

Implications of Domesticated Modern Media Technologies on Family Cohesion in Punjab, Pakistan

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Abstract

Today, we are part of the world which is fully equipped with a variety of modern media technologies that have great impact for our lives. Modern media technologies have changed the world with new tools of communication especially; internet has revolutionized the world by introducing most efficient ways of communication and interaction such as video calling and live chatting with social networking apps. Moreover, television, video games cellular networks and print media also have enchanted the human life. With these implications media technologies have also affected the lives in family set up. Families are magnificently furnished with all types of tools and equipments of modern media technologies. These technologies are not only used for communication and entertainment but also they have changed the level of cohesion, intimacy and interaction among family members in the household. The present study has examined the relationship between modern media technologies being used in the family and extent of social cohesion among individuals. The research focused on exploring the ways by which the modern media technologies are playing a vital role in everyday lives of the families in the modern age. A sample of 600 hundred respondents was investigated from three Districts of the Punjab i.e. Faisalabad, Multan and Rawalpindi. Data were collected through a well-structured interview schedule. Collected information was analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings obtained from collected data show that modern media technologies are immersed into the household and negatively affecting the family cohesion within household through decreasing intensity and duration of interaction among family members.

Keywords: Media Technologies, Family Cohesion, Communication, Linear Regression

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Introduction

Modern media technologies have a major implication on society as a whole. The concentration of such technologies into social settings, especially the household, is having an enormous influence on the frequency and intensity of social interaction among individuals. It is very clear from current literature that media technologies are influencing the nature of social interaction within family in a number of forms. These technologies can support in boosting up interaction among families by bringing family members and generations together. As a consequence, they can assist bridge digital and generational divides. Contrariwise, these media technologies within a household can grow privatization within family life, with the use of technology by the individuals independently instead of jointly (Corcoran, 2012). The adoption of technology is usually related to the teenagers and youngsters. They are considered generally as the first adopters of technology and accused for over using it (Watkins, 2009).

There has been a stress on how children utilize media, but there is also a little debate on the patterns that is used by parents to employ media. Although it might be a tough idea to understand that like the other members of society parents also are people, media is a basic element in their everyday lives. Parents may use technology in different ways as compared to their children. They may consider it as a resource to accomplish different activities that are required by their parenthood (Jordan et al., 2006). Video games and TV appeared to take the family together, particularly with youngsters or children having same age with common wishes. Conversely, it seemed that cell phones, computers, and mp3 players led to social, physical, or both type of isolation from other family members (Venkatesh, 1997).

It is notable that while we observed the incidents of "media-driven isolation" where one member of a family becomes isolated from other family members due to the extensive use of media technologies; it was also noted the examples of "isolation-driven media use" where a member of family utilized media due to pre-existing isolation from the other family (Dye, 2010).

Modern Media Technologies Implications for Family Cohesion

The communication life of humans has become easier due to modern media technologies. Media technologies are becoming less expensive with the passage of time and even a lay man can also easily purchase and use these technologies. The society has moved to instant interaction among family, friends, and organizations from writing and printing way of communication. The internet made it easier with chatting, twitting, emails, blogging and Facebook. Smart phone is another new technology

that includes a number of functions like taking pictures, video, text messages, organizer, calculator, music player and games. Today, the people are living in the world of unlimited media and the access of unlimited media has altered the desires of modern age. Media is not only a source of information for the people, but also has an influence their way of thinking and forming their attitudes. In this respect the internet has become the widely used and fastest growing medium, particularly in the West. The estimations say that, there were 513,410,000 users of internet worldwide in August 2001. The period in which the internet became widely available to consumers is another sign of the internet's flourishing growth (Rooh-e-Aslam et al., 2009).

On the other hand we are facing a number of challenges due to these media technologies and our lives have become more complicated. With an intensive consumption of these technologies we are lagging interpersonal communication among our family, friends and colleagues. In a family a person engaged in watching television does not interact with any other person during watching television. The findings of a national survey of media conditions among American children aged two through eighteen was alarming as they concluded that "the average child consumed six hours and thirty-two minutes per day in using all kinds of media, and they spent average about forty five minutes in reading books and magazines (Busy, 2005).

The introduction of modern media technologies into the family has the capacity to encourage and discourage social interaction between individuals within the household. Various scholars give different arguments regarding the effects of media on children. They outline a negative point of view that digital media has been claimed in the past to have had on children; as being "the death of childhood" (Buckingham, 2000).

Television, computers and games have negative impacts on children. These technologies lead them towards social isolation. Their social intellectual, imagination and linguistic development are at risk due to increased social isolation. Moreover, as children are spending increased time indoors, their well-being is under threat, and they are at risk of obesity. It reduced the opportunities for interactions within household that is essential for their emotional development. In other words, modern media technologies are putting negative effect on social interaction between individuals and family members within a household (Plowman et al., 2010).

With the domestication of media more time of the people is spent in their bedrooms for individualization and consumerism. Consequently, it is increasing the "privatization of children's lives". Young people and

children are becoming socially excluded and more individualized and consequently, they spend less time with families. This phenomenon is having a significant effect on social interaction and communication among family members. It shows a negative association “between spending free time with the family and spending time in the bedroom”. Media rich bedrooms provide facilities which provide sharing of media not with family but with friends (Bovill and Livingstone, 2001). It is very clear that television is a means of interaction on a parallel basis in which every member of the family interacts with television more than interacting with each other when the television is on. This is totally distinctive to things such as sports and meals where interactive communication happens. Various studies have revealed that when the television is on, fathers and children are fewer of the time concentrated towards each other; they don't talk too much and have less positive facial expressions than when the television is switched off. The interaction between the members of the family is increased during commercials but it goes back to a lower level again with resuming the program (Bolen, 2006). The online interactive social networking like MySpace and Facebook has changed the methods of communication among families. In a study conducted at Indiana University investigated parents for their views on the use of modern media technologies. Some of the parents described that a child who is socially isolated may become more isolated because all of his/her activities are performed on the computer. Conversely, other parents stated internet could assist a potentially depressed child. This situation can be controlled if parents join their children through Facebook. In this way they can monitor the online activities of children and their conversations with friends. Researchers have analyzed that even though Facebooking, text messaging and IMing are fun, fast communication tools that youngsters love, most of their serious conversations still come to pass offline (Sorensen, 2015).

Significance of the study

The present study has designed to explore the implications of domesticated modern media technologies on the family cohesion. Today, we live in a sophisticated and modern media technology era that certainly contributes to changing the extent of bonding among family members. Families are magnificently furnished with all types of tools and equipments of modern media technologies. These technologies are not only used for communication and entertainment but also they have changed the level of cohesion, intimacy and interaction among family members in the household. The present study has examined the relationship between modern media technologies being used in the

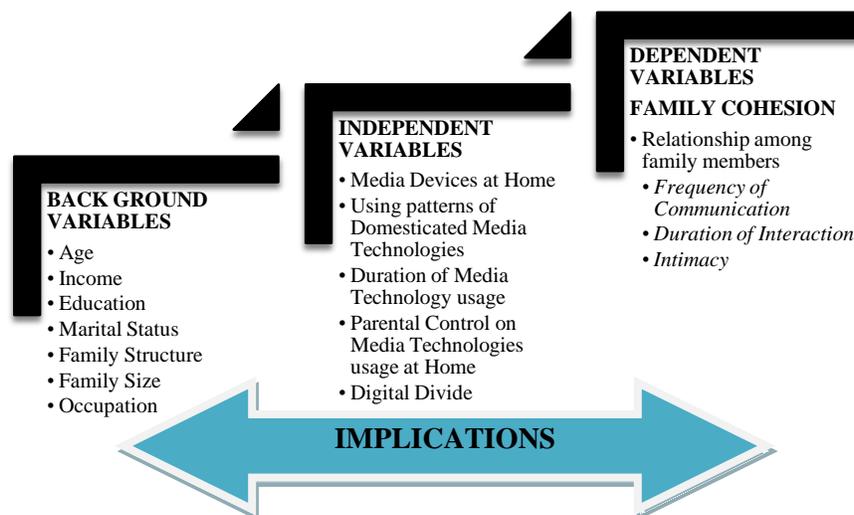
family and extent of social cohesion among individuals. The research focused on exploring the ways by which the modern media technologies are playing a vital role in everyday lives of the families in the modern age. There was a need to deal with a matter that has a great impact on family cohesion by changing the dimensions and nature of family members' relationships. The study will contribute to fill the gap in such a specific research area.

Objectives of The Study

- To examine the relationship between the utilization of domesticated media and family cohesion and to recommend some possible measures to keep the family organization undisturbed despite the interference of media technologies

Conceptual Frame Work

The variables used in the present research are identified and categorized in a diagram shape known as conceptual frame work. Through conceptual framework the theme of study is explained in form of different categories of variables such as background, independent and dependent variables. In this way a comprehensive blueprint of research problem is formed which depicts a tentative relationship among variables. The variables are formulated by consulting existing literature about the research problem.



Materials and Methods

The observations are examined through a comprehensive system of methodology which has a significant importance in research. Social researcher use modern tools and techniques in the sociological

investigation to probe the problem of contemporary period. Social scientists now use the complicated procedural approaches in the social science research (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992)”. The precision of analytical analysis, reliability and validity significantly depend upon scientific methodology. The present study was conducted in the Punjab Province of Pakistan. Three Districts Faisalabad, Multan and Rawalpindi were selected from Central, Northern and Southern zones of Punjab province. Using multistage sampling one tehsil from each district was selected at first stage. At second stage two Union councils were selected from each tehsil. Two localities were selected from each union council at third stage. A sample of 600 respondents was drawn from the selected twelve localities randomly. Moreover, data were collected with the help of a well-structured interview schedule and processed through SPSS. Multiple linear regression was applied to check the relationship among different variables.

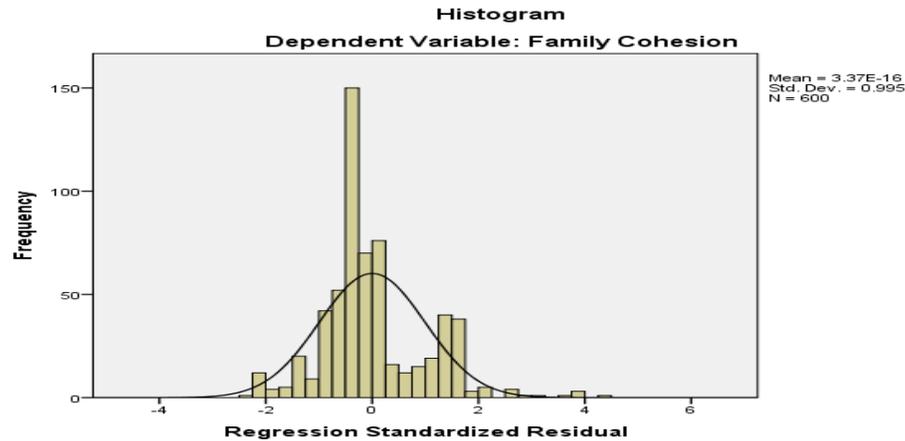
Results And Discussions

Analysis and discussion about the information gathered by the researcher and its explanation is the important and main portion of the research work. Overall generalization and implementation researcher is unable to give proper forecasting about the social world that is the main goal of the social research.

Multiple Linear Regression Model

Table 1: Effect of numerous explanatory variables on response variable (Family Cohesion): A multiple linear regression analysis

Independent variable	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t _{cal.}	Significance (P-Value)
	b _i	Std. Error	β _i		
(Constant)	-1.080	0.113		-9.554	0.000**
Number of media Technologies/devices in the home (X ₁)	0.120	0.032	0.167	3.798	0.000**
Number of SNS use (X ₂)	0.213	0.028	0.232	7.550	0.000**
Average time spend on media usage (X ₃)	0.231	0.026	0.293	8.999	0.000**
Use of cellular phone packages (X ₄)	-0.149	0.044	-0.129	-3.419	0.001**
Parental control (X ₅)	0.414	0.045	0.320	9.116	0.000**
Excessive use of modern media technologies (X ₆)	0.223	0.036	0.174	6,195	0.000**
Adjusted R ² = 0.614		F = 159.483		P-Value (Significance) = 0.000**	
** = Highly Significant, Response Variable: Family Cohesion					



The value of R-Square is 0.614. The analysis shows that 61.4 percent change in family cohesion was explained by six variables that were highly significant with each other. The value of the contributory factors predicts that domestication of modern media technologies greatly influenced the family cohesion. The overall significance of the model can also be judged by the value of ANOVA i.e. $F=159.483$ which is highly significant at less than one percent level of significant. The value of constant predicts, when all the variables (X) are equal to zero then intercept is below the zero and have negativity in the regressor and regressand. It indicates that intercept has inverse relationship with the dependent variable (Y) when independent variables (X) are equal to zero. The variable wise portrayal of the results drawn from regression model is given below:

Number of Modern Media Technology sources/devices in the Home

The coefficient of this variable had a positive sign with value 0.120 i.e. highly significant at 1 percent level of significance. It depicts that more than one media device used by the individual to access the media technologies made 12.0 percent change in the family cohesion in form of decreasing intimacy among family members. So it was concluded that youth spending greater time on media technologies from different sources affected the family cohesion in a negative way.

Use of Social Networking Sites (SNS)

Regression coefficient of SNS had value 0.213 with a positive sign. It was highly significant at 1 percent level of significance. This variable depicts, most of the respondents reported that family members using a number of social networking sites had more frequent interaction with their peers as compared to the family members. They developed strong bonding with the outsiders and remained isolated in the home.

Effect of time spent on media technologies in the home

Time spend on using media had positive sign with regression coefficient value 0.231 that shows the significant relationship. It shows the direct relationship which explains that more time spend on media like TV, Internet, Cell Phones etc. by youngsters in the family was responsible for the weakening of the family ties. Siblings spent most of their time using internet and cell phone rather than spending time in various activities with family members.

Cellular Phone Packages and Family Cohesion

Use of cell phone had a negative sign with value -0.149 that shows the significant relationship. It shows the inverse relationship which explains that greater use of cell phone by youth through call packages or SMS chatting was responsible for the weakening of the family ties. The younger family members remained attached with their cell phones even in the dining room where all family members usually gathered but they had lessor conversation with each other due to the use of cell phone.

Effect of Parental control on the use of Domesticated Media

In a family system usually parents do not pay attention towards the use of media technologies by their children. In this situation children spend their most of time in various activities on internet and other media technologies. As Taylor (2013) explained that children's more time spending in the use of modern media technologies may also mean that parents don't bother entertainment activities with children, and leave them more time to themselves.

This phenomenon creates gap between the children and parents. But an effective parental control on using patterns of media technologies in the home can overcome this media directed isolation of children. The variable of parental control on domesticated media usage had the value of 0.414 with positive sign depicting that control by the parents on usage of media technologies delimit the youth attachment with the media and they could seriously thought to bother the family activities.

Excessive use of Media Technologies

It had positive sign with value of 0.323 having highly significant association that illustrates, excessive use of media technologies strongly affect duration of interaction and communication among family members. This excessive use of media technologies was deteriorating the cohesion among family members.

Conclusion

The results of present study indicate that modern media technologies are having negative implications for family cohesion. With the increased amount of time being spent in separation from other family members, family cohesion was deteriorated. Moreover, the findings demonstrate

that more than half of the respondents were not spending enough time with their parents due to the involvement in the use of modern media technologies. The using patterns of media technologies at home were very important regarding the family cohesion. Personal TV sets in the bedrooms, use of cellular call and SMS packages and internet/social media surfing for long hours, all these patterns were reducing the frequency, duration and intensity of interaction and communication in the household that ultimately become the cause of diminished family cohesion.

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