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A Comparison of motivation, frequency and content of S.M.S. messages sent in boys and girls high school student

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Abstract

The purpose of the present research was to comparison of content, motivation and frequency of S.M.S Messages sent by boys versus girls. 288 high school students (125 girls and 138 boys) aged 14 to 18 participated in the study that have been chosen via cluster multistage sampling method and completed Type of SMS using Assessment Questionnaire (TSAQ; Shayad, 2010). Data was analyzed by using multivariate analysis of covariance (MANOVA). The results showed that there was a significant difference between boys and girls with regard to motivation, content and frequency of S.M.S messages. Girls send S.M.S more frequently than boys. In fact they send an average of 39 S.M.S a day versus 15 S.M.S sent of the average by a high school boy. Girls seek reassuring information while boys try to sending information for assurance and avoid of face-to-face relationship when they have recourse to S.M.S Boys also send more S.M.S with uncommon content, gibe content and impersonal information.

Key words: Number of sent S.M .S ; Motivation ; Content ; Adolescent; High School Student

1. Introduction

S.M.S is a nonverbal communication service which allows its users to communicate through a combination of digits and letters (160 letters / digits maximum). The first S.M.S was sent in 1992 and right from then its usage began to rapidly spread. S.M.S is a very low cost means of communication. Furthermore it allows direct contact between communicating parties. Sending, and receiving S.M.S needs not be and usually is not synchronous and this allows communicating parties to avoid unwanted live communication while being still on-line throughout the day. (Scharl, & Murphy, 2005). S.M.S users are not hampered in their communication by formalities. S.M.S Is a potent way of expressing things that would have been otherwise very embarrassing to express. People believe that It Is possible through S.M.S to become more intimate with one's friends (Barry, 2002). Social communication is undergoing drastic change as S.M.S usage rapidly expands. A study by Nokia conducted on a sample of 3300 individuals revealed that S.M.S constituted the bulk of mobile phone communications (Reid & Reid, 2004) S.M.S addiction is recognized as a new form of neurosis in young adults (Meals, 2003). Despite popularity of S.M.S messaging in Iran and particularly among younger generation. Very few studies have been conducted on the content

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and motivation of these messages (Barry2002).A study with the aim of comparing boys and girls with regard to content and motivation of their messages can provide authorities and planners with guidance on how to tackle misuse of S.M.S The current study was thus initiated with the above facts being seriously taken into consideration.

2. Method

The statistical community of this research was all high school students in Tehran city. sample includes 151 girls and 141 boys that have been chosen multistage random sampling method. data were analyzed by using multivariate analysis of covariance (MANOVA) and the chi square test.

3. Measures

Questionnaire on Types of S.M.S usage: This questionnaire was complied with the aim of measuring S.M.S usage types. It comprises 45 questions and has 4 parts with regard to content .The first part which deals with motivation comprises 29 questions. The second part, which deals with S.M.S contents, comprises 12 questions. The third part, which deals with frequency of usage, comprises 2 questions and the last part which deals with preferred receiving parties comprises 2 questions. kronbach alpha coefficient and retest were used to measure the validity of this questionnaire. The calculated validities for the two said methods were 0.85 and 0.74 respectively. Face validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by 5 experienced psychologists and factorial analysis was used to establish its construct validity. kronbach alpha coefficient for the purviews of motivation and content was calculated as 0.74 and 0.60 respectively (Shahyad , 2010).

4. Results

Table1. mean and standard deviations of motive, content and number of using S.M.S

variable	girls		boys	
	M	**SD**	**M**	**SD**
number of using S.M.S	39/8	105/83	15/33	23/92
economical motivation	29/37	7/02	29/32	8/27
common motivation	21/92	6/04	23/31	10/56
sending information for assurance	20/63	3/93	18/58	4/73
avoid of face-to-face relationship	8/9	2/96	10/22	3/99
uncommon content	6/85	2/84	8/49	3/77
gibe content	9/05	2/77	10/17	3/17
impersonal information content	8/92	3/05	9/73	4/04

Because it Is known that the dependent variable "number of sent messages" is correlated with the variable" number of received messages" with a correlation of 0.96, the latter was chosen as the covariated variable.

Table2.multivariate analysis of covariance for relation between attachment style and motive, content and number of using S.M.S

source	variable	SS	DF	MS	F	P
number of received messages	number of using S.M.S	1395589/539	1	1395589/539	3470/032	0/001
	economical motivation	272/781	1	272/781	4/594	0/033
	common motivation	287/12	1	287/12	3/739	0/054
	sending information for assurance	11/311	1	11/311	0/597	0/44
	avoid of face-to-face relationship	2/806	1	2/806	0/222	0/638
	uncommon content	48/476	1	48/476	4/446	0/036

	gibe content	17/218	1	17/218	1/899	0/169
	impersonal information content	0/305	1	0/305	0/023	0/879
gender	number of using S.M.S	1542/714	1	1542/714	3/836	0/051
	economical motivation	16/11	1	16/11	0/271	0/603
	common motivation	158/473	1	158/473	2/064	0/152
	sending information for assurance	182/835	1	182/835	2/064	0/002
	avoid of face-to-face relationship	116/47	1	116/47	9/231	0/003
	uncommon content	222/698	1	222/698	20/426	0/001
	gibe content	117/216	1	117/216	12/927	0/001
	impersonal information content	52/809	1	52/809	4/047	0/045

The Results of table 2 shows that ther there is a significant effect by the number of received messages of the number of sent message (F=3470.032,P>0.05). Also there is a significant effect by economical motivation and uncommon content (F=4.446,P<0.05). After eliminating the effect of the proportion of received messages, girl and boys demonstrated significant differences with regard to number of sent messages (F=3.836,P<0.05), re-assuring information as a motivation for S.M.S usage (F=9.648,P<0.05), avoid of face-to-face relationship (F=9.231,P>0.05), uncommon content (F20.426,P<0.05), gibe content (F=12.927,P<0.05) and impersonal information content (F=4.047,P<0.05).

5.   Discussion

Our main aim was to investigate possible gender – related differences between boys and girls with regard to frequency and content and motivation of S.M.S messages send by them. Results show that girls send more S.M.S than boys (This corresponds to findings reported by LING 2001, LING 2007 and Falconer and Kelvin 2005). A possible explanation could be Women's inclination for forming closer social bands [.Ling, 2001; Ling, 2007& Faulkner & Culwin, 2005).

Results also indicate gender-ralated difference between motivations behind S.M.S messages sent by boys and girls. Girls are mostly motivated by being informed and feeling secure as a result of the information received. Boys the other hand are mostly motivated by avoid of face-to-face relationship. These findings conform to (Sun ,2004; Debrand & Jhonson, 2008). A probable explanation could be different communication styles in men and women. Social network which mainly consist of women are emotion – oriented while those mainly consisting of men are duty – oriented.

Men communicate mostly with the aim of maintaining their position within community. Women are intrinsically more social and more probable to disclose personal matters to their friends. Women's social network are more closely knit (Igarashi, Takai, & Yoshida, 2005). It is not strange, thus, that girls are more disposed toward providing assurances and alleviating their friend's worries (Ling, 2001). One particularity of S.M.S is self – disclosure with the aim of de-escalating tensions(Manteghi, 2008). As stated before, women are intrinsically more social and disclose secrets to their friends more openly. They thus are less motivated, as men are, by avoid of face-to-face relationship when they send S.M.S messages. Some gender – related differences can also be seen in the purview of content. This also conforms to findings by (Ling ,2001 & Manteghi ,2008). Compared to boys, girls send less messages with impersonal information content, gibe content. sexual stereotypes may be a possible explanation for such behaviour. Women are expected to be more caring and more sociable (Debra& Arthu ,2004). They thus are less motivated to send messages with impersonal information content, gibe content. They also less frequently send messages with uncommon content, thanks to shyness and inhibition expected from them by the society (Manteghi ,2008).Two sets of consequences is realizable for the current study. With regard to theoretical consequences, this study has reaffirmed that gender – related differences in communication styles are reflected in motivation, frequency and content of S.M.S messages.

On the practical level our study can help launch preventive and intervention programs to protect members of box sexes (and specially girls). However, there are limitations to the results gathered from the current study. For instance, generalizing these results to other social groups and cliques should be done with utmost caution, knowing that our statistical population consisted of university students only. It is recommended that gender–related differences are taken into consideration when preventive and intervention programs are being planned.

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