

USAGE OF MOBILE PHONES AND INTERNET SOCIAL MEANING AND FAMILY CONVERSATION

Noel E. Margate, MAGC, RGC

The study was meant to describe the social meaning of the mobile phone and the Internet as perceived by the selected college students of San Pedro College. A qualitative-phenomenological research design was used to describe how the said technologies were used and how the face-to-face conversation and the virtual connection in the family were carried through. The research data were gathered through a series of focus group discussions (FGDs). The social meaning of the mobile phone and the Internet was found to be influenced by the type of technology attachments the college students were formed. The FGD participants who showed functional type of attachment merely considered the aforementioned technologies as utility devices that were instrumental in attaining social and academic responsibilities. On the other hand, those that exhibited structural type of attachment viewed the mobile phone and Internet as basic needs and as source of emotional comfort. While both technologies were helpful in expanding the face-to-face conversation to the virtual connection with the families, the mobile phone was found to be more accessible and widely used means to obtain personal updates in life, share information of all sorts and indirectly express emotions with ease. The study concludes that based on the flow of the family conversation, family values and moral purpose were imparted as part of the formation and foundation of their individual self. However, the banality and the eventual shift of technology attachment from functional to structural purposes seemingly influenced the virtual connection with family members. Thus, the flow of the family conversation where family values and moral purpose are imparted is apparently affected.

Introduction

People globally have apparently looked madly crazed and lured by the wonders of the information and communication technologies (ICT). Ownership and usage of the mobile phones and the Internet are now seen ordinary gestures of human activities. In other words, what we thought before as technological luxuries are now considered basic personal properties that are essential in day-to-day living.

Initially, the progression of these phenomena dwells on the human need of constant and faster contact or communication. By simple phone calls, text messages and electronic mails, face-to-face encounters are considerably extended and sustained (Gergen, 2002). As technology continues to accelerate connection in different contexts, it eventually permeated into the culture of most societies. Besides, the colorful experiences of fun and excitement in every electronic encounter favorably promoted recursive usage.

Along with the need of faster communication, is the fast advancement of technology. Modern and superior electronic gadgets are constantly setting new trends, functions, various forms of interaction and more extensive spheres of information and contact. Most of all, these advancements have paved the way to the interconnection of mobile phones and Internet or the existence of the virtual world or reality that unthinkable transcends the boundaries of time, space, age, race, ideologies, lifestyles, etc. These technologies empower all users to perform and respond to various tasks in a single time interval. Thus, no doubt that most of the populace worldwide are allured of the convenience, benefits, and amusement.

However, while the mutual development of technology and economy continues to soar, new and unusual social incidences such as net dependency, online game addiction, cyber pornography, latest phone model hysteria, etc. are found to have growingly emerged in human communities. Moreover, the influences of social relationships and social institutions like

churches, institutions, communities, and most especially families are perceived to have weakened. These technological phenomena have subtly turned into a major powerful force where one's identity, relationships and life in general are increasingly defined and shaped especially among the young individuals who are obviously considered the largest technology users. In short, the acculturation of mobile phone and Internet has transformed the online network connection or virtual world into a new global necessity that evidently demanded and elicited new patterns of social behavior.

Thus, new values and precepts towards the mobile phones and the Internet came to surface beyond the boundaries of simple communication devices. These days, these technologies are now significantly defining and directing attitudes towards social relationships and social situations, and are profoundly creating new and unimaginable human identities and societies.

This paper intended to find out the social meanings that the young individuals have associated with mobile phone and Internet. It also examined the manner in which these gadgets were utilized. More importantly, the findings were then used to describe the dynamics of face-to-face conversation and virtual connection in the family. Furthermore, this study is seen to provide basis in understanding the young people or even the family who are actively shifting their transit from the two different spheres of the physical and the virtual world.

Theoretical/ Conceptual Framework

The social construction theory according to Gergen is concerned with explicating the process by which people come to describe, explain, or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) by which they live. It attempts to articulate common forms of understanding as they now exist. Gergen (2008) noted that what we take to be true about the world is not born out of the picture in our minds, but out of relationships.

More importantly, Gergen (2008) pointed out that while constructionism is relevant in spreading and maintaining traditions, it is further offering ideas of building new futures. The expanded relationships we have where we acquired various world meanings are highly facilitative and potent of emerging new forms of language and ways of interpreting the world. It is leading towards generative discourses of everything that are at the same time challenging the existing tradition and offering new possibilities for action (p. 12).

Considering the aspect of technological change, it is said to be driven by social processes rather than any internal technological logic, according to Bruun and Hukkinen (2003). Additionally, it is functionality that prompts a new artefact or material to work better. But technical properties and purpose that determine the functionality of artefact are said to be made by people and not by any non-social realm of technology (Bruun & Hukkinen, 2003).

Family systems approach on the other hand is grounded on the assumption that the individual cannot be fully understood apart from the family system. Its basic principle points out that a change in one part of the system will result in a change in other parts of the system. Thus, if the family unit changes in significant ways particularly aspects of family communication, these changes will have an impact on the individual.

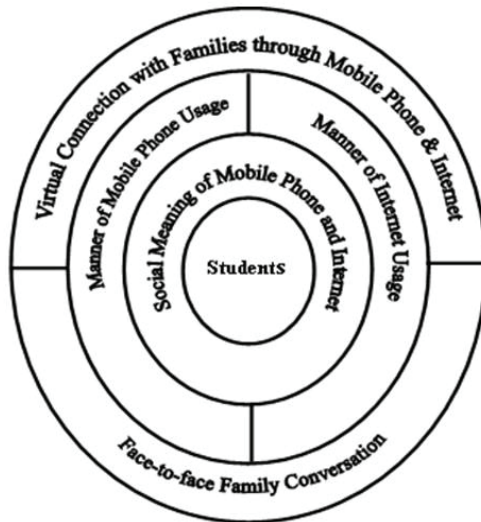


Figure 1. The Schematic Diagram of Students Whose Social Meanings on Mobile Phone and Internet Vary Likely Affects the Way they Use the Technology and the Way they Converse and Connect with their Families.

Methods

This study utilized a qualitative-phenomenological research design to describe the social meanings associated with mobile phones and Internet, the manners in which the mobile phones and Internet were used, and the manner in which the face-to-face conversation and the virtual connection with the family were carried through.

The study was conducted at San Pedro College (SPC), Davao City. The said institution is owned and managed by the Dominican Sisters of the Holy Trinity. It is primarily offering allied medical programs such as Nursing, Medical Laboratory Science, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Respiratory Therapy, and Biology. However, nonmedical programs are also available like Education, Business Administration, Information Technology, and Psychology.

Selected college students across all year levels and course programs were the target respondents of the study considering that majority of the techno-savvies are educated and young individuals (Kioskea.net, 2009). The means of selecting the respondents was through purposive or convenience sampling technique. The economic status of the family was also noted to supplement the analysis of results.

The research data included the thoughts, feelings, practices, and experiences of each participant on the mobile phones and Internet. Focus group discussion (FGD) was the means where the said data were collected. Data analysis was made through categorizing and classifying the individual responses into themes and issues.

The first thing that was done was to seek permission to conduct the study at San Pedro College (SPC) through the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Afterwards, selected groups of 6-10 students from the first year to fourth year level or from the allied medical and nonmedical programs were invited to participate in the FGD. The FGDs were held in a group counselling or testing room of SPC. Each discussion was started by a presentation of the background and objectives of the study. The participants were also requested to wear a nametag and introduce themselves to the group. Their consent was requested too that the entire discussion shall be audio-recorded yet shall be held with utmost confidentiality. Each of the 5 major research

questions was printed on a whole sheet of bond paper. As the discussion began, each question was read twice to the group and was presented one at a time. Each participant was also encouraged to take turns in sharing their answers in a successive manner. The discussion was solely facilitated by the researcher. All the guide questions were asked and a total of four FGDs were conducted. After completing all the FGDs, all audio-recorded responses were transcribed into text for analysis. However, the first focus group was eventually discarded as the audio-recorded file was barely comprehensible. The transcripts of the 3 discussions were translated first into English language. The thematic analysis of transcripts were then made by following the open coding technique of Strauss and Corbin (1998) where the text was ran through line by line in relation to the notes and observation that took place during each, chunks of the text that suggest a category were marked, and categories were named and ascribed with attributes.

Group Composition

Focus Group 1

The respondents were an aggregate of four 3rd year and five 4th year Bachelor of Science in Nursing students. Four of the 4th year students were noted to be living away from home. While they came from different year levels and sections, their consent to participate in the FGD came easily as they happened to share common acquaintances and vacant time. All of them claimed that they have been using and owning mobile phone and Internet for quite a time. But six have strongly expressed negative positions towards cessation of the said technologies. On the other hand, the remaining three simply said that such scenario did not bring so much loss in their lives. As the discussion went towards the last question, three participants requested to leave the session due to an important concern.

Table 1. Profile of Focus Group Respondents.

Conditions	Year Level and Course	Number of respondents
Living away from home	4 th Year Nursing students	4
	2 nd Year Psychology student	1
	2 nd Year Education students	4
	1 st Year Pharmacy students	4
Residing in Davao City	3 rd Year Nursing students	4
	4 th Year Nursing student	1
	1 st Year Psychology student	1
	2 nd Year Education students	2
Don't want mobile phone and Internet to end	3 rd Year Nursing students	2
	4 th Year Nursing students	4
	1 st Year Psychology student	1
	1 st Year Pharmacy students	4
Mobile phone and Internet are not so much of a loss	3 rd Year Nursing student	1
	4 th Year Nursing students	2
	2 nd Year Psychology student	1
	2 nd Year Education students	2

Colored cell = FGD group number; light blue – group 1, light green – group 2; white- group 3

Table 2. Profile of Focus Group 1 Respondents.

Conditions	3 rd Year Nursing Students	4 th Year Nursing Students
Living away from home	-	4
Residing in Davao City	4	1
Don't want mobile phone and Internet to end	2	4
Mobile phone and Internet are not so much of a loss	1	2

Focus Group 2

This group of students was a composition of special study grant recipients of SPC. Only two students were taking up Bachelor of Science in Psychology while the rest of the six were taking up Bachelor of Science in Education. Their participation was purposely recommended to provide a description of students who belong to families with low economic status. Since they frequently meet and work together during their duty assignments in the different offices of SPC, asking their consent was not a difficult task. All respondents were females as there were only a few number of males in their rank. As many as five in their group as well were noted to be living away from their families. In terms of technology penetration, everyone owned a mobile phone but the usage of Internet was seen to be less frequent. Six participants articulated that they might be highly affected when the function of the aforementioned technologies ceases the following day. The other two however with dissenting statements mentioned that their lives may still be fine without it.

Table 3. Profile of Focus Group 2 Participants

Conditions	1 st Year Psychology Students	2 nd Year Students	
		Psychology	Education
Living away from home	-	1	4
Residing in Davao City	1	-	2
Don't want mobile phone and Internet to end	1	1	4
Mobile phone and Internet are not so much of a loss	-	1	2

Focus Group 3

This group has the smallest number of participants. There were only four Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy female students who came to join the focus group. All of the four as well were living away from their families. During the discussion, spontaneity of responses was noticeably observed as they were all familiar with one another. Based on their sharing, all of them said that they did not want the said technologies to stop. It may highly lead their lives to be more difficult. But there was one who was willing to let go of the Internet as she generally saw it as a mere vehicle of socialization.

Table 4. Profile of Focus Group 3 Respondents

Conditions	1 st Year Pharmacy Students
Living away from home	4
Residing in Davao City	-
Don't want mobile phone and Internet to end	4
Mobile phone and Internet are not so much of a loss	-

Results and Discussion

Social Meaning on Mobile Phone and Internet

Based on the hypothetical scenario where the mobile phone and the Internet's existence were impending to end, two forms of technology attachment came to surface. The functional type of attachment was first noted that generally recognized the practical and instrumental uses of the mobile phone and the Internet. A structural form of attachment that further portray the technologies mentioned above as basic needs in life and, at the same time, as sources of emotional comfort, was also noted.

Functional Attachment

Katz and Aakhus (2002) also made an implication that the examination of the usefulness of the ICT devices follows a functionalist perspective.

Similarly, the mobile phone and the Internet were generally recognized as modern utility devices. These technologies were found instrumental in the completion of academic requirements and tasks. The devices were also helpful in attending various social concerns and responsibilities in the family and friends. However, the absence of the said technologies in life was seen insignificant. The daily routines of those who claimed this response were noted to have continued without being so dependent and without giving much thought or priority to the mobile phone and the Internet. One of the focus group participants stated this experience.

"It is fine for me (without mobile phone and Internet) because I am not used to send text messages. It is even okay for me whenever my cell phone is left at home. In one week, it is seldom for me to load my cell phone. I only load when it is really needed, when it is needed for a project and when it is needed to contact somebody."

The technology was observed as well to have brought about ironies to human activities. Accordingly, while it had facilitated faster connection and communication, it had also caused procrastination and disruption of the daily household chores as text messages and other mobile phone features were instead given more attention. This observation was noted from a focus group one participant through the following statement.

"I used to quarrel with my younger sibling because she is a heavy text user. It seems that our daily routine is disrupted because of her. When she is asked to do a chore, she will retort, 'wait for a while I will first attend to my text messages.' I'm really annoyed with procrastination. It is really fine for me when cell phone is no longer there."

On another note, though it had broadened the reservoir of knowledge and made the access of information only a click or a type away, many students were also slothful to read and think further for their studies. It was cited too that social networking in the Internet was not that important. Thus, letting it stop or cease would not be that hard. A focus group two participant cited the following thoughts.

"There are certainly advantages to those who do not know how to write because their eagerness to write and send letters will be practiced. Whenever (the) Internet is no longer accessible, libraries in schools will be more useful in doing research. Most likely, students are likely led to use their head."

Structural Attachment

The structural type attachment is patterned after the construct of Katz and Aakhus (2002) that the ICTs were formerly seen to be existing in an untamed and wild state, but are now tamed and integrated into the household like pets that are part of the domestic life.

This form of attachment was noted to have viewed the mobile phone and Internet in two fashions. The first perception identifies the connection with families and friends for various concerns and access to the reservoir of information as basic needs in life. The second one seemingly describes the technology as persona of relationship and as source of emotional comfort.

Basic Need

As the mobile phone and the Internet fostered connectivity with families and friends online both near and far (Kennedy, Smith, Wells, & Wellman, 2008), its importance became identical to the level of the basic needs. As noted in the lives of the focus group participants, families were simply a call or text message away that important concerns and personal updates in life were readily conveyed especially by those who were living away from home. Classmates and friends were promptly asked as well pertaining academic endeavor, social relationships, and gossips. Completion of tasks and errands, and request for monetary needs were easily coordinated and made possible, too. A focus group three participant was in one with this idea as she reported this answer.

"It's difficult (absence of mobile phone). Considering that you are far from your family, how could you communicate? In case of emergency, how would they know what happened to you? It will also cause delays and other incidences that you have not been expecting."

Emotional Comfort

Aside from the perception on the mobile phone and Internet as basic needs in life, the ownership of these technologies has further manifested traces of emotional attachment. This observation was marked in the findings of McQuail (2001) that use of media use behavior is frequently not very rational, motivated, or planned, but is a result of habit, circumstance, and change, as well as being moved by emotions.

As the mobile phone and Internet extended the presence of others or seemingly became icons of significant others, the absence of the said technologies was observed to elicit unpleasant emotional responses. Students who were living away from home had made mention that they may frequently feel anxious and perplex on what they are going to do with their daily routines. Others also admitted having experienced boredom when they were unable to contact their families and friends. A focus group participant two said, *"Oh my God, please don't permit it (cessation of mobile phone and Internet). Maybe if it ends, I will get crazy."*

Those with long distance relationships with their boyfriends on the other hand were able to say that they might likely live an incomplete life. The mobile home had seemingly acquired a sentimental value as the said relationship was eventually maintained all throughout many years. This was the account of a focus group one participant.

"In my case, I am in a long distance relationship with my boyfriend. So for us, it is the only way of communication because our relationship is able to survive for 6 years through the use of cell phone, text messages, and calls. It would be incomplete, it would be lacking because mobile phone and Internet are already part of my life and my routine."

Moreover, the attachment to the mobile phone had seemingly penetrated into the core of emotions. Its role in life was placed in the sphere of social relationships by a few participants. As heartbreak is a common scenario when a loved one is lost, the same experience may be felt when the mobile phone is lost. The following was the thought of a focus group two participant.

"I may get too depressed or I may feel I was in a situation where there is death of a loved one because I may get really exhausted."

The device was considered a friend, too. It was the constant companion anywhere especially in solitary situations. As the various features of the device were interactively

operated, relief was eventually elicited as a person's presence was seemingly felt. This scenario was reported by a focus group three participant.

"I used to pretend looking at my phone whenever I am alone. So, it is my friend because I used to pretend looking at my phone when I am not doing anything. It appears awkward for me when I am alone. I am really afraid when it seems I am all alone. I used to pretend looking at my phone as if I am doing something. I am really anxious."

Manner of the Mobile Phone usage

Uses of the Mobile Phone

Communication Tool

The mobile phone was found to be useful for various concerns. The device was generally seen as a primary channel of the virtual communication or connection by the functionally attached and structurally attached participants.

In the virtual connection of both categories, two types of social relationships were consistently cited. Connections were usually directed to their families and friends for various reasons. Within the family, issues regarding financial needs, relationships, update of one's life, academic concerns, and errands or tasks were the usual themes of connection. *"It's really about problems like money, shortage of what has been given, immediate need, and tuition fee when I send text messages to my parents (focus group 2)"*

On the other hand when it comes to their friends or classmates, the themes were mostly dwelling on academic tasks or school activities, update of one's life or latest happenings, and gossips. *"I usually text my classmates about academic affairs like updates of our projects and practices. I use mobile phone in order to contact my friends especially my group mates when we have case studies (focus group 1)."*

Utility Device

Both categories were also noted to have utilized the auxiliary features of the mobile phone like calendar, alarm clock, reminder, organizer, note pad, etc. The said features were found to be helpful in keeping abreast of their academic responsibilities and social functions in the family and in their circle of friends. *"I also use it as alarm clock so that I can wake up early to attend my 7:30 morning duty (focus group 1)."*

Means of Entertainment and Fun

The mobile phone was further considered as a gadget for entertainment and fun by most of the structurally attached participants. Listening to music or audio files and playing of microvideo games came out as the usual forms of pastime. *"I usually listen to my favorite songs that are new just like Hillsongs and acoustics (focus group 3)."* Another participant in the same focus group cited how she used her mobile phone for amusement and fun. *"I sometimes play games in my cell phone like Snakes and Sudoku. I am also viewing pictures, any pictures, repeatedly viewing them to get rid of boredom (focus group 3)."* It was also used to access the Internet by a single participant whenever she experienced boredom. Her mobile phone was found to be equipped with advanced features. *"I am also accessing Internet through my phone whenever I am bored (focus group 1)."*

Emotional Pacifier

Among the structurally attached participants who were noted to be using the mobile phone anywhere, the device was not merely used for entertainment and fun but was viewed as

well as a provider of emotional comfort in idle or solitary situations. Similar to the feeling of being accompanied by somebody in sought of friends or company, the interactive features of the device evidently superseded anxiety and eventually reciprocated relief and calmness. *"I am also using it as if I am sending text messages when I am idle and alone though I felt very stupid. I did it by playing with my phone because I do not know what to do when I went to NSO considering that I had run out of text load and had no one to talk to (focus group 1)."*

Setting Where Mobile Phones were Usually Used

The difference of setting or situation where the mobile phones were usually used was not clearly distinctive between the functionally and structurally attached users. The general disparity instead was seen between the focus group 2 and the rest of the groups. The former oftentimes identified their homes or residences, whereas the latter reflected fluidity as they frequently used the device anywhere as possible. *"Wherever I go, at home, school, malls, gimmick, jeep, anywhere, my cell phone is always here with me (focus group 1)."* Seemingly, the economic status and the scholarship grants of participants in the focus group two may have influenced restriction or limitation on the way their mobile phones were used. Besides the fact that their financial capacity to own technologically advanced units was limited, they were likely used to the old policy that scholarship grantees could not use their mobile phones while rendering their duties or staying inside the school premises. *"I usually use it at home because we are not allowed to use it in school (focus group 2)."*

Dealing with Text Messages or Phone Calls

Setting Aside

The functionally attached participants were observed to frequently set aside received text messages or phone calls than the structurally attached ones as they were used to place their mobile phones in their bags. *"Honestly, I am not responsible when it comes to my phone because it is left at home most of the time. It seems that my phone is not the topmost priority inside my bag (focus group 1)."* However, further specific reasons why text messages or phone calls were at times set aside or ignored were also seen in both categories. The first one pointed out a cautious use of the device in the midst of formal events like classes, meetings or Eucharistic Celebrations. *"My phone is always turned silent and vibrating. I do not use ring tones because I am ashamed of being noticed by everyone around when I am attending important events like meetings and masses. I just also ignore and do not reply usual message (focus group 1)."* The second reason described a feeling of banality wherever general messages in the form of quotes or passages were received. *"But when it is like text quotes or asking me how I am, I am sorry since I really do not reply (focus group 1)."* Thirdly, an attitude of timidity on phone conversation was seemingly shunning others to answer or pick up calls. *"I am a person who does not like to answer phone calls. I prefer text messaging. Sometimes with calls, I am putting it in a silent mode, and I am not answering it (focus group 3)."* The next one talked about disregard of messages or calls as caused by one's prejudices towards the sender or caller. *"When I do not like to text the person, I usually tell him/ her that I have a class (focus group 3)."* Lastly, there was disinterest to reply whenever messages or calls were coming from unregistered phone numbers. *"I tend to disregard calls from unsaved numbers because it is unnoticeable in my phone. The importance of phone calls is eventually known when it is followed by a text message (focus group 2)."*

Eliciting Immediate Replies

The structurally attached, on the other hand, were bent to elicit immediate answers or replies. They were inclined to frequently check their mobile phones when ring tones were seemingly perceived. *"When it vibrates, even if it is silent, I can likely feel that there is a text message. So, I look at it. I have an attachment to my cell phone. I can feel the radar (focus group 3)."* However, both categories were noted to be prompt when text messages or phone calls were found to be coming from their parents. Generally, they were inclined to think that important concerns were meant to be conveyed especially by those who were living away from their families. *"Text messages from my family are mostly made when they really need something. They just do not need send messages for nonsense matter (focus group 2)."* This sense of urgency was seen in the report of Kopomaa (2000) that parents bought their children mobile phones to reassure and supervise the children regardless of where they were and what they were doing. Both categories were also bound to do the same when the messages were found to convey important concerns regardless of who the sender or caller was. *"When it comes to a phone call, I really answer it because it is so unusual to receive one and it is likely very important. When somebody calls you up it means there is something very important (focus group 1)."*

Moreover, aside from their parents or families, the structurally attached participants were also inclined to elicit immediate replies when the sender or caller was somebody whom they like or get attached with. *"But when I like the person even when we have a class, reply is really made (focus group 3)."*

In classroom scenario, the structurally attached ones were also noticed to easily reply messages when the discussions or lectures appeared to be boring. *"But I can reply when I am not doing something or the class is boring (focus group 3)."*

Manner of the Internet Usage

Uses of the Internet

Research Tool

Like the mobile phones, the Internet was seen to be helpful for several functions. The most useful function of the Internet in the lives of the functionally and structurally attached participants as students was its capability to provide facts and information of all sorts. As lessons and subject matter were instantly sought anytime with ease, the Internet evidently became surrogate for books and other references or even the libraries. Making use of authors' or writers' ideas was made effortless as well as text documents were instantly copied and pasted in computer office applications. Additionally, the Nursing Research Database of SPC may have been considered as one of major Internet resources of the students. *"Internet is really one of my important resources aside from my handouts especially in studying the concepts of nursing subjects. I just access and read further the topics that are not well understood or unclear (focus group 1)."*

Communication Tool

Perhaps, being able to connect to different people especially those who were residing in far places made the communication function of the Internet equally usable. The Internet brought instantaneous relationship to an exponentially increasing population throughout the globe (Gergen, 2000). This form of usage was noticeably visible among the structurally attached participants. They were using electronic mail, Facebook, and other chat engines just to get in touch with others. Kennedy, et al., (2008) accounted that the Internet is a key tool for young people to communicate, meet new friends and keep in touch with old ones. Generally, updates

of personal or individual lives were the common issues being discoursed about. *"I am often using the Internet because I am always on access with Facebook. We always chat and have ladies talk with my best friend through YM. Our talk is mostly about how we are doing. We are telling each other what happened to us in a day (focus group 3)."* However, for the functionally attached participants, the communication function of the Internet was primarily used for academic purpose. The electronic mail account was usually maintained to share and circulate important academic documents to other classmates or group mates in the study or project. *"I use the Internet in order to do research. I also use it to email our thesis especially that we have not submitted yet (focus group 1)."*

Means of Entertainment and Fun

Probably, this form of usage may not be as useful as the previous functions. However, all participants were noted to have experienced getting amused in at least one of its many features like music, videos, games, TV shows, and news and fashion. However, the structurally attached ones were mostly found to indulge further and get hooked up. *"I also love viewing videos and entertainment in YouTube, particularly America's Got Talent because I can never catch it on TV (focus group 1)."*

Place Where Internet was Usually Accessed

Between the two categories of technology attachment, there was no apparent difference in matters concerning the place or setting where the Internet was usually accessed. An apparent difference was rather seen in the focus group two. Many in the said group were observed to have been renting only at an hourly rate in the Internet café. *"But I go to the Internet café outside when my Internet card (school access) is fully consumed (focus group 2)."* The focus groups one and three on the other hand were mostly noticed to have been using the Internet through the private connection of their respective residences. *"I only use Internet at home because I have no patience and I am easily annoyed at school where connection is very slow and computer units are already old as well (focus group 1)."* At times, the Internet was also accessed in Wi-Fi zones by those who owned a mobile computer or laptop. *"I usually use Internet inside my room because it is reachable by Wi-Fi (focus group 3)."* The difference was likely related to the economic status of the focus group participants. Generally, the more accessible the Internet was to them, the more frequently it was used.

Usual Responses When Internet Usage was Interrupted Persistence in Using the Internet

Interruptions are social interactions with families and friends or technical incidences that cease the participant from using the Internet. Such incidences were seen to be responded to with persistence in the usage. Their response was observed to involve disregard of interruption and continuation of Internet access.

Generally, regardless of technology attachment types, persistence was manifested whenever completion of tasks through the Internet was highly urgent or academic related like course assignments and researches. *"But I tend to prioritize my research tasks when interruptions are merely minor. I just say hello to my classmates when they are around and I immediately go back to my tasks (focus group 2)."* The same form of response was also elicited every time they got stuck on the websites that provide online networking, games, videos, music, etc. *"I usually ignore interruptions when using the Internet. I am often scolded during mealtimes because I always say yes, yet still stuck in the Internet. Though my mother is already grumbling,*

my focus on the Internet is still persisting. Sometimes, I eat my meal in front of the computer (focus group 2)."

Moreover, those with private connections in their respective households were inclined to assert continuous usage when interruptions were merely caused by the younger or submissive siblings. *"I really agree with my younger sibling and eventually get angry when he bothers what I am doing. He is often telling me that I have been viewing it many times since (focus group 3)."* Parents or guardians with tolerant attitude were also noted to perpetuate prolonged Internet usage. *"When it comes to my father and mother or sister I tend to request amiably if I seemingly want to continue using. My parents are not really authoritative (focus group 3)."* Others were noted as well to observe schedule of usage or to find time to wake up at dawn to enjoy nonstop use. On the other hand, participants who were living away from their families in residences or dormitories with Internet connection had claimed to have barely experienced minimal interruptions or none at all. Thus, Internet connection was taken solo all throughout. *"But no one really interrupts my Internet usage when I am in Davao (focus group 1)."*

Attended to the Interruptions

Their response tendency is described as the transitory halting of Internet usage to accommodate the concerns of the family members or friends. Similar to the previous one, without distinction to a specific technology attachment category, Internet activities were readily forgone when issues being posed by others were more important or pressing. *"I also compromise when I only use Facebook since it is not that necessary and it can really wait (focus group 1)."* Also, parental authority was still noted to discipline continuous Internet use. Generally, obedience and fear were evident over an imminent anger and scolding. *"I really obey instantly to avoid being scolded when my mother has errands at home in General Santos. I am also ashamed of being chided. Besides, the Internet is just there and can wait, instead of inciting rise of blood pressure of my mother (focus group 3)."* A tendency to give up Internet usage was manifested too when the quality of connection was too slow to access favorite websites or when the computer being used was not their property.

Quarrel Out of Interruption

Among the structurally attached participants, continuous Internet use was causing trouble with their siblings. In some instances, argument and quarrel were noted over a seemingly unwilling behavior to relinquish one's turn or to share the schedule for use. *"But sometimes, he would not simply stop that he needs to be told harshly (focus group 1)."* The quarrel of a single participant had even led to a physical fight. *"We had even engaged physically because of such situation especially when our usage is for important reasons (focus group 1)."*

Manner of Face-to-face Conversation with the Family The Family Members Usually Conversated with

The face-to-face conversation with the parents and the siblings was noted to have frequently taken place in the family irrespective of the type of technology attachment the participants were identified with. In particular, the conversation with the mother was more frequent compared to the father, and the conversation with the sibling whom they happened to share the same personal interest frequently came about compared to the rest of the siblings.

Usual Issues or Concerns

Conversation with Parents

The face-to-face conversation with parents was noticed to dwell on academic or school concern oftentimes. It included issues relating to grades, specific performance in the course program, teachers, course requirements, study habits, school fees, and other school needs. *"She (mother) is also asking about how I am doing in school, my school needs like my books and how I studied my lessons (focus group 2)."* At times, updates on one's personal life were observed as well as the focus of the conversation. These consisted of themes on one's social relationships, love life, conflict, crushes, likes or preferences, or any experiences concerning how one's personal life was. *"She has been asking me also if I have already a boyfriend. I am telling her as well that I have only suitors since they are not allowing me yet to have one (focus group 1)."* Moreover, matters on information and interest were discussed too as a means to promote bonding. This theme had something to do with current events, social controversies, fashion, games, TV series, artist-celebrities, life of others or any topic indirectly associated with one's life or outside of one's life. *"When I am with my father, it is about current events or news. He is also opinionated which is why we often argue as we differ in opinions on some issues. But that is seemingly my bonding moments with him (focus group 1)."*

Conversation with Siblings

The most talked about theme in the conversation with the closest sibling was seemingly on issues pertaining to information and interest. Anything that came into their minds or *"anything under the sun"* as what they exactly uttered, like TV shows, movies, gadgets, trends or fashions, and lives of others was readily discussed. *"We also talk a lot with my elder sister about personal matters and all because we seem to jive in almost everything (focus group 3)."* Likewise, updates on personal lives such as crushes, love life, and gossip were included more frequently in the intimate talk and bonding. *"When it comes to my sister, we usually talk about crushes. She also shares with me about her boyfriend especially their quarrels, happiness, and escapades (focus group 2)."* In some instances, issues on academic or school concerns were also conveyed. *"We discuss too about school matters especially that she seems to have neglected her studies. Sometimes, I get annoyed of her because she often wakes up late (focus group 1)."*

Unclear Messages in Face-to-face Conversation

Conversation with Parents

Unclear messages are spoken words or phrases that are not understandable in the midst of the conversation. These are present in some instances if not most of the time. As noted in the conversation with parents, the inclination to ask or inquire right away what the unclear statements were all about was the general behavior. *"My mother often makes me unsatisfied of her statement. For instance, when she is interrupted while asking me if I know about something, she would no longer talking about it. When I make a follow-up by asking her what she said a while ago I eventually laugh as she could no longer recall what it was. Sometimes, she seems to easily forget what she said (focus group 3)."* However, when conversations were getting emotionally charged, the tendency to withhold one's doubt was also manifested. *"But when I get offended of her (mother), I tend to withdraw and keep my anger to myself yet remain responsive when asked (focus group 2)."*

Conversation with Siblings

Almost the same pattern of response was observed in their conversation with siblings. Any subject that went unclear was readily discussed further. *"However, when something seems unclear on my part, I tend to force them to give answers and I mostly respond with further questions (focus group 2)."* However, argument or quarrel was also seen to result at times when issues were not taken seriously or withheld intently for the purpose of creating annoyance or humor. *"Sometimes when my sister tells me something or tries to relay a story but my attention is focused on my text messages, TV programs, or my studies, she usually yells at me to get me to listen. But there are times when she grumbles because she seems hurt. That is why I grumble as well that often leads to argument and quarrel. We sometimes spank each other. After which, we often wait who will initiate conversation (focus group 1)."*

Emotionally Charged Face-to-face Conversation Conversation with Parents

Emotionally charged interactions are face-to-face conversations that involved strong feelings of anger, anxiety, joy, etc. These situations were noted to be dealt with silence and reticence by those who were bent to avoid any forms of reproof. *"I tried to make pretension that I am all okay whenever I am offended of my father's statement. I am also inclined not to show my anger because I feel he has also helped me. When there is anger, I see, to lessen our conversation and minimize the words I express. But I still pretend and continue to conceal my anger (focus group 2)."* However, those who were seen expressive or transparent of their temper were likely inclined to elicit grumbling and argument. *"I am very open and vocal when it comes to feelings. For instance, when I am really angry, I often express it using harsh words or those that hit below the belt. That is really my weakness (focus group 1)."* At times, the tendency to slam things around was also revealed by those who cannot contain their anger when argument was seemingly difficult. *"When I get angry, I tend to slam things around. I also tend to ignore her (mother) presence (focus group 2)."*

Conversation with Siblings

Vocal expression of feelings was observed as the usual response when conversation with siblings was charged with anger or irritation. *"We often quarrel harshly with my sister because the manner she responds to my request is really annoying. She tends to be mean and rude in turning down my request. Thus, exchange of grumbling and tirades eventually follows (focus group 1)."* In some instances, the inclination to engage in a physical fight was further manifested by those who were considered hot tempered or intolerant with further annoyance. *"She feels that I am the priority to be given allowance that is why she gets angry with me. She often ignores my presence and throws me a fist, which also provokes me to answer with a fist (focus group 2)."* However, modulated arguments were noted as well in situations where petty quarrels were experienced.

Manner of Virtual Connection with the Family Family Members Usually Connected With

Conversation by means of the mobile phones or the Internet is also known as online or virtual connection. In this context, the parent, particularly the mother and the sibling whom the participants were usually conversing face-to-face were still observable in the connection loop. *"I usually connect with my mama using my mobile phone to ask for my needs especially when there are things that I need to buy or when there are fees that I need to settle (focus group 3)."*

According to Sawhney and Gomez (2000), mothers were the most essential persons with whom to communicate as they seemed central to maintaining the parental and emotional links. It was the mother who provided news and information about others in the family.

However, although almost all connections took place through the use of the mobile phones, the occurrence of connection was also noted to be less frequent. Between the two categories of technology attachment, the functionally attached participants were apparently seen to have minimal virtual connection compared to the structurally attached ones. It somehow coincided with one of the findings of Kennedy, et al., (2008) that only 23 percent of the survey respondents pronounced that Internet and mobile phone had greatly improved their connections with members of their family though they played an important role in keeping in touch with loved ones both near and far. Seemingly, the availability of various technological entertainment features that were mostly exhausting the participants' free time was one of the major factors that affected the frequency of connection. Parents' technological adaptation was also considered a factor. *"I do not have any connections with my mama and dada since they do not know how to use mobile phones (focus group 2)."* Moreover, the network connection preferences and privacy of the siblings were also seen to have contributed to the whole scenario. *"I am connecting very seldom with my younger sister as she uses a Sun Cellular SIM card (focus group 3)."*

Issues or Concerns in Virtual Connection

Virtual Connection with Parents

The virtual connections with parents were noted to contain academic issues that included grades, classes or duty schedules, subject requirements, study habit, etc. *"The text messages I have with mama are only about my studies (focus group 2)."* Update on one's life was also seen as one of the themes which possess situations about how one's life went through especially those who were far from their families *"They are monitoring and asking me always how I am and how my day is. I ask them too how they are because I often get envious of their escapades (focus group 3)."* The previous issues were found as the usually talked about themes of the structurally attached participants.

Financial concerns were observed as well as usual contents of text messages or phone calls just like school fees, allowances, and necessary things to buy. *"He often gets anxious as well when my message requests him to make a call since most of my concerns are all about allowances and other school fees (focus group 1)."* While both categories of technology attachments were noticed to have asked for monetary support in the said means especially by those who were living away from their families, this kind of concern was noticed as the main theme among the functionally attached participants.

Additionally, issues on coordination of household errands or tasks were further observed occasionally. *"She (mother) often sends me text messages about her reminders and errands especially Mary Kay items, which I am often hassled with (focus group 3)."*

All the aforementioned concerns were consistent to the account of Ling (2004) that "parents used the mobile phone to monitor and regulate their teenagers." It was also coherent to the previous result on mobile phone usage reported by Chen and Katz (2009) that the mobile phone was identified as the "most important ICT to keep in touch with parents."

Virtual Connection with Siblings

Issues that were usually found in the virtual connection with siblings were more or less related or continuation of the themes in the face-to-face conversation. It included updates of one's personal life as well as matters concerning interest or entertainment. *"Our topic mostly is about his crushes or his textmates. He often tells me to search the girl in the Facebook especially when he gets refused from online courtship (focus group 2)."* The said themes were

mostly observable among the structurally attached than the functionally attached ones. Financial needs were barely noted, too. It was noticed from a single participant whose academic endeavor was regularly supported by her elder sister.

Unclear Messages in the Virtual Connection ***Virtual Connection with Parents***

Unclear messages in the virtual connection are text messages or phone calls that are found unreadable or unperceivable by the receiver. In the event where parents happened to convey these types of messages, phone call was seen as the usual response by those who claimed impatient with text messaging and had enough phone load for this form of communication. *"I find unclear text messages very hard and irritating as it necessitates longer statements or sometimes paragraphs just to express my thoughts (focus group 1)."* However, inquiries were also made through text messaging by those who admitted to have limited budget. *"I usually ask her to send again the messages or make a call to clarify the message (focus group 3)."* At times, ambiguous messages were merely set aside by those who ran out of mobile phone load or by those who were just seeing their parents at home after their classes. *"Sometimes when I run out of load to send a message or make a call, I rather set it aside until we see each other at home (focus group 1)."*

The difference between the categories of attachment was not really distinctive. Both were noticed to elicit either or a combination of the said responses. Additionally, unclear statements in the midst of phone call were either responded with further questions that often lengthened the talk or elicit instant approval to make the discussion shorter though the message was not really well understood. *"I often say okay even when I am not getting the messages. I am led to say yes or to affirm what was told (focus group 3)."* Wallace (1999) pointed out that there was "high likelihood of both misunderstandings and disproportionate responses in the virtual connection due to the lack of visual and verbal cues to situate utterances." "Insofar as relying on indirect communication, ambiguity is always a problem for improving personal relationships" (Igarashi, Motoyoshi, Takai, & Yoshida, 2008).

Virtual Connection with Siblings

While the virtual connection with a sibling was noted to be less frequent compared to that of the parents, the unclear messages were still dealt with in more or less similar manner. Immediate answers or clarification were often sought through making phone calls by those who prefer phone calls. *"That is why I see to it that my Sun Cellular SIM is loaded with one month unlimited calls so as to readily respond to unclear text messages. I mostly prefer making calls (focus group 1)."* However, text messaging was generally seen as the most accessible means to inquire unclear issues by all mobile phone users. *"I simply ask to repeat the message when it appears unclear (focus group 3)."* Even those who prefer phone calls had also experience text messaging in making inquiries to their siblings especially when connections were clouded with emotions. Moreover, no particular pattern of response was observed that was mainly associated with either of the technology attachment categories.

Emotionally Charged Messages in the Virtual Connection ***Virtual Connection with Parents***

Emotionally charged messages in the virtual world are text messages or phone calls that convey annoyance, anger, disappointment, happiness, etc. to the receiver in the mobile phone or computer. Generally, feelings are evident if not physically visible in relating to each one in the family. In situations where connections with parents were emotionally charged, vocal expression

of feelings in phone call was seemingly experienced by those who prefer phone calls and by those who can openly express their feelings in the face-to-face conversation. Phone call users were observed to have acknowledged that feelings were difficult to express in text messages. *"It is really different in text messaging as feelings are not totally expressed unlike in face-to-face conversation. It is making you lazy as well to compose text messages. There is also a tendency that you will be misunderstood (focus group 1)."* However, text messaging was generally noted as the usual means to express one's feelings in the virtual world. Such practice was seemingly helpful when direct confrontations either through phone call or face-to-face talk were seemingly difficult or too heavy to do. It was seen as well as the only way to purge out resentment or anger according to a few participants. *"I tend to do it in a nice way that my mother does not get hurt. Though I never place exclamation marks or periods in my text messages, she seemingly knows how I feel (focus group 2)."* Castells, Fernandez-Ardevol, Qiu, & Sey, (2007) reported that since the mobile phones were instrumental in negotiating boundaries with their parents, better parent-child relationships were fostered.

It was further observed from those who were inclined to avoid tension, hurting or annoying messages were simply ignored or discarded. *"I don't express anger even through text messages because I'm afraid how mama gets angry when she is offended (focus group 3)."* Troubles were shunned as well by responding safe and uncharged messages though unpleasant feelings were also noticed to have elicited the same response for the purpose of expressing resentment. *"But she can feel my resentments just like when she took back my ATM. I did not reply right away when she monitored me if I was already in my dormitory. I wanted to make her worried because of what she did (focus group 3)."* The aforementioned responses are apparently seen in the studies of Green (2001) and Ling (2004) that teenagers were avoiding the connection of their parents by refusing to answer their mobile phones or by not telling the truth. Koopoma (2000) also testified that the mobile phone allowed the teenagers to get connected.

Moreover, expression of positive and happy feelings towards the parents was generally awkward to do. There was an instance after the annual recollection where everyone was encouraged to say "I love you" to their parents. Since such text message was unusual in the virtual connection, parents were reportedly amazed as they elicited replies. *"I only had such message because I'm not showy to them of my feelings. Besides, I'm not used to do it. I know that I love them but I really feel shy and yucky to talk about it (focus group 3)."*

Virtual Connection with Siblings

Taking into account how emotions were expressed in the context of virtual connection with siblings, vocal expression of feelings in phone calls was consistently elicited by those who prefer phone calls. But text messaging was manifested as the widely used means to convey not only annoyance or anger but appreciation or joy as well. *"Though I also use smiley, clips and graphics that convey feelings like typing the word 'Ngrrr' when angry, I still find them inadequate (focus group1)."* Igarashi, et al. (2008) noted that "emoticons and paralinguages are other useful ways for expressing senders' feelings in text messages." However, being resentful when irritated or reservation of feelings for a seemingly vindictive face-to-face argument was also seen in rare instances.

The social meaning of the mobile phone and the Internet was found to be influenced by type technology attachment the college students have formed. In the point of view of the functionally attached participants, these ICTs were merely considered utility devices for important social, relational and academic responsibilities. On the other hand, the said instrumental functions were seen basic needs in the construct of the structurally attached participants. As connection with significant others and access to the reservoir of information

were eventually emanated through the existence of the virtual world and were along the way assimilated into the habit and lifestyle, the aforementioned technologies were seen inseparable in day-to-day living. Likewise, emotional attachment was further noted as a bond that held the mobile phone and Internet more valuable in daily routines. The presence of these technological devices was observed to project the spirit of significant others and at the same time the technologies' interactive features were seen to reciprocate a feeling of comfort and relief. Thus, unpleasant emotional responses were exhibited in its absence.

The whole scenario apparently suggests a path of social construction. There was expansion or shift of the purpose or uses of the mobile phone and Internet as shaped by the influential social groups or communities where the focus groups participants were associated with (Bruun & Hukkinen, 2003). Similarly, Gergen (2008) pointed out that the meaning or functions of technology are eventually made or through relationships or interaction of different people.

While the functionally attached and the structurally attached participants did not reveal clear distinction in the face-to-face conversation and in the virtual connection with their respective families, the entire phenomenon is construed to have led significant changes in the family communication and family relationship. The mobile phone and Internet have indeed facilitated fusional relationship (as cited in Peters & Allouch, 2005), stronger intimacy Green, 2001 and global and local interaction and linkages (Horrigan, Rainie, & Fox, 2001). Kennedy et al. (2008) also viewed both technologies as useful means in expanding the face-to-face conversation to the virtual connections with family members and as "positive tools for improving the quality of communication with family members," particularly those who are living away from home.

Additionally, getting specific into the mobile phone, it was cited as the most accessible and widely used technology to obtain and share personal updates in life and academic status. According to Leena, Tomi, and Arjab, (2005), access to the mobile phone is a "vital necessity among the young people and a portable gadget for survival in the modern world." It was also noted to be very instrumental in expressing personal sentiments. Through text messaging, feelings that were held behind in the face-to-face conversation with families especially towards the parents were eventually conveyed indirectly. This is consistent with the findings of Igarashi, et al. (2005) that adolescents were inclined to prefer the indirect communication through text messaging so that obstacles in the face-to-face situation are moderated. On the other hand, the Internet was mostly useful for research on academic matters and entertainment and establishing a virtual connection with friends and classmates or any person outside the family through Facebook and other chat engines. Piazza and Bering (2009) also confirmed in their study that most of the young people are using the Internet to socialize with their current friends, make new friends, share photos and videos, and disclose personal thoughts.

However, irrespective of the technology attachment categories, the virtual connections with parents and siblings were generally infrequent. It somehow coincided with one of the findings of Kennedy, et al. (2008) that only 23 percent of the survey respondents pronounced that the Internet and the mobile phone had greatly improved their connections with members of their family.

Nearness of family members was also noticed to have affected the virtual connection. Participants who were seeing their parents after school activities were inclined not to elicit immediate or further messages replies. This finding was reported too in the study of Mesch (2009), that individuals residing in proximity to their contact and individuals who perceived their relationship as close deemed more likely to communicate face to face.

Moreover, ICTs have also perpetuated communication drawback that are manifested in the form of communicative barrier between the caller and the others who are physically near (Persson, 2001), "absent presence," in which individual's presence became unavailable for others (Gergen, 2002a), contraction in the size of an individual's social network (Kraut, et al.,

1998), isolation and reduction of time spent with significant others brought by the time spent online (Nie & Erbing, 2002).

Most importantly too much attachment to the virtual world is seen to undermine the original, coherent and natural relationships in the family where the true foundation of self and identity (Gergen, 2000) originates. The family as a basic social institution is eventually becoming less influential. Within the family, each member is increasingly owning mobile phones and seeking constant access to the Internet or to the virtual world. Consequently, "geographic propinquity now means little and each member lives a psychologically separated life" (Gergen, 2002b).

In the virtual world where connection and sources of meaning are increased or expanded, social relationship becomes superficial as details of contact and exploration of deeper feeling are made unavailable or less accurate (Gergen, 2002b). Each virtual connection is well bringing new information, opinion, and values into play (Gergen, 2000) that are posing king of individual identity that is fluid where each user is led to make immediate shift from one form of response to another like a chameleon (Gergen, 2002b). Fluid identity is then suggesting a polyvocal type of self that contains multiple views and values that are often conflicting (Gergen, 2000) and confusing. To that effect, the inner self that is supposedly grounded on the family values in making appropriate decisions and choices is led at the footloose and is easily allured to adhere to the popular and practical notions of others in the virtual world that often negates the foundation of the moral self and purpose. Thus, considerable threat is manifested to the formation of "integral and authentic" self (Gergen, 2000) that is purportedly rooted in traditional families and communities.

As the individual self is understood in the context of their family as they are a fraction of the family system, new thoughts and habits they espouse are as well seen to affect the dynamics and nature of the family (Corey, 2005). In this light, the individual self who holds on and assimilates more the notions and the contradicting values of influential media in the virtual world diminishes the chance and opportunity of their family to impart values and formation. In other words, as the family influence and formative role decline, the natural family relationship breaks. As a result, the family loses its grip on the individual self, thereby making the child difficult to understand and form.

As the virtual world of ICT continues to penetrate every household, the foresight of the entire phenomenon can be viewed as a lens by the different formators of the individual self. Parents in particular are seen to have strong authority to exercise caution in the usage of the mobile phone and Internet. There can be effective ways to regulate the usage technically or behaviorally. However, there is no substitute for the family rituals where the entire family frequently spends time together. This scenario is usually exercised and maintained during mealtime, every time casual conversation to any family member pops out, and when household chores are at hand, or when opportunity is seen for outdoor activities and fun. Not even the virtual connection with the family members can replace them. Face-to-face communication, interaction and togetherness can always be path towards sharing personal lives, understanding, and most importantly formation of individual self. An individual self that is founded in accordance with the family values and moral purpose can likely withstand storm of influences posed by various institutions or prominent personalities in the virtual world. Teachers or even school personnel as well are considered **formators** of the individual self. Simple rules in the classroom or inside the school campus can be helpful ways to regulate the usage. The school personnel can even create Internet filters to restrict the access of inappropriate websites. However, school activities that lessen or discourage online indulgence are seemingly better alternative. The different support services of the school can recreate its program to answer this concern. Most of all, the students themselves who are subject of the family values formation should take caution from time-to-time of the information they have browsed online. While they are encouraged to be

critical in terms of values and moral purpose, they are urged as well to lessen or minimize their online indulgence in favor of studies, family rituals, school or church activities.

While the results and discussion of the study may be used to confirm the results of the current researches on the usage of mobile phone and Internet, the degree to which the finding can be generalized is limited due to its sample size. However, the results may be counted as one of the initial findings of which further quantitative researches can be directed. Quantitative studies on the usage and meaning of mobile phone and Internet can eventually establish general profiles for various populations of students for policy and school program formulation or intervention.

References

- Bruun, H. & Hukkinen, J. (2003). Crossing boundaries: An integrative framework for studying technological change. *Social Studies of Science*, SAGE Publications, 33(1), 95-116. Retrieved March 18, 2009, from <http://sss.sagepub.com>
- Castells, M. Fernandez-Ardevol, M., Qiu, J., & Sey, A. (2007). *Mobile communication society: A global perspective*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Chen, Y.F. & Katz, J. E. (2009). Extending family to school life: College students' use of the mobile phone. *International Journal of Human Computer Studies*, 67, 179-191. Retrieved May 4, 2009, from www.elsevier.com/locate/ijhcs
- Corey, G. (2005). *Case approach to counseling and psychotherapy. Overview of the therapeutic perspectives* (6th ed.). Brooks/Cole, Thomson Learning, 7-8.
- Gergen, K. J. (2000). The self in the age of information. *The Washington Quarterly*, 23(1), 201.
- Gergen, K. J. (2001). *Technology, self and moral project*. Retrieved October 19, 2009, from http://swarthmore.edu/documents/-faculty/gergen/Technology_-_Self_and_the_Moral_Project.pdf
- Gergen, K. J. (2008). *Social construction: Revolution in the making*. Retrieved October 19, 2009, from [http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/faculty/gergen/25230_01_Gergen_\(2e\)_Ch_01.pdf](http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/faculty/gergen/25230_01_Gergen_(2e)_Ch_01.pdf)
- Gergen, K. J. (2002a). *Cell phone technology and the challenge of absent presence*. Retrieved October 19, 2009, from http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/faculty/gergen/Cell_Phone_Technology.pdf
- Gergen, K. J. (2002b). *Self and community in the new floating worlds*. Mobile democracy, essays on society, self and politics. Vienna: Passagen. 103-114.
- Green, N. (2001). *Who's watching whom? Monitoring and accountability in mobile relations*. In: Brown, B., Green, N., Harper, R. (eds.). *Wireless world: Social and Interacial aspects of the mobile age*. Springer, London, UK, 32-45.

- Horrigan, J., Rainie, L., & Fox, S. (2001). 'Online communities: Networks that nurture long-distance relationships and local ties.' *Pew Internet and American Life Project*. Retrieved October 19, 2009, from http://www.pewinternet.org/report_display.asp?r=47
- Igarashi, T., Takai, J., & Yoshida, T. (2005). Gender differences in social network development via mobile phone text messages: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 22, 691-713.
- Igarashi, T., Motoyoshi, T., Takai, J., & Yoshida, T. (2008). No mobile, no life: Self-perception and text message dependency among Japanese high school students. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 24, 2311-2324. Retrieved October 19, 2009, from www.elsevier.com/locate/comphumbeh
- Katz, J. E. & Aakhus, M. (2002). *Introduction: Framing the issues*. In: Katz, J. E. & Aakhus, M. (eds.). *Perpetual Contact: Mobile Communication, Private Talk, Public Performance*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 1-14. In: Chen, Y. F. & Katz, J. E. (2009). Extending family to school life: College students' use of the mobile phone. *International Journal of Human Computer Studies*, 67, 179-191. Retrieved May 4, 2009, from www.elsevier.com/locate/ijhcs
- Katz, J. E. & Aakhus, M. A. (2002). *Conclusion: Making meaning of mobiles—a theory of Apparatchgeist*. In Katz, J. E. & Aakhus, M. A. (eds.). *Perpetual Contact: Mobile Communication, Private Talk, Public Performance*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 301-319. In: Peters, O. & Allouch, S. B. (2005). Always connected: A longitudinal field study of mobile communication. *Telematics and Informatics*, 22, 239-256. Retrieved October 19, 2009, from www.elsevier.com/locate/tele
- Kennedy, T. L. M., Smith, A., Wells, A. T. & Wellman, B. (2008). Network families: Parents and spouses are using the Internet and cell phones to create a "new connectedness." *Pew Internet and American Life Project*.
- Kioskea.net (2009). *Games trump deals for Philippines web users: Survey*. Retrieved from en.kioskea.net/news/12364-games-trump-deals-for-philippines-web-users-survey
- Kopomaa, T. (2000). *The city in your pocket: Birth of the mobile information society*. In: Chen, Y. F. & Katz, J. E. (2009). Extending family to school life: College students' use of the mobile phone. *International Journal of Human Computer Studies*, 67, 179-191. Retrieved May 4, 2009, from www.elsevier.com/locate/ijhcs
- Kraut, R., Patterson, M. Lundmark, V., Kiesler, S., Mukopadhyay, T., & Scherlis, W. (1998). 'Internet paradox: A social technology that reduces social involvement and psychological well-being?' *American Psychologist*, 53, 1017-31. In: Cavanaugh, A. (2009). From culture to connection: Internet community studies. *Sociology Compass*, 3/1, 1-15. Retrieved October 19, 2009, Journal Compilation, Blackwell Publishing, Ltd.
- Leena, K., Tomi, L. & Arjab, R. (2005). Intensity of mobile phone use and health compromising behaviours-how is information and communication technology connected to health-related lifestyle in adolescence? *Journal of Adolescence* 28 (2005) 35-47
- Ling, R. (2004). The mobile connection: The cell phone's impact on society. Morgan Kaufmann publishers, San Francisco, CA. In: Chen, Y. F. & Katz, J. E. (2009). Extending family to

- school life: College students' use of the mobile phone. *International Journal of Human Computer Studies*, 67, 179-191. Retrieved May 4, 2009, from www.elsevier.com/locate/ijhcs
- McQuail, D. (2001) With more hindsight: conceptual problems and some ways forward for media use research. *Communications: The European Journal of Communication Research*, 26(4), 337-350. In: Peters, O. & Allouch, S. B. (2005). Always connected: A longitudinal field study of mobile communication. *Telematics and Information*, 22, 239-256. Retrieved October 19, 2009, from www.elsevier.com/locate/tele
- Mesch, G. S. (2009). Social context and communication channels choice among adolescents. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 25, 244-251. Retrieved August 15, 2009, from www.elsevier.com/locate/comphumbeh
- Nie, N. H. & Erbing, L. (2002). Internet and Society: A Preliminary Report. *IT & Society*, 1, 275-283. In: Cavanaugh, A. (2009). From Culture to Connection: Internet Community. *Sociology Compass*, 3/1, 1-15. Retrieved October 19, 2009, Journal Compilation, Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Persson, A. (2001). Intimacy among strangers: On mobile telephone calls in public places. *Journal of Mundane Behavior*, 2(3). Retrieved May 4, 2009, from <http://www.mundanebehavior.org/issues/v2n3/persson.htm>.
- Peters, O. & Allouch, S. B. (2005). Always connected: A longitudinal field study of mobile communication. *Telematics and Informatics*, 22, 239-256. Retrieved October 19, 2009, from www.elsevier.com/locate/tele
- Piazza, J. & Bering, J. M. (2009). Evolutionary cyber-psychology: Applying an evolutionary framework to Internet behavior. *Computers in Human Behavior*. Retrieved August 15, 2009, from www.elsevier.com/locate/comphumbeh
- Sawhney, H. & Gomez, H. (2000). *Communication patterns in domestic life: Preliminary ethnographic study*. Retrieved May 4, 2009, from <http://web.media.mit.edu/~nitin/ethno/DomesticEthno.pdfS>.
- Wallace, P. (1999). *The psychology of the Internet*. In: Cavanaugh, A. (2009). From Culture to Connection: Internet Community Studies. *Sociology Compass*, 3/1, 1-15. Retrieved October 19, 2009, Journal Compilation, Blackwell Publishing, Ltd.