Hong Kong Gamer Study Report 2011[1]

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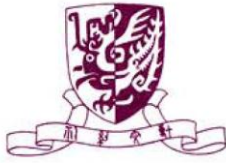
Supported by Hong Kong Game Industry Association and Hong Kong Cybercafé Industry Association

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1 Research Background

As the technology industry emerges, the economic value that Internet and online game bring to the regional and national development is increasingly important. And yet there are also enormous social impacts that the game industry creates. On the one hand, online game becomes a rising cultural phenomenon. On the other hand, there is a predominant concern about the negative impacts of online games on gamers. How to balance industry development and minimizing negative effects has been a key question among industry leaders and policy makers.

Cybercafé gamers are the main targets of this research. The research seeks to explore these gamers' experience in online game and Internet use, along with the impacts that the new media pose on them. The significance of the study lies in outlining the dynamics among Internet, online games and gamers and to as a reference for the government in policy making. The report consists of four parts, including the general situation of online gamers, online game preference of cybercafé gamer, general perception of online game among cybercafé gamers and online gamer's Internet experiences.

This research is part of project "Hong Kong Game Industry: Cultural Policy, Creativity and Asian Market", which is commissioned by Research Grants Council (RGC). The survey is organized by the School of Journalism and Communication, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and the data is collected by the Center for Communication Research (CUCCR). CUCCR was founded in 2004, as part of the School of Journalism and Communication. Since the School of Journalism and Communication was established in 1965, the creative industry has long been the focus of teaching and research. Undergraduate students can not only specialize in news, advertising and public relations, but also choose creative and new media as electives. Meanwhile, the school also offers master course in new media, providing professional training in new media and creative industry.

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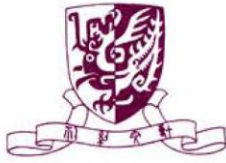
2 Research Method

Data of the Hong Kong Cybercafé Gamer Research is mainly from survey. In July 2011, our researchers collaborate with CUCCR and interview gamers by random sampling. Eight Msystem.com.hk and i-One's cyber cafes across Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Territories are chosen as the research site[2]. We conduct interview in three different timeslots, from after school to after work and mid-night. We adjust the number of samples in accordance with the traffic estimated by the staff of the cybercafé and we have interviewed 320 gamers in total.

Table 1 Location and Sample of the Hong Kong Cybercafé Gamer Research

		Causeway bay (i-One)	Wan Chai (i-One)	Mong Kok (i-One)	Kwun Tong (i-One)	Tsuen Wan (i-One)	Tuen Mun (Msystem)	Wong Tai Sin (Msystem)	Tseung Kwan O (Msystem)
After School (45.6% of all samples)	N=146	15	20	16	18	20	19	19	19
After Work (26.9% of all samples)	N=86	15	10	11	10	10	10	10	10
Mid-night (27.5% of all samples)	N=88	10	10	13	12	10	11	11	11
Total No. of Sample	320	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40

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To ensure the interview aligns with the standard procedure, all interviewers have been well trained with the interview skills. In addition, our researchers and the research center randomly supervise the interview procedure. To identify the right interviewees, interviewers will only interview those gamers who have joined the overnight scheme. If the gamers accept the interview invitation, the researchers will accompany the interviewees to finish an online survey. To ensure the quality of the interview and the accuracy of the statistics, the interviewers will read out reach question and type in interviewees' responses.

To avoid any bias caused by the deviation among the distribution of gender and age, the statistics collected in the survey has been weighted. Further analysis on the five variables, namely gender, age, education, monthly income and occupation have been introduced, and that aims to provide more in-depth analysis on online gamer's gaming pattern and experiences of Internet use.

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[2] We first consult the two main chains of cybercafes to identify those major cybercafes in terms of their traffic and number of visitors. To select a particular branch of cybercafe as our research site, we take the size/scale of the cybercafe into consideration. We also make sure that each district of Hong Kong, from Hong Kong Island to Kolwoon and the New Territories are well-represented.

3 General Situation of Cybercafé Gamer

3.1 Popularity of Online Game and Cybercafé

Figure 1 Gamers' Frequency of Online Gaming

- Often 43%
- Sometimes 45%
- Rare 12%
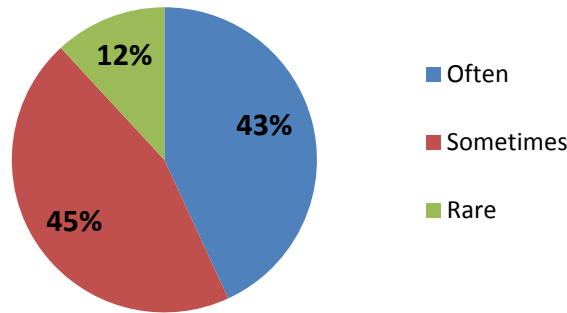
Overall speaking, online game remains very popular among cybercafé gamers in Hong Kong. We interview cybercafé gamers for their own perception of their frequency of online gaming. 43% respondents reported that they often play online game while 45% stated that they only play online game sometimes. Only 12% expressed that they rarely play online game. Meanwhile, gamers' average gaming experiences remain 4.9 and their average time on online gaming is 218.59 minutes per day, which occupies 82.87% of their time on Internet everyday. The average frequency of visiting cybercafé or game center among our respondents is 2.36 per week and they spend on average 236.14 minutes per visit.

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表 **2** 網絡遊戲普及狀況及平均時間

Variable	Category	Average Years of Gaming Experiences	Frequency of Online Gaming Per Week (Measured in Term of Day)	Average Time Spent on Online Game Per Day (Measured in Term of Minute)	Average Time Spent on Internet Per Week (Measured in Term of Minute)	Average Frequency of Visiting Cybercafe and Game Center Per Week (Measured in Term of Day)	Average Time Staying in Cybercafe and Game Center Per Visit (Measured in Term of Minute)
Gender	Male	5.0	4.4	219.6	258.7	3.5	233.5
	Female	4.2	4.8	201.1	347.8	3.7	280.0
Age	11~20	4.3	4.4	197.3	224.4	3.4	202.2
	21~30	7.5	4.5	240.7	341.6	3.3	261.5
	31~40	5.8	3.5	290.7	397.1	3.9	408.6
Education	Form 3 or Below	4.0	4.7	191.1	171.0	3.4	166.3
	Form 4 to Advanced Level	5.0	4.1	224.6	304.4	3.4	260.6
	Tertiary Education or Above	7.6	4.0	176.5	349.1	3.0	222.4
Family	$14999 or	4.5	5.1	264.3	310.7	3.8	282.2

Monthly Income	Below						
	$15000~$29999	5.3	4.3	205.1	243.8	3.5	243.1
	$30000 or Above	5.4	3.8	176.3	262.0	3.5	195.8
Occupation	Professional	6.3	4.3	282.1	435.4	3.6	323.4
	White collar worker	5.8	4.6	200.2	295.9	4.0	382.9
	Blue collar worker	7.0	3.5	330.0	233.3	1.8	430.0
	Student	4.4	4.3	185.6	207.6	3.4	178.0
	Unemployed	6.4	6.0	314.4	358.9	5.0	341.3
Total	**Average**	**4.9**	**4.3**	**218.6**	**263.8**	**2.4**	**236.1**

To compare the various groups listed above, male and female does not differ much from each other. Respondents with tertiary education or above have the longest years of online gaming experiences with 7.6 years on average. Unemployed respondents spend the longest time on visiting cybercafé and game center per week. Blue-collar workers spend the longest time in cybercafé and game center per visit. Respondents whose family with less than HK$ $ 14,999 monthly income spend the most time on Internet and online game on a daily basis.

In addition, there are 72.5% of respondents whose family members are not into online game and 77.5% of respondents visit cybercafé with friends.

3.2 Preference of Cybercafé

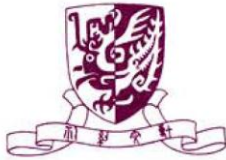**Figure 2 Gamer's Reason of Choosing Cybercafe**
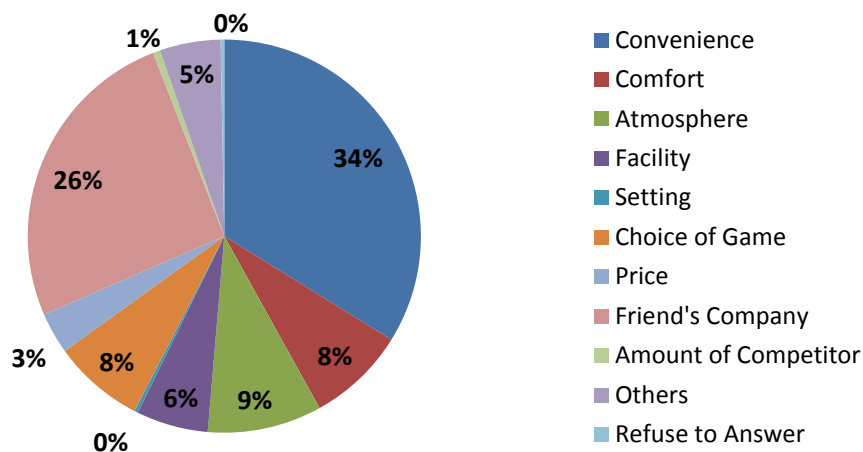
According to the statistics, the primary reason for choosing a particular cybercafé lies in its convenience (33.8%), followed by peer influence (25.6%). Other factors include atmosphere, comfort, choice of games and facilities.

3.3 Consumption Pattern on Cybercafé and Online Game

**Table 3   Consumption on Cybercafé and Online Game**

Variable	Category	Average Monthly Consumption on Cybercafé and Online	Frequency of Purchasing Game Card Per Month	(For consumer of game card) Average

		Game (Measured in Term of HKD)		Consumption Per Month (Measured in Term of HKD)
Gender	Male	211.0	4.1	214.1
	Female	201.4	8.2	140.0
Age	11~20	145.9	4.7	176.1
	21~30	316.2	2.3	207.4
	31~40	520.7	2.8	609.7
Education	Form 3 or Below	113.7	3.7	652.8
	Form 4 to Advanced Level	224.3	5.1	266.3
	Tertiary Education or Above	202.7	3.3	131.7
Family Monthly Income	$14999 or Below	209.3	2.8	245.0
	$15000~$29999	214.8	4.4	205.9
	$30000 or Above	135.8	2.9	88.7
Occupation	Professional	500.3	2.5	465.7
	White collar worker	262.1	2.7	227.7
	Blue collar worker	363.3	2.7	275.0
	Student	133.8	4.8	163.5
	Unemployed	192.9	4.1	62.3
Total	**Average**	**210.5**	**3.5**	**211.3**

The monthly expense on cybercafé and game center among the respondents is HKD 210.51 on average. They buy game card roughly every 3.5 months and spend HKD 211.33 on it monthly. The consumption pattern differs among various groups. For instance, the age group between 31 and 41 spends the most money on cybercafé and game center monthly and the amount reaches HK$ 520.7. The frequency of buying game card remains the highest among female correspondents. Monthly income with less than HK$ 14,999 spend the most money on game card compared with other groups. Compared with other occupation groups, professionals spend more money on game cards, and such phenomenon is far different from public perception.
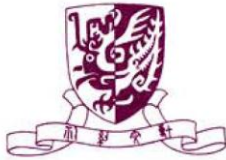
Figure 3 Location of Buying Game Card
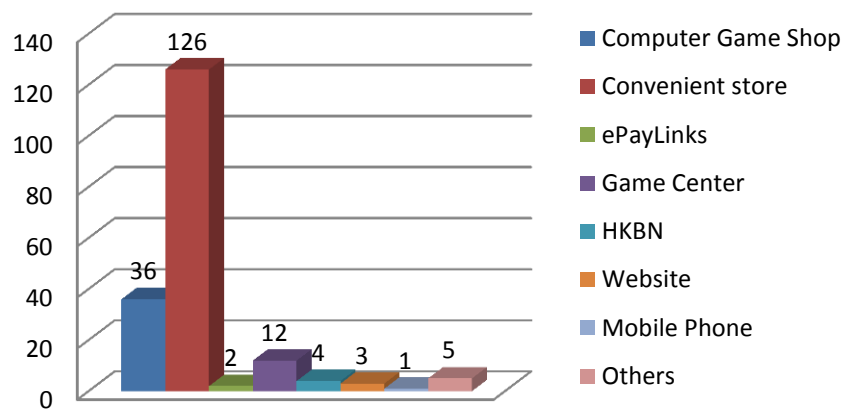
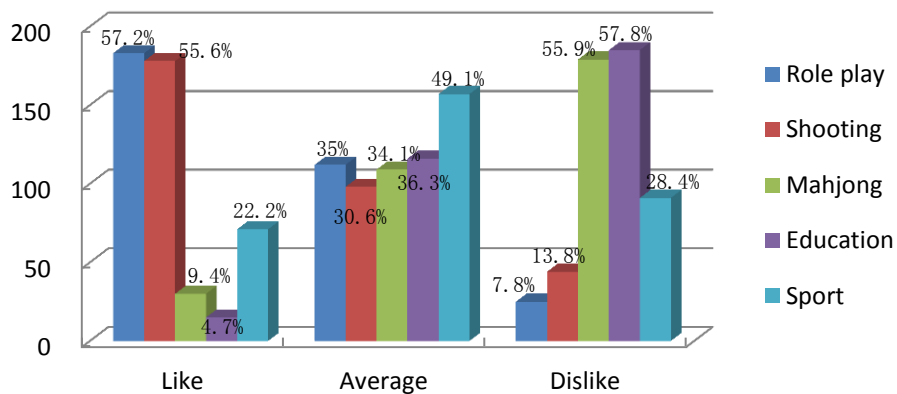* As respondents could choose more than one answer, the total percent could exceed 100%.

To compare the existing sale channels of game card, convenient store remains the most common one with 82% respondents and computer game shop comes to the second with 22.4%.

4 Online Game Preference of Cybercafé Gamer

4.1 Preference on Online Game Genre

Figure 4 Cybercafe Gamers' Preference on Game Genres

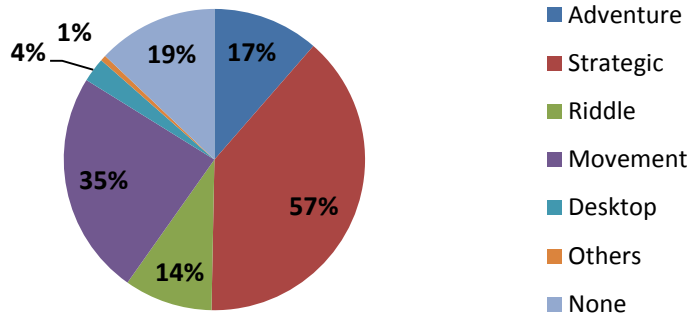* As respondents could choose more than one answer, the total percent could exceed 100%.

According to the statistics, more than a half of respondents prefer role-play and shooting among different genres of online game to other genres. Meanwhile, more than a half do not prefer mahjong and educational game. The popularity among the genres in order remains role-play, shooting, sport, mahjong and educational game.

As for the differences among various groups, female enjoy role-play and mahjong game more compared with male but the gap between two groups is small. The age group between 11 and 20 likes shooting most. While respondents from the service sector prefer more role-play, students tend to like the sport type of online game.

In addition to the online game genres mentioned above, other popular genres in order are strategic games, movement, adventure, riddle and desktop games. There are 57% respondents like strategic games and 35% respondents enjoy movement games.

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Figure 5   Other Popular Online Game Genres

* As respondents could choose more than one answer, the total percent could exceed 100%.

4.2 Gaming Experiences of Massive Multiplayer Online Game and Social Web Game

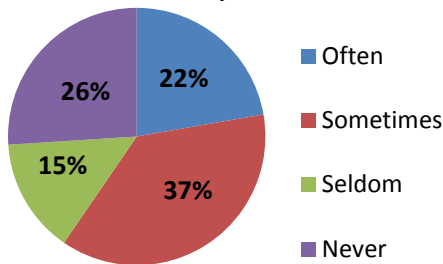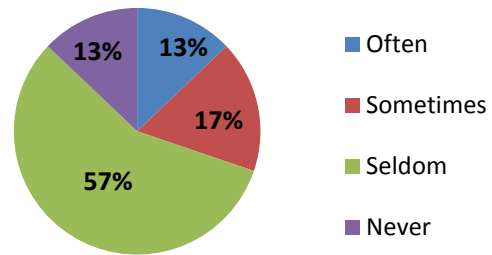**Figure 6 Massive Multiplayer Online Game Experences**

Figure 7 Social Web Game Experiences

Overall speaking, 26% respondents have never played massive multiplayer online game and 13% have never tried social web game. 57% respondents rarely play social web game and 14% seldom play massive multiplayer online game. In other words, the popularity of social web game is higher than massive multiplayer online game but gamers of massive multiplayer online game play more frequently than social web game players.

Figure 8 Participating in Massive Online Games with Net Friends and Strangers
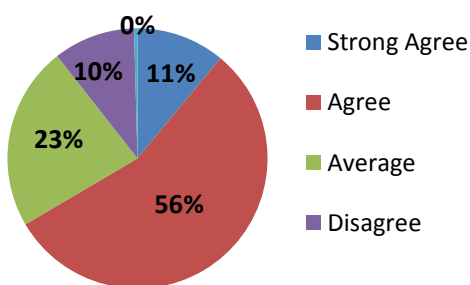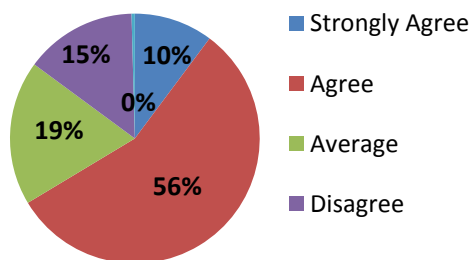

Figure 9 Interacting with Others in Massive Online Games is to Accomplish the Game Tasks


Among gamers of massive multiplayer online game, most of them agree that they join the online game with net friends or strangers and that the communication with other gamers is to

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accomplish a particular task assigned in the game. massive multiplayer online game players have 60 friends on their list on average.
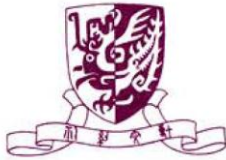
4.3 Popularity of Other Games

Figure 7 Popularity of Other Games
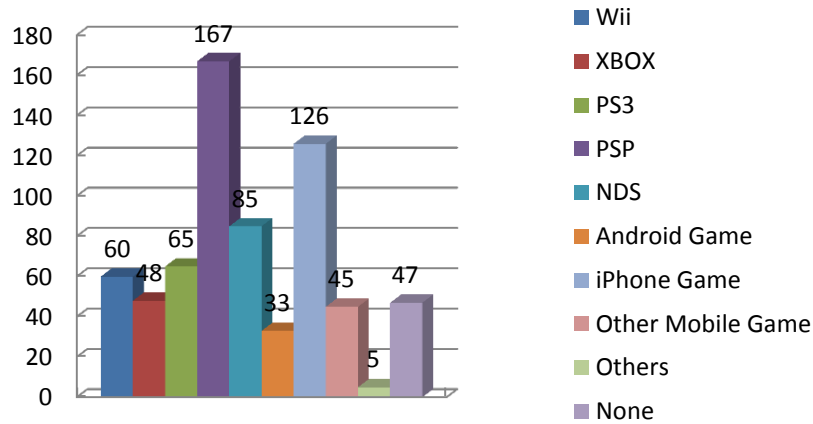
In addition to online games, mobile game players (including Android and iPhone) remain the majority and the number of iPhone game players is the highest.

More male than female have experiences in PSP game but more female than male play mobile games. There are 25.9% respondents whose monthly income is less than HKD 14999 have no experiences in other games. This income group remains the highest compared with other groups. Among different mobile games, iPhone games are the most preferred one.

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5 General Perception of Online Game among Cybercafé Gamers

5.1 General Perception

Figure 8 Gamer's Level of Favourite on Online Game

- Strongly Like
- Like
- Average
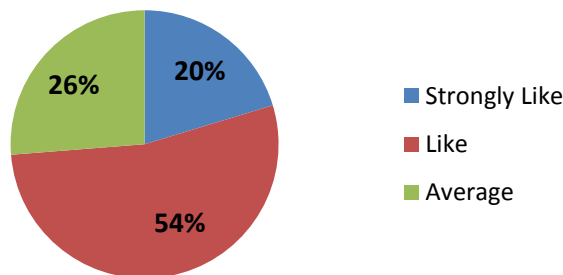
74% respondents in cybercafé like online game. The frequency of choosing "I like online game strongly" is the highest among respondents with education level of form 3 or below. In the meantime, respondents with less than HKD 14,999 monthly income enjoy more online games than the other groups.

The general perception of online games will be measured in term of level of addiction, time management, human relationship, physical and psychological well-being as well as academic and work performance.

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5.2 Impacts on Time Management

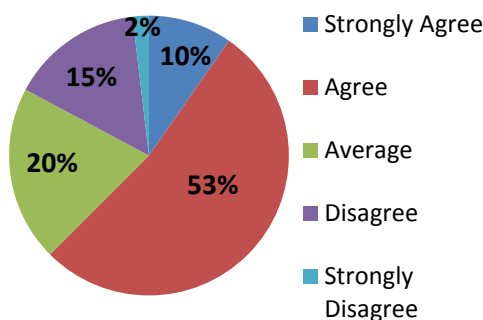Figure 9 Whether to Agree "Online Game Influence Time Management

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Figure 10 Whether to Agree "Online Game Influence Time with Family

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
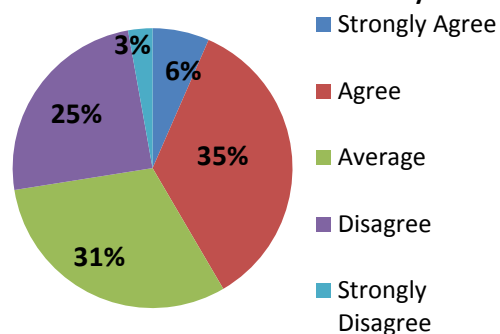- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Figure 9 and 10 reflect whether gamers perceive any impacts of online games on time management and time with family. More than half of the respondents agree with the two descriptions.

5.3 Impacts on Human Relationship

Cybercafé gamers generally do not regard the impacts of online game on human relationship negative. Only less than 30% respondents think that online games negatively influence the bonding among family members. Roughly 80% respondents think that online games do not have any harm on important human relationship. When being asked about whether online games result in unwillingness to face-to-face communication and dislike of making friends in reality, 82% and 90% express their disagreement respectively.

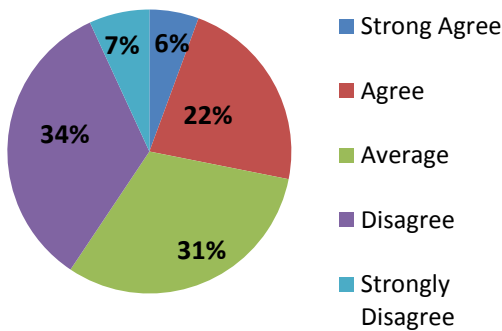**Figure 11 Whether to Agree "Online Game Influence Family Bonding"**

Strong Agree 6% · Agree 22% · Average 31% · Disagree 34% · Strongly Disagree 7%

Figure 12 Whether to Agree "Online Game Once Did Harm to Your Relationship with Others

Strong Agree 4% · Agree 11% · Average 16% · Disagree 49% · Strongly Disagree 20%
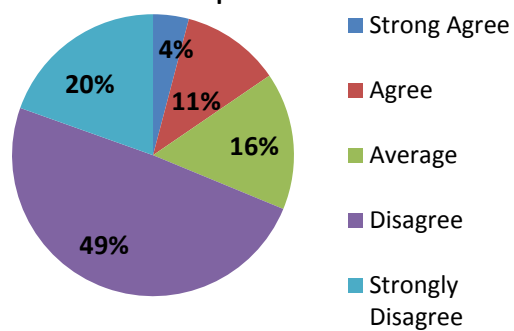
Figure 13 Whether to Agree "Online Game Makes You Less Willing To Communicate with Other People"

Strong Agree 1% · Agree 5% · Average 11% · Disagree 59% · Strongly Disagree 24%
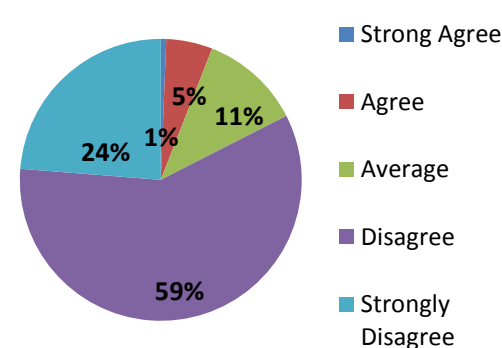
Figure 14 Whether to Agree "Online Game Makes You Less Willing to Make Friends in Real Life"

Strong Agree 0% · Agree 3% · Average 7% · Disagree 59% · Strongly Disagree 31%

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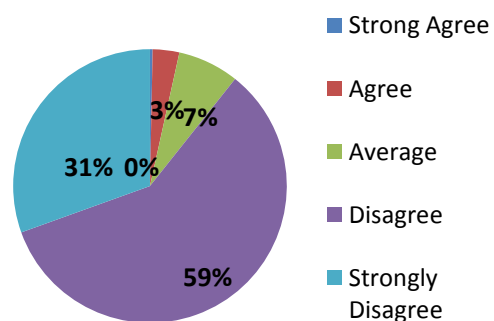
There are several differences among various groups. First, more than 90% respondents aged between 31 and 40 disagree that "online games once damage your relationship with other people". The percentage is 57% higher than the group aged between 11 and 20 and 33% higher than the group aged between 21 and 30. Secondly, more male than female disagree that online games influence their social life. Third, the higher the educational level the respondents have, the more the disagreement with the negative impacts of online games on human relationship. Last, the proportion of agreeing on the impacts of online games on family bonding remains the highest among unemployed respondents and the percentage reaches 66.6%.

5.4 Impacts on Physical and Psychological Well-being

As figure 15 suggests, 58% respondents agree or strongly agree that online games influence health. The proportion of male, aged between 31 and 40, with form 3 to advanced level education and white collar remains the highest. The group aged between 21 and 30, with tertiary education and blue-collar workers tend to disagree.
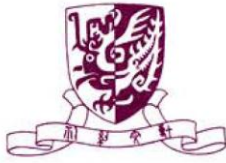
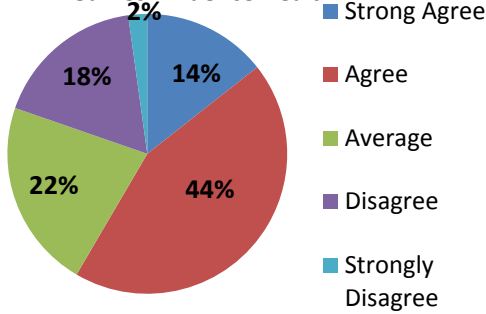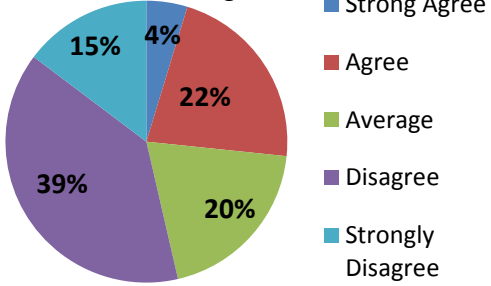**Figure 15 Whether to Agree "Online Games Influence Health"**

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2%
18%
14%
22%
44%

Figure 16 Whether to Agree "You Once Used Online Games to Escape from Problem and Negative Emotions"

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15%
4%
22%
39%
20%

Whether to take online games as a way to escape from obstacle and negative emotions, there are roughly 30% respondents who had such experiences. The experiences are reported more frequently among female, blue-collar worker, respondents whose monthly income in between HKD 15000 and 29999 as well as whose education background as form 3 or below.

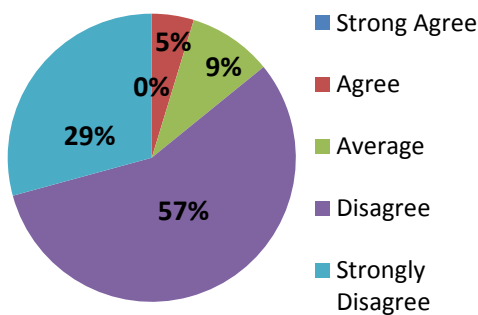**Figure 17 Whether to Agree "Online Games Make You Less Willing to Talk"**

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5%
9%
0%
29%
57%

Figure 18 Whether to Agree "Online Gaming is Your Way to Handle Emotions"

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
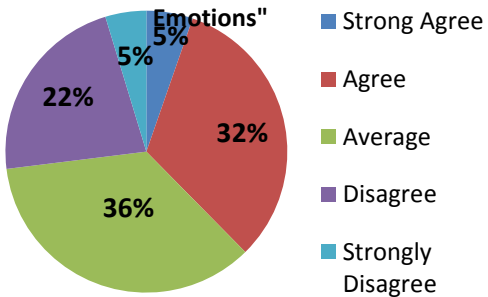
5%
5%
22%
32%
36%

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Figure 17 shows that almost 90% respondents disagree or strongly disagree that online games turn someone to less willing to talk. Among the respondents who agree with the situation, most of them are aged between 31 and 40, whose monthly income as HKD 14999 or below, blue-collar workers and whose education background as form three or below.

Approximately 40% respondents think that online games may influence one's emotions. To compare the perception among various groups, there are 10% more unemployed respondents agree than employed. Female tend to agree on "online games as a good solution to change one's emotions" than male.

5.5 Impacts on Work and Academic Performance

Figure 18 and 19 reveal the respondents' perception and experiences of online games. More than a half of respondents perceive that "online games influence academic and work performance". And yet only 15% respondents have such experiences.
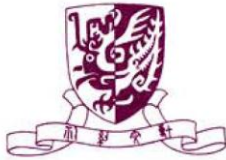
Figure 18 Whether to Agree "Online Games Influence Academic and Work Performance"
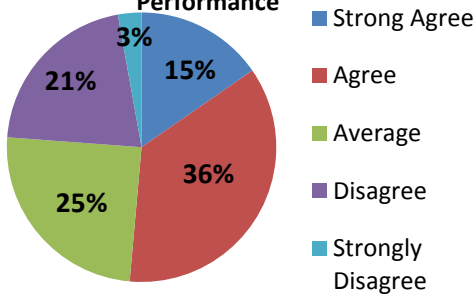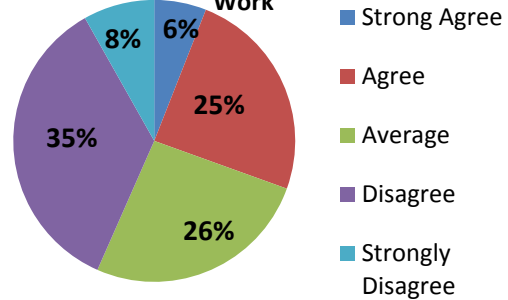
- Strong Agree — 15%
- Agree — 36%
- Average — 25%
- Disagree — 21%
- Strongly Disagree — 3%

Figure 19 Whether to Agree "Online Games Do Harms on your Study or Work"

- Strong Agree — 6%
- Agree — 25%
- Average — 26%
- Disagree — 35%
- Strongly Disagree — 8%

In term of the differences among various groups, firstly more female than male agree on "online games influence academic and work performance". Secondly, younger respondents or respondents with low monthly family income tend to be in the same line of thinking that online games influence work and academic performance but they also tend to disagree on the harms of the online games. Thirdly, blue collar workers tend to disagree more on the negative impacts that online games on academic and work performance. Lastly, respondents with higher education background tend to disagree on the statement "online games once did harms on work, academic or career".

5.6 Addition to Online Game

Level of addiction is an underlying cause of the four dimensions mentioned above. Level of addiction could be analyzed in term of gamer's psychological state, attempt to reduce online gaming and intervention from other people.

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Figure 20 to Figure 25 contrast the psychological state among gamers.

Figure 20 Whether to Agree "Long Hours Online Gaming Make One Constantly in the State of Ecstasy"
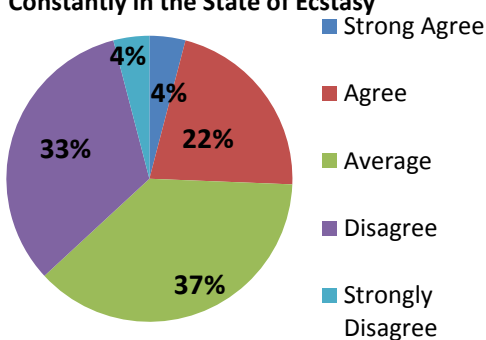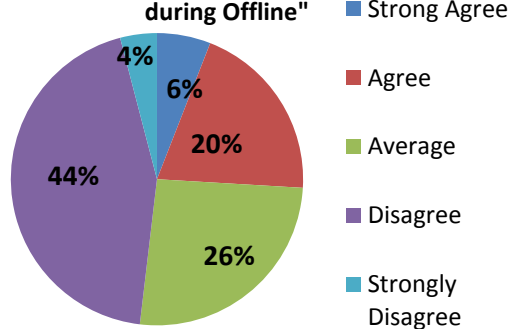
- Strong Agree — 4%
- Agree — 22%
- Average — 37%
- Disagree — 33%
- Strongly Disagree — 4%

Figure 21 Whether to Agree "Keep Thinking about Online Games Even during Offline"

- Strong Agree — 6%
- Agree — 20%
- Average — 26%
- Disagree — 44%
- Strongly Disagree — 4%

Only 25% respondents agree on "long hours online gaming make one constantly in the state of ecstasy" and "keep thinking about online games even during offline".

Comparing among different groups, more female tend to agree on the association between long hours online gaming and the state of ecstasy than male. Second, the group aged between 11 and 20 agree on the two situations 7% and 8% more than other age groups. Third, respondents with higher education level and family monthly income tend to disagree with the two statements. Last but not least, more blue-collar workers than other occupations tend to disagree on the association

between long hours online gaming and the state of ecstasy and unemployed respondents tend to agree more on the two statements than other occupations.

Figure 23 Whether to Agree "the Feelings of Online Gaming are like Being in the Other World"
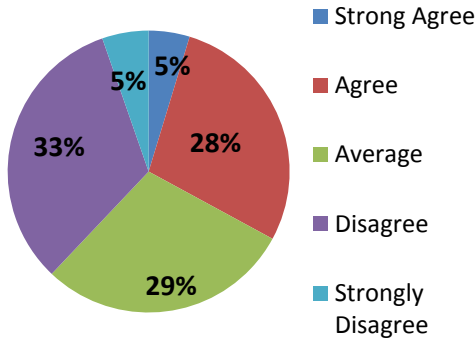

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Figure 24 Whether to Agree "Over Dedicated Online Gaming Makes One Forget Self"

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Figure 25 Whether to Agree "Online Gaming Makes One Detached from the Reality "

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

40% respondents disagree on "the feelings of online gaming are like being in the other world" and more than a half respondents disapprove of the two statements that "over dedicated online gaming makes one forget self" and "online gaming makes one detached from the reality".

By comparison, more females than males tend to agree on the three statements and their addiction to online games are higher than males. Secondly, more students than other occupations tend to disagree on the three statements but white-collar workers tend to agree on "the feelings of online gaming are like being in the other world". Third, younger the respondents are tend to disagree on "the feelings of online gaming are like being in the other world" but agree on "over dedicated online gaming makes one forget self".

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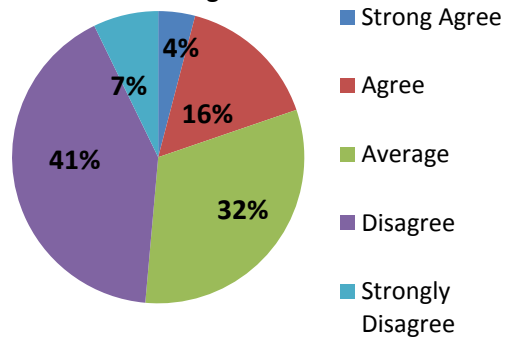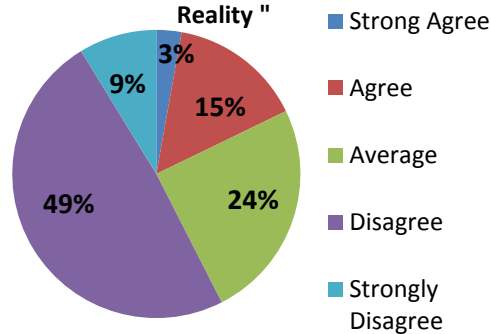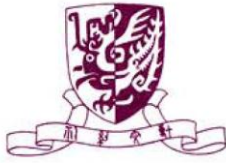**Figure 27 Whether to Agree "Your Once Tried But Failed to Quit or Reduce the Frequency of Online Gaming"**

Strong Agree — 3%
Agree — 17%
Average — 25%
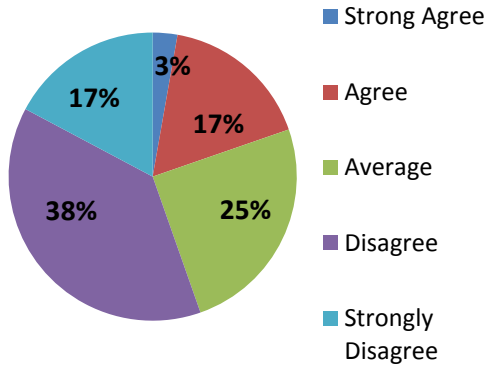Disagree — 38%
Strongly Disagree — 17%

Figure 26 Whether to Agree "Your Attempts to Quit or Reduce the Frequency of Online Gaming Resulted in Negative Emotions"

Strong Agree — 4%
Agree — 11%
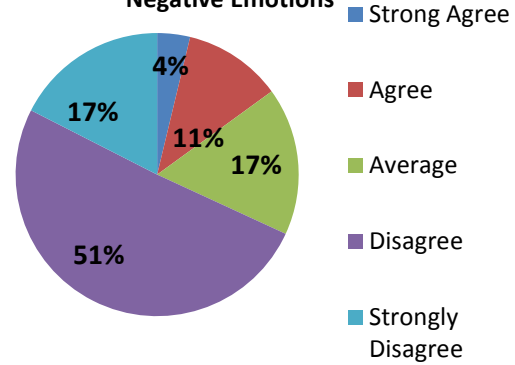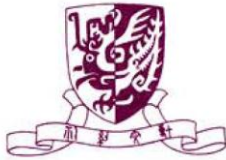Average — 17%
Disagree — 51%
Strongly Disagree — 17%

Figure 26 and 27 reveal the experiences and impacts of online gamers' attempt to reduce their frequency of online gaming. More than a half respondents state that they never fail to reduce their frequency of online gaming after several attempts and no negative emotions have been caused. Younger respondents or respondents with lower education background and lower monthly family income tend to agree on the two statements. More females agree on their experiences of failure after several attempts to reduce their time of online gaming than males, and yet more males agree on the negative emotions caused by reducing or stopping their online gaming than females.

Figure 28 Whether to Agree "Your Once Hided Your Time Spent on Online Gaming from Your Friends and Family"

Strong Agree — 3%
Agree — 18%
Average — 13%
Disagree — 49%
Strongly Disagree — 17%

17
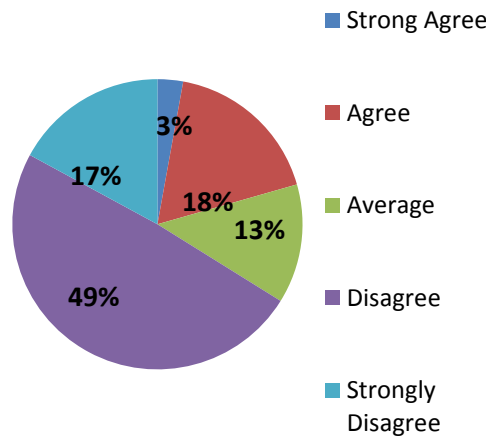
When being asked about whether to hide the time spent on online games, 60% respondents disagree or strongly disagree on the statement. Among the respondents who agree on the statement, they are mainly female, aged between 21 and 30, students or respondents with form 3 or below education background and less than HKD 14999 monthly family income.

6 Online Gamer's Internet Experiences

6.1 Internet Service Provider (ISP)

Figure 29 Family'Internet Service Provider
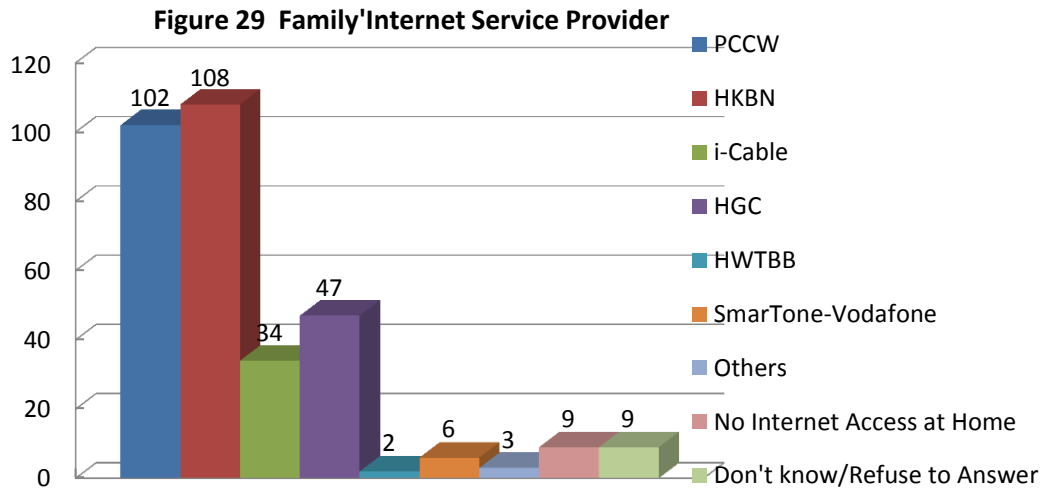
The most popular Internet service providers among online game players in order are Hong Kong Broadband Network (HKBN), PCCW, HGC and i-CABLE. Respondents with higher monthly family income tend to choose PCCW and respondents with lower monthly family income tend to choose HKBN. It is worth mentioning that 2.8% of the respondents (9 out of 320) do not have Internet access at home.

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Figure 30 Major Reasons of Choosing the Current Interet Service Provider
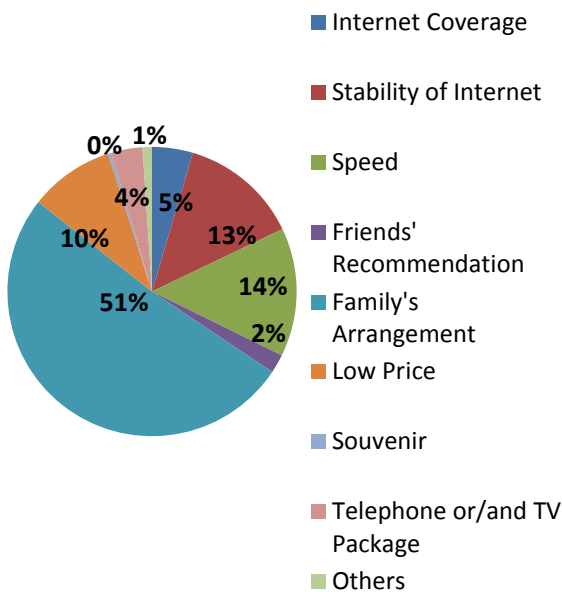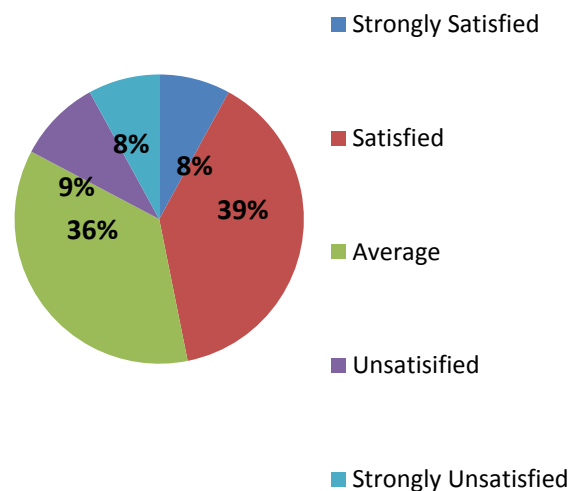

Figure 31 Level of Satisfaction of The Internet at Home

According to the survey, most respondents point out that they do have not much control over the choice of Internet service provider and the one chosen is mainly the decision from their family members. Still, speed, stability and pricing are reported to be the main factors of consideration.

6.2 Use of Social Networking Site

Figure 32 to 36 reflect the experiences and perception of social networking site among the respondents.

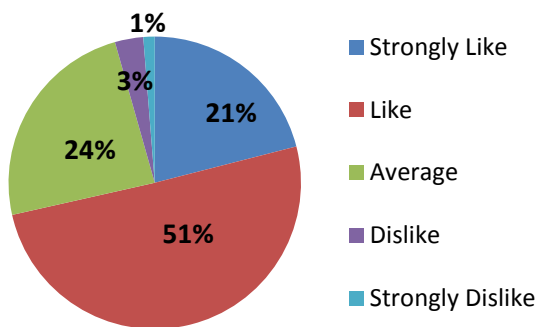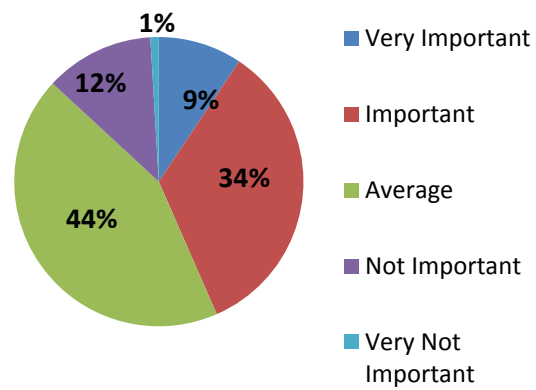Figure 32 Whether to Like Social Networking Sites

- Strongly Like — 21%
- Like — 51%
- Average — 24%
- Dislike — 3%
- Strongly Dislike — 1%

Figure 33 Level of Importance of Social Networking Sites

- Very Important — 9%
- Important — 34%
- Average — 44%
- Not Important — 12%
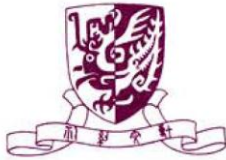- Very Not Important — 1%

There are more than 70% respondents like and strongly like social networking site compared with only 13% respondents consider social networking site not important. As for the differences among various groups, respondents aged between 31 and 40 have the highest proportion of the 13% who do not like social networking site. In contrast, students like social networking site most. There are 20% more females who regard social networking site important than males. Respondents with higher monthly family income tend to share the idea that social networking site is not important.

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Figure 34 Frequency of Visiting or Updating Social Networking Sites

- Often — 46%
- Sometimes — 38%
- Seldom — 12%
- Never — 4%
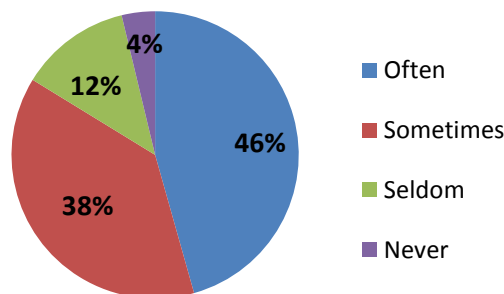
Nearly half of the respondents often visit and update their social networking profiles. Respondents who are female, with higher education background and with higher family monthly income tend to visit or update their social networking profiles more frequently than other groups. Respondents aged between 31 and 40, unemployed and with form 3 or below education level are the most common group with no experiences of visiting or updating social networking profiles.

Regarding the average number of friends on the social networking sites, there are 319 friends on average.

Figure 35 Whether to Agree "the primary purpose of using social networking site is to keep in touch with friends in their existing social circles"
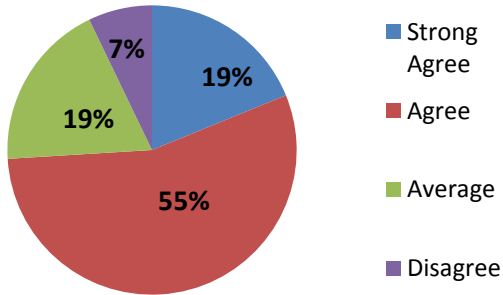
- Strong Agree — 19%
- Agree — 55%
- Average — 19%
- Disagree — 7%

Figure 36 Whether to Agree "the Purpose of Sharing on Social Networking Sites is to Maintain Bounding with Your Social Circles"

- Strong Agree — 14%
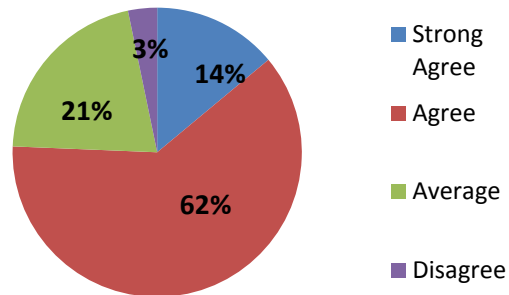- Agree — 62%
- Average — 21%
- Disagree — 3%

Figure 35 and 36 compare the perception of the human relationship on social networking site among gamers. More than 75% respondents agree on the primary purpose of using social networking site is to keep in touch with friends in their existing social circles. Respondents with higher education level and family monthly income tend to agree on the two statements. In other words, social networking site is considered as an extension of social web in real life.
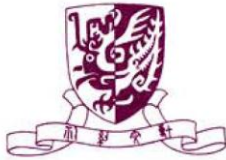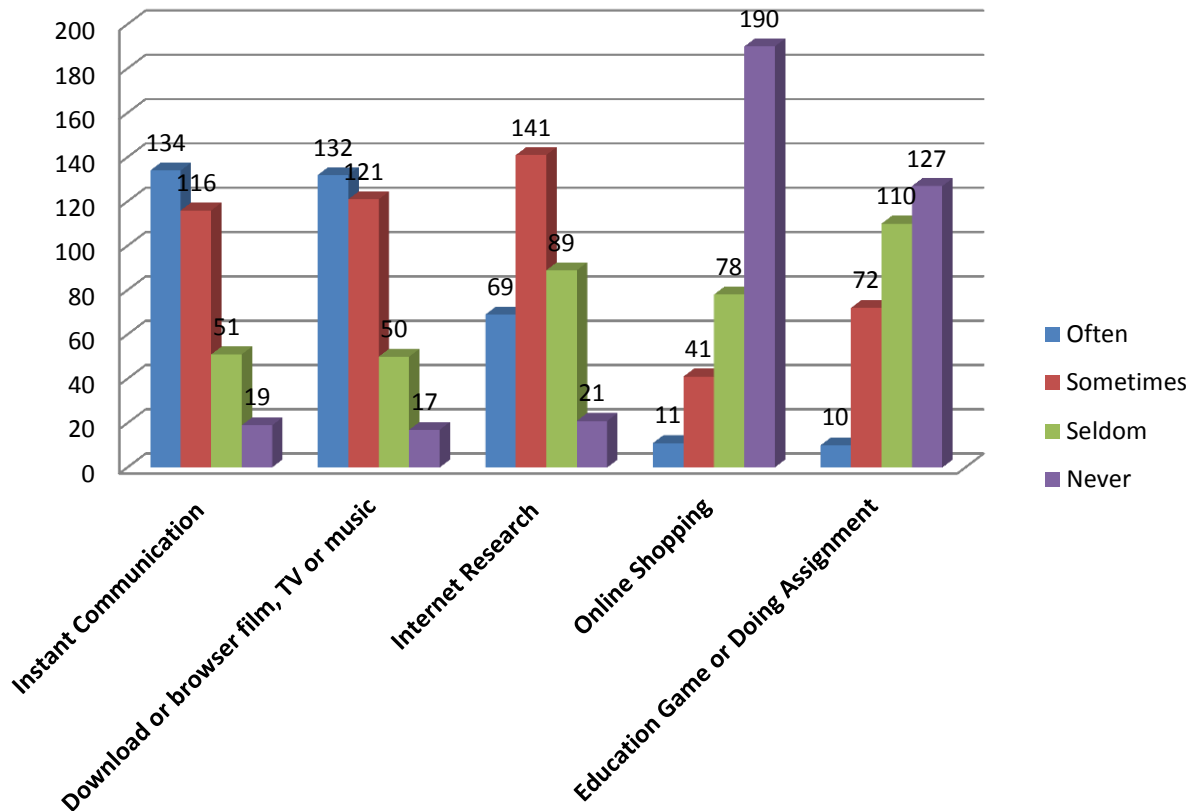
6.3 Use of Internet

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Figure 37 Cybercafe Gamers' Frequency of Different Uses of Internet

Regarding the use of Internet, the most common purposes among cybercafé and game center gamers in order are instant communication, watching video, downloading music and Internet research. The least common purposes are online shopping, participating in educational games or doing homework.

As for the intergroup differences, the group aged between 31 and 40 tend to use less Internet than other age groups other than for the purpose of Internet research. Secondly, there are 20% more female who often use Internet for video and music download and 14% more female who often do online shopping than male. Lastly, respondents with higher monthly family income tend to use Internet more often for instant communication, Internet research and online shopping but less for video and music download compared with other groups.

6.4 Perception of Internet

Respondents' perception on Internet could be discussed in term of time allocation, interpersonal communication, physical and psychological well-being and addiction to Internet.

Figure 38 to 40 compare how respondents' time allocation is influenced by the use of Internet.

Figure 38 Whether to Agree "You Find Difficult to Manage Your Time Spent on Internet"
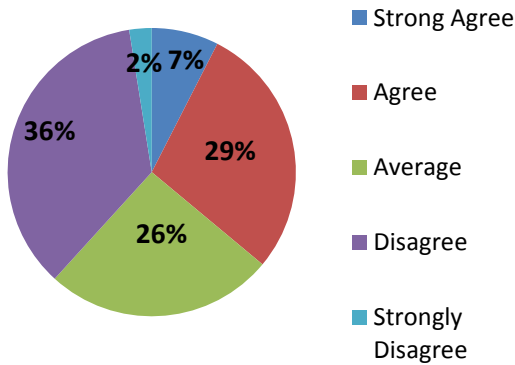
- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2% 7%
36%
29%
26%

Figure 39 Whether to Agree "You Spend Too Much Time Online and That Make You Hard to Organise Your Life"

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7% 4%
12%
28%
49%
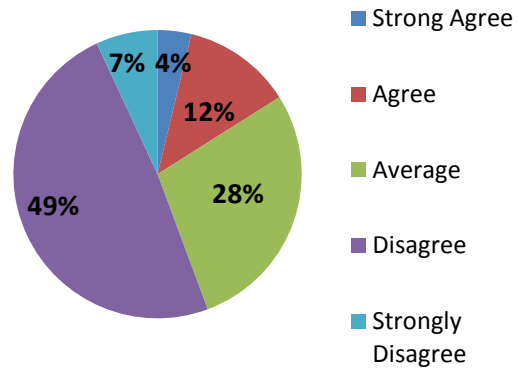
Figure 40 Whether to Agree "You Once Got Late or Cancelled Your Meeting Because of Internet"

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5%
14%
28%
34%
19%
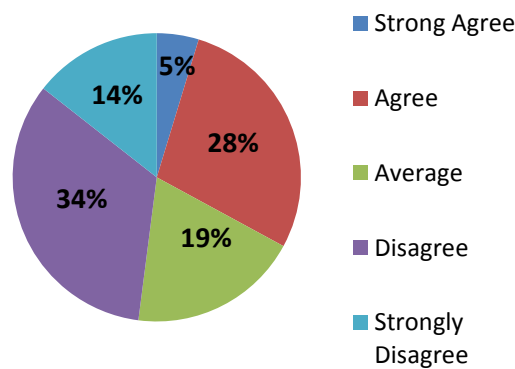
There is approximately the same proportion of respondents who agree (36%) and disagree (38%) on the difficulties of managing their time for Internet. More than half respondents disagree on overuse of Internet influence their life planning and appointment.

To look at the differences among various groups, respondents with higher age and education level tend to regard their time allocation not influenced by the use Internet. Second, there are more female respondents who lose track of time because of Internet than male respondents. Last but not least, unemployed respondents tend to agree on the association between the use of Internet and their time allocation.

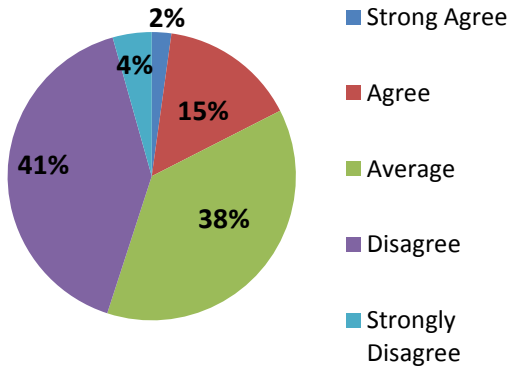**Figure 41 Whether to Agree "You Prefer Communicating with Others Online to Face-to-Face Conversation"**

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2%
4%
15%
41%
38%

Figure 42 Whether to Agree "You Find Online Communication More Comfortable Than Face-to-Face Conversation"

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
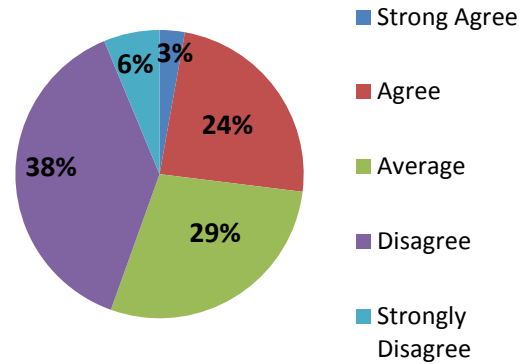- Strongly Disagree

3%
6%
24%
38%
29%

Figure 41 and 42 reflect the respondents' perception of the impacts of Internet on interpersonal communication. More than a half of respondents disagree on their preference on communicating with others online and considering virtual communication more comfortable than face-to-face communication. Among a limited number of respondents who agree on the two statements, they are mainly aged between 31 and 40 with less than HKD 14999 monthly family income.

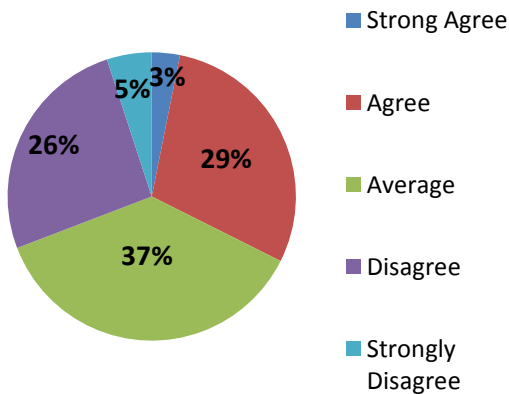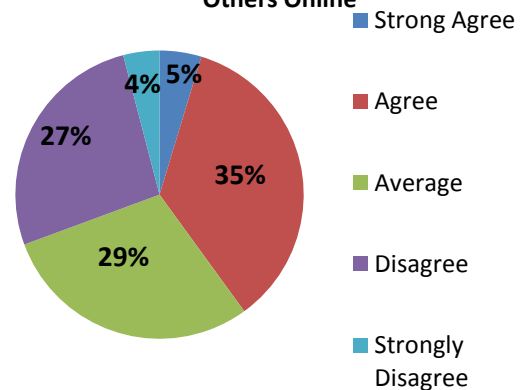**Figure 43 Whether to Agree "You Use Internet to Cope with Unhappiness"**

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

3%
5%
29%
26%
37%

Figure 34 Whether to Agree "When You Feel Lonely, You Will Communicate with Others Online"

- Strong Agree
- Agree
- Average
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5%
4%
35%
27%
29%

23

In term of physical and psychological well-being, most respondents hold a neutral attitude in general. There are more females who tend to take Internet as a way to cope with negative emotions and sense of loneliness than males. Respondents with younger age, lower education level and lower family monthly income tend to agree more on Internet as a way to adjust negative emotions. Both professional and unemployed tend to take the communication online as a way to cope with their sense of loneliness.

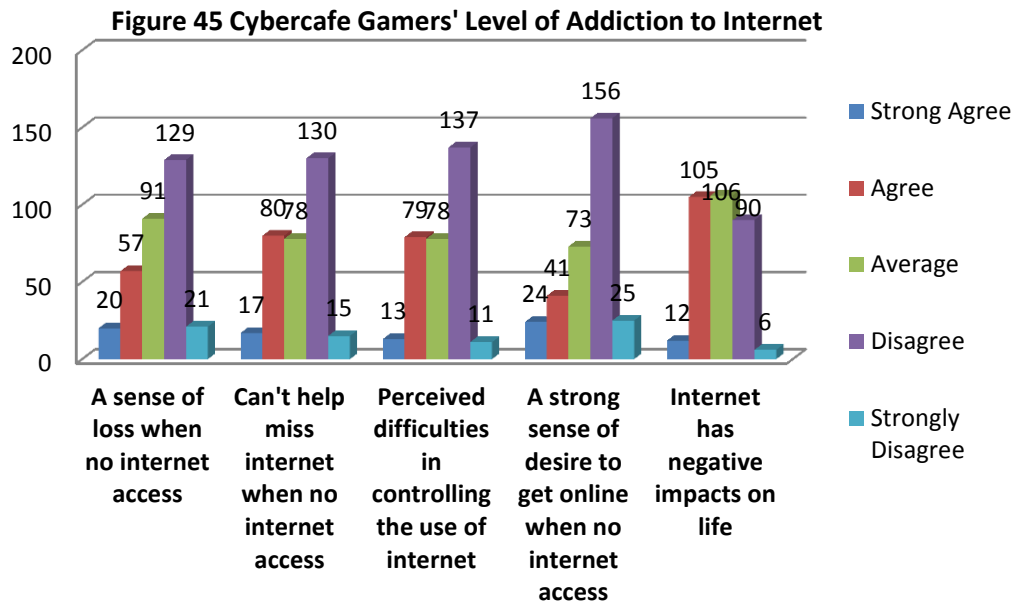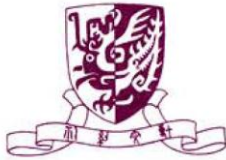## Figure 45 Cybercafe Gamers' Level of Addiction to Internet

Figure 45 reflects the level of addiction among cybercafé gamers. More than a half of respondents disagree on the lack of Internet access would result in a sense of loss, losing self control to think of Internet, difficulties in controlling the use of Internet and uncontrollable drive to go online. As for the statement about the negative impacts of Internet on daily life, there is a balance of view among agreement, neutrality and disagreement.

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To compare the differences among various groups, females tend to disagree on the four statements more than males. Respondents with younger age and lower family monthly income tend to agree on the statements above. They appear higher level of addiction to Internet.

7 Conclusion and Recommendation

The current research seeks to investigate the Internet and online gaming experiences as well as level of addiction among cybercafé gamers in Hong Kong. On the other hand, the report serves as a reference for public policy in balancing the sustainable development of the online game industry and preventing the negative consequences associated with Internet and online games. On the other hand, this report provides the key industry players, including producer, sales agent, distributor, advertiser, Internet service provider, cybercafé and game center with up-to-date statistics regarding gamers' consumption pattern and demand.

7.1 Internet and Online Game Addiction among Gamers Remains Insignificant

Despite 36.7% respondents admitting the negative impacts of Internet on their daily life, their self-assessment of their Internet addiction remains insignificant. The perception of the common addiction to online games and Internet could be non-gamers' stereotype on gamers. Such stereotype could be the result of media biased report. Figure 46 and 47 compare and contrast gamers' self-assessment and their evaluation of their family bonding.

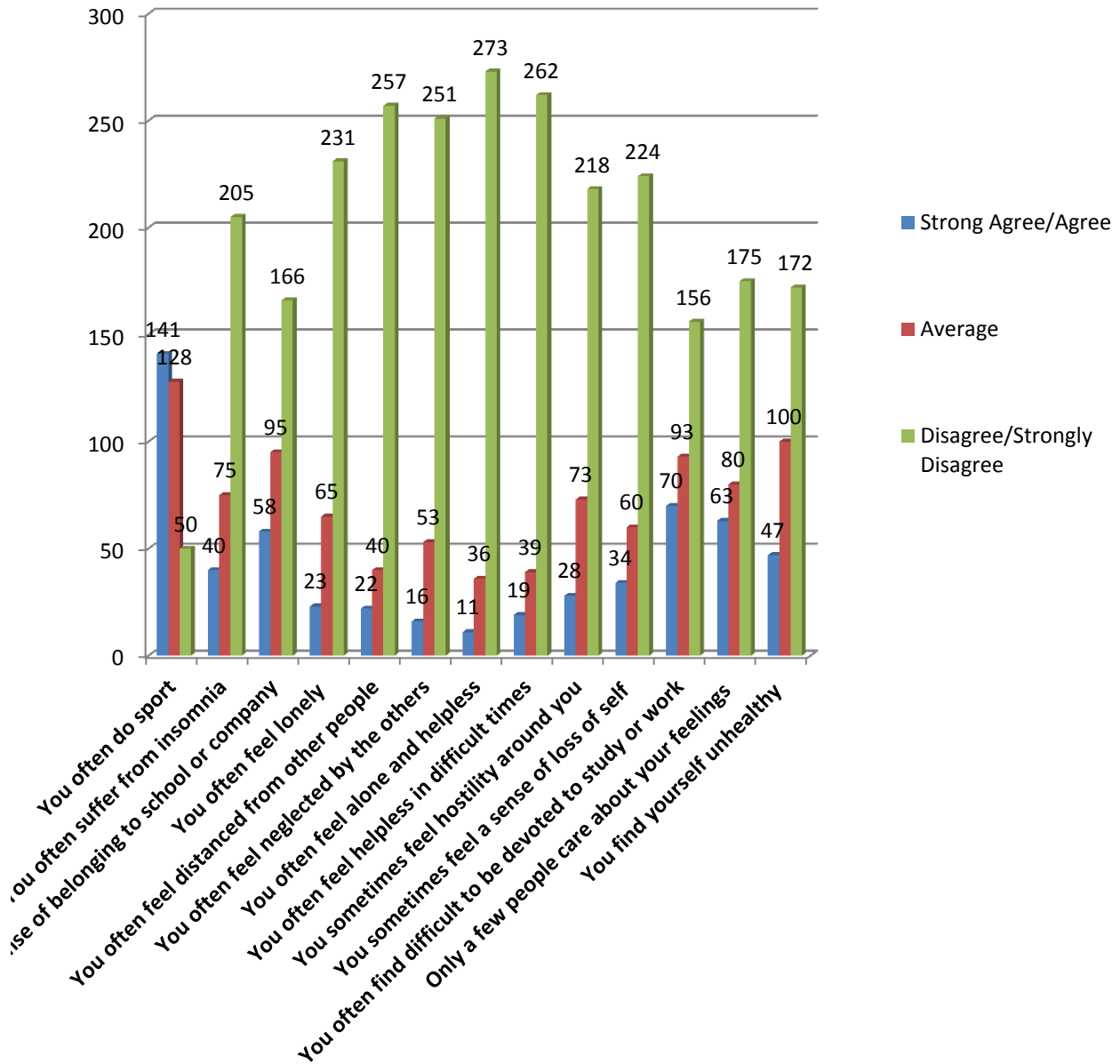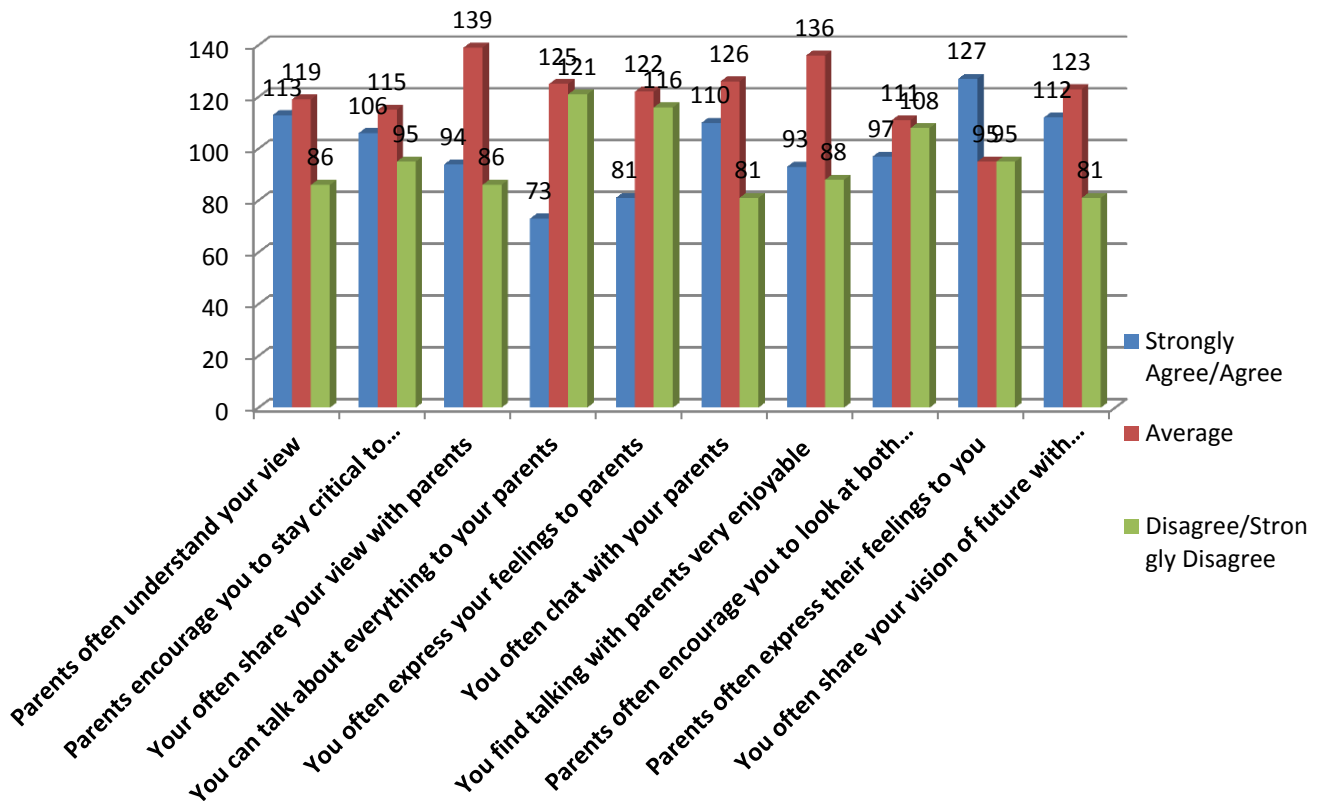**Figure 46 Cybercafe Gamers' Self Evaluation**

Figure 47 Cybercafe Gamers' Relationship with Parents

Overall speaking, most respondents look healthy and in good spirit. They also have positive interaction with the people around and immerse themselves in the society. Such observation is in line with the survey results. In other words, the first step for the policy maker is to debunk the stereotype and bias on Internet and online games. Instead, the government should advocate the proper use of Internet.

7.2 Diversification Enhances Online Game Market Potential

With the rising number of online gamers, their demand is increasingly diversified. To begin with, the demand from female gamers should not be underestimated. Despite relatively low number of samples in this study, their passion and rich experiences of gaming illustrate that they form a niche market. Given 4.2 years of gaming experiences on average, they prefer role-play, mahjong and sport type of online games. Meanwhile, female spend more time on cybercafé and game center than male. In other words, the industry should develop business which targets such a niche market.

Furthermore, 77.5% respondents visit cybercafé with friends. Coincided with the primary reason of visiting cyber café, 25.6% respondents' visit to cybercafé is driven by the company of friends. It means that cybercafé gamers like visiting cybercafé and game center in a group. As such, cybercafé and game center should launch discount promotion that focuses on group instead of individual consumers.

In addition to the enormous market of online games, social games and web games, mobile gamers (including Android and iPhone) remain the majority. Given the convenience brought by

mobile phone, along with the rising popularity of smart phone, there are increasing business opportunities of mobile games which are worth attention from the industry.

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