Chapter 8
Family Dynamics and ICT:
An Intergenerational Analysis of Activities in Domestic Life

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ABSTRACT

The use of information and communication technologies is increasing in the present scenario to a great extent for various purposes such as education, entertainment, business, e-governance, and so on. When ICT use expanded its origin, it has also predominantly taken a huge place in domestic activities. In the recent decade, the domestication of technologies in home has been expanding and its influence in family activities and family members must be a considerable area to study. Though many scholars from various countries attempted to understand the ICT influence in family life, this chapter adds a contribution to the field by analysing how the different activities in domestic life influences the family dynamics. This research collected the data from two different generation family members such as parents and children. This will help to understand how the ICT use influences the intergeneration family members. It is found that ICT has a desirable influence in family activities. Young adults are highly influenced by parents, and the regular monitoring is expected to avoid harmful effects.

INTRODUCTION

ICT

"Information and Communication Technology is a term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing radio, television, mobile phones, computer, internet, and the services associated with them" (Rouse, 2005).

ICT is the extensive-term of Information Technology (IT) that focuses on unified communications. It is an array of digital technologies intended to collect, organize, store, process, and communicate the information effectively to the other person/group (Ritchie & Brindley, 2005). ICT is similar to information technologies (IT), but it focuses more on communication media such as television, the internet, wireless networks, and mobile phones and so on.

The different means of ICT are telephones, mobile phones, desktops, laptops, and internet service which is used for e-mailing, chatting, file transfers, etc. The type of ICT based activities is divided into four major categories such as Instrumental (Telework, teleconferences, teleservices, telemedicine, e-shopping), Information (web-based time tables, libraries, new sites), Social Communication (virtual interaction/ communication with friends, family, etc.), and Entertainment (web-based games, movies, music, art, radio, etc.).

UNESCO (2007) has defined ICT is the form of technology that is mainly used to transmit, process, store, create, display, share, or exchange information by electronic means. ICT includes hardware (computers, smartphones, game consoles) and software (email, video conferencing, online social networks) that sustains digital culture (Bacigalupe & Lambe, 2011; Stafford & Hillyer, 2012).

The growth of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gives people an enriched experience in various aspects of daily life such as education, work, consumption of goods, entertainment, etc. It provides them with on-demand access to any information and also entertains them easily (Kelly Garrett, 2006). The daily life of the people is occupied with ICT based activities which include productive, reproductive, consumption and leisure.

It has now grown to take place among the essential requirements of a modern human being along the lines of food, shelter, and clothing. Technology is used for communication in most homes (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008) and it has become one of the family members (Johnson, 2010).

ICT has different purposes according to the devices or applications people are accessing. Some ICT devices are used for communication and connectivity purposes whereas few other ICT have the capability to exchange interactive information such as sending pictures, videos to the other family members. Thus ICT has the ability to reach the members of the family in different interactive ways (Rudi et al., 2015).

Initially, the developments of technologies are focused on improving entertainment experiences in homes. (Huisman et al., 2012). But with the emergence and integration of new communication technologies such as computers, internet, mobile phones (Lanigan, 2009), social media, and other digital media applications, the domestic life of people are occupied by more technical devices (Huisman et al., 2012) and the changes in the routine practices occur among various family members. Socialization practices, leisure time, entertainment also get changed and affected due to the innovation of new technology (Thulin & Vihelmson, 2005).

LITERATURE REVIEW

ICT and Family Dynamics

Despite the age factor, ICT is associated with every member in the home. Children in families are prone to media habits such as watching television and using computers and it has influenced their daily routines. Parents and grandparents engage in ICT activities such as watching serials & movies, playing online games, searching and socializing with friends, shopping, and chatting (Wartella & Jennings, 2000).

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