Motives for Facebook use in an Australian sample.

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A survey of 209 Australians (17-69 years) was conducted to examine the motives for Facebook use, and how these factors related to individuals' belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaning. An initial factor analysis identified four distinct factors underlying motives for Facebook use: meeting people, relationship maintenance, monitoring relationships, and seeking information. These four factors extend previous research and help clarify the key reasons for Facebook use. Further analyses found that participants' age was negatively correlated with each of the motives for Facebook use factors. Multiple regressions were performed with each of the four motives regressed on age, gender, and the individuals' belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaning. All four of these variables contributed significantly to the prediction of factor 1 (meeting people). Only belonging was a significant predictor of factor 2 (relationship maintenance) and factor 3 (monitoring relationships). Both self-esteem and belonging were significant predictors of factor 4 (seeking information). This study included general community members and not just undergraduate students and therefore has wider applicability than previous research. Facebook use seems to be closely related to individuals' belonging across a wide age range.

Key words: Facebook, motives, belonging