GENDER DIFFERENCES IN DISPLAYING EMOTICONS AND SOCIAL ROLES THROUGH A SOCIAL MESSAGING LINE APP

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With the advances of traditional computer-mediated communication (CMC), Line, launched in 2011, integrates multiple print-linguistic and non-linguistic forms of visual representation symbols -- digital stickers or so called emoticons. Theoretically, emotional expression in nonverbal communication is controlled to an important extent by display gender beliefs, rules and norms that dictate which feelings are to be exposed to whom and when and extend social roles. Goffman (1959) has stressed people's ability to manage the impressions of their emotional states which others receive. As the technology itself grows in leaps and bounds, so too will the adaptive responses by individuals in society who utilize this new medium (i.e., Line) to meet their own aesthetic needs and interpersonal needs. In this way, Line provides individuals with the cultural capital (i.e., signs, images, symbols and experiences) by which they can organize their lives and build their ideal selves through digital aesthetic consumption practices (Giddens, 1991). The expansion of digital aesthetic consumption culture may facilitate the display of new or digital identities and social roles through a diversity of the digital aesthetic commodities (e.g., different genres of digital stickers) and manage the impressions by these performances. To the best of our knowledge, most prior studies on mobile text-based messaging services have focused on the exchange of linguistic information; individuals' usage of nonverbal cues, particular focusing on visual aesthetics and emotional expressivity, has received far less attention. This research aims to explore emoticon consumptions and practices in Line of the consumer by approaching it phenomenologically.

Keywords: Digital sticker, Emoticon, Gender difference, Line app, Social role