them, also had a Facebook account. However, only 23% of them were always link up Instagram and Facebook, which meant that the posts on Instagram would also be shown on Facebook. About 34% of respondents were never link up Instagram and Facebook and approximate 41% of them were selectively link up these two social networking sites, they would link up Instagram and Facebook only when they posted something that they do not mind all their Facebook friends to see (see Table 30). When compared with Facebook, students agreed that they like to use Instagram because Instagram is more simple and user friendly ( $M=3.02$ ) (see Table 31), followed by the reason that students can say or do something that they do 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 are not using 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 something that I do not want my parents to know	2.38	1.269
Because I can say or do something 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 was launched for only about three years and it was becoming popular in Hong Kong since 2012 so students have used the Instagram mostly for 3 months to 24 months (i.e. 2 years). Results also showed that most students used Instagram every day and this indicated that the use of Instagram has become their daily routine and brought influences towards their daily life. The period of using Instagram was not long among students so majority students only contained few (0-300) Followers on their Instagram account due to the positive correlation between duration of Instagram use and number of Followers on Instagram that shown in the result. The result was consistent with that in Joinson's (2008) study, which stated the longer time registered, the more number of friends on Facebook. It was obvious that the number of Followers was accumulated along with the period of Instagram use. This study also showed a similar result with the study of Wong (2012) that "Like" friends' post was the activity which students had the highest frequency of participation on SNSs.

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

For the self-presentation, the result showed that Ingratiation was the most popular self-presentation among participants that could be observed on Instagram, the second common type was Enhancement and the least famous type was Supplication. This result was the same as the one 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 (appear weakness) on the SNSs.

### Motives and Usage on Instagram

From the results, the Instagram activities were derived from particular kinds of motives. For example, Interpersonal Communication motive could predict the actions like 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 social interaction motive was a significant and positive predictor of the use of comment on Facebook. It was clear that the above activities could connect people with their friends online, people could still interact with their friends through the use of comment and tag function on Instagram. Besides, like friends' posts, upload photos and put "#hashtag" under posts were positive associated with Self-expression motive. It was reported that people could share their things and express their feelings by uploading optimal 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 linkage between different users in the ways that users could put some special labels under their posts. Those labels were served as the hyperlink that connected posts with the

same “#hashtag” underneath. In other words, the “#hashtag” was regarded as additional description of the users to explore themselves to the public (both exiting friends and strangers). Smock, et al (2011) also examined that the status update on Facebook had a positive correlation with expressive information sharing motive and the expressive information motive was shared a similar features with the Self-expression motive. Furthermore, 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 help users to acquire information and knowledge on Instagram in order to fulfil the need of seeking information, for instance, users could get information of different products and services by viewing the online shops’ pages. However, it was surprised that upload videos was associated with the Escape motive and there was still no evidence showed these two variables were related, future study might further investigate about these two variables.

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

#### *Motives and Self-presentation on Instagram*

This study tried to examine the relationship between motives and self-presentation on Instagram since there were lacking of relevant literature. The result illustrated that all motives were related to all types of self-presentation positively. For further details, it was noted that only self-expression motive was the significant and positive predictor of all 3 types of self-presentation. This could be explained by the impression management theory. Individual would adopted self-presentation tactics to present themselves as the desired image that they wanted to be perceived by the others. Since the origin of the self-expression motive was to express and share things about oneself and the way that they present themselves would influence the impression perception of the others on them, therefore, impression management strategies were necessary to be employed as a technique to control individual’s self-image on Instagram. Therefore, among the 4 motives, only self-expression motive had a significant prediction effect on all 3 types of self-presentation. Surprisingly, the other 2 motives - information seeking and escape motive also found to have relationship towards the 3 types of self-presentation separately. Nevertheless, these were not the main focus of current study, further analysis might obtain in future study.

#### *Instagram usage, Self-presentation and Number of Followers on Instagram*

There were a positive relationship between Instagram usage and number of Followers on Instagram which meant the more frequently use of Instagram, the more Followers on Instagram. This result was consistent with the 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. Furthermore, among 3 types of self-presentation, Ingratiation was identified to be a positive predictor for the number of Followers on Instagram, meaning that the more the students present themselves as likeable and attractive on Instagram, they would have more Followers. Clearly, individuals tend to show a positive image than a negative image on SNSs. The explanation for this phenomenon was that the SNSs contained many interpersonal interaction in the context, it would be more social beneficial for individual to maintain a likeable impression in front of others (Cunningham, 2013). For example, in the case of Instagram, Ingratiation self-presentation would help individual yield more Followers, that meant more attentions, cares and supports could be received by the individual in terms of the number of Followers.

To be specific, according to the multiple regression result, by putting all major variables as independent variables and number of Followers as the dependent variable, only the bonding capital activities found to have significant positive effect on predicting the number of Followers and the Ingratiation self-presentation was marginally significant after excluding the motive variables. In fact, the bonding capital



activities contained majority of common activities appear on SNSs like 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 he/she to obtain attentions, listening ears and supports from the others. Gratifications would be generated from those attentions to the user and that meant the user could satisfy their social and psychological needs by using Instagram. Therefore, they tend to engage more in Instagram activities so as to gain more Followers and extract more gratifications. In other word, based on the Use and Gratifications theory, since people found that they can obtain gratification and fulfil their needs on Instagram, they would then have a higher frequency use on it.

To be clear, considering all significant results, the theoretical framework model would be modified as shown below:

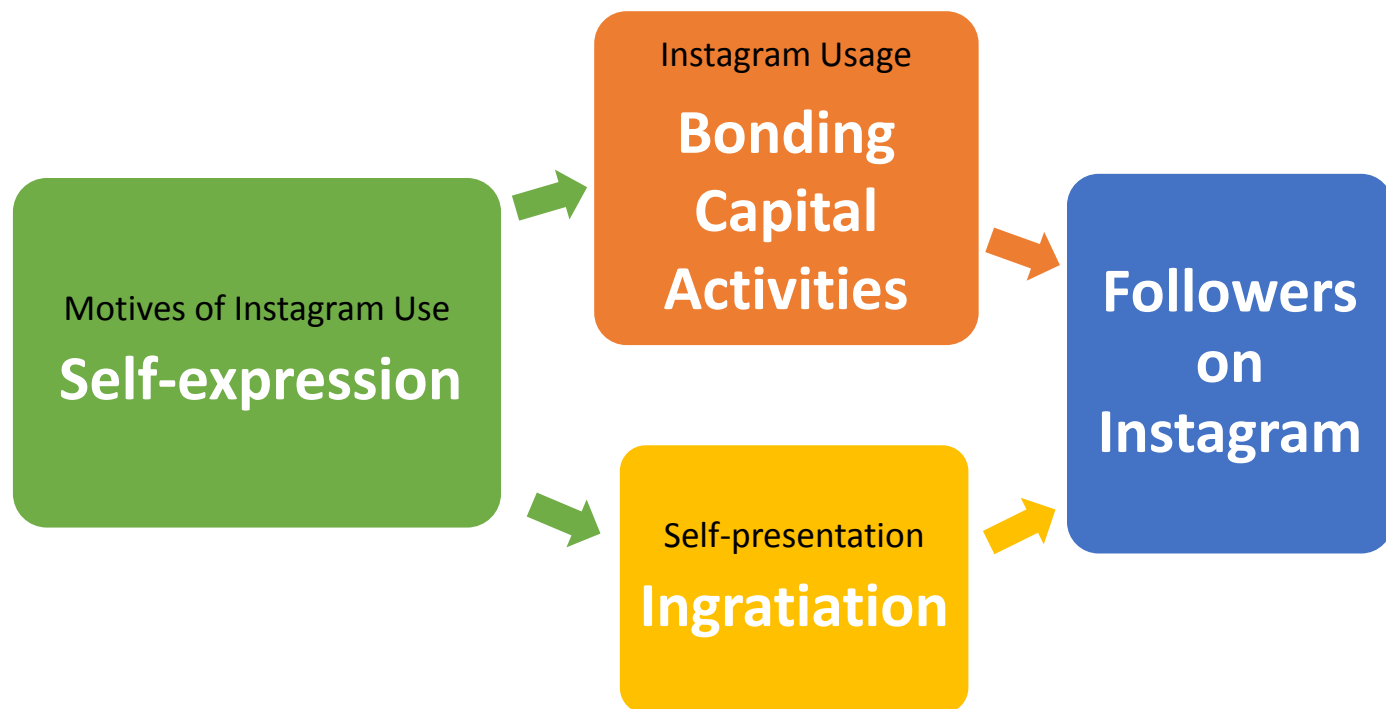


Figure 2. Modified Theoretical Framework Model

### Limitation

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

### Implication for Future research

A mixed approach that consisted of both quantitate and qualitative research method is recommended to be adopted in future study. A participant observation might employed to further examine the appearance of self-presentation among different users by capturing the features of the posts that the users had uploaded on Instagram.

Secondly, 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 into “private” on their accounts in order to control the Followers of their account in the way that rejecting or accepting follower requests from others. Under this situation, the number of Followers will be subject to the users’ preferences.

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

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, the relationship between 4 major variables – motives, usage, self-presentation and number of Followers on Instagram were examined in this study. It was found that motives of Instagram use were positively related to the Instagram usage and self-presentation as well as the number of Followers was also positively correlated with the Instagram usage and self-presentation. But, there was no direct causal relationship between motives and number of Followers on Instagram. Furthermore, Self-expression motive played an essential role on predicting the Instagram usage and self-presentation on Instagram, while the bonding capital activities and Ingratiation self-presentation were the predictors of the number of Followers, the causal relationships between variables as shown in the theoretical framework model were supported in this study.

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