Chapter 12
Motivations and Behaviors of Young People in Playing Online Games

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ABSTRACT

This article studies the motivations and behaviors of young people for playing online games. In this article, the authors used the quantitative methods research methodology to collect young people' game intention information. A survey was conducted to collect responses related to game behavior questions were completed by 82 college students. The discovery was that to a certain extent, personality traits can predict game behaviors. Individual factor, game feature factor, and social factor can affect players' game motivations. The results of this study are not only offering perspective into players' game motivations and behaviors from a different culture but also providing a good reference for game developers to design their future online game systems and services.

INTRODUCTION

The online game market has been expanding rapidly and the online game industry chain is gradually formed. Based on the statistics provided by Entertainment Software Association (ESA, 2015), the most frequent online game players as of 2014 are playing games online for 6.5 hours per week and 29% of them are paying players. This suggests that the online game market is full of potential for generating revenue. As a result, game developers worldwide have entered the era of an online game (Hsu & Lu, 2004). Cheung, Shen, Lee, and Chan (2015) predicted that the number of global players would rise

to 1.55 billion and the global game market would grow to US$86.1 billion. Meanwhile, Yoon, Duff, and Ryu (2013) predicted that the Asia-Pacific region would become the largest game market, and the proportion will continue to grow. As a whole, online games have become an essential entertainment of young people's daily life.

However, playing online game has its own characteristic. It is unlike buying tickets online for movie watching or CD for music listening. Games not only combine a lot of movies and music elements, but also include many user control functions that other entertainment media do not have (Yoon *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, it is necessary for both academia and practitioners to gain a better understanding of gamers' motivations and behaviors of playing games, as well as their preference and engagement in playing games.

Further, the rapid growth of online game development companies in the past few years, and the anticipation of more companies joining the market have brought tremendous competition to both game developers and vendors. This makes them be aware of the importance of exploring the factors to encourage users to actively participate in online games. Obviously, one of the factors which can encourage users to engage with the online games is the better gaming experience (Cheung et al., 2015).

With recent advancement and popularity of mobile technologies in recent years, many online game enterprises started to cooperate with the mobile platform suppliers to launch cross-platform game products. Mobile extension of online games enables players to spend more time with online games due to anytime, anywhere availability of the mobility provided by their mobile devices. Extension of customer participation would further stimulate the online game industry's growth.

As such, in the eyes of stakeholders of the Asia Pacific gaming industry, Hong Kong is a market that they are targeting for. This is because Hong Kong has a very high user adoption rate (79.9% as of 2014) of Internet service, and of which in 2014, 84.2% and 94.7% of these Internet users were connected online through a personal computer and mobile device, respectively (C&SD, 2014). In fact, the penetration rate of the mobile phone in Hong Kong is more than 200%, with more than 17 million registered SIM cards activated in this 7 million metropolis (OFTA, 2017). Amongst this group of users, young people are the highest adoption of Internet service (99.6%), and thus they are the ultimate target for the gaming industry.

In this research, we investigated into factors affecting young people in Hong Kong to tap into online games. In particular, we are interested in a particular research question: what factors are influencing and motivating young adults' online game behavior in Hong Kong. We probe into this research question with the help of a quantitative survey.

This paper is presented as follows. After this introduction, we develop our research model based on our literature review. Next, we present our data analysis. We then present our discussion before we conclude our paper with our future research directions.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Factors Affecting Young Online Gamers' Behavior: Personality Factors

Depending on the orientation and personality, a character reflects the continuous-time behavior of individual psychology, such as thoughts, feelings, and actions, which affects a person's choice of online games (Fang & Zhu, 2011). In general, online game players are extraversion people, who are more open

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