



University of Macau
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
Department of Communication

Internet use pattern and the production of social capital

----The case of students in University of Macau

By
Chen Xiao fan, Grace
M-A65517-9

Supervisor: Prof. Chen Huailin

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts at the University of Macau
September 2008

I. Introduction	3
1. Overview of Internet and social capital researches.....	3
2. Youth, civic participation and Internet use.....	5
3. An overview of the research context-Macau	6
3.1 Political background	6
3.2 Political culture in transition.....	7
4. Purpose of the study.....	8
5. Significance of this study.....	10
II. Literature Review	12
1. What is social capital?	13
2. Individual level indicators of social capital	14
3. Internet-focused social capital researches.....	18
Does the Internet increase social capital?	19
Does the Internet decrease social capital?	21
Internet: Supplement rather than substitute	23
4. Motives for Internet use	25
Uses and gratifications perspective.....	26
Internet use patterns and the consequences on social capital	27
5. The mediation effects of citizen communication.....	29
6. Conceptualization and research questions	30
III. Methodology.....	32
1. Sampling process	32
2. Measurement.....	33
Measure of Internet usage.....	33
Measures of citizen communication	35
Measures of social capital.....	36
3. Research Hypothesis.....	37
3.1 Overall Internet use and social capital	38
3.2 Internet use motivations and social capital	38
3.3 Internet use pattern and social capital	39
Mediation effect of citizen communication	40
IV. Results	41
1. Descriptive findings.....	41
Characteristics of Respondents.....	41
Overall Media Use	42
Internet use frequencies	42
Civic engagement.....	44
Comparison of local and non-local students.....	45
2. Explanative findings	47
2.1 Overall media use and social capital.....	48
2.2 Internet use motivation and social capital.....	48
2.3 Internet use pattern and social capital.....	49
2.4 The mediation effect of citizen communication	50
V. Conclusion and Discussion.....	52

1. Media use habit of UM students	53
2. Civic participation of UM students.....	54
3. Internet use pattern and social capital	56
4. Mediation effects of citizen communication.....	58
5. Two dimensions of civic participation	59
6. Practical implications of this study	61
7. Research limitations.....	62
VI. Bibliography	63
Appendix: Questionnaire	