
Impact Of Computer Mediated Communication On Youths

(With Special Reference to Youths In Raipur City)

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ABSTRACT:

From the research it was found that Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) has increasingly becoming a way of expression and way of life for a good segment of youths in the city. The entire world has shrunk to their CMC arena and they have the conviction that it has enhanced their cross-cultural understanding, personal relationship and their knowledge. In terms of interpersonal relationship, the respondents had it that the CMC has in fact, strengthened and expanded their interpersonal Relationship scope with their friends, class mates and in some occasion with their family.

However issues like indulgence to computers and social networking sites, privacy and leakage & misuse of personal information have also been identified as the main areas of concern by these youths as they are trying to cope with the situation in their CMC communication.

INTRODUCTION:

Science fiction author William Gibson invented the term ‘Cyberspace’ in 1981 to describe a new virtual world: ‘a consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators in every nation, by children being taught mathematical concepts A graphical representation of data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system. (1)’ Cyberspace is geographically unlimited, non-physical space, in which –independent of time, distance and location-transactions take place between people, between computer and between people and computers.

Cyberspace comprises of all forms of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) that includes networks that connects telephones, mobiles fax machines through digital electronics,

digitally operated controlled systems, transportation systems, digitally operated appliances and robots. We participate in cyberspace when we surf the web, chat with our friends over face book or tweeter or over instant messaging, when we book a train/flight ticket or swipe our debit/credit cards etc. These are all the parts of a computer mediated communication (CMC) where computer plays a significant role.

When computer is conceptualised as a medium rather than a source, the focus shifts from the computer as an entity with which human users interact to the computer as a conduit of content that human users actively use. The computer as medium (CAM) model is often equated with CMC when the computer is considered a medium between human interactants i.e. interpersonal and group communications mediated by computers.

A random national survey of 1071 American adults by Perse and Dunn (2) found that individuals who felt that computers were able to fulfil a media-related need were likely to report greater use of this technology. Guided by uses and gratification theory, this study also showed that users focus more on gratifications offered by the medium as a whole.

The objective of the study was to find out the behavioural pattern of uses of social networking sites and its impact on the life of the youths of Raipur City. With the objective to study the behavioural pattern of uses of social networking sites and its impact on the life of the youths of Raipur City, data was collected from 100 youths from the city.

According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), “Youth” is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. Youth is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group. On the other hand, the United Nations (UN), for statistical consistency across regions, defines ‘youth’, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. All UN statistics on youth are based on this definition, as illustrated by the annual yearbooks of statistics published by the United Nations system on demography, education, employment and health.(3)

According to Wikipedia, ‘Around the world, the English terms youth, [adolescent](#), teenager, kid, and young person are interchanged, often meaning the same thing, but they are

occasionally differentiated. Youth can refer to the entire time of life when one is young, including childhood, but often refers specifically to the time of life that is neither childhood nor adulthood but rather somewhere in between. Youth also identifies a particular mindset of attitude, as in "He is very youthful". The term also refers to individuals between the ages of 16 and 24. (4)

First the selection of youths was made on the basis of random selection and then they were asked to fill questionnaire. Analysis of the data thus collected, shows that 92 out of a total of 100 i.e. 92 percent of the youths in the age group of 16-24 are active users of CMC. While some are logging on to the internet for finding study materials and references, a good number of them have responded that they uses the medium for chatting, instant messaging and getting updates about fashion, movies etc.. figure shows that about 24 % of the CMC users (22) log-on to the computers/ internet for finding study materials and references where as rest uses the medium for finding friends, chatting, messaging or seeking information related to fashion, movie etc.. The rest 08 are not unknown to the internet but their hooking on to the net is irregular and was guided by need.

Out of the total CMC uses in this short research it was found that, 84 percent have completed their graduation where as the rest are undergraduates. Again amongst the graduates, more than 50 per cent are continuing studies like post graduation, professional skill development courses or preparations for competitive examinations.

On a question of time devoted on social networking sites, 77 respondents had it that on an average 24 hours were being spent per week on surfing the web and logging on to network sites. This implies that about three and half hours per day are being spent by the youths of the city on network sites and browsing the computers. 10 respondents had it that they spent less than one hour per day on networking sites where as 13 youths said they were hooked to the net between 1-3 hours per day.

When asked as to the negative impact of their indulgence to the CMC, a good number of the respondents (76) said there was no such negative impact. In fact, a whopping 77 % from them have admitted that their interpersonal communication with their friends and family members

got better. The rest 24 had admitted of experiencing negative impact of their over indulgence to the internet. Interestingly all these respondents were logging on to the net for more than 24 hour a week.

To the question as to whether their relationship with their family has been affected as they spend more time on surfing the internet and networking sites, 68 respondents had admitted that, it does affect their relationship to some extent. On the other hand 11 respondents said there was no such thing.

The respondents, though admitted that they were aware about the loss of privacy and confidential information by the users, said they have had no such personal experience as such.

On a question as to whether their communicative language has been modified/ corrupted as they have shifted to their communication to CMC, 56 % answered in affirmatively where as the rest felt that there was no such change in their communicative language.

CONCLUSION:

From the research, it can well be concluded that CMC communication with its speed, agility and interactiveness has been replacing the conventional mode of communication. And youths are becoming the change agent by hooking to the computer day-in and day-out for all kind of their works. Youths in the city while finding the CMC suitable for their interpersonal communication, cross cultural understanding and enhancing their knowledge, they are little apprehensive about losing privacy and losing personal information which may be used by others.

LIMITATIONS:

The results of this research, which is conducted amongst a smaller sample (i.e. 100) may not entirely hold good, when taken in the perspective of the entire city. However, it could well be said that the results are indicative of the trend of the CMC use by the youths in the city and their perception towards its positive and negative impacts.

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