How Cell Phones Affect People's Lives

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Abstract

Until the start of the 20th century, the increase in mobile phones and internet technologies has been noticed. From the perspective of health, it's not that the use of cell phones causes danger to human health, but it is the installation of base stations within or near human residences (Misra, 2016). The base stations hold very high frequencies around their close diameter; these frequencies are very fatal and dangerous to human health. These frequencies can cause many health issues, such as brain cancer, heart diseases and various skin problems. The people residing near base stations are continuously in danger; too much exposure to such rays and frequencies can harm them and their coming generations as well. Mobile companies, in order to provide better services, are expanding their network area by installing more and more base stations around different areas. However, it's the choice of humans to buy cellphones or not; only that way can companies stop making more and more base stations (Turkle, 2008).

Introduction

Nowadays, around the world, more cell phones are being used than landlines or cordless phones. Mobile phones are thin, portable and light in weight, so they can fit anywhere, even in pockets and bags (Salehan & Negahban, 2013). There are numerous mobile phone companies that are actively competing to provide the best and latest features in the coming mobile models. Mobile phones have combined so many features nowadays; users can keep photographs, personal information, financial and health-related data and many more. Mobile phones have become the most basic part of the telecommunication world. These cell phones allow users to maintain continuous communication. Smartphones are the latest category of mobile phones, and they have the most advanced features of all time, such as internet connectivity, voice and video calls, etc. Research has found that there are almost 7.22 billion mobile phone devices in the world. This massive increase in the number of cell phones has affected human health in many aspects (Sarwar & Soomro, 2013).

Literature Review And Research Question

Research has shown that family communication and interaction are mediated by cell phones instead of through traditional meetings. As stated by Jobilal (2015), people prefer having meetings through

social media apps such as WhatsApp and Facebook rather than face-to-face meetings in a room. Though such activities have helped save time, they have reduced the level of interaction or engagement among families, hence making families grow apart instead of bringing them together (Jobilal, 2015). Therefore, cell phones inhibit human connection, which results in loneliness. For instance, it is common to find people in a group laughing and smiling as a result of chatting with people far away. On most occasions, people can stay in a room or a lobby for almost an hour without uttering a word because of the lack of interest created by mobile phones (Nabawy, Ahmed, & Soliman, 2016). Many people prefer chatting on social media and reading updates instead of having a serious face-to-face engagement.

Therefore, cell phones have reduced the level of face-to-face engagement, which negatively affects the relationships of people in society. A study in the School Community Journal has indicated that technology, especially the cell phone revolution, has altered the nature of family engagement or interaction (Elsobeihi & Samy, 2017). It states that parents and children spent almost the entire night awake and engaged with their mobile phones, chatting and talking to other people rather than talking amongst themselves in the house. This affects interpersonal relationships and, therefore, hurts peer relationships. Instead of face-to-face engagement, families prefer having a group phone meeting and sending messages as minutes for the meeting. A study by Elsobeihi and Samy (2017) showed that this affects self-esteem and, therefore, has a serious psychological effect on most young people. Elsobeihi and Samy (2017) stated that this is likely to affect them in their marriages and even at the workplace. The study shows that young people who use a mobile phone more often are likely to have poor relationship skills and feel shy due to poor engagement skills, which can also affect their self-esteem (Miakotko, 2013).

However, cell phones have also increased communication with people who live far away, bringing people together. Research has indicated that social media and other apps which are used to connect with relatives and friends from other countries have made it possible for families living apart to feel connected all the time (Kramer, 2016). Families can now have frequent calls and texts to bond together without spending much money to travel to their home countries. It has helped build unity and brought lost families and friends together. It is evident that before the mobile phone was invented, it was difficult to communicate effectively with family and friends living outside the country or in other states due to several barriers. Advanced technology has shrunk the world, making it possible even to have video calls and making people feel togetherness; it, therefore, enhances relationships and improves connection and understanding among families (Campbell, 2015).

Nevertheless, mobile phones contribute to the majority of breakups or separations in marriages. According to Corbett (2009), mobile phones have increased the level of cheating in a relationship, and therefore, they contribute significantly to almost 64% of breakups. A study conducted by a School community journal regarding youth relationships and mobile usage discovered that nearly 60.9% of college breakups happen as a result of cheating found on a mobile phone (Corbett, 2009).

Although mobile phones have improved the level of communication, they have divided people and

reduced the self-esteem of several young people. It has contributed to reducing the level of face-to-face engagement, therefore reducing the trust among family members. Corbett's (2009) analysis of the effect of cell phones on face-to-face communication indicates that technology has changed people, and many would communicate with strangers far away rather than people who are closer to them. Corbett went further to state that face-to-face communication is fading away faster, and it is likely to make people lonely and apart if something is not done to limit the usage of mobile phones among young people in society. One study which was conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation discovered that people aged between 12 years and 24 years spend more on media, and therefore, they do not have time to spend with friends and family (Nabawy, Ahmed, & Soliman, 2016). Even when at home, they are engaged in social media and other activities that are available on a cell phone. This, therefore, creates a gap in the family and increases the level of misunderstanding among family members since they do not have time for each other as a family. Therefore, my research question is how cell phone use affects people's lives.

Cell phones have a really important role in people's lives. It is important to better understand the way people use cell phones. Hence, this investigation attempts to answer the following questions: Do cell phones have a negative influence on people's relationships? Compared with gender, is there any different way to influence females and males?

Research Questions

- How frequently and how long do you use your smartphone?
- For what purpose do you use your smartphone? Is it texting, calls or entertainment?
- Have you ever experienced shoulder pain or discomfort after prolonged use of a smartphone?
- Have you ever experienced a tingling sensation in your arms or shoulder after prolonged use of a smartphone?
- Have you ever experienced headaches or stress after prolonged usage of a smartphone?
- Have you ever experienced pain in the eyes or tension after more than 2 hours of usage of a smartphone?
- Do you think the usage of smartphones is appropriate for children below 15 years of age?
- Does the use of smartphones or cell phones have an impact on human relationships?
- Do you think using smartphones diverts students' attention?

Methodology

The crosstabulation of the two variables above gave me the results that I expected. I am going to use 0.01 as my significance value; however, the p-value of my result is 0.612, which means my result is less than the significance value. As the null hypothesis is "Do cell phones have a negative influence on people's relationships?" it fails to reject the null hypothesis. The two variables are associated. In this survey, we can say cell phones have a negative influence on people's relationships. In the

crosstab, it is pretty clear that there are more people who prefer to stay with friends without cell phones. The degree of happiness without a cell phone is much higher than with a phone friendship.

In the ethnographic interviews, I interviewed three people of different ages to help with my research. Each person takes about half an hour. There are three topics in my interviews because I want to know whether people of different ages have various ideas about cell phone use. In the first interview, he was a 23-year-old student who was studying at UCI. In his mind, when people contact each other, they should have more emotional contact. When people play with their phones, it is hard to connect with others' emotions. "we emotionally connect to one another, and the reason why that happens is that it decreases the amount of eye contact we make when we're having a face-to-face conversation with someone a lot of times, and I'm 100% guilty of this while you're having a conversation while you're at dinner" The second interviewee is a 35-year-old woman who has a child studying in middle school, and she talks about cell phones diverting children's attention. "the first reason being is that they are major distraction instead of focusing on what the teacher is speaking in the class you know those to the attention of the student will be diverted by his or her cell phone and instead of talking you know instead of sharing the difference you know people will be taking selfies and taking pictures of the food." The third interviewee answered questions about face-to-face communication. "You're having a meeting at work, you will pull out your phone, and you'll take a look to see if you've received any new emails or any new text messages, and as a result, you kind of break this emotional connection that you could be creating with someone that you're either working with or someone that you're trying to date".

Data And Analysis

A couple of interviews were conducted with people of different age groups; each person took about half an hour. There are three topics in my interviews because I wanted to find out whether people of different age groups have the same idea regarding the use of cell phones or not. The first interview was conducted with a 23-year-old student at UCI. According to him, when people contact each other, the contact should be more emotional. People are always playing with their cell phones, which makes it difficult for other people to develop emotional connections with them. It becomes hard to judge their emotions. The conclusion of the first interview was that when we make emotional contact with others, we are actually having face-to-face conversations with someone. These conversations are the best; such conversations involve dinner chit-chat.

The second interview was conducted with a 35-year-old woman who had a kid studying in middle school. She concluded that cell phones distract students and divert their attention from studying. The main reason for mobile phone use is that it is a major distraction and prevents children from putting their attention on their studies. While taking lectures, students cannot focus on what is being taught by the teacher. Children's attention will be diverted from the lecture, making them unable to understand the core topic or lecture. Moreover, cell phones can also be used by kids for bad purposes. For example, they can cheat during tests using cell phones, they can easily get distracted by mobile

apps, they may waste their time taking selfies, etc. They may not share their feelings with their friends, instead sticking to their cellphones.

The third interviewer was also asked about the use of cell phones and their effects on human beings. The interviewer answered the questions about the idea of face-to-face conversation when you are having a meeting at the workplace and you pull your phone out of your pocket and see whether you have received any notifications or have an email or a text message. As a result, you break your connection with all the people attending the meeting, and your emotional connection is lost.

The interviewer tried to collect data about the use of cell phones from people of different age groups, asking them different questions and creating a different scenario. It was concluded that the use of cell phones is affecting human life, whether it's about students, employees or interpersonal communication. Cell phones have a negative impact on our lives; we should restrict the use of cell phones so that we can concentrate on our social lives.

Conclusion And Limitation

Technology can be our best friend, or it can also be our biggest enemy (Arminen et al., 2007). Technology interrupts our story; it also stops our ability to have our own thoughts. It may also stop us from imagining something different and wonderful because we're too busy using technology, and the walk from the café back to the workplace is spent on the cellphone. Smartphones and cell phones have become an essential part of our lives, and we cannot even imagine our lives without these devices. Cell phones have influenced our lives so much that they have started having a bad effect on our daily lives; cell phones are continuously affecting human health. There is no opinion that cellphones bring harm to human health; it's the base stations or the reliance that put human life in danger. The huge addiction to cell phones has offered numerous risks to human health and development. These risks may include social, psychological, physical as well as emotional factors (Lepp, Barkley & Karpinski, 2014). A smartphone is considered to be an electronic toy that is designed for the inner lonely child of each and every one who has been hiding since birth. With the help of this research, I have tried to bring attention to all the potential risks involved in using smartphones that can cause harm to humans and provide some solutions regarding how we can mitigate the side effects of cell phones. Limiting the use of cell phones and investing some time in physical activities can reduce the risk. More studies are required to find solutions regarding cellphone usage and create awareness among cellphone users about the serious consequences of this matter (Ferreira, Dey & Kostakos, 2011).

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