

# MOBILE PHONES, COMPUTERS AND MARRIED LIFE: AN EXPLANATORY STUDY OF MALAKWAL CITY

Haris Farooq<sup>1</sup>, Abid Ghafoor Chaudhry<sup>2</sup>, Aftab Ahmed<sup>3</sup>, Adnan Nasir<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>IDS Department, Iqra University Islamabad,

<sup>2</sup>Department of Anthropology, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi,

<sup>3</sup>Pakistan Association of Anthropology, Islamabad

Corresponding Author's Email: [mianharis\\_farooq@hotmail.com](mailto:mianharis_farooq@hotmail.com)

**ABSTRACT;** *The study was designed to explore the impact of the usage of mobile phones and computers on the married life in the Malakwal city of Punjab. The research was carried out on the two urban councils of the city with a sample drawn as 390 households. The research found a strong relationship between the excessive usage of the modern communication tools and distancing among marital relationships which may end up in domestic violence and even divorce(s).*

**Key Words:** Communication Tools, Marital Status, Marital Relation

## INTRODUCTION

Culture is an ashore lively and symbolic unit and its disparity is not just the heritage of a tribal history, but it is also a continual creation through the normal processes of human life. There are two reasons that why anthropology is need to consider these issues with particular attention: Firstly, “the questions raised have widely ramifying implications, requiring a more holistic view of all of social organization, culture, the morality of actions and choices, alternative visions of the good life ; and secondly, even the most committed environmentalists, economists and writers seen innocent of the facts of contemporary global cultural diversity and work from a homogenizing and unilinear, ethnocentric vision [1].

Technologies, inventions and innovations change the life of people altogether from prehistory to history to contemporary life. Computer, mobile and broadcasting technologies cover most part of the ICT, which includes Social Network Sites, Social Bookmarking, Blogs, Online Video, Micro blog, Specialty Magazines, Television Channels, and Radio Programs etc.

Electronic media influence people to change their societies and cultures; this influence is different in all regions of the world. The flaws of the media, directed beyond the metropolis and beyond centers of wealth and technology to rural communities, do not so much intrude upon static, rigid, closed ‘traditional’ structures. The communication media, particularly computers, added their inflow to the ongoing creative processes of cultural ‘reproduction’ and enactment. Through computer, people broaden their views, explore and experience different new ways of life, different from those of local life.

Computers have changed ones thinking and reconstruct imaginatively their lives and future, that their forms and norms are creatively constructed and not traditional reflections of local circumstances and conditions [2]. Information technology is playing a great role in our lives now a days. Information technology is capable of giving access to the awareness, understanding and chance which are the assets of the world [3]. Men and women both are interested in utilizing information technologies and also want to use or even know the latest “media technologies” as well[4]. There is still many doubts prevailing in both developing and developed countries that is the access provided to information technology is useful. As all countries are spending much on communication technologies, so if it is not working, then it is just a waste of money then[5].

Information and communication technology is influencing day by day on society and on one’s life and the use of ICT is bringing “radical” change in society and introducing new ways of social life or lifestyle [6]. Now let’s have a look on the impact of television in everyday life that how television become a reason of change in society. The change in society starts from the persons of the organization in which the electronic communication systems are used. So the predictable background shows how the information and communication technologies affecting household and how usage is different from other field of life than household [7].

The changes which the latest communication is bringing in society is differ from society to society and are influenced by the people that how they use the information and communication technology whether it is of good use or is the reason of bad. Using any technology in good is favorable for

the society, environment, culture and the individual too. So the use of communication in the specific “culture” or society decides and it is also affected by environment [8].

If in one way information and communication technology has some negative impact on the time it has positive impact as well. Information and communication technology helps in any society to get opinion or views of their individuals so it is the good source to know the problems or queries of the society [9]. The effects of the information and communication technologies on “social life” is different when discusses in a different way as when to search for the change which telephone and television brought to society and how the social changes differ from one another. Telephone is helpful in keeping friendship; one can easily talk to relatives or friends living far from them even in a different countries. On the other hand television is just to provide entertainment or is the way to know what is happening in the world from news channels, but television has more negative effect on daily routine as people are more spending their time on watching TV it effects on their daily routine [10].

The mobile phone is one of the important technologies in our century. It creates positive change on the society as people are more connected with each other and “culturally innovative participative” society, it also has impact on personal life as people are more confident, it’s a status symbol too, people can contact with people or internet any time, confidentiality, no one can have privacy, no interruption, and communication increases [11,12].

Mobile phones whereas developing a positive impact as it is minimizing the time consuming on travelling etc., but on the other hand also have a negative impact on the society, it is a course to begin and increase “romantic contact”. This starts of “face to face” contact, which could be in some community get-together or celebration there people met and ask for their mobile numbers. Then the process starts from text messaging to each other if the respondent responds positively for those message then it became easy to develop the possible association. Through SMS one can easily compose and edit a message in their ease time without any “immediacy”. Text is another benefit of mobile phones that you can easily SMS your friends anytime if you were stuck somewhere and can’t even call them then just SMS to them. SMS is very popular in teenagers, one can carefully edit message before sending it relatively connect to the telephone talk or gathering. Texting procedure starts when the recipient is also interested in making contact with the message sender. By just replying to a single text SMS and showing positive response has made a chance to expand their relation further [13].

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Malakwal city, a Tehsil (sub-division) of District Mandi Bahauddin. Total sample size (n) of 390 were drawn from two urban councils of the city while considering (Z=1.96, R=1, P=0.5, A=0.05, N=33433) due to time constraint(s). Data collection started with survey questionnaire forms and by some Non-Probability Techniques (Purposive, Snowball, and Convenience) where respondents were selected for Formal, In-Formal interviews and FGD’s. Participant observation method was also adopted throughout in the field stay to collect qualitative notes.

**RESULTS**

**Table. 1:Division of respondents regarding gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	162	41.5
Female	228	58.5
Total	390	100

The questionnaire were distributed among both male and female as it was distributed mostly among households that's why number of female are more respondent(s) than number of males. More than 41 percent respondent were male and more than 58 percent were female.UNESCO defines the household as "A household is [a] common residential unit, which would consist of not only primary relatives (orientation or procreation families) but even some distant kin and non-kin relatives" [14].

**Table. 2:Distribution of respondents according to family Structure**

Family Structure	Frequency	Percent
Extended	3	0.8
Joint	206	52.8
Single/Nuclear	181	46.4
Total	390	100

Table 2 represents the family structure of the respondent. Ureibo explains the term family as "The family is a social agreement not just a biological unit. These biological relations 'myth' usually needed for property issues, but has less important in terms of families, but at a biological level, one could be descended from a father and mother or both" [15]. 46.4 percent respondent was living in single/nuclear family structure. Pollock says "A nuclear family is consisting of a two-generation, a father and mother and their children or a single, but live together".52.8 percent were in a joint family and 0.8 percent were in an extended family system [16]. Edwards defines extended family as "Family in which Grandparents or Uncles/Aunts perform the main part in children's broad up. This includes or not, includes other relatives which are living with their children. These members of family are in addition to the child's parents [17].

**Table. 3:Are Mobiles&Computers creating distance between marriage relations**

Mobiles and Computers created distances between relations?	Marital Status			
	Single	Married	Divorced	Widow
Yes	77.3%	73.2%	100.0%	66.7%
No	22.7%	26.8%	---	33.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3 shows the result that how many respondents from different marital status think having mobiles and computers creating distance between relations. From single the result is 77.3% strongly agreed that having mobile and computers, creating distance between relations 22.7% rejected that mobile and computer has not created any difference in relations. When asked from married, 73.2% agreed and told mobile and computers are the main reason in creating differences. When asked from divorced all of them were pointing out the only reason is mobile and computers creating distance between relations. 66.7% of the widow percentage were also agreed and also focusing on the issue of mobile and computers excessive usage, creating distance between relations but 33.3% rejected this reason.

Table 4 depicts what impact mobile and computer produces in ones married life for this I ask some questions; first was relations getting better 10.2 percent single and 14.6 percent married were in favor but divorced and widow show no response, second question was

its providing solution in contact each other single were 46.4 percent and married were 36.3 percent in favor, third question was is it reason of fights 29.3 percent single, 41.5 percent married, 100 percent divorced and 66.7 percent were widow, next when asked failure of relations/separations 8.9 percent single, 4.9 percent married and 33.3 percent widow were in favor and 5.3 percent single and 2.4 percent married gave no response for impact of mobile and computer produces in ones married life.

**DISCUSSION**

Dr. J. S. McQuillen warns that power of ICT can be obstacle to social contact. Internet squeezes the world in respect of social interaction, but broader in regards of face to face touch. Kids, left with Internet are rarely see familial interdependence. ICT are manufactured for virtual communication which is similar to the face-to-face connection, he also has a strong believe that this can be disastrous for family life [18].

A study conducted in America to find different advantages and disadvantages of technology especially for married life presented that cell phone, social media (Facebook, twitter) and internet have become the main actors in the life of majority of couples, as reported that 66% adults who are in committed relationships. It also presents that number of clashes happens over its use and also reported some distress experiences [19].

"Almost 10% of internet users who are married say that internet produces "major impact" on relationship, 17% say it had a "minor impact." 72% of married or committed adults said the internet has "no real impact at all". 74% users answered that internet produces positive impact on marriage.

**Table 4:What typeof impact, mobile and computer produces on one's married life?**

What impact, mobile and computer produces on one's married life?	Marital Status			
	Single	Married	Divorced	Widow
Relations Getting better	10.2%	14.6%	--	--
Provide solution in contact each other	46.4%	36.6%	--	--
Reason of fights	29.3%	41.5%	100.0%	66.7%
Failure of relations/separations	8.9%	4.9%	--	33.3%
No Response	5.3%	2.4%	--	--
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Still, 20% said the impact was mostly negative, and 4% said it was good and bad at the same time."

A social survey conducted by debate.org reported that social media made us less social and Facebook and twitter is on top of the list. Peoples especially young generation focused to sit on Facebook and twitter rather going outside with friends and to enjoy time with family and relatives. Data of 2012 depicts that 845 million were the monthly user of Facebook and in same calendar year 250 million photos were uploaded by using Facebook website.

Along with disadvantages of technology advantages were also reported by different researchers and material was also found on different websites. On the one hand technology makes us less social, on the other hand technology made the path easier to contact and stay in touch with family, friends and relatives by eliminating all boundary or geographic barriers, in day timings or if someone need physical conversation; that technology provide solution to remain in contact. But the tragedy or other side of pictures is people are now interacting with computers, mobiles, iPods the real face to face interaction is getting nominal day by day. This decrease in face to face interaction or physical social gathering will be really threat for future generations [20].

In recent past citizens feel the need to go out for refreshment with their family and friends to find out about their lives but now seen is totally dependent on computer screen and mobile screen interaction as compared to human interaction. Mean of communication also changed as public no more need to be able to talk appropriately with others due to the fact that now they have the internet is doing it for them. Coffee shops and cafes are now nonsocial areas due to this technological advancement.

## CONCLUSION

The study explored that there is a strong relationship between the usage of mobiles and computers with domestic life. It was found that the domestic life style in the Malakwal city is greatly influenced by the use of the above mentioned technologies. The excessive use of mobile and computer can have multiple impact(s) on the members of the households especially on the married couples. The technology is less compatible both culturally and in the domestic ways, thus the relationship is based more on communication through mobiles and social media etc. It is worth mentioning that most of the widows consider the modern communication tools as the most influential way of weakening the existing and on the other hand discovering and strengthening the new relationships. It can also be concluded both mobiles and computers add either way that is it can create gap in existing relationships and also can provide solutions in certain domestic issues.

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