

MASTER'S THESIS

Birds of a feather flock together: a study of homophily tendency in social networks of mainland undergraduate students in Hong Kong

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**Birds of a Feather Flock Together:
A Study of Homophily Tendency in Social Networks of Mainland
Undergraduate Students in Hong Kong**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Philosophy**

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ABSTRACT

The current study addresses the issue of network building processes of Mainland undergraduate students in Hong Kong. It takes the theoretical framework of social network analysis and studies the patterns of social networks of Mainland undergraduate students, especially in terms of their homophily tendency. Mainland students in Hong Kong present a very interesting case for studies of social association and social integration. On the one hand, people in mainland China and Hong Kong share the same culture; but on the other hand, they come from very different political and economic systems. The data for the current study comes from a survey of Mainland undergraduate students in Hong Kong Baptist University in 2011, and from ten in-depth interviews of Mainland undergraduates in this university. The findings reveal that the social networks of Mainland students in Hong Kong are highly homophilious. There are two reasons for the homophily in their social networks: more opportunities to come into contact with other Mainland students, and socially constructed preference in choosing Mainland students as friends during the process of making new friends. This thesis attempts to contribute to studies on homophily in social networks.

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