

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY ON ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT  
AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

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## ABSTRACT

INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY ON ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT AND SPIRITUAL  
FORMATION

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Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009

Adolescence is the time when a person develops perceptions about religious thoughts and with proper guidance, can be a stronger follower of Christ. The purpose of this project is to analyze the effects of technology on young people and to show a direct correlation between the influence of technology and spiritual growth of adolescents. I will argue that both the positive and negative influences of technology have made our students more informative yet less personally intimate. This shift of personal interaction presents a challenge to the cognitive development and spiritual formation of all students.

Abstract length: 94 words

## DEDICATION

To Meghan: my wife, my love and my very best friend. No one has more to celebrate than I do.

To Jacob, Aidan, and Olivia: I love you and pray that you will glorify God in all that you do. Thank you for calling me Dad.

To my dad, Dan Monahan, thank you for all of your support, I could not do this without you.

To my mentors: Pastors Tom Mullins, Todd Mullins, Doug Randlett, Merle Martin, David Nelms, Jimmy Fogleman, Bill Keith and JohnMark Oliver: You have all inspired, challenged and formed me to be more like Jesus. Thank you.



## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

The world has become smaller and emergent technology is the largest factor in this global development. Technology is fast becoming the current driving force behind what is often called the “generation gap”.<sup>1</sup> While people of all ages have become quite comfortable with technology, operation of technology is not the only separation between the young and old. Another difference is each of the generation’s perceptions about technology. Not surprisingly, younger adults are more likely to admit to “gadget lust” than older adults are willing to confess.<sup>2</sup> The direction of technology is affecting the lives of many peoples in both positive and negative manners. In this particular study we are going to work on the influences of the technology on adolescent spiritual growth and the end user will gain a variety of information about the technology and its impact on adolescent development.

Technology is working for effective development of humanity physically, socially, economically and spiritually. Childhood and adolescence is the time a person develops his or her perceptions about religious thoughts. It is the time when a proper instruction will assist him or her to be an appropriate civil society member as well as a better person according to God’s rules and regulations. Great spiritual teachers down through the ages have understood the state of technology, but awareness of the role that technology may play in the development of children’s imagination, and of the role that inspiration may play in children’s spiritual development has been longer in coming.

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<sup>1</sup> The Barna Group - *New Research Explores How Technology Drives*.  
<http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/14-media/212-new-research-explores-how-technology-drives-generation-gap>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

### *Statement of the Problem*

In the study, the researcher's main mantra is to focus and critically evaluate the working of positive and negative effects of technology on human nature and spiritual development of their children; from which one can easily find both the positive and negative attributes of technology.

### *Statement of Limitations*

Other than the parameters set by the above asked questions, this project will be limited in the following ways. First, the author will not conduct a study of all aspects of adolescent development. He will only consider the elements of development that are consistent with the influence of technology. Second, the author will not cover every aspect of technology; he will only consider those practices consistent with common social media. Third, the author will not pose a moral judgment on specific types of technology that have obviously influenced adolescent development. He will simply share how technology has influenced adolescent development. Fourth, the author will not analyze the Christian life, doctrine or practices of the people interviewed for this project, only their principles of technological influence as they relate to adolescents. Finally, the author will not attempt to validate technological influences through survey, but will simply illustrate the principles from people who are heavily influenced by technological advances.

### *Theoretical Basis*

Today, deliberation of technological development and feelings toward technology are manifestly different. Generally speaking, in the West before the 20<sup>th</sup> century an anti-technological observation has come to be held more and more by the educated class. However, the developing and under-developed countries usually hold favorable views of technology and often take a sanguine approach toward an ambitious development of technology. This distinction is a remarkable feature of contemporary theories of the development of technology.<sup>3</sup>

Despite such diverse understandings and outlooks to technology, since the 20<sup>th</sup> century progress and achievement in this one broad field of human activity have surpassed all those attained throughout history. There have been many inventions, including airplane, rockets and spaceships, electronic techniques, atomic energy, antibiotics the computer and robots, even the simulation of the human gene. This has resulted in an extraordinary social circumstance at once, hopeful and potentially dangerous. All this was implausible before this century.<sup>4</sup>

In the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> century an impressive accomplishment was attained in contemporary technology that culminated the modern natural sciences as represented by Newtonian mechanics. In the year 1851 at the London Fair, many novel and conspicuous machines and products were shown in the Crystal Palace. This seemed to prove Frances Bacon's protuberance that all things could be comprehended. The American author, Edward Bellamy, narrates in his novel, *Review*, foretold that technology would disburse

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<sup>3</sup> Wang Miaoyang, *The Humanization of technology and Chinese Culture*. (Journal of Chinese Philosophical Studies, XI, 1998) p 93.

<sup>4</sup> Elisheva F. Gross, "Adolescent Internet Use: What We Expect, What Teens Report" (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.47

the most splendid and positive part in the ordered society of 2000. In as much as technology has been enormously developed and played an exceptional role in social life in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some theorists have called the 20<sup>th</sup> century “*the beginning of the technological era*”.<sup>5</sup>

The modern progress of technology not only has intensely influenced nature, but also has penetrated all fields of social life, with ever increasing impact on society and its development. Elementary change is introduced into the productive mode of society and its life. This has intensely influenced the development of the human being himself, thereby making a deep notion on the interaction between humans and nature and on interpersonal relations, in a word on the comprehensive development of contemporary human life.

The anti-technological propensity is mounting primarily because the marvelous destructive power of the technological progress during wars represents a grave danger to life environment of humans and to the existence of humans themselves. This is due to the perceptible harmful social outcomes caused by technological progress as pollution of air and water, traffic accidents, noise and damage to the ecology environment.<sup>6</sup> These unenthusiastic effects of technology are at a superficial level but are immediately palpable. At a deeper level the unenthusiastic effects are mainly the domination of humans by technology and the bondage of their spiritual life and comprehensive development of their children.

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<sup>5</sup> Buckingham, David and Kate Domaille. “*Where Are We Going and How Can We Get There?: General findings from the UNESCO Youth and Media Education Survey 2001.*” (2002). Retrieved from: <[www.ccsonline.org.uk/mediacentre/Research\\_Projects/unesco\\_survey.](http://www.ccsonline.org.uk/mediacentre/Research_Projects/unesco_survey.)>.

<sup>6</sup> Wang Miaoyang, *The Humanization of technology and Chinese Culture*. (Journal of Chinese Philosophical Studies, XI, 1998) p 97

## *Methodology*

The proposed design of the project is one that involves ten steps. Each of these steps serve as a chapter in the project. Below is the chapter listing for the project.

Following the chapter listing, a summary of each chapter will be given.

### CHAPTERS

1. Chapter 1: Introduction
2. Chapter 2: Literature Review
3. Chapter 3: Adolescent Relationships and Communication Technology
4. Chapter 4: Adolescent Spiritual Development
5. Chapter 5: Hypothesis Testing
6. Chapter 6: Research Design
7. Chapter 7: Analysis & Findings
8. Chapter 8: Conclusion & Recommendations

### Chapter 1: Introduction

First a cursory introduction will be given to the reader. This proposal will serve as the introduction to the reader of what to expect throughout the project. This chapter will include the analysis of why the project needs to be examined, statement of the problem, statement of limitations, theoretical basis, statement of methodology, and a review of literature. The first chapter will also address changing attitudes towards technology as well as a brief history of technology.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter we will specify the media technology; that how this mode of technology is affecting the children all over the world. This is the fast growing technology in this new world. The chapter will explain to the readers about the media technology that is grasping the intellect of children. The subtopics discussed will include the role of television on adolescences and children, radio among adolescents and children, Internet, and an approach to print media.

## Chapter 3: Adolescent relationships and Communication Technology

In this chapter, I will first explain how adolescents are using this new form of electronic media technology to converse, and then present an academic framework for analyzing these uses. I will discuss electronic media technology and relationships, in turn, analyzing those relationships with romantic partners, strangers, friends, and parents. We then discover how parents and schools are responding to adolescents' relations with electronic media technology. At the end, we observe how adolescents are using electronic media technology in the overhaul of identity construction. This chapter will also deal with electronic media technology in the overhaul of adolescent communication, the academic framework of technology, adolescent relationships and electronic media technology, relationships with friends, electronic media technology, relationships with romantic partners and electronic media technology, relationships with acquaintances and strangers, parental influence and electronic media technology, schools, electronic media and other forms of technology. Finally, I will identity development and electronic communication.

## Chapter 4: Adolescent Spiritual Development

This chapter will focus primarily on adolescent spiritual development. We will define what spiritual development is as well as tag various stages of spiritual development. We will look at Wesleyan Two-crisis theology, Darling's spiritual growth paradigm, and look how some churches are using technology, and do a brief case study. We will see how larger institutions are using technology to advance their impact. Some ways devices that we will use are the use of movie clips, email blasts, online presences, and satellite dishes. Finally we will discuss the longevity of technology and if it is here to stay.

## Chapter 5: Hypothesis Testing

### *Hypothesis # 1*

Main and sub hypotheses to be tested in the study are as follows:

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not enhance the efficiency in the working place.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does enhance the efficiency in the working place.

### *Hypothesis # 2*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does have an adverse effect on the mind of adolescents.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does not have an adverse effect on the mind of adolescents.

### *Hypothesis # 3*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not increase the level of spiritual development among adolescents.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does increase the level of spiritual development among adolescents.

*Hypothesis #4*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not curtail the cost and other expenses of the organization.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does curtail the cost and other expenses of the organization.

*Hypothesis #5*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not increase the level of competency of employees.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does increase the level of competency of employees.

Chapter 6: Research Design

A study that is causal in nature, because I want to analyze the cause and effect relationship of enhancement of technology on the productivity of the organization and also on the spiritual development of the adolescents. This will be done primarily through Internet surveys and physical handouts.

Chapter 7: Analysis & Findings

In this section a detailed mathematical analysis will be published along with the scientific findings achieved. The questionnaire will be filled by almost all the major religious hierarchical levels like pastors, holy priests and ecumenical subordinates, so that the result can be considered as a whole.



## Chapter 8: Conclusion & Recommendations

In this final section I will provide my conclusions paired with personal recommendations.

## CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

In this study, the researcher's main focus is to focus and critically evaluate the operation of positive and adverse effects of technology on human nature and spiritual development of their children; from which one can easily find both the positive and negative attributes of technology.

There are many products found in everyday use that are derived from new techniques. For example, the telephone, microwave oven, wireless phones, television, telex, electric heater, computer, air conditioner, high-speed vehicles, high speed locomotives, airplane etc. These countless inventions and technological products offer support in our daily life as well as give information about spiritual growth through various resources. The progress of science and technology improves the effective of industry and agriculture, thus increasing the total cost of domestic income and therefore improving religious life. The living standard of the American people in 2009 is more than double than in 1978, which mainly is the effect of the development and implementation of science and technology.<sup>7</sup> The understanding of China's purpose of doubling twice the whole value of the national product also depends largely on technology and science.

In distinction to the above, technology is accused of controlling human life and controlling any spiritual development of children. By increasing the limitations on human life and teachings, technology becomes sovereign over their social life. On the production line it is essential for workers and believers of God to follow in a thorough manner

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<sup>7</sup> Wang Miaoyang, *The Humanization of technology and Chinese Culture*. (Journal of Chinese Philosophical Studies, XI, 1998) p 95

several procedures, thereby becoming “part of the machine”.<sup>8</sup> In other words, man is not able to master technology, which stands in opposition to him. Though automation implements the human strength of the worker, the operation of pressing a button reduces the operator to a sense of monotony, suppressing thought and creativity. Man gradually changes into a robot in charge of some operation. Spare time also is limited by technology for one cannot change the programs on radio and TV; fast food and inherently homogenous modes of spending leisure time turn dry and lacking in individualism. Technologization of one’s manner of life confines one’s freedom to act.

Further, as this affects all the fields of social life it divests interpersonal relationships of transaction in feelings, mental communications and understandings. The use of socio-psychological hotlines and consultations reflect the weakening of interpersonal communication. Thirdly, the development of high technologization reduces spiritual and cultural level. In sophisticated industrialized countries technologization places excessive prominence on material outcomes, thus relatively reducing the function of spiritual values. For the young, this encourages their indulging in material enjoyment while putting aside the spiritual search; it urges paying great care to technological sciences while disregarding the level of humanities.

While new technology and its tools cause material progress, this is of no assistance for lasting inquiry into the human spirit and philosophy. Therefore, many moral and religious groups have considered technology a reaction against spiritual life, lowering its quality and that of culture and turning to more superficial means of intelligence. School examinations using technology allows students only to make choices and fill the elements of knowledge, but not of wisdom. Today there is urgent need for

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

intensification of the link between education and the spiritual development and knowledge; indeed, the development of technology should be guided in manner of the spiritual guidance, and thereby humanized.

*Children, Youth and Media Technology Around the World*

In this section we will examine media technology and how this method of technology is affecting the children all over the world. This is the fastest growing technology in this modern world.<sup>9</sup> This section will explain to the readers about the media technology that is grasping the brains of the children.

A look at the world media landscape for children and youth instantaneously presents two opposing themes: risks and opportunities. For example, globalization of media brings opportunities to expand children's perspectives and add more equivalent access to information, but it also intimidated religious identification and values. There is an urgent need for societies to both look after minors and empower them to assess their own media milieus, as spelled out by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and progressively more by media educators and experts around the world.<sup>10</sup>

About one-third of the world's populace is made up of 2 billion adolescent people under 18.<sup>11</sup> They make up half the population in the least urbanized nations; less than a quarter in the most developed ones. They face a range from basic tolerance to aggression and exploitation. Furthermore, there are innumerable differences in traditions, values and their cultures. However, children and youth ubiquitously share some common

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Gigli, Susan and Aneta Genova. *Young People and Media in Central & Eastern Europe, the CIS & Baltic States*. A report prepared by InterMedia for UNICEF 2001

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

personalities. They are inherently more confident, more open and inquisitive than their adult complements. Increasingly, children are enjoying extraordinary freedoms in many countries. Regrettably, others meet growing social, psychological and health problems, ranging from deepening ethnic strife and poverty to substance abuse and sexually transmitted diseases, political turmoil, warfare and atheisms.<sup>12</sup>

Debatably, the globalization and propagation of media are among the key factors that have defined and shaped the current generation of young people. In many countries, kids had access to a greater portion of multimedia alternatives than ever before, conventional, newspapers and magazines; radio stations; satellite and cable TV channels; the Internet and computer and video games.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, many are exposed to the same programs, the same characters and the same-marketed products. Today there is greater accessibility of foreign media and programming, and less formal suppression and management in many parts of the world.<sup>14</sup> Information, images and email flow around the world freely and faster than ever. Certainly, mass media is making the world smaller, and culture and media are increasingly entangled, especially for teens.<sup>15</sup>

### *Role of Television on Adolescents and Children*

In the recent world, television is considered as the foremost instrument of interest

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<sup>12</sup> Annenberg Public Policy Center, “*Stranger Contact in Adolescent Online Social Networks*” Philadelphia: (Annenberg Public Policy Center, University of Pennsylvania 2007)  
[http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/Releases/Release\\_HC20060920/Report\\_HC20060920.pdf](http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/Releases/Release_HC20060920/Report_HC20060920.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Children Now. “*Key findings from Big Media, Little Kids: Media Consolidation and Children’s Television Programming.*” (2003). Retrieved from <[www.childrennow.org/media/fcc-03/media-study-highlights-05-21-03.cfm](http://www.childrennow.org/media/fcc-03/media-study-highlights-05-21-03.cfm)>; (2001). “Fair Play: Violence, Gender and Race in Video Games.” Retrieved from <<http://www.childrennow.org/media/video%2Dgames/2001/index.cfm>>

<sup>15</sup> Elkamel, Dr. Farag. “*Dialogue with the Future: Findings of a Study on Adolescents in Three Egyptian Governorates*”. Cairo, (Egypt: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Egypt Country Office 2001), p.2-3

for young people as well as for adults. From the mid 1990s to the mid-2004s, the number of household television sets, television channels and hours depleted watching television more than doubled. There are now nearly more than 350 televisions sets per thousand inhabitants in the world, far more than the number of telephones.<sup>16</sup> Satellite television arrives at all continents, offering increasing numbers of channels objecting specific market segments, including young viewers. In the late 1990s, some 50 television channels directed exclusively to children were launched, most of which have had tremendous international success. Though, this has caused national television services in many areas to cut back their own production of children's programs.<sup>17</sup>

The average daily use of television among school-age children all over the world had ranges from between 1.5 hours to more than four hours; many of these children will rarely read a book.<sup>18</sup> The significance of television in young peoples daily lives makes it one of their chief data sources about the world around them. The commonness of television viewing among young people increases serious concerns about recent national as well as global trends in the television industry. The unbridled consolidation of commercial media has meant the influence of only a handful of large and powerful companies.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> El-Tawila, Sahar. "Adolescents' Communication Needs: What We Know and What We Need to Know." (Submission to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Egypt Country Office 2003), p.55

<sup>17</sup> Gigli, Susan and Aneta Genova. "Young People and Media in Central & Eastern Europe, the CIS & Baltic States". (A report prepared by InterMedia for UNICEF 2001), p.95, 99

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> ANDI-Brazilian News Agency for Children's Rights. ANDI – Brazilian News Agency for Children's Rights. Brasilia, (2003). pp. 226-240  
Brazil; "Overview of Children and Media in Brazil." PowerPoint presentation. Buckingham, David. "Media Education: A Global Strategy for Development." A policy paper prepared for UNESCO Sector of Communication and Information. (2001) Retrieved from  
<[www.ccsnline.org.uk/mediacentre/Research\\_Projects/UNESCO\\_policy.html](http://www.ccsnline.org.uk/mediacentre/Research_Projects/UNESCO_policy.html); (1999), "Young People, Politics and News Media: Beyond Political Socialization". Oxford Review of Education, Vol. 25, No. 1/2 (March/June).

In industrialized countries, there have been recent protests over rising levels of eating disorders, obesity, aggression, substance abuse, risky sexual behavior and lack of their religious knowledge among youth, increasingly attributed to commercial media intended for children and youth.<sup>20</sup>

In developing countries, where resources are limiting domestic productions, a majority of programs for children and kids are introduced. Unfortunately, much of the material contains characters and messages that, at best, are simply not relevant to local cultures and religious activities, and at worst convey brutal images and mass marketing messages. Plus, public broadcasters that have traditionally produced some of the best-quality children's media have had to reduce their youth programming in the face of funding cuts and growing competition from private channels.<sup>21</sup> Obviously the case for media pluralism, i.e., access to media that effectively communes and supplies relevant content, applies to children and young people as well.

### *Radio Amongst Adolescents and Children*

After television screening, listening to the radio is another most common trend among youth and children people worldwide.<sup>22</sup> Actual listening rates among the adolescent vary considerably, nevertheless, depending on the value of national broadcasting and the accessibility of private alternatives. In some countries, there has been an outbreak among young people in radio listening over the past decade, the result

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<sup>20</sup> Elkamel, Dr. Farag. “*Dialogue with the Future: Findings of a Study on Adolescents in Three Egyptian Governorates*”. Cairo, (Egypt: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Egypt Country Office 2001), p.2-3

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> El-Tawila, Sahar. “*Adolescents’ Communication Needs: What We Know and What We Need to Know*.” (Submission to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Egypt Country Office 2003), p.55

of the materialization of dozens of commercial radio stations. This is predominantly the case in Africa and the former Soviet bloc countries.<sup>23</sup> Most young people tune in to the radio, first and foremost for leisure and music. However, some local radio stations have been hugely successful in attracting and informing more communally active segments of the population, young and old alike.

An admirable example is the ANEM network of independent radio stations in former Yugoslavia. It has become a leading source of miscellaneous information and entertainment for youth concerned in social life. In some countries, listening to the mostly political fare of communal international radio broadcasters, the VOA, Deutsche Welle, BBC, and Radio France Internationale, among them, remains astonishingly high among young people. According to 2003 surveys, 16 percent of young people aged 15 to 19 listened to international radio in Albania, 12 percent in Bangladesh, 21 percent in Nigeria and 26 percent in urban Haiti.<sup>24</sup> These comparatively high listening rates attest to young people's interest in social and political events, and recreate the need for high-quality information, still lacking in many countries.

### *Internet and Adolescence*

The Internet has been acquiring popularity among young people, but at a much slower pace than television and radio. In spite of salient differences among the developing world, the use of computers and the Internet is rising increasingly, fastest among adolescent people.<sup>25</sup> The fact that there are many more computer-literate

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p228

<sup>25</sup> Youth Bureau Update, <http://www.co.orange.ny.us/documentView.asp?docID=1954> (accessed October 2009).



adolescents than adults designates the younger generation's greater interest in technological advances. Around the world, young users are increasingly turning to the Internet as a source of communication, entertainment, socializing, and information. At the same time, web access is the source of conflict, both between countries (Internet use in developed countries far outpaces use in the developing world), and within countries (Internet use intense among wealthier and better-educated metropolitan youth).

Nevertheless, still in countries where computer and Internet use is low, young people vigorously look for access whenever possible, most often in Internet cafes. Young people are excited about Internet because, more than any other sources, it helps them institute contact with the outside world and liberally seek information. Perhaps it is free access to information that also accounts for the upper levels of trust young people often invest in information found on the web. But, the directness of the web and young people's evident inability to distinguish clearly between content and advertising worries parents and child advocates alike.<sup>26</sup> Young people use the Internet principally for communicating (email and chat rooms); downloading (computer games, software and music); and obtaining information (about education, entertainment, sports, "taboo" topics not addressed by adults, and news that may be concealed for political motives).

### *The Adolescent Online World*

It is critical to view the Internet as an innovative social environment in which universal adolescent matters pertaining to identity self-worth, formation and sexuality are

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<sup>26</sup> Parent's Safety Guide, <http://www.protectkids.com/parentsafety/rulesntools.htm> (accessed October 23, 2009).

discovered in a virtual world.<sup>27</sup> As a social circumstance, the Internet enables multiple communication meanings, such as e-mail, instant messaging (IM), chat, and blogs, to permit adolescents to contribute and co-construct their own environments.<sup>28</sup> Extracting the data from the Pew Internet and American Life Project, the immense majority (89%) of teens use e-mail; 75% use IM, which permits them to have multiple simultaneous discussions with a distinct group of peers. Over 50% of teens acquire more than one email address or screen name, which they can use to propel confidential messages to friends or to partake incognito in online forums, such as chat rooms.<sup>29</sup> Easy and incessant access to the Internet provides marvelous chances for adolescent socialization, allowing them to connect with their peers as well as with absolute strangers from across the world. Clearly, the Internet is converting the social world of adolescents by influencing how they communicate, establish and maintain relationships and find social stability. Consequently, it is necessary to gain awareness of both the possible benefits and risks of teen Internet use, and provide policies to guide safe and positive practice.

As a multifaceted source of communication, the Internet enables the opportunity of small, intimate social environments geared for faster or immediate communication. At the same time, the networks can be unusually large presenting global access to its users. This global network permits for American adolescent to connect with those in Botswana or any “wired” sector in the world.<sup>30</sup> This drives the growth of youth leadership, socialization, information, communication and learning to an intercontinental scale. For

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<sup>27</sup> Subrahmanyam, K., Greenfield, P.M., & Tynes, B. *Constructing sexuality and identity in an online teen chat room*. (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.59

<sup>28</sup> Greenfield, P., & Yan, Z. “Children, adolescents, and the Internet: A new field of inquiry in developmental psychology.” (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2006), pp.35-37

<sup>29</sup> Marcia, J., Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), “Handbook of adolescent psychology”. (New York: Wiley 1980), p.12

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

example, teens in Accra, Ghana use the Internet as a source of fitness information in order to gain the necessary information on both sexual and general health issues that they would possibly not have access to in their present local environment.<sup>31</sup>

Research on American youth shows that the Internet provides as a powerful resource for information about socially receptive topics such as sex and interpersonal relations;<sup>32</sup> it also supplies as a community-building tool providing information on civic appointment and political contribution.<sup>33</sup> Studies have exposed that during Internet communication, youth are given the chance to exercise leadership skills and become stakeholders in communities that they have created. This supports independence and individuality free of norms and prospects. Despite fears of stalkers and inappropriate sites, parents are beginning to distinguish the Internet as a powerful tool for both networking and academic augmentation for their children. A current study found that low-income youth who constantly used the Internet exhibited higher grade point averages over the course of time than less regular users.<sup>34</sup>

Some evidence advocates that Internet communication maybe particularly advantageous for shy, socially nervous, or marginalized adolescence, facilitating them to perform social skills without the risks allied with face-to-face communications.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, online communication may promote more truthful exchanges; many people

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<sup>31</sup> David Šmahel and Kaveri Subrahmanyam, “*Any Girls Want to Chat Press 911: Partner Selection in Monitored and Unmonitored Teen Chat Rooms*,” (CyberPsychology and Behavior 2007), pp. 97-100

<sup>32</sup> Suzuki, L.K., & Calzo, J.P. *The search for peer advice in cyberspace: An examination of online teen bulletin boards about health and sexuality.* (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004).

<sup>33</sup> Rainie, L., & Horrigan, J. “*A decade of adoption: How the Internet has woven itself into American life.*” (Washington DC: Pew Internet and Family Life 2005), p.46

<sup>34</sup> Jochen Peter, Patti M. Valkenburg, and Alexander P. Schouten, “*Developing a Model of Adolescent Friendship Formation on the Internet*,” (CyberPsychology & Behavior 2005), pp.90, 538

<sup>35</sup> McKenna, K.Y.A., Green, A., & Gleason, M. “*Relationship formation on the Internet: What’s the big attraction?*” (Journal of Social Issues 2002), p.57

report a better keenness to share opinions and approaches online than they would in person.<sup>36</sup> This autonomy from social anxieties may help adolescents build more self-confidence in real social circumstances and can provoke a sense of connection to others, an imperative expression in adolescent social development. On the other hand, this lack of “on the ground” relations may pose risks for teens, particularly those who are socially nervous.<sup>37</sup>

The Internet has reliable positive contacts on modern society, it has also caused various societal concerns about solitude, sanctuary, Internet crime, pornography and virtual community.<sup>38</sup> It’s easy accountability poses greater problems and hazards for adolescents in contrast to other forms of media. According to the National Altitudinal Poll, the number one media concern for parents has transferred from television to the Internet; 85% of parents reported that among all sources of media, the Internet posed the greatest jeopardy to their children.<sup>39</sup> Parental concerns are legitimate, especially considering that teens are essentially free to view and post anything they choose and communicate with whomever they intend. Hand in hand with this, the Internet has become an extremely effectual and lucrative means of allocating sexually explicit material, as well as a sophisticated channel for sex trafficking, obsessive sexual behavior, and sex crimes.<sup>40</sup> According to a study performed by the London School of Economics (2002), 90% of children between ages 8 and 16 have accessed pornography on the

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<sup>36</sup> McKenna, K.Y.A., & Bargh, J.A. “*Plan 9 from Cyberspace: The implications of the Internet for personality and social psychology.*” (Personality and Social Psychology Review 2000), p.435

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Greenfield, P., & Yan, Z. “*Children, adolescents, and the Internet: A new field of inquiry in developmental psychology.*” (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2006), pp.35-37

<sup>39</sup> Common Sense Media retrieved from “[www.common sense.com](http://www.common sense.com)”

<sup>40</sup> Galbreath N. & Berlin, F. “*Paraphilias and the Internet. In A. Cooper (Ed.), Sex and the Internet: A guidebook for clinicians.*” (New York: Brunner Routledge 2002), pp. 115-117

Internet.<sup>41</sup> In most cases, the sex sites were accessed inadvertently when a child, often in the course of doing homework, used an inoffensive word to search for pictures or information. Such free entrance and contact to this information by adolescents who have not yet developed to full maturity could pose unenthusiastic impacts on adolescent development and could potentially manifest their social relations with peers, their sexual behavior, and their emotional development.<sup>42</sup>

Moreover, free and occasionally anonymous communication through chat rooms, blogs, and IM pose jeopardy to teens. Current studies have shown that adolescents form virtual communities to support detrimental behavior including self-injury and eating disorders.<sup>43</sup> Examination of chat discussions proposed that chat participants often resort to the age/sex/location chat code to share identity information. A nationwide poll demonstrated that half of teens aged 13-18 often communicate through the Internet with someone they have not met in person; one-third have talked about potentially meeting someone face-to-face whom they have only met through the Internet.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, almost 12.5% exposed that someone they were communicating with online was an adult pretending to be much younger.<sup>45</sup> Phony identities are easy to make and to sell on the Internet. Teens will often create personal pages where they can make up or post their personal profiles, real identities, and pictures on websites such as Myspace and the Facebook. This poses a safe jeopardy since it is difficult to distinguish someone's genuine identity over the Internet. In addition, a United States poll revealed that 54% of

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Subrahmanyam, K., Greenfield, P.M., & Tynes, B. "*Constructing sexuality and identity in an online teen chat room.*" (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.59

<sup>43</sup> Warfield, B. "*Perfectionism.*" Philadelphia, PA: (The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co. 1958)

<sup>44</sup> Polly Klaas Foundation (2006) retrieved from <[www.pollyklaas.org/Internetsafety/Internet-pdfs/PollingSummary.pdf](http://www.pollyklaas.org/Internetsafety/Internet-pdfs/PollingSummary.pdf)>

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

girls reported they could be online without their parents' acquaintance and have been involved in some form of cyber relationship.<sup>46</sup> As long as this online culture grows in popularity and socializing continues to be precedence for teens, safety will be an issue. Additionally, creating fake identities discourages from "real life" social situations as it allows for individuals to generate any image of themselves with little or no social consequences. Hence, although the Internet may serve as a means for communication and may increase social aptitude of socially anxious teens, it may also promote fake identities and a false image of real-life circumstances. These socially anxious teens may have a propensity to resort to computer communication as an alternative for real-life interaction.

#### *Approach of Print Media*

In contrast to the balanced rise of other sources of media, in many countries print media have experienced a decline from the role they once played. Several current developments have served to further reduce the statistics of young readers of print media. In part, this is an outcome of the improved quality and quantity of information available from television, radio and Internet. In developed countries, adolescent people are preoccupied by numerous media choices and technologies. In developing countries, few youth-oriented publications subsist and those that do often have limited transmission or are too luxurious for most youth to afford. In the former Soviet bloc countries, youth press once played a quite vivacious role and received considerable government backing.<sup>47</sup> Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, conversely, youth press has largely moved out and has

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<sup>46</sup> Girl Scout Research Institute., *The Net Effect: (Girls and New Media 2002)* retrieved from <[www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/original/net\\_effect.asp](http://www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/original/net_effect.asp)>

<sup>47</sup> Gigli, Susan and Aneta Genova. "*Young People and Media in Central & Eastern Europe, the CIS & Baltic States*". (A report prepared by InterMedia for UNICEF 2001), p.95, 99

not been replaced by a regular substitute forum for adolescent people. Starting in the early 1990s, newspaper readership levels reduced sharply throughout the region, especially in those countries experiencing the greatest financial complexities. Many publications folded without government subsidies and could not magnetize adequate subscribers or advertisers. Those that did endure had to hoist their prices, making them unaffordable for many.

Finally, the sharing system was so badly destabilized in many countries that it is now common for newspapers and magazines to land in rural areas weeks and months late, if at all. The publications in strongest demand amongst adolescent people are those that plea to their specialized interests such as comic books and popular specialized magazines on computers, fashion, sports, science, business and music. Many are high quality, with professional and attractive content that cater to adolescent people's interests, yet are often too costly for the average young person (or adult).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 99.

### CHAPTER THREE ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Over the past few decades, technology has become progressively common in the lives of adolescents. As a lot, adolescents are the primary users of newer electronic communication forms such as e-mail, text messaging and instant messaging as well as communication-leaning Internet sites such as social networking, blogs and sites for sharing videos and photos. Kaveri Subrahmanyam and Patricia Greenfield analyze adolescents' relationships with their friends, romantic partners, strangers, and their families in the midst of their online communication behaviors.<sup>49</sup>

The research shows that adolescents are using these communication tools primarily to strengthen existing relationships, both with romantic partners and friends.<sup>50</sup> Increasingly they are integrating these tools into their "offline" worlds, using, e.g. social networking sites to get more information about new contestants into their offline world.

Greenfield and Subrahmanyam reported that adolescents' online relations with strangers, while not as widespread now as during the early years of the Internet, may have reimbursement, such as alleviating social anxiety, as well as costs, such as sexual predation.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, the researcher establishes that online content itself can be both positive and negative. Even though teens find precious information and support on websites, they can also meet hate and racism messages. Electronic communication may also be strengthening peer communication at the cost of communication with parents, who may not be knowledgeable enough about their children's online actions on sites such

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<sup>49</sup> Subrahmanyam, K., Greenfield, P.M., & Tynes, B. "*Constructing sexuality and identity in an online teen chat room.*" (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.59

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Subrahmanyam, K., Greenfield, P.M., & Tynes, B. "*Constructing sexuality and identity in an online teen chat room.*" (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.55



as the extremely popular MySpace.

The Internet was once viewed as the savior of education. Schools today are doing their best to organize the harmful and disturbing uses of electronic media technology while children are at school. The hurdle for schools is to eradicate the negative uses of the Internet and cell phones in educational settings while preserving their positive contributions to social and education relationships.

In this chapter, we first explain how adolescents are using these new forms of electronic media technology to communicate and then present an academic framework for analyzing these uses. We discuss electronic media technology and relationships, in turn, analyzing, dating relationships, relationships with strangers, friends, and parents. We then discover how parents and schools are responding to adolescents' relations with electronic media technology. At the end, we observe how adolescents are using electronic media technology in the overhaul of identity construction.

Adolescents have a vast selection of electronic tools for communication with each other. Cell phones, instant messaging and social networking sites are some of the most popular. Research demonstrates that adolescents use these communication tools mostly to strengthen existing relationships, both friendship and romantic relationships, and to check out the potential of new entrants into their offline world.<sup>52</sup> But while the Internet permits teens to cultivate existing friendships, it also enlarges their social networks to include strangers.

The newly launched networks can be used for good (for example, alleviating social anxiety) or for ill (for example; sexual predation). Though researchers have

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<sup>52</sup> Cliff Lampe, Nicole Ellison, and Charles Steinfeld, "*A Face(book) in the Crowd: Social Searching vs. Social Browsing*," Proceedings of the 2006 20th Anniversary Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work: New York, ACM Press (2006). pp.27-30

established no rigorous trials into how adolescents' extensive use of electronic communication may be affecting their relationships with their parents, indications are that it may be strengthening peer communication at the disbursement of communication with parents.<sup>53</sup> In the meantime, parents are increasingly hard-pressed to stay conscious of what their children are doing online. With newer forms of electronic communication, such as social networking sites, making it harder for them to control or even sway their children's online behaviors. Schools too are now trying to control the distracting uses of the Internet and other media such as cell phones, while children are at school. The hurdle for parents and schools alike is to eradicate the negative uses of electronic media technology while conserves their distinguished contributions to education and social relationship.

### *Electronic Media and Adolescent Communication*

To better recognize how adolescents use electronic media technology for communication, we are going to start by describing the many diverse ways in which such communication can take place. Among adolescents today, the popular communication forms comprise of instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms, text messaging, blogs, bulletin boards, social networking utilities like, Facebook and MySpace, video sharing sites like YouTube, photo sharing such as Flickr, particularly multi-player online computer games such as Counter Strike, and virtual worlds for example Teen Second Life and Second Life. The table given below lists these communication forms, the electronic hardware that helps them, and the purposes that they make possible.

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<sup>53</sup> Subrahmanyam, K., Greenfield, P.M., & Tynes, B. "*Constructing sexuality and identity in an online teen chat room.*" (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.63

There are many assorted forms of electronic hardware that preserve the diverse communication forms, however, these differences are getting indistinct as the technology progresses. For example, e-mail, which was originally maintained only by the computer, can now be used throughout cell phones and other portable devices, such as Apple's iPhone, Helio's Ocean, personal digital assistants (PDAs) and the T-Mobile Sidekick. The same is true for functions for example; instant messaging and social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook are now available on most every cellular smartphone. Other communication forms such as Flickr and YouTube are likewise accessible on portable devices such as cell phones with cameras and cameras with wireless. Text messaging persists to be typically the province of cell phones even though one can use a wired computer to send a text message to a cell phone. As most of the phones appended instant messaging service, instant messaging by cell phone is also increasing in status.<sup>54</sup> Teens use many of these types of electronic hardware to admittance to online communication forms. Most research on teen's use of electronic communication has targeted computers; where accessible, we will take into account the findings based on other technologies, such as cell phones.

Adolescents are using these diverse communication forms for many different principles and to interrelate with acquaintances, friends, and strangers alike. Teens use instant messaging generally to communicate with offline friends. Similarly, they use social networking sites to keep in touch with their peers from their offline lives, both to make plans with friends whom they see often and to keep in touch with friends whom they see rarely. They use blogs to allocate details of everyday activities in their life.

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<sup>54</sup> Stephanie Dunnewind, "R U Still Up? Teens Are Text-Messaging Friends into the Wee Hours," Seattle Times, Living section, (2007) retrieved from [http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/living/2003644903\\_textsleep31.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/living/2003644903_textsleep31.html)

Cell phones and text messaging has also become an imperative communication tool for teens. Virgin Mobile USA reports that there are more than nine of ten teens with cell phones have text messaging capacity; two-thirds use text-messaging daily.<sup>55</sup> Certainly, more than half of Virgin's customers, aged fifteen to twenty, accept or send at least eleven text messages a day, while almost a fifth text twenty-one times a day or more. From October through December 2006, Verizon Wireless swarmed 17.7 billion text messages, more than double the total from the same epoch in 2005. Adolescents exploit cell phones, text messaging, and instant messaging to communicate with existing friends and family.<sup>56</sup> Using these tools to keep in contact with friends is a departure from the early days of the Internet, when contact with strangers was more frequent. But the trend is not astonishing given the fact that youth are more likely to find their family and friends online or with cell phones today than they were even five or ten years ago.<sup>57</sup>

Though teens are using these electronic communication forms to keep in touch with family and friends, the digital landscape continues to be populated with anonymous online contexts such as bulletin boards, massively multi-player online games (MMOG), massively multi-player online role playing games (MMORPG) and chat rooms where users can look for information, role play, play games, or find support.<sup>58</sup> Electronic communication forms also diverge both in the extent to which their content is private or public and in the extent to which users can keep content private. Public chat rooms and bulletin boards are maybe the least private. Screen names of users are publicly available,

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<sup>55</sup> Cliff Lampe, Nicole Ellison, and Charles Steinfield, "*A Face(book) in the Crowd: Social Searching vs. Social Browsing*," Proceedings of the 2006 20th Anniversary Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work: New York, ACM Press (2006).

<sup>56</sup> Sameer Hinduja, and Justin W. Patchin, "*Personal Information of Adolescents on the Internet. A Quantitative Content Analysis of MySpace*," (Journal of Adolescence 2007), p. 25

<sup>57</sup> Janis Wolak, Kimberly J. Mitchell, and David Finkelhor, "*Escaping or Connecting? Characteristics of Youth Who Form Close Online Relationships*" (Journal of Adolescence 2003), p.39

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

though users choose their screen names and also whether their silhouette is private or public. Of course, private head-to-head between users is not publicly available, and such private messages are usually restricted to other users who have also registered. This constraint precludes lurkers and others not connected with the site from privately contacting a user. Communication through instant messaging, e-mail and text messaging is supposedly the most private. Although email and transcripts of instant messaging dialogues can be forwarded to third parties, they still stay among the more private spaces of the Internet.

Communication forums like blogs and social networking sites, give users appropriate control over the extent to which their profiles or entries are private or public. MySpace profiles and Blog entries, for illustration, can be either freely accessed on the Web by anyone or limited to friends of the author. In recent times, MySpace has limited the ability of users over age eighteen to become friends with younger users. Facebook gives users a selection of privacy options to manage the profile information that others, for example, friends and other people in their network, can see. Such as, users can restrict particular people from seeing their profile or can permit specific people to see only their restricted profile. Searches on the Facebook network or on search engines disclose only a users name, the networks they belong to and their profile picture thumbnail. Facebook used to be somewhat “elite,” in that members had to have an “.edu” suffix on their e-mail address; the intention was to limit the site to college and university students.<sup>59</sup> That requirement, though, has recently changed, making Facebook less “confidential” and more civic. Most photo sharing sites permit users to organize who views the pictures that

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<sup>59</sup> Cliff Lampe, Nicole Ellison, and Charles Steinfeld, “*A Face(book) in the Crowd: Social Searching vs. Social Browsing*,” Proceedings of the 2006 20th Anniversary Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work: New York, ACM Press (2006).

they upload. Pictures can be uploaded for private or public storage and users can control whom views pictures marked personal. YouTube, a very public communication forum, permits registered users to upload videos and unregistered users to view most videos; only registered viewers can post comments and pledge to video feeds. Users often must pay a subscription fee to access them. They can generate avatars or online identities to interrelate in these worlds and have the freedom to make them resemble or differ from their physical identities. Some virtual worlds such as Second Life are limited to people older than eighteen; Teen Second Life is limited to users between thirteen and seventeen. Several controls have been put in position to guard youth in these online contexts. One such control for Teen Second Life is the verification of users, which entails a credit card or PayPal or Alter Pay account. Another control is the threat of losing one's civil liberties in the site; for instance, underage users found in the main area are moved to the teen area and overage users found in the teen area are banned from both the teen and main areas. These solitude measures have given adolescent users a immense deal of control over who views their profiles, who views the substances that they uploaded, and with whom they interact on these online forums.

A recent study of more than 9,000 profiles on MySpace found that users do not divulge their personal information as widely as many fear: 40 percent of profiles were private. In fact, only 8.8 percent of users exposed their name, 4 percent exposed their instant messaging screen name, 1 percent incorporated an e-mail address, and 0.3 percent exposed their telephone number.<sup>60</sup> As Dana Boyd points out, though, an inherent limitation of solitude in electronic communication is that words can be copied or

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<sup>60</sup> Stephen T., Russell, Brian T. Franz, and Anne K. Driscoll, "*Same-Sex Romantic Attraction and Experiences of Violence in Adolescence*," (American Journal of Public Health 2001)

distorted and shared with others who were not the proposed audience.<sup>61</sup> Further research is required to learn how this trait affects social relationships.

Privacy controls on networking sites also signify that adolescents can restrict parental access to their pictures, profiles, and writings. In fact, on Facebook, even if teens provide their parents admittance to their profiles, they can restrict the areas of their profile that their parents can view. There is a recently conducted focus group study that exposed that some teens may go as far as to have multiple MySpace profiles, some of which their parents can access, others of which they did not, and still others that they do not know exist.<sup>62</sup> Monitoring and controlling youth contact to these communication forums is growing ever more demanding, and it is noteworthy for parents to notify themselves about these online forums so they can have meaningful conversations about them with their adolescents children.

One key question for study is whether these new online communication forums have distorted traditional patterns of interpersonal contact among adolescents. Is time spent in online communication coming at the cost of time spent in face-to-face communication? Or is time spent online merely substituting for time that would have been spent on the telephone in earlier eras? Research has shown that over the past century adolescence has become more and more alienated from adult life.<sup>63</sup> Most adolescents today spend much of their time with their peers. A regularly weighty question is whether adolescents' online communication is altering the nature and amount of connections with

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<sup>61</sup> Dana Boyd, "Social Network Sites: Public, Private, or What?" (Knowledge Tree 13 2007) retrieved from ([http://kt.flexiblelearning.net.au/tkt2007/?page\\_id=28](http://kt.flexiblelearning.net.au/tkt2007/?page_id=28))

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Cliff Lampe, Nicole Ellison, and Charles Steinfeld, "A Face(book) in the Crowd: Social Searching vs. Social Browsing," Proceedings of the 2006 20th Anniversary Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work: New York, ACM Press (2006).

families and relatives. Research has not yet even consistently documented the time spent by adolescents in different online communication locations. One difficulty in that endeavor is that the multi-tasking nature of most online communication makes it rigid for subjects to give a realistic estimation of the time they spend on different behaviors. Recall errors and chauvinisms can further mutilate estimates. Researchers have activities to elude this problem by using diary studies and experience-sampling techniques in which subjects are beeped at various points all over the day to evidence and reading their behaviors and moods. But recent diary studies of teen media expenditure do not address the questions of curiosity here. The rapidly shifting environment of adolescent online activities also complicates time-use studies. For example, on the blogging site Xanga, a regular user spent an hour and thirty-nine minutes in October 2002, but only eleven minutes in September 2006.<sup>64</sup> Likewise, recent media reports propose that Facebook has displaced the once-popular Friendster and MySpace sites among adolescents.<sup>65</sup> These shifts in preference signify that data on time usage rapidly gets outdated; evidently new researchers are needed to study these issues.

#### *Academic Framework*

The academic framework of the study illustrates on John Hill's theory that adolescent activities are best understood in terms of the key developmental tasks of adolescence, intimacy, autonomy, identity and sexuality, and the factors, for example, adolescent and cognitive modification and the variables, such as sexual category and

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<sup>64</sup> Sameer Hinduja, and Justin W. Patchin, "*Personal Information of Adolescents on the Internet. A Quantitative Content Analysis of MySpace*," (Journal of Adolescence 2007), p. 25

<sup>65</sup> Washington Post, "In Teens' Web World, MySpace Is So Last Year," (2007) retrieved from (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/28/AR2006102800803.html>)



social class, that influence them.<sup>66</sup> Enlarging his thoughts, we recommend that for today's youth, media technologies are an imperative social variable and that virtual worlds are psychologically associated. The virtual world provides a playing ground for developmental concerns from the physical world, for example, identity and sexuality. Therefore, understanding how online communication influences adolescents relationships obliges us to observe how technology shapes two significant tasks of adolescence, instituting interpersonal relations and constructing identity.

### *Adolescent Relationships and Electronic Media*

Instituting interpersonal relations, such as friendships and romantic relationships, and those with siblings, parents and other adults outside the family is one of the most notable developmental tasks of adolescence.<sup>67</sup> As electronic media technologies have become a meaningful means of communicating with others, it is imperative to consider them in the situation of the interpersonal relationships in adolescent lives. Two themes have framed discussions about adolescent online communication and relationships. One is apprehension about the quality and nature of online and offline relationships. The other is how online communication affects adolescents' relationships and happiness and whether the effects are positive or negative. Though research on adolescence has traditionally not considered relationships with strangers, we contain that relationship here, as the Internet has opened up a world ahead of one's corporal setting.

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<sup>66</sup> John Hill, "Early Adolescence: A Framework," (Journal of Early Adolescence 1983).

<sup>67</sup> Laurence Steinberg, "*Adolescence*" (New York: McGraw Hill 2005), p. 569

*Peer Relationships and Electronic Media*

In this part of the thesis we will examine the part of electronic media technology in an adolescents' existing friendships. One study of daily reports of home Internet use establish that adolescents used e-mail and instant messaging for much of their online relations; they interact mostly with friends from offline lives about everyday issues such as friends and school day activities.<sup>68</sup> Another study establishes that teens use instant messaging in particular as a replacement for face-to-face talk with friends from their physical lives.<sup>69</sup> According to this study, accomplished in 2001-02, teens feel less psychologically close to their instant messaging partners than to their partners in phone and face-to-face relations.<sup>70</sup> Teens also discover instant messaging less enjoyable than, but as compassionate as, phone or face-to-face communications. They find instant messaging particularly useful to talk freely to members of the opposite gender. The author of the study theorizes that teens have so wholly cuddled instant messaging despite its professed limitations because it pleased two key developmental needs of adolescence: connecting with peers and defining their group identity by enabling them to join offline groups or crowds without the fear or face-to-face rejection.

Social networking sites are also used in the context of offline friendships; this is true more often for girls. The 2006 Pew survey research on social networking sites and teens found that girls use such sites to get into already-in friendships whereas boys use

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<sup>68</sup> Jackson, L.A., Von Eye, A., Biocca, F.A., Barbatsis, G., Zhao, Y., & Fitzgerald, H.E. "Does home Internet use influence the academic performance of low-income children?" (Journal of Developmental Psychology 2006), p.97

<sup>69</sup> Bonka S., Boneva and others, "Teenage Communication in the Instant Messaging Era," in *Information Technology at Home*, edited by Robert E. Kraut and others: (Oxford University Press, 2006) p. 27

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

them to flirt and make new friends.<sup>71</sup> Text messaging on cell phones has currently become popular among U.S. teens; they are now subsequent to youth in Asia, Europe and United Kingdom who have widely assumed it and entangled it in their lives. Adolescents swap most of their text messages with their peers.<sup>72</sup> To examine the communicative principles of text messaging, one study asked ten adolescents (five girls and five boys) to keep a comprehensive log of the text messages that they received and sent for seven consecutive days. Examination of the message logs exposed three primary conversation threads: planning (organizing meeting arrangements), chatting (discussing gossip, activities and dealings, and homework help), and coordinating communication (having discussions about having conversations). The teens ended most text communications by switching to another setting such as phone, instant messaging, or face-to-face.<sup>73</sup>

According to a study established in 2001 by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 48 percent of online teens suppose that the Internet has enhanced their relationships with friends; the more often they use the Internet, the more strappingly they voice this conviction. Amusingly, 61 percent experience that time online does not take away from time spent with friends.<sup>74</sup>

One current study emerges to sustain adolescents' self-reported viewpoints about how the Internet influences their friendships. A survey analysis of adolescent and preadolescent youth in the Netherlands observed the link between online communication and relationship potency. 80 percent of those surveyed reported using the Internet to

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<sup>71</sup> Lenhart A., Madden M., & Hitlin P. *Teens and technology: You are leading the transition to a fully wired and mobile nation.* Retrieved October 12, 2005

<sup>72</sup> Rebecca E., Grinter and Margery A Eldridge, "y do tngrs luv 2 txt msg?" Proceedings of Seventh European Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work ECSCW '01: (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers 2001), p. 17

<sup>73</sup> Catherine Saillant, "Testing the Bounds of MySpace" (Los Angeles Times 2006) p.28

<sup>74</sup> Patti, Valkenburg and Jochen Peter, "Preadolescents' and Adolescents' Online Communication and Their Closeness to Friends" (Developmental Psychology 2007), p.22

preserve existing friendship networks. People who communicate more often on the Internet feel closer to existing friends than those who did not, but only if they were using the Internet to communicate with friends rather than strangers.<sup>75</sup> Partakers who experiences that online communication was more effectual for self-revelation also reported feeling closer to their offline friends than adolescents who did not observed online communication as permitting for more intimate self-revelation.

Whereas survey partakers who used instant messaging communicated principally with existing, offline friends, those who visited chat rooms communicated with existing friends less often. This prototype makes sense because chat is usually a public place providing wide admission to strangers and little admittance to friends, whereas instant messaging is mainly a private mood. But the analysis leaves unreciprocated the question of whether chat reduces communication with existing friends or whether teens with scrawnier friendship networks use chat further. The researchers completed their survey before social networking sites had become popular in the Netherlands; only eight percent of their respondents used the most popular Dutch social networking site. The examination did not evaluate the relationship between the use of social networking sites and existing friendships.

Authors have exposed some proof that the feedback that teens accept in social networking may be associated to their feelings about themselves. A current survey of 881 Dutch adolescents reviewed how using a social networking site (CU2) exaggerated their self-esteem and welfare.<sup>76</sup> The study accomplished that feedback from the site influenced self-esteem, with optimistic feedback ornamental it and negative tone decreasing it. Even

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Jochen Peter, Patti M. Valkenburg, and Alexander P. Schouten, "*Characteristics and Motives of Adolescents Talking with Strangers on the Internet*," (CyberPsychology & Behavior 2006), p.97-99

though most adolescents (78 percent) accounted receiving positive feedback always or primarily, a small marginal (7 percent) accounted receiving negative feedback always or primarily. The analysis, though, was based entirely on partakers' self-assessments as to the essence of feedback they conventional; there was no independent assessment of whether it was negative or positive.<sup>77</sup> It is unfeasible to tell whether negative feedback abridged self-esteem or whether partakers with lower self-esteem usually professed the feedback they established as more negative, which in turn originate a further dip in their self-esteem. Nor did the examination take into account whether friends or strangers offered the feedback.

Even when adolescents are corresponding with their friends, social networking sites such as MySpace may by their very nature be adjusting their peer relations. These sites make communication with friends public and perceptible. Through potentially countless electronic listing of friends and "friends of friends," they bring the meaning of choosing one's social relationships to a new tremendous. They have thus become an indispensable part of adolescent peer social life while foremost to a redefinition of the word "friend." A current focus group examination of MySpace on a college campus establishes that most users had between 150 and 300 "friends" on their MySpace site.<sup>78</sup> Friends' photos and names are exhibited on users' profiles, and every profile comprises a list of "top" friends, choices from a "top four" to a "top twenty-four." Such public display of best friends appears a potentially transformative feature of a social networking site. But how does making (and not making) someone's "top" friends record affect adolescent relationships and self-esteem? This is an important question for future research in the

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Adriana A. Manago and others, "*Self-Presentation and Gender Differences on the MySpace Network*," (Department of Psychology, UCLA, 2005) p. 28, 30.

field of adolescent peer relations. Other technologies visibly form barriers against all nose-to-nose communication. Initial research is that the effortlessness of electronic communication may be making teens less interested in nose-to-nose communication with their friends.<sup>79</sup> There are more study is needed to see how widespread this event is and what it does to the emotional quality of a relationship.

### *Aggression and Electronic Media*

The news media has increasingly accounted that adolescents are using electronic technologies such as instant messages, cell phones, text messages and e-mail to bully and persecute their peers. In a survey conducted in 2005 in the United Kingdom, 20 percent of the 770 respondents, aged eleven to nineteen, accounted being bullied or accessing a threat via Internet, e-mail, chat room or text, and 11 percent accounted sending a bullying or intimidating message to someone else. Text bullying was most frequently accounted, with 14 percent reporting being bullied by mobile text messaging.<sup>80</sup> Bullying in Internet chat rooms and through emails was accounted by 5 percent and 4 percent of the example, respectively. A new form of nuisance appears to be promising through cell phone cameras: 10 percent accounted feeling humiliated, uncomfortable, or threatened by a picture that someone took of them with a cell phone camera. Most of the respondents accounted knowing the person who bullied or threatened them.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Larry Rosen, *Me, MySpace, and I: Parenting the Net Generation* (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, forthcoming 2006).

<sup>80</sup> Brendesha Tynes, Lindsay Reynolds, and Patricia Greenfield, "Adolescence, Race, and Ethnicity on the Internet: A Comparison of Discourse in Monitored vs. Unmonitored Chat Rooms" (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), pp. 97-110

<sup>81</sup> NCH, "Putting U in the Picture: Mobile Bullying Survey 2005" retrieved from <[http://www.nch.org.uk/uploads/documents/Mobile\\_bullying\\_%20report.pdf](http://www.nch.org.uk/uploads/documents/Mobile_bullying_%20report.pdf)>, p.56

Similar trends have been established in the United States. The second Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-2) held in 2005 established that 9 percent of young Internet users accounted being beleaguered online in the previous year. A nuisance included being anxious online, in addition to, having someone post or send messages about them to others. Both boys and girls were aimed, although girls were more likely to encounter distressing harassment. Instant messaging elicited the most information about harassment (47 percent), as well as by emails (13 percent), chat rooms (11 percent), and blogs (3 percent).<sup>82</sup>

A leading online survey accomplished at a popular teen Internet site in 2005 found an advanced rate of harassment, 72 percent, using two different processes of approximating pervasiveness for the preceding year.<sup>83</sup> Research on cyber-bullying has endeavored to make profiles both of youth who are likely to commit harassment and of those who are likely to be the wounded of harassment. Cyber-bullies are more likely to account for poor child-parent relationships, substance use, and wrongdoing.<sup>84</sup> Youth (aged ten to seventeen) with indications of aggression are more likely to account being harassed. Among boys, those reporting substantial gloominess were three times more likely to be harassed than those reporting meek to no depression.<sup>85</sup> As with other co-relational studies, it is impossible to recognize the direction of causality.

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<sup>82</sup>Juliana, Raskauskas and Ann D. Stoltz, *"Involvement in Traditional and Electronic Bullying among Adolescents"* (Developmental Psychology 2007)

<sup>83</sup>Jaana Juvonen, and Elisheva F. Gross, *"Extending the School Grounds? Bullying Experiences in Cyberspace"* (University of California–Los Angeles 2007).

<sup>84</sup>Michelle L. Ybarra and Kimberly J. Mitchell, *"Youth Engaging in Online Harassment: Associations with Caregiver-Child Relationships, Internet Use, and Personal Characteristics"* (Journal of Adolescence 2004), p. 45

<sup>85</sup>Michelle L., Ybarra, *"Linkages between Youth Depressive Symptomatology and Online Harassment"* (Cyberpsychology and Behavior 2004), p. 96

Cyber-bullying demonstrates how traditional offline adolescent matters are moving to the electronic stage. A questionnaire study of eighty-four thirteen to eighteen-year-old teens establish that text messages were the most widespread form of electronic bullying.<sup>86</sup> Most remarkable, the findings propose that students' part as victim and doer of bullying in the offline world mirrored their role in electronic bullying.<sup>87</sup> When a section of traditional bullies were wounded in the virtual world, there was no sign that victims of bullying in the real world strike backed by becoming bullies on the Internet or in text messages. Nor was there any sign that bullying began electronically and was thence move towards to the real world.<sup>88</sup> This common pattern was established by the large-scale Internet-based study in 2005 reported earlier, which incorporated more than 1,400 respondents between twelve and seventeen years of age.<sup>89</sup> The study establishes that respondents who had practiced frequent school-based bullying were seven times more likely to be subjected to repetitive online bullying. Heavy use of the Internet also amplified the risk, as did the use of common Internet tools like instant messaging and webcams. These latter features were much less powerful than school-based bullying. The analysis establishes that instant messaging was the most widespread tool for bullying, whereas the U.K. study noted earlier establishes that text messaging (which is more admired in the United Kingdom) was the most widespread.<sup>90</sup> Another finding is that

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<sup>86</sup> Michelle L. Ybarra and Kimberly J. Mitchell, "Youth Engaging in Online Harassment: Associations with Caregiver-Child Relationships, Internet Use, and Personal Characteristics" (Journal of Adolescence 2004), p46.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Janis Wolak, Kimberly J. Mitchell, and David Finkelhor, "Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later" (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Bulletin 2006) retrieved from <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV138.pdf> p.18

<sup>89</sup> Jaana Juvonen, and Elisheva F. Gross, "Extending the School Grounds? Bullying Experiences in Cyberspace" (University of California–Los Angeles 2007).

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.



Internet bullies comprise both unknown others and associates. About two-thirds of the cyber-bully wounded knew the performers; one-third did not.<sup>91</sup>

### *Dating and Electronic Media*

Given that adolescents are using electronic media technology to interrelate with peers, it is imperative to see how they use them in the district of romantic relationships. Finding a romantic partner and instituting a romantic relationship are vital adolescent developmental chores. Associated with these tasks are adolescents' developing sexuality and their edifice of their sexual identities.

Adolescents emerge to use electronic media technology to strengthen existing romantic relationships, as the same as they execute friendships. According to a current online survey by Teenage Research Unlimited, almost a quarter of teens in a romantic relationship have communicated with a girlfriend or boyfriend hourly between midnight and 5 a.m. using a cell phone, text or instant messaging. One in six communicated ten or more times an hour throughout the night. Concern about sleep deficiency has been one outcome to this data.<sup>92</sup>

Online communication forms which permit for ambiguity offer adolescents a new path to practice partner selection. By using a sample research on 12,000 utterances from adolescent chat rooms, researchers have established that the search for partners was

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<sup>91</sup> Janis Wolak, Kimberly J. Mitchell, and David Finkelhor, "*Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later*" (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Bulletin 2006) retrieved from <http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV138.pdf> p.18

<sup>92</sup> Stephanie Dunnewind, "*R U Still Up? Teens Are Text-Messaging Friends into the Wee Hours*," Seattle Times, Living section, (2007)

abundant online, with approximately two partner desires each minute.<sup>93</sup> In approximately one-third of cases, a user asked involved parties, often of the opposite sex, to present a string of numbers (for example, Ladies If Ya Sexy Press 11 or press 234567 if you want to have a chat) that stood out visually to point out a desire to have a chat. Users who acknowledged that they were older searched more energetically for a partner and were also more likely to identify the gender of the partner they were looking for.<sup>94</sup> Also users who affirmed that they were females were more likely to make partner requests. The gender difference shows that the online atmosphere gives a safer space for females to commence romantic relationships. While combining up with a romantic partner has always been a primary task of adolescent development, in this study we will elaborate how teens address this need more freely and frequently in a virtual communication atmosphere than has been heretofore possible in the “real” world.

Research also proposes that anonymous online contexts offer a forum for sexual searching, another crucial task of adolescence. Of the 12,000 utterances in the chat study just distinguished, 5 percent were sexual ones (about one sexual observation a minute).<sup>95</sup> Users who self-presented as older were more likely than younger ones to make open sexual utterances.<sup>96</sup> Gender was also interrelated to modes of sexual idioms. Inquires by users with mannish screen names were more sexually overt; those using feminine screen names, more sexually implied. Adolescents also use online announcement boards to learn

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<sup>93</sup> David Šmahel and Kaveri Subrahmanyam, “*Any Girls Want to Chat Press 911: Partner Selection in Monitored and Unmonitored Teen Chat Rooms*,” (CyberPsychology and Behavior 2007), pp. 97-100

<sup>94</sup> Stephanie Dunnewind, “*R U Still Up? Teens Are Text-Messaging Friends into the Wee Hours*,” Seattle Times, Living section, (2007), p95.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> David Šmahel and Kaveri Subrahmanyam, “*Any Girls Want to Chat Press 911: Partner Selection in Monitored and Unmonitored Teen Chat Rooms*,” (CyberPsychology and Behavior 2007), pp. 97-100

about sexuality. Finally, they use the Internet to take part in cybersex. In a study of 692 Czech secondary school students, 16 percent of 12 to 20 year olds accounted having tried virtual sex.<sup>97</sup> An important number reported having their first sexual experience online. The study also establishes that 43 percent of the boys and 8 percent of the girls confessed to viewing pornographic materials.<sup>98</sup> Although adolescents' contact to online sexual content can be either deliberate or spontaneous, more research is necessary to assess how this untimely contact may affect sexual identity and closeness during emerging adulthood. Studies have established that unintentional contact to sexual media in childhood and adolescence often has negative psychological effects, such as disgust, shock or embarrassment, and that these effects can be continuing. Online forums may also offer sexual marginal adolescents with a safe asylum for sexual journeying without the prejudice and harassment that gay, lesbian, and bisexual adolescents sometimes face at the hands of peers and adults.<sup>99</sup>

Much more research is available regarding adolescents' use of electronic communication technology for relationship development. The survey of Pew in 2001 on teenagers and instant messaging established that among teens that used instant messaging, 17 percent used it to inquire someone out and 13 percent, to fragment with someone.<sup>100</sup> There is also a recent study of romantic relationships amongst college students discovered the use of Facebook, a social networking site, amongst 1,440 first

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<sup>97</sup> Lalita K., Suzuki and Jerel P. Calzo, "*The Search for Peer Advice in Cyberspace: An Examination of Online Teen Health Bulletin Boards*" (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.23

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Sameer Hinduja, and Justin W. Patchin, "*Personal Information of Adolescents on the Internet. A Quantitative Content Analysis of MySpace*," (Journal of Adolescence 2007), p. 25

<sup>100</sup> Amanda Lenhart, Lee Rainie, and Oliver Lewis, "*Teenage Life Online: The Rise of the Instant-Message Generation and the Internet's Impact on Friendships and Family Relationships*" (Washington, D.C. 2007) p. 97: Pew Internet and American Life Project, 2001 retrieved from [http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP\\_Teens\\_Report.pdf/](http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Teens_Report.pdf/)

year students at Michigan State University.<sup>101</sup> According to the research, the lowest-ranked use was exploring informal sex partners; the next lowest was exploring people to date. The students may, though, have been using Facebook to look into people they had met as forthcoming dates. Perhaps to glance out people they have met socially or in class or others who live in their dorm are all ranked comparatively highly. Another research of relationship development asked a sample of Facebook users about an instance when they had met someone socially and then analyzed his or her profile.<sup>102</sup> Contrasted with light users, heavier users of Facebook accounted feeling more convinced in the information they had gleaned from the profile. They also accounted being more concerned about sentiments more similar to the profile they analyzed.<sup>103</sup> One technique in which online communication may influence romantic relationships may be delicate: getting more information about people one has convinced to potential date.

### *Relationships with Acquaintances and Strangers*

Most people think that because online communications lack face-to-face communication, they are supposed to be less affluent than ones that are offline. When the interaction is with strangers of one's offline life, it is supposed to signify weak ties, which have been characterized as relationships that have shallow and simply broken bonds.<sup>104</sup> Queries about the comparative affluence of online communication have

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<sup>101</sup> Sameer Hinduja, and Justin W. Patchin, "Personal Information of Adolescents on the Internet. A Quantitative Content Analysis of MySpace," (Journal of Adolescence 2007), p. 26

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Stephen P., Andon, "Evaluating Computer-Mediated Communication on the University Campus: The Impact of Facebook.com on the Development of Romantic Relationships" (Florida State University 2007), p.137

<sup>104</sup> Robert E., Kraut and others, "Internet Paradox: A Social Technology That Reduces Social Involvement and Psychological Well-Being?" (American Psychologist 1998), p. 65

increased concerns about the amount of adolescents' online relationships with strangers and about the social contact of such weaker relationships and interactions.

The concern for online stranger contact varies depending both on the particular technology used and the time period in question. In the former years of the Internet, when chat rooms were the frenzy, teens were more likely to be in touch with strangers. Once instant messaging became accepted, teens appear to be using it to connect mostly with offline friends.<sup>105</sup> With the arrival of today's popular social networking sites, photo and video sharing sites, and blogs, adolescents may again interact and connect with people who are not part of their offline lives.

A previous US national survey of adolescents aged ten to seventeen published in 2002 exposed that in the year prior to when they were reviewed, 25 percent of Internet users had created casual online friendships and 14 percent had created close friendships or even romantic relationships.<sup>106</sup> Another US national survey published in 2006 established that 40 percent of fourteen to twenty-two year olds who use social networking sites for example MySpace had been contacted online by a stranger whom they did not recognize before. Yet one more survey, accomplished in 2007, accounted that an overwhelming majority of teens who use social networking sites do so to keep in contact either with friends whom they see often (91 percent) or with friends they seldom see (82 percent).<sup>107</sup> These variable trends advocate that although adolescents may be using online communication forms as a way of expanding their communication with peers from their

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<sup>105</sup> Bonka S., Boneva and others, "Teenage Communication in the Instant Messaging Era," in *Information Technology at Home*, edited by Robert E. Kraut and others: (Oxford University Press, 2006) p.27

<sup>106</sup> Janis Wolak, Kimberly Mitchell, and David Finkelhor, "*Close Online Relationships in a National Sample of Adolescents*" (Journal of Adolescence 2002), p.97

<sup>107</sup> Marcia, J., Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), "*Handbook of adolescent psychology*". (New York: Wiley 1980), p.12

offline lives, the possibility for communications with strangers is high and therefore qualities further study.

The research on this topic reveals that adolescents' relationships with strangers that begin online may indeed vary from their offline ones. A study of 987 Israeli adolescents establishes that teens knew online friends for such a little period of time than they knew face-to-face friends and that the relationships were not as secure. The topics discussed were less private and the shared actions were less.<sup>108</sup> It is doable, though, that online relationship may become more alike to offline over time. Another study, whose partakers ranged in age from sixteen to twenty-nine (median age was 20.67), established that offline relationships were higher in quality primarily; but not when both species of relationships lasted more than a year.<sup>109</sup> Partakers in this analysis, Hong Kong Internet users, who were employed from an online newsgroup, were asked about the importance of one offline and one online relationship of similar period. Duration of relationships was likely significant because the longer a relationship, the more occasions for information exchange and greater self-disclosure. Self-disclosure emerges to be crucial for relationship quality in computer-mediated contact. In fact, one study with college students establishes that users who self-disclosed more in such communication also accounted higher relationship quality.<sup>110</sup> Although the study reveals that online relationships with strangers can extend in quality over time, it is not clear how many last long enough to become higher-quality relationships.

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<sup>108</sup> Gustavo, Mesch and Ilan Talmud, "*The Quality of Online and Offline Relationships, the Role of Multiplexity and Duration*" (Information Society 2006).

<sup>109</sup> Darius, K. S. Chan and Grand H. L. Cheng, "*A Comparison of Offline and Online Friendship Qualities at Different Stages of Relationship Development*" (Journal of Social and Personal Relationships 2004), p.89

<sup>110</sup> Young-Ok Yum, and Kazuya Hara, "*Computer-Mediated Relationship Development: A Cross-Cultural Comparison*" (Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication 2005), p.29

Another question is whether relationships with strangers that establish online move offline. In a US national survey of 1,501 youth, 256 respondents' accounted close online relationships and 41 percent of them accounted nose-to-nose meetings with their online friend.<sup>111</sup> This study shows that relationships move from online to offline only infrequently; however, given that the newer friendship forms of networking center on making "friends," this matter needs further examination.

It is also meaningful to discuss the characteristics of adolescents who are more likely to interrelate with strangers and to form relationships with each other. Such communications can compromise the safety and welfare of the adolescent if the strangers are not peers but, rather, older, unscrupulous adults. Previous research on this question establishes that more troubled adolescents were more likely to have produced close online relationships.<sup>112</sup> Girls who had high levels of conflict with their parents and boys who had low social skills were more likely to have created close online relationships.<sup>113</sup> Troubled adolescents have likewise been more likely to visit chat rooms, where users frequently encounter strangers rather than family or friends.<sup>114</sup>

Personality types also appear to play a role in how youth form relationships with strangers online. In a survey study of 600 Dutch adolescents, both extroverts and introverts stated that they created online friendships, but they did so for various

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<sup>111</sup> Janis Wolak, Kimberly Mitchell, and David Finkelhor, "Close Online Relationships in a National Sample of Adolescents" (Journal of Adolescence 2002), p.97

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Janis Wolak, Kimberly J. Mitchell, and David Finkelhor, "Escaping or Connecting? Characteristics of Youth Who Form Close Online Relationships" (Journal of Adolescence 2003), p.39

<sup>114</sup> Timothy J., Beebe and others, "Heightened Vulnerability and Increased Risk-Taking among Adolescent Chat Room Users: Results from a Statewide School Survey" (Journal of Adolescent Health 2004).

reasons.<sup>115</sup> Extroverts created online friendships so that they could self-disclose more and connect in more common online communication. Introverts created online friendships to recompense for their inferior social skills; the social recompense reason also led to better self-disclosure and occurrence of communication and accordingly facilitated online friendship development.<sup>116</sup> Again we see that communication incidence and self-disclosure play a part in computer-mediated communication and the development of online friendships just as they do in nose-to-nose communications and offline friendships.

With the newer styles of online communication forums and the greater solitude controls they present, youth now have the option to mingle online both with strangers and with people from their offline lives. Researchers have contrasted adolescents who primarily talk online with strangers and those who talk online both with strangers and with friends; they reviewed 412 Dutch adolescents between twelve and eighteen years of age.<sup>117</sup> Only 5 percent conversed exclusively with strangers, 43 percent conversed exclusively to people they knew in person, and 10 percent conversed as often to strangers as to people they knew. The study establishes that younger adolescents were particularly prone to communicate with strangers. Users who communicated more often were less likely to communicate with a stranger, whereas those who communicated at more length were more likely to talk with strangers. Adolescents were also more likely to talk to strangers if they communicated online to assembled people to alleviate tedium and to recompense for their lack of social skills. Those who communicated online to preserve relationships were less likely to talk to strangers.

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<sup>115</sup> Jochen Peter, Patti M. Valkenburg, and Alexander P. Schouten, “*Developing a Model of Adolescent Friendship Formation on the Internet*,” (CyberPsychology & Behavior 2005), pp.90, 538

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Jochen Peter, Patti M. Valkenburg, and Alexander P. Schouten, “Characteristics and Motives of Adolescents Talking with Strangers on the Internet,” (CyberPsychology & Behavior 2006), p.97-99



Online communication with strangers may present some positive reimbursement for adolescents. A study using thorough daily diaries established that adolescents who accounted feeling lonely or socially concerned on a given day were more likely to communicate that day through instant messaging with people whom they did not know well.<sup>118</sup> Another study demonstrated that online relations with unknown peers help adolescents recover from the sting of social rejection. In perchance the only experimental study on this topic, a cyberball task (the computer alike of playing catch) to imitate social enclosure or barring was followed by either an instant message conversation with an unknown opposed sex peer or by private computer game play.<sup>119</sup> Adolescents who practiced social barring accounted for greater negative influence (such as, shame, lower self-esteem and annoyance) than those who were involved. The researcher recommended that the relations with unknown peers in forums such as chat rooms and social networking sites might help adolescents manage with threats to “belonging” in their offline lives. The researcher agrees “policies are required to encourage the formation and upholding of safe areas for youth to interrelate online.”<sup>120</sup>

The Internet is crammed with anonymous conversational groups dedicated to all kinds of topics of interest to youth, from television shows, musical groups, sports, sexuality, health and even college admissions. Despite the large number of such online curiosity and sustain groups frequented by youth, existing study has mostly focused on adolescents’ communications with strangers in the context of health information and

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<sup>118</sup> Elisheva Gross, “Logging on, Bouncing Back: An Experimental Investigation of Online Communication Following Social Exclusion” (University of California–Los Angeles 2007), pp.48-49

<sup>119</sup> Timothy J., Beebe and others, “*Heightened Vulnerability and Increased Risk-Taking among Adolescent Chat Room Users: Results from a Statewide School Survey*” (Journal of Adolescent Health 2004)

<sup>120</sup> Girl Scout Research Institute., *The Net Effect: (Girls and New Media 2002)* retrieved from [www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/original/net\\_effect.asp](http://www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/original/net_effect.asp)

sustainability. One reason why adolescents' might wish to acquire their health related information online is the anonymity of such communication. Young people may feel more contented asking strangers receptive health related queries than they would asking a parent or physician in person. Another benefit of online report boards and conversation collections are their full-time accessibility. They also make it probable to get information anonymously (by looking at other peoples queries and the retorts they received) and to get counsel and ideas from far more sources than would be likely from one's surround of face-to-face friends.<sup>121</sup> The interpersonal relations with strangers made practical by electronic media technology may be calm youthful fears from illnesses, such as AIDS, eating disorders, and self-injurious activities, about which they may not feel contented talking with their friends in face-to-face communication. A study of the private Web pages of adolescent cancer patients establish that they often articulated a strong longing to help other young cancer patients through providing information, sharing personal knowledge, and giving counsel. The guest books establish on most of the Web pages (which are equivalent to electronic report boards) designated that the pages were producing cyber communities instituting patient-to-patient help for cancer victims.<sup>122</sup>

Even healthy adolescents may have complicated questions concerning health and sexuality. Lalita Suzuki and Jerel Calzo examine a popular health support website that uses a peer produced bulletin board arrangement to help the conversation of adolescent health and social problems. Their investigations of two health report boards, one on teen

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<sup>121</sup> Lalita K., Suzuki and Jerel P. Calzo, "The Search for Peer Advice in Cyberspace: An Examination of Online Teen Health Bulletin Boards" (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.23

<sup>122</sup> Lalita K., Suzuki and Ivan I. Beale, "Personal Home Web Pages of Adolescents with Cancer: Self-Presentation, Information Dissemination, and Interpersonal Connection" (Journal of Oncology Nursing 2006)

problems and one on sexual health, concluded that report boards were a influential forum of personal opinions, actionable proposals, concrete information and emotional sustainability and that they permit teens to candidly converse about sensitive topics, such as sexuality and interpersonal relationships. In increasing nations where access to health care is much less accessible than in countries such as the United States, Internet discussion may be an especially beneficial resource.<sup>123</sup>

One widespread study of the responses and posts on self-injury message boards establishes that such forums gives emotional help to youth filled with fear and anxiety.<sup>124</sup> A study of an electronic group for individuals with eating disorders such as anorexia, nervosa and other diseases, a frequent affliction of adolescents, particularly females, made a similar verdict.<sup>125</sup> Although such online forums may offer support, they could also be difficult, usually for susceptible adolescents, because they regularize and thereby promote such injurious activities.<sup>126</sup> The anonymous and public natures of these online forums may give benefits to youth; they may as well as restrain users and guide to negative content in their online communications. Cultural disgraces and comments were much more usual, such as, in unmonitored chat rooms common by older adolescents than in the observed chat rooms frequented by younger adolescents. Furthermore, though chat members frequently use conflict to identify themselves and other in-group participants, they nevertheless stay in the chat room with everyone, rather than self-isolating as in school lunchrooms. Competition was often mentioned in the chat discussions: 37 out of

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<sup>123</sup> Dina L., G. Borzekowski, Julius N. Fobil, and Kofi O. Asante, “*Online Access by Accra’s Adolescents: Ghanaian Teens’ Use of the Internet for Health Information*” (Developmental Psychology 2006), pp.86-89

<sup>124</sup> Janis L. Whitlock, Jane L. Powers, and John Eckenrode, “*The Virtual Cutting Edge: The Internet and Adolescent Self-Injury*” (Developmental Psychology 2006), p.88

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Andrew J. Winzelberg, “*The Analysis of an Electronic Support Group for Individuals with Eating Disorders*,”(Computers in Human Behavior 1997) pp 27-39.

38 half an hour records had at least one reference to contest.<sup>127</sup> As the researchers concludes, “whereas most references had a unbiased or positive valence in both monitored and unmonitored chat rooms, chat members however had a 19 percent possibility of being uncovered to unenthusiastic remarks about a racial or ethnic group (potentially their own) in a conference of monitored chat and a 59 percent possibility in unmonitored chat”.<sup>128</sup> These conclusions advocate that racist behaviors are prowling under the surface and, in the absence of social controls, such as a monitor, may be overtly uttered in online venues. But the monitor is a relatively weak social control: even a frequency of one in five Internet sessions seems an extremely high rate of racist remarks; it is hard to imagine such a high rate offline. It is also hard to imagine the level of the psychological damage that such comments do. These conclusions were legalized by a study that interviewed adolescents engaged by instant messaging from a teen chat room.<sup>129</sup> Members accounted contact to negative pigeonholes and racial prejudice alongside their own and other ethnic groups online.

The most dramatic examples of young people appealing in racist activities online occur on hate sites focused on children and teens. Websites, chat rooms, multi-user domains, audio and videotapes, music, discussion boards, games, and journalism are some of the most usual tools used to broadcast online hate. Hate groups reach out to young people online by a number of modes, including the design of Web pages particularly geared to children and teens. Ideas may be worded to be more

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<sup>127</sup> Kaveri Subrahmanyam, Patricia M. Greenfield, and Brendesha Tynes, “*Constructing Sexuality and Identity in an Online Teen Chatroom*” (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.41

<sup>128</sup> Lalita K., Suzuki and Jerel P. Calzo, “The Search for Peer Advice in Cyberspace: An Examination of Online Teen Health Bulletin Boards” (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.38

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

comprehensible to young people. The sites may even characterize messages by youth intended to other youth.

Online relations with strangers also puts adolescents at risk for sexual solicitation and sexual utilization by predators, though such risks were far higher in the former days of the Internet before the extensive recognition of the possible dangers intrinsic to online stranger relations. Most online communication forms today have individual controls that, if used, can significantly decrease the risks for sexual persecution. Indeed, a current study has found that over a five-year period, information of unwanted sexual solicitation and harassment has decreased, a trend that researchers hypothesize is a result of improved education and more effectual law enforcement.<sup>130</sup> The second Youth Internet Safety Survey (YISS-2), concluded in 2005, also establish that only 4 percent of respondents had practiced violent sexual solicitations.

#### *Changes in Social Relationships from Electronic Media*

To assess thoroughly whether technology has distorted a relationship, researchers must be sure to contrast the relationship before and after a technology is initiated. For many kinds of electronic communications media, it is too late to do such studies in such technologically advanced surroundings. The best plan for assessing how technology influences relationships would perhaps be a historical one, in which social prototypes were documented before the arrival of the technology; there are certainly parts of the world in which this is still likely, but the United States is not one of them.

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<sup>130</sup> Kimberly J., Mitchell, Janis Wolak, and David Finkelhor, “Trends in Youth Reports of Sexual Solicitations, Harassment and Unwanted Exposure to Pornography on the Internet” (Journal of Adolescent Health 2007), p.14

Analysis concluded in this chapter, however, has also revealed that the characteristics of electronic communication technology intrinsically change social relationships. We may never know the changes in nose-to-nose and face-to-face communication that different types of electronic communication technologies have brought about. But we do know that teens now perform a higher proportion of their communication through writing in an electronic medium rather than face-to-face, in result, relatively depersonalizing the process of interpersonal communication. It is also clear that electronic communication technologies enlarge adolescent social networks. Such as, for a teen to have 150–300 “friends” would have been unheard of before social networking. It is also revealed that electronic communication technologies brings together, for both fine and ill, regular interest groups whose uniting characteristics, for example, adolescent cancer or self-mutilation, may be uncommon in anyone’s group of family or friends. The experimental monitoring researches in teen chat have also specified that the anonymity of the Internet created a restraining effect on both sexual and racist behavior. For example, the daughter of an L.A. Times journalist told her mother that MySpace had become essential for her social life.<sup>131</sup> If that feeling is extensively shared among teens, it would signify a substantial change in the procedures by which peer relationships are created. When the procedures are so different, it would be surprising if the products were not different too.

### *The Influence of Parent and Electronic Media*

In this section we will analyze parents’ participation in their children’s use of electronic media technology. To begin with this section, we asked the question, “What do

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<sup>131</sup> Cassell J., Huffaker, D., Tversky, D., & Ferriman, K. *The language of online leadership: Gender and youth engagement on the Internet*. (Applied Developmental Psychology 2006).

parents understand about the various communication forms and their teens' use of them?"

Reliable data on this question is inadequate, both adolescents and their parents agree that youth recognize more about the Internet than their parents do. In the Pew Report 2001, 64 percent of teens supposed that they knew more than their parents about communicating online and 66 percent of their parents concurred.<sup>132</sup> Since that testimony was issued, the press has reported widely about the potential dangers of interrelating on the Internet, and we believe parents today are better informed about electronic communication and technologies, but they are probably still not as well informed as their teens.

Likewise limited research exists about what parents know about their own teens' use of electronic media and other form of technologies for communication, including whom they talk to and what detail they have on their profiles. One current survey of parent and teen pairs recommended that the parents were mostly in the dark about their teens' MySpace activities. Nearly half the parents almost never gazed at their teens' MySpace profile and a third had never observed it.<sup>133</sup> On a similar note, a large-scale Internet-based review of teens exposed that 90 percent of the example did not tell an adult, including parents, about cyber bullying. This hush of course makes it impractical for parents to take action in opposition to cyber bullying.

Parents can review their adolescents' use of electronic communication and other form of technologies forms in two ways: by monitoring and by limiting access.

Monitoring is usually best done by using Internet software that monitors, filters and

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<sup>132</sup> Lalita K., Suzuki and Jerel P. Calzo, "The Search for Peer Advice in Cyberspace: An Examination of Online Teen Health Bulletin Boards" (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.28

<sup>133</sup> Kaveri Subrahmanyam, Patricia M. Greenfield, and Brendesha Tynes, "*Constructing Sexuality and Identity in an Online Teen Chatroom*" (Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 2004), p.41

blocks entrée to different kinds of materials. Again, no research documents either the level of parental use of such software or its effectiveness. Limiting access would appoint restrictions on where teens go online, the time they squander online, the electronic forms they use (such as, MySpace), and how they use those forms (such as, keeping blogs private, not posting challenging pictures).

There is another study of parent and teen pairs has discovered that almost half the parents permits their teens to access the Internet in their bedrooms; only a third put limits on MySpace use and a quarter put limits on computer use.<sup>134</sup> Interestingly, parent and teen perceptions about limits did not coincide: fewer teens than parents thought that their parents set proper limits on their use. Parenting styles were related to their teen's MySpace use. Parents who are structured, consistently apply standards, and are willing to engage with their children were more likely to have seen their teen's MySpace page. They were also more likely to have set limits on MySpace use and less likely to permit a computer in the bedroom. Their teens, along with those with totalitarian parents (parents who have high standards, convey little affection and expect stern obedience), were least liable to give out personal information on MySpace.<sup>135</sup>

Qualitative facts are starting to pile up that reveal social networking sites such as Facebook are causing serious parent-child disagreements and loss of parental control. Rosen's interviews with parents discovered several typical tribulations.<sup>136</sup> Such as, a boy who botched to complete his homework before midnight because he was on MySpace retorted to his parents attempts to restrain his use of MySpace by niggling back online.

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Larry Rosen, *Me, MySpace, and I: Parenting the Net Generation* (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan, forthcoming 2006).

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.



And a girl posted detail about her sweet sixteen party on MySpace, foremost so many teens to collide the party and cause so many issues that her father had to call the police.

Generally it emerges that although their concerns about their teen's online behaviors, parents may not know much about them and may not be effectual at setting boundaries and monitoring their behaviors.<sup>137</sup> More research is needed to conclude whether the problem is parents' lack of acquaintance about these communication forms or their lack of parenting abilities. It would be beneficial to find out whether parents are also unacquainted about their teens' offline behaviors, predominantly their offline social communications.

Child-Parent opinions about adolescents' media use, is one more topic requiring further research. What is the realm of such divergence? Are these divergences like to disagreements in other areas such as alcohol, and sex? Are they alike to or different from problems of earlier generations? Although proof is starting to accrue that social networking is causing child-parent conflicts and professed loss of parental control, no study has been done on how to decrease the divergence and restore parental influence. In this void, Rosen's study of parenting research in other circumstances, as well as his list of Internet sites submitting advice to parents on this topic, can be of value to parents seeking guidance.<sup>138</sup> More importantly, we advocate researchers to fill this void both with thorough studies about whether social networking harms child-parent relations and with involvement studies considered to restore a healthy balance between peer and family relations.

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<sup>137</sup> Janis Wolak, Kimberly J. Mitchell, and David Finkelhor, "*Escaping or Connecting?* Characteristics of Youth Who Form Close Online Relationships" (Journal of Adolescence 2003), p.39

<sup>138</sup> Joanne Cantor, and Marie-Louise Mares, "Autobiographical Memories of Exposure to Sexual Media Content" (Media Psychology 2003), p.56

*The Education System and Electronic Media*

How have schools countered to the increasing occurrence of electronic media and other form of technology in the lives of today's child, adolescent and other young people? News stations report that some schools and school districts have reacted by blocking the use of electronic media and other form of technology in schools, in finicky text messaging, cell phones, iPods, and video games.<sup>139</sup> Many school computer systems also block entrée to websites frequently visited by teens such as those that gives access to instant messaging, blogs, e-mail and social networking utilities. School authorities state that these forms of media are isolating, distracting and disruptive and that they help cheating (as when cell phone cameras are used to copy exams) and other illegitimate activity (as when cell phones and pagers are used in drug and gang movements).

A recent questionnaire of middle and high school teachers as well as administrative staff examined restricted Internet access for schools in an entire school district.<sup>140</sup> Most experienced that the confines of unduly restricted Internet access. Out of 120 respondents, 117 felt that lawful sites had been blocked. Some school personnel experienced that students were not always chastised for downloading unpleasant material. Others confessed that they themselves used techniques to get around the filter or block to absolute their tasks. Many respondents felt that the "filtering" system made them vulnerable to their recital of their duties, created hassle, condensed student autonomy,

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<sup>139</sup> City News, "Cellphone Use Banned in all Toronto Public Schools" (2007) retrieved from [www.citynews.ca/news/news\\_9977.aspx](http://www.citynews.ca/news/news_9977.aspx)

<sup>140</sup> Deborah G., 2007, p.546 Simmons, "Internet Filtering: The Effects in a Middle and High School Setting" (Georgia College and State University 2007), p.546 retrieved from [http://info.gcsu.edu/intranet/school\\_ed/ResearchofDrSmoothstudents/Simmons%20Research%20Filter%20Study.pdf](http://info.gcsu.edu/intranet/school_ed/ResearchofDrSmoothstudents/Simmons%20Research%20Filter%20Study.pdf)

lowered self-esteem and made it less expected that they would make up lessons that would incorporate technology.<sup>141</sup>

The prohibition against cell phones in high schools is perchance the most controversial. Parents and youth both favor cell phones as valuable tools for everyday planning that can be a serious help in the event of an emergency. But in a case brought by parents, the New York State Supreme Justice reported in favor of New York City's ban on cell phones in the schools. Partial or complete cell phone prohibitions have now been established in Detroit, Los Angeles, Toronto and Milwaukee.<sup>142</sup> It remains unclear how efficient such bans are in averting the activities they are designed to avert. Researchers need a better consideration of what teachers and school administrators are familiar about adolescent use of electronic media technology and how such technologies might be effectively incorporated in school settings.

### *Identity Development and Electronic Media*

According to Erik Erikson, the German developmental psychologist, instituting an articulate identity is a necessary psychosocial task of adolescence.<sup>143</sup> Adolescents must institute a clear sense of how they are supposed to act, who they are and where they are headed. Early on, some spectators saw the Internet, with its probable for anonymity and disembodied communication, as a perfect site for such identity examination and testing. Online, it was considered, people could be whomever they decide to be and could glide in

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> CityNews, "Cellphone Use Banned in all Toronto Public Schools" (2007) retrieved from [www.citynews.ca/news/news\\_9977.aspx](http://www.citynews.ca/news/news_9977.aspx)

<sup>143</sup> Erik Erikson, "Identity and the Life Cycle:" (New York: W. W. Norton 1959) p.13

and out of various identities. But over time, apprehensions were confirmed that such identity play might hinder, not help, adolescent development.<sup>144</sup>

Opinions are mixed as to whether adolescents connect in identity play online. In one study of twelve to fifteen year olds, of the 175 members who reacted to queries about online facades, 49 percent had never pretended to “not be yourself,” and 41 percent accounted pretending a couple of times.<sup>145</sup> Seven members accounted pretending often and two accounted that they pretended all the time. Most usual was pretending to be older and was often done in the company of a friend and as a joke. Only 2 percent accounted that they pretended to discover a new self or identity.

By distinction, in a research of Dutch adolescents, 246 out of a total of 600 members accounted having trialed online with their identity at least sometimes.<sup>146</sup> Imagining being someone older was most usually reported, particularly amongst girls. The most familiar reasons for identity experiments were self-exploration (to scrutinize others’ response) social recompense (to make up for bashfulness), and social easiness (to form relationships). The research does not make it feasible to review exactly what share of the sample pretended often to be someone else. Taken mutually, the conclusions of various researches recommend that though youth do pretend to be someone else online, they do not do so typically, and when they do, they may simply pretend to be older.

Given that many online sites have age limits, it is quite possible that such pretense is not a true form of identity exploration but more a way to sidestep age related limits.

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<sup>144</sup> Patti M., Valkenburg, Alexander Schouten, and Jochen Peter, “*Adolescents’ Identity Experiments on the Internet*” (New Media & Society 2005), p.10

<sup>145</sup> Elisheva F., Gross, Jaana Juvonen, and Shelley Gable, “*Internet Use and Well-Being in Adolescence*” (Journal of Social Issues 2002), p.122

<sup>146</sup> Jochen Peter, Patti M. Valkenburg, and Alexander P. Schouten, “*Developing a Model of Adolescent Friendship Formation on the Internet*,” (CyberPsychology & Behavior 2005), pp.90, 538

Although youth do not look to be using electronic media and other form of technology to experiment with different parts and identities in the manner described by Erikson, none the less, these media give them opportunities to discover as well as to perform self-disclosure and self-appearance which are both serious steps toward building a rational identity. Anonymous forums such as chat rooms, enable such examination and self-presentation.

## CHAPTER FOUR ADOLESCENT SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

In the review of the literature, Kenneth Hyde illustrates many religious features of adolescence, such as their behavior, attitudes, influences, and understandings of religion. While most Christian schools and churches have highlighted information about the Bible, God, and spiritual viewpoints, the last few years has produced a new prominence upon the experiential features of faith, often expressed “spirituality.”<sup>147</sup> This is in part because one can establish a broad opinion about God, and even make an initial commitment to the Christian worldview yet not have an active, ongoing relationship with God that includes religious experiences. “Spirituality” highlights wonder, awe, and other experiences that are beyond typical, everyday life and that attach the individual to something inspirational and/or of decisive significance. While spirituality comprises practices with God, it can also comprise dread and speculate from practices such as observing a beautiful sunset that overcomes the person emotionally and even perceptually. Spiritual practice can be moreover optimistic and productive or unenthusiastic and counterproductive.<sup>148</sup>

A few unenthusiastic Spiritualities:

- Aggression;
- Suicide;
- Harassment;
- Illegitimate usage of Drugs;
- Venturesome;
- Controlling with Aloofness and Disguise (by “spirituality sponges” who are parasites, says Berryman)
- Lack of Ethical Impulse/ Sleaze
- Lack of Concern for Others
- Insignificance
- Chauvinism

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<sup>147</sup> Donald Ratcliff. Christian Education Journal. Volume XIV. Number 1 (Autumn, 1993), pp. 73-86

<sup>148</sup> Hay D., & Nye, R. “*The Spirit Of The Child.*” (London: Fount 1998), p.49

- Greed
- Evil Character (M. Scott Peck)<sup>149</sup>

The new importance upon the investigational features of faith is replicated in Christian books such as Klaus Issler's: *Wasting Time with God*, which spotlights on the continuing, energetic and converting features of a walk with God. This procedure is sometimes referred to as "spiritual development," a sequence of intensification that can be optimistic by "spiritual configuration" behaviors.

There are some arguments as to whether spiritual expansion happens in chapters or is more of measured steps of becoming more and more of what God requires, a discussion that in part pursues from differing theologies.<sup>150</sup> The Bible speaks of stage-like expansion, highlighting the differences between spiritual childhood and adulthood (Eph. 4:14-15, Heb. 5:12-14), both of which can be illustrated from skepticism prior to salvation. The broad steps are unbelief (or spiritual demise), then salvation (spiritual existence), initial faith (spiritual immaturity and/or childhood) and ultimately a degree of maturity (spiritual adulthood). Theorists, for example, James Fowler have recommended substitute stages of faith development and Engel and Norton have even recommended stages of development former to salvation, although Engle confesses that gauging spiritual development is challenging.

Harold Darling has devised stages spiritual development that reproduces theological mechanisms of both Reformed and Wesleyan viewpoints, adding a stage of spiritual adolescence to the biblical succession.<sup>151</sup> Thus, if a creature becomes a Christian as a child, it is rather possible that spiritual and physical adolescence could concur, while

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<sup>149</sup> Berryman, J. "*Godly play*." San Francisco: (Harper San Francisco 1991).

<sup>150</sup> Ratcliff, D. E. "*Stages of spiritual development: Crisis experiences in the Christian life*." (Christian Education Journal 1993), p. 12

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

those who recognize Christ during adulthood are likely to grow through stages of spiritual childhood and adolescence while they are actually adults. Spiritual adolescence, in Darling's model, engages a degree of chaos as the creature questions the childishness and reliance of the prior spiritual childhood. While a healthy journey on to spiritual adulthood is one decision, there are other options as well. Drawing from psychodynamic assumption, Darling declares that the individual could choose some dysfunctional figure of adulthood, continuous fixation at spiritual adolescence or weakening to spiritual childhood, instead of healthy spiritual adulthood. Darling inserts that there are also minute growth spheres in healthy spiritual development prior to and subsequent to the adolescence stage. These loops involve four steps: reviewing one's weak spots, mistakes and peccadillo, confessing these harms to God, asserting God's clemency and appropriating the strength God offers to conquer the problems and live a healthy Christian life.

For some people, the succession is not as consistent as Darling's model may advise. Some believers connect moods with spirituality, and thus their awareness of their walk of faith may be recurring, hills and valleys which imitate positive and negative emotions that can shift from day to day. These are not to be confused with times of resist and victory which are normal features of the Christian life, sometimes explained as "mountain top practices" and "valleys". Others live out a crisis-based faith, marked by sporadic moments of spiritual practices during restoration services; sudden shifts from a normally mundane spiritual life. Perhaps a mixture of Darling's spheres and sporadic valleys and "mountain top practices" are the most familiar gears of healthy Christian



living, spheres and loops that are constituent of a long-term predispose marking spiritual growth and development.

In summing up the theory, healthy Christian living is evident by growth in understanding and an intensifying relationship with God. Spiritual development engages confessing and turning from mediocrity, surviving dry times when God appears remote, differencing with moments of spiritual vivacity, times of reverence and adoration, when God is experienced as being “closer than a brother.” Spiritual development activities can help this procedure, including retreats, prayer, fasting, meditation and the like.

The blend of adolescence and spirituality is thorny at best. Peers describe what is “cool” or “overwhelming” or “scorching” or “groovy” and “pleasing” or “cool” or “tidy” and seldom is God even a slight part of youth civilization. Churches may have youth plans, but often the plans seek to entertain and too often yield to the principles of youth culture. Teenagers see during that life stage and therefore the Churches that are most likely to keep their teens into adulthood are those that stand beside the general society in some respects.<sup>152</sup>

What can Churches and schools do to encourage spiritual development in teenagers? Erik Erikson highlighted the significance of identity development, as a central task of adolescence and religious identity is one feature of identity development that schools and Churches can concentrate on. Not only can we teach faith and principle as a cause of identity, but we can also call teenagers to promise; identity achievement needs promise. The promise needed is not just accord with propositional statements, but a level of promise contemplation to be beyond the potential of children. Teenagers are

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<sup>152</sup> Meier, P., Ratcliff, D., & Rowe, F. “*Christian child-rearing and personality development.*” Grand Rapids, MI: (Baker 1995).

emotionally able to assert the entire “Lordship” of Christ in every region of life and are ready to find out how to drastically influence the world in extremely realistic ways.<sup>153</sup>

This level of promise engages self-sacrifice as well as a longing for spiritual development and more of God. The outcome is a change in one’s viewpoint of the world, such as viewing the world as fundamentally abnormal due to the nuisance of mediocrity and that there is a spiritual world of angels and demons that coexists with the chronological world. Full devotion to Christ engages a daily walk with God by reading the Bible and praying, and at least occasional experiences of a spiritual nature, such as strong worship. In the process, the teenager more and more turns from personal mediocrity and self-centeredness, and turns toward greater empathy with God.

Where does this connect the Christian teenager in relation to youth culture? When not intrinsically sinful, features of youth culture can be adopted as long as they do not become a high priority in life. Too often, though, satisfactory aspects of youth society become idols that need to be overwhelmed. Musicians can be idols that are venerated. Peers may be the eventual authority. Money, belongings and the latest fashions may obsess one’s belief throughout the day. Keeping things in their appropriate position is no easier to achieve for teenagers than it is for adults. In fact, because our society tends to value the “liberty” of adolescence, which too often interprets to laziness and frivolity, deposing of idolatry may be predominantly difficult for teenagers. Paul’s insistence that we live our lives as slaves to God may be almost unfathomable to teens that have been persuaded by culture that they should be self-absorbed and follow the latest fashions and trends.

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<sup>153</sup> Campolo, A., & Ratcliff, D. Activist youth ministry. In D. Ratcliff & J. Davies (Eds.), *“Handbook of youth ministry.”* Birmingham, AL: (Religious Education Press, 1991). pp.300-360

For teenagers to gravely think a life of radical faith, they need dependable models and a social context that supports such anti-cultural response. Christian schools can promote this by selective admissions and unusual social perceptions and behaviors. But merely having strict rules is not adequate; it is all too easy to surrender to rules but inwardly live a remarkably different life. Spirituality is a subject of the inner person, not just the external activity. We have seen home-schoolers who have avowed productive alternatives to adolescence, such as an “all-but-adult” sight of teens that persuades the taking of accountability and other adult activities that fall within the limits of the law. These home schooling parents frequently maintain a close circle of friendships with other home-schoolers who are compatible. If the parents live constantly with those values, as well as mingle their children with peers from relatives that share the same values, teen years without a typical adolescence are possible, and perhaps can even look natural.

However, in most cases adolescence cannot be shunned entirely, but teachers and other adults can be crucial assets at this time of life. Don Joy emphasizes the significance of spiritual mentors during the teen years. Strong youth leaders can call for full and costly pledges, and mentor their protégés so that they refuse sinful facets of youth culture. Unfortunately, in childhood, as well as adolescence, spiritual practice is often concealed by critical peers, the negative views of conventional secular culture,<sup>154</sup> and even by some churches. As an outcome, a “failure in faith” in high school or college in realism may be an interment of what died years before. Thus it is essential to begin prior to the teen years to support and give serious concentration to children’s spiritual experiences, promote and nurture spirituality in preadolescence, and perhaps the effects will be that in the teen years youth society will be marginal and living for Christ will be prime.

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<sup>154</sup> Hay D., & Nye, R. “*The Spirit Of The Child.*” (London: Fount 1998), p.49

### *Stages of Spiritual Development*

Numerous psychologists and theologians have examined spiritual development. One of the most prominent psychological theories is that of James Fowler who has widened a succession of faith stages.<sup>155</sup> This model uses developmental and psychodynamic psychology to focus upon the cognitive development of the individual. Long standing amongst theologians is the Wesleyan doctrinal perception on spiritual development, which recommends that the maturation process involve two crises. This perspective of spiritual development has been a contentious one, though, resulting in the polarizing of Churches either to acceptance (by most Armenian bodies) or to rejection (by those of the Calvinist or Rehabilitated faith). During this century numerous new groups have assumed the Wesleyan viewpoint of spiritual development to a better or slighter point.<sup>156</sup> Most Pentecostal and charismatic groups amend Wesley's second crisis or add a third crisis. An untimely pioneer of psychological-theological incorporation, Harold Darling, recommends a model of spiritual development, which we suppose may be used to help connect the gulf between those of the Wesleyan location and those who hold the Reformed perspective.

As a psychologist, Darling used a human growth model in unfolding and diagramming spiritual development. His model has important insights, which may help increase understanding between these groups, as well as help conquer false dichotomizing, of which theologians in both groups have been guilty. With the help of a more comprehensive model such as Darling's, enlightened contact between advocates of both sides can give advantage all Christians.

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<sup>155</sup> Joann Wolski Conn (ed.), *Women's Spirituality: Resources for Christian Development*. (Paulist, 1986), pp. 226-232.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

Theologians who grasp to the perception of two crisis practices in spiritual development usually submit to John Wesley's writings for extended statements of the holiness location. Wesleyans experience that evangelicals throughout Church history, e.g. Augustine, Ignatius, Clement, Polycarp and early mystics, have practiced two crisis practices.<sup>157</sup> Though, Wesley is said to have more fully clarified the doctrine, much as Luther convoluted explanation by faith.

The Wesleyan-Arminian situation declares that two crisis practices are essential to spiritual development. The former, salvation, brings about the commencement of spiritual life. A subsequent crisis, submitted to as "entire sanctification," "the baptism of the Holy Spirit," or "Christian perfection," take place ensuing to salvation. The latter is not a condition of absolute perfection, but rather a time of purification of the carnal nature and passionate love for others. John Wesley sum up Christian perfection as: "...the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbor. . . a simple act of faith consequently in an instant. . . [with] a gradual work both preceding and following that instant, . . generally many years after rationalization but that it may be within five years or five months after it. . ." <sup>158</sup>

Throughout the precedent century, and into the untimely part of this century, many took Wesley's perceptions and with small amounts of amplification, developed what is sometimes called "the holiness movement." Finney, A.B. Simpson, the Keswick movement, and others held to two levels of commitment for a deeper Christian life. In addition, denominations such as the Nazarenes, the Wesleyans, the Free Methodists, the Salvation Army and many smaller groups were established with Wesleyan consideration

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<sup>157</sup> Wiley, H. "*Christian Theology*" Vol. II. Kansas City, MO: (Beacon Hill Press 1952), p.169-172

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

as a key factor of faith. Almost certainly the most contentious holiness principle is the concept of sinless excellence. This is the belief that one can obtain a personal sense of perfection here on earth. Many propose that the carnal nature may be cleansed and eradicated through the second crisis, therefore resulting in total liberty from sin. Mediocrity is defined here as a willful disobedience against a known law of God. In current years, some within the “holiness movement” have come back to Wesley’s scripture for reanalysis and clarification. Mildred Wynkoop, a Nazarene, wrote *A Theology of Love* in which she stated that holiness is nothing more than love. She states that a “credibility gap” exists between holiness theology and the living of Christianity. Wynkoop asserts that this gap is the result of “too much confidence put in the ‘crisis experiences’ to solve all human problems”.<sup>159</sup>

Seamands, retired pastor and former professor at Asbury Seminary, discriminates between Christian perfection and perfectionism. He explains that those who are perfectionists are often seen as being self-devaluing, crammed with anxiety, prone to legalism, and often refuting a basic internal bitterness of their self-forced ought. This may be a distinction with Christian perfection, a position, says Wynkoop, in which one acts “responsibly in respect to changing and challenging circumstances”.<sup>160</sup> Over the past two decades the conventional understanding of a second crisis has considerably declined in many Wesleyan-Arminian denominations.<sup>161</sup> While conventional perceptions are maintained in some lesser Wesleyan spheres (frequently those who illustrate themselves as “holiness” in doctrine) it is now usual for Wesleyan-Arminian Churches to reduce the conventional doctrines of “eradication,” “sinless perfection,” and “entire sanctification.”

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<sup>159</sup> Wynkoop, M., *A Theology of Love*. Kansas City, MO: (Beacon Hill Press 1972).

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Wiley, H. *Christian Theology* Vol. II. Kansas City, MO: (Beacon Hill Press 1952), p.169

Instead, the second work may be described as “believing Christ as Lord” in distinction with “tolerant Him as Savior,” that is, salvation.<sup>162</sup> Total surrendering as a second event becomes the spotlight of attention, rather than the attendance or absence of mediocrity. Some have come to the point of not even mentioning a second crisis; one book *Essentials of Wesleyan Theology* shunned the topic entirely.<sup>163</sup>

Some evangelicals have responded to Wesleyan-Arminian perceptions in a rebellious manner. Henry A. Ironside writes that second blessing holiness is a “vain effort to attain the unattainable; that scores have actually lost their minds. . . because of the . . . bitter disappointment in the search for holiness”. Ironside recommended that discouragement, pretense, and inferior of standards were the ultimate outcomes of the Wesleyan position.<sup>164</sup> Other renewed theologians, such as Warfield, are less negative in their disparagement, holding that consecration is not to be recognized with a second work of grace, but rather commences at salvation and continues throughout life. Moments of spiritual development may transpires after salvation, and an individual may be explains as filled or empowered by the Holy Spirit at various times, but not as a second crisis practices in the same sense that salvation is a crisis practice. Perfection, on the other hand, is achieved only at the second coming of Christ.<sup>165</sup>

Those who are not of the holiness site find the doctrine of “sinless perfection” and the abolition of the carnal nature to be contradictory with practice as well as biblical

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Zbynek Vybiral, David Smahel, and Radana Divínová, “*Growing Up in Virtual Reality: Adolescents and the Internet*” in *Society, Reproduction, and Contemporary Challenges*, edited by Petr Mares Brno: (Barrister & Principal 2004), p. 95

<sup>164</sup> Wiley, H. “*Christian Theology*” Vol. II. Kansas City, MO: (Beacon Hill Press 1952), p.169  
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<sup>165</sup> Warfield, B. “*Perfectionism.*” Philadelphia, PA: (The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co. 1958).

education. Such terms may become predominantly estranging, since public confessions of sinlessness can emerge to be a figure of spiritual exclusiveness, which is great in theory and most difficult in practice. To obscure the concern further, a different description of sin is generally held: sin is considered to be any exodus from God's perfect will.<sup>166</sup>

Francis Schaeffer writes that while there are extents of consecration, "salvation is all one piece... and yet a flowing stream... [Operating] moment by moment . Precision on the other hand "is only a basis for ploy or despair". While Schaeffer embraces a soft view of Wesleyan principle, he is less unenthusiastic in his responses than some of the Reformed view. He writes, "I think his [Wesley's] theology in this area was mistaken and he used the wrong terminology, but he certainly did not have the wrong aspiration".<sup>167</sup>

Bill Bright, President of Campus Crusade for Christ, states that there is a vast dissimilarity between the carnal Christian and spiritual Christian. While the pamphlet does not support traditional Wesleyan principle, it is reminiscent of further spiritual practice after salvation, and has been used as an aid in explaining a second crisis practice by some holiness Churches.

Historically, Wesleyan and Reformed theologians have been opposed to one another in their viewpoints on a second work of grace, much dialogue has happened in recent years. While Wynkoop and Schaeffer are still distant from one another theologically, some from each side of the debate have chosen to spotlight upon the many doctrines they hold in common and have agreed to disagree on the material of complete sanctification.

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Francis Schaeffer, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview : A Christian View of the Church* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1982), 273.



### *Spiritual Growth Paradigms*

Harold Darling has devised a four-stage paradigm of spiritual development based upon the stages of emotional and physical development.<sup>168</sup> Just as individuals develop through birth, childhood, adolescence and adulthood, likewise these stipulations may be used to explain spiritual development.

Darling's first spiritual stage is "birth." The early crisis in social and physical development is when the infant first sees the light of the outside world. Darling writes: "Life in Christ starts with a birth experience. This "new birth" is concentrated by pain and anguish; it comes about by admission of our sins, promise of our total being to God and faith that God honors that promise."<sup>169</sup>

The Bible frequently explains adaptation as birth. Christ's discussion with Nicodemus is perhaps the brightest comparison of physical and spiritual birth (John 3). This similarity for change is also stated in Galatians 4:29; 1 Peter 1:23; John 1:13; and I John 2-5. The "born again" experience is a methodically biblical perception. Human birth is lead by a period of grounding in which the embryo and later the fetus enlarges through stages. Engel and Norton have proposed a process of development proceeding to spiritual birth in which God carries an individual to salvation. This development process includes:

- personal problem recognition;
- a positive attitude toward the Gospel;
- awareness of a supreme being through general revelation;
- grasping the implications of the Gospel;
- a decision to act;
- initial awareness of the Gospel;
- repentance and faith in Christ<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Darling, M. *Man in Triumph*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989. p38

<sup>169</sup> Ibid. p42

<sup>170</sup> Engel, J. and Norton, H. *What's Gone Wrong with the Harvest?* Grand Rapids. MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975. p111

Engel and Norton write that successful evangelism will rouse movement through these stages until spiritual birth happens.

“Subsequent to birth, one goes into the stage of childhood. Says Darling: “The infancy stage of Christian living is distinguished by growth, security, impulsiveness, and conformity. We admit the teachings of authority (particularly parents and Church) without questions. We are living in the “awe” stage of our rapport to God, and our compliance follows a rather easy, natural course.”<sup>171</sup>

Biblical similarities to such a spiritual stage are abundant. Jesus pronounced that one must become like a child to enter the kingdom of God (Matthew 18:4). He also pronounced that the kingdom of God belongs to those who are like children (Mark 10:14). Christ compares His disciples to youngsters (Matthew 11:25). Likewise, Peter compared young Christians to children: “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation” (1 Peter 2:2, NIV)

Ultimately most Christians start to outgrow spiritual childhood. Doubts and questioning begin to typify a new stage of spiritual development i.e. adolescence. Darling states:

“We become indistinctly malcontent with the spiritual status quo... our Christian living is too average; our God is too small...such an awareness produces a crisis: something must be done.”<sup>172</sup>

Spiritual adolescence has been more discovered as a necessary transition by Berry. Citing a number of case histories from his analysis experience, he highlighted the commonness of such a practice. Often peoples going through this chaotic period of spiritual growth will seek out an analyst or pastor to help them. Berry recommends that these individuals should be teaches to see the present circumstances as a “Jordan-

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Darling, M. *Man in Triumph*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989. p47

crossing” experience and to direct the counselee’s attention to Canaan on the other side (spiritual adulthood). In the procedure of this change the “narcissism of childhood” befalls less famous.<sup>173</sup>

Darling recommends seven possible means of deciding the clashes of spiritual adolescence. Six of the seven are spiritually dysfunctional, with the seventh being the solution to spiritual adulthood. Spiritual “neurosis” is one means used to decrease the conflicts of this third stage; the individual becomes a “spiritual hypochondriac” in which there is abnormal concern about the spiritual condition. A second option is spiritual “psychosis” in which negligible issues and doctrines are eminent and a passion develops which lacks depth and power.<sup>174</sup>

A third likelihood is re-dependence upon Christ in which the person is conquering with defeat. Therefore, life becomes much like that which existed prior to salvation. A fourth path is weakening; returning to the contracted conformity of childishness in which others is allowed to do the thinking. Fixation can be a fifth way of effecting to resolve the crisis. This engages a perpetual adolescence with uproars, and faultfinding a permanent way of life. Darling writes:

“There is however, another substitute and that is giving up. We cuddle the way of faith, pledge and abandonment; the Holy Spirit takes command. We welcome the power that has motivated the dedicated souls of all the ages, facilitating them to overcome their self-centeredness and unholy fear. . . . This is the life, we with poise assent, that Christ promised us in John 10:10, “I came that they may have life, and have it more abundantly.”<sup>175</sup>

This submission initiates a fourth stage, that of adult maturity. Once more, a

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<sup>173</sup> Al-Sharif, Ghada. “Organizations Working For and With Youth in Jordan.” Amman, Jordan: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Jordan Country Office (2002).

<sup>174</sup> Darling, M. *Man in Triumph*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989. p49

<sup>175</sup> Ibid. p46

number of writings explained maturity in context to earlier spiritual childishness, using the human growth analogy. Elementary truths are measured to be milk for infants, while mature Christians are to eat “solid foods” (i.e., advanced teaching) as an adult would (Hebrews 5:13-14). Rather than students, as children would be, individuals become teachers as spiritual adults (Hebrews 5:12). Paul says, “Then we will no longer be infants . . . blown here and there by every wind of teaching. . . (but) instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him. . .” (Ephesians 4:14-15, NIV).

Spiritual adulthood owns at least some of the uniqueness of self-actualization. Oakland recommends that the Wesleyan perceptive of sanctification may be equated with self-actualization, plus Maslow’s peak practices.<sup>176</sup> Elsewhere in his book, Darling explains the abundant Christian life in terms common with actualization psychology: confident surrender, purposeful integration, adjusting tension, transparent spontaneity and wholehearted affirmation.

During both childhood and adulthood, Darling recommends that there are “spheres” in spiritual growth. These are periods of rebellion, which comprises of confrontation with “sins, moods, destructive tensions, glaring imperfections and ever-present proneness to wander from the path of faith and obedience”. Rather than succumbing to these, however, the adult practices admission, confirmation and appropriation through prayer and acting upon the insight received. Such practices are essential to the growth process, anyway of the spiritual stage.

These spiritual loops are not unlike Bright’s idea of spiritual breathing. Bill Bright recommends that when a trouble is found in one’s life which is offensive to God, one

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid, p57

should first admit and repent (exhaling) and then give up and appropriate (inhaling).<sup>177</sup>

Darling's spiritual "spheres" also repeat one of Wesley's accounts of growth prior to, and following to, a second crisis experience.

### *Religiousness and Collective Identity*

Often when people think of spirituality, religion comes to their mind. Because professed membership in a religious group can be a powerful contextual influence on spiritual identity development. Let's take a closer look at what we know about collective identities. One's professed membership in a social group may be based on assignment or chosen characteristics.<sup>178</sup> Race, national origin and gender are examples of assigned characteristics because they are components of identity over which individuals have little choice, but around which they must construct meaning.<sup>179</sup> On the other hand, chosen collective identity components arise from choices afforded in a social context of the individual, such as being a member of football team or a political party.

Where does a religious identity fall on the spectrum of assigned versus chosen? This is a difficult question to answer. A young child growing up in an actively practicing Catholic family is likely to develop a Catholic identity without any reflection or conscious commitment. Religious identity is closer to an assigned identity rather than a chosen collective identity. The line between a chosen and assigned religious identity becomes more blurred in adolescence. For example, imagine an adolescent who is given the freedom and opportunity to explore outside of his or her familial religious tradition

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<sup>177</sup> Bright, Bill. *Have You Made the Wonderful Discovery of the Spirit-Filled Life?* San Bernadino, CA: Campus Crusade for Christ, Int., 1966.

<sup>178</sup> Grotevant, H.D. *Adolescent Identity Formation*. (Newbury Park, 1992), pp. 73-90

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

and in the end chooses to become a member of a different religious community. This adolescent's religious identity is closer to the chosen end of the continuum. In contrast, imagine an adolescent who does not explore alternate religious belief systems or who does but then does not change his childhood religious affiliation. Is his collective religious identity still assigned? If it is chosen, at what developmental point did the change from assigned to chosen take place? Does it become chosen at a developmental turning point, such as when the individual is free to choose whether or not she attends religious services? Even when the individual is allowed to make a choice not to attend religious services, are the social norms regarding religion in the family and community so strong that the individual's identity continues to be more assigned than chosen? Or has the individual simply internalized the prescriptive belief system?

One could contend that if the objective of spiritual development is self-transcendence, newborns are inherently spiritual beings. Many theories in psychology, such as attachment and ego psychology; imply that newborns do not differentiate self from other and thus exist in a state of "oneness".<sup>180</sup> Children move out of the state of undifferentiated oneness as they begin to interact with their world. They classify themselves into gender, race and other religious social categories based on assigned or biologically determined characteristics. They also choose social categories based on the cultural opportunities available to them, such as being a soccer player or ballet dancer.

Unlike chosen social categories, children often perceive the behaviors and values associated with assigned identities such as immutable. They learn the power of social and

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<sup>180</sup> Martin, C.L. Ruble, D.N. & Szkrybalo, J. *Cognitive theories of early gender development*, (Psychological Bulletin, 2002). pp.903-933

group conformity norms and what it means to be included or excluded from a group.<sup>181</sup>

Children categorize themselves based on the concrete categories available in their social worlds, for example, the religion of their parents. When parents include their children in religious activity participation and/or stress the importance of their religion, children may accept a religious identity much like an assigned identity rather than a chosen identity. Children not only accept their categorical membership in a religious group, they also accept the beliefs, values and behaviors that are normative for the religious group. In other words, my parents are Catholic, so I'm a Catholic and this is how a Catholic thinks and behaves.

An atheist friend, Tom, grew up in a religious family. During a discussion about spirituality, he surprised me by saying that it takes just as much faith to be an atheist as it does to believe in God. He recalls walking around the corner at the age of 8 or 9 and looking back to his house. His view was blocked by other houses and yet he believed the house was still there. Tom started thinking about how he knew the house was still there even though he could not see it, and this led him to question how one knows that God exists when you can't walk back around the corner and verify God's existence. He resolved his conflict regarding the existence of things that you cannot see or experience with the five senses by deciding God does not exist.

Tom's story demonstrates a turning point in religious identity development concurrent with cognitive and social maturational changes that begin to occur around age 10. During adolescence, individuals begin to develop by Piaget and Inhelder, as the

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<sup>181</sup> Dishion, T.J. McCord, J., & Poulin, F. *When interventions harm: Peer groups and problem behavior*. (American Psychologist, 1999), pp. 755-764.

formal operations stage.<sup>182</sup> These cognitive resources include an increased ability to think abstractly, to use more sophisticated information processing strategies, to conceptualize many different perspectives on a problem at once, and to reflect on oneself.<sup>183</sup> On a social level, adolescents have increased perspective-talking abilities and better developed social skills.<sup>184</sup> These cognitive changes move the young child's hedonistic orientation to world, from concern with approval and disapproval of other in late elementary years, to a more self-reflective and empathetic orientation in adolescence.<sup>185</sup> In early adolescence, individuals also begin to become more focused on the psychological as well as to introspect more about their inner life.<sup>186</sup> These maturational changes bring new meaning to question, "Who am I?" and may trigger questioning of youth's current religious or lack of religious, identity similar to what Tom experienced as a child.

Erikson would describe Tom's loss of belief in God as a turning point, "a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential, and therefore, the ontogenetic source of generational strength and maladjustment".<sup>187</sup> Development, as conceptualized by Riegel, progresses along four interdependent dimensions: the inner-biological, the individual-psychological, the cultural-sociological and the outer-physical. When the progression of events along each of these four dimensions loses synchronicity, conflict or crisis is assumed to be the result. Through the process of restoring balance, the individual

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<sup>182</sup> Harter, S. *The Construction of the self: A development perspective*. (New York: Guilford, 1999) p28

<sup>183</sup> Brynes, J.P. *Minds, brains and learning: Understanding the psychological and educational relevance of neuroscientific research*. (New York: Guilford, 2001)

<sup>184</sup> Harter, S. *The Construction of the self: A development perspective*. (New York: Guilford, 1999) p 32

<sup>185</sup> Eisenberg, N. *Improving competence across the lifespan: Building interventions based on theory and research* (New York: Plenum, 1998), pp. 59-78

<sup>186</sup> Damon, W., & Hart, D. *The development of self-understanding from infancy through adolescence*. (Child Development, 1982), pp. 841-864

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.



matures and is internally strengthened.

In this perspective, development is assumed to proceed through a hierarchical series of crisis formations and resolutions. By attaining new levels of maturity across the four dimensions and by successfully adapting to each new context, individuals gradually broaden their understanding of cognitive maturity and become increasingly capable of dealing with more complex situations. Exposure to more complex situations and to maturational and social changes, in turn, can produce new crises and new resolutions.<sup>188</sup> The nature and direction of this sequential hierarchy have been described in similar terms by different cognitive and ego stage theorists e.g. Kohlberg, Erikson and Loewinger. These theorists describe a graduated, process of inner psychological growth, augmented by active individual/ environment interaction, culminating in independent levels of functioning in which the individual integrates once conflicting and differentiated aspects of personality to satisfy self-realized needs.<sup>189</sup> Moreover, each of these theorists points to adolescence as a critical period in the formation and solidification of a post-conventional identity, an identity reflecting one's own goals and experiences rather than being based on socially prescribed roles. Because Erikson has so directly influenced thinking about identity development, we will discuss his work and identity theories derived from his perspective.

Erikson conceptualized development as a series of stages, each representing a crisis created by the individual's level of development and the socialization demands faced. Optimal growth depends on the successful resolution of each of these crises.

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<sup>188</sup> Eccless, J.S., & Bryan, J. *Gender-roles across the life span: A multidisciplinary perspective* (Munich, IN: Ball State University Press, 1994), pp. 111-148

<sup>189</sup> Harter, S. *The Construction of the self: A development perspective*. (New York: Guilford, 1999) p 37

Unsuccessful resolution can lead to stagnation and continuing functional preoccupation with that particular level. Important here is that this process reflects diagnosed growth, in which the individual is able to incorporate factors of lower stages into current schemes, even while forming newly transcendent ones.<sup>190</sup>

Adolescent adaptation in the context of spirituality expands beyond parents and peer groups into the perceived cultural milieu. Adolescents are concerned with shaping their rapidly developing identity into socially acceptable roles. On the socio-cultural level, spiritual identity may or may not be a major determinant of acceptability during this time of technology. Marcia suggested that cultures that allow for choice in social, ideological and vocational roles are best suited to the resolution of the identity crisis. The current cultures environment in the United States presents many opportunities for spiritual exploration. Not only is it the most religious industrialized country, it is also the most religiously diverse technologies oriented country.<sup>191</sup> American adolescents are exposed to more opportunities than ever before to explore spiritual connections beyond the religious and spiritual roles and social groups they identified with as children.

Thus, researchers believe the periods of adolescence and emerging adulthood can serve as a gateway to a spiritual identity that transcends, but does not necessarily exclude, the assigned religious identity from childhood. Many scientists have focused on adolescence because it is a rare universal transition time when and begin making the transition to new adult identities. However, spiritual identity development is a lifelong process, not bound to a specific critical period, nor does it unfold in an easily understandable or predictable pattern.

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<sup>190</sup> Eck, D. L. *A new religious America: How a "Christian country" has now become the world's most religiously diverse nation.* (San Francisco: Harper, 2001)

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

*Technology and Churches: An Interview*

This report is based upon telephone interviews performed by The Barna Group with an arbitrary sample of 605 Senior Pastors of Protestant Churches. For evaluation, similarly strained samples of Senior Pastors were interviewed earlier, responding to the same survey queries. In the preceding studies conducted in 2005, 845 Senior Pastors were interviewed and in the year 2000, 610 Senior Pastors were interviewed. The maximum fringe of sampling blunder associated with the collective sample of 605 pastors spoken to in the most current survey is  $\hat{A} \pm 4.1$  percentage points at the 95% self-assurance level. Denominational stratification was used to guarantee a representative occurrence of the variety of denominations in the U.S.<sup>192</sup>

Protestant Churches all over the nation are using different forms of up-and-coming technology to influence people lives and liven up their Church familiarity. But the rapidity of technology implementation seems to have sluggish in the previous two years as some Churches focus upon making the majority of what they already have and other Churches effort to get by without integrating such tools into their ministry blend.

The current study discovered the existence of eight technologies and applications in Protestant Churches. Those tools incorporated large screens used for showing video imagery; showing movie clips and other video sections during Church events; sending e-mail explosions to all or segments of the congregation; working with a website of Church; offering a blog site or pages for communication with Church leaders; maintaining a page on behalf of the Church on one or more social networking sites;

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<sup>192</sup> Various statistics and summaries taken from *New Research Describes Use of Technology in Churches*, retrieved from "[www.barna.org](http://www.barna.org)"

providing pod casts for people to eavesdrop to; and getting training and programming via a settlement dish.

### *Video Technology*

In this study, two-thirds of Protestant Churches (65%) currently are using a large screen projection system in their Churches that they use for services and other events. However, that number is scarcely higher than the 62% recognized in Barna study held in 2005. At that time, development was still apparent, given that only 39% of Churches had such a system in 2000. Since 2000, there has been a 67% increase in the number of Churches using big-screen systems, but only a 5% increase since 2005. The incidence of a large-screen system is associated to the Churches financial availability and theology. The smaller a Church is, the more likely it is to use such tools. Among Churches that average less than 100 adults each week, only half (53%) have such systems, the amount balloons to 76% among Churches that draw an average of 100 to 250 adults and almost nine out of ten Churches (88%) that illustrate more than 250 adults each week.

Likewise, only 43% of Churches explained by their pastor as possessing a liberal theology and having big screen potentials, contrasted to 68% among the Churches that say they are theologically conventional. Most of the Churches that have a big screen increased in the Church use that monitor to display movie clips or other video segments. Generally, 57% of Churches demonstrate movie clips or other video sections during their services and proceedings. That represents 88% of the Churches that have a big screen in place up from 76% of the Churches who had big screens in 2000, but a minor reduction

from the 99%<sup>193</sup> of Churches with large screens who illustrated such materials in 2005. The same prototype materialized granted the use of movie clips and other video content, in which theologically broad minded Churches and small parishioners were the least likely to use the screens to display such stuff.

### *Electronic Mail Technology*

Sending email blasts to large clusters of people or to the whole Church body is common to a mainstream of Protestant Churches (56%). Astonishingly, however, the commonness of this experience has not dislodged since 2005. Small congregations are less probable to send out such blasts (47%) than are Churches with 100 or more adults focusing during a typical week (66%).

### *Internet Presence*

The techniques in which Churches are accomplishing out to people over the Internet are growing. Far back in 2000, only one-third of Protestant Churches (34%) had a Church website. That detonated to 57% in 2005, and has inched aloft since then to 62%. About half of the small Churches (48% of those transactions less than 100 adults) have a Church website, compared to three-quarter of the mid-sized Churches (75% of the worshippers drawing 100 to 250 adults per week) and nine out of ten larger Churches (91% of the Churches with more than 250 adults drawing). One out of every four Protestant Churches (26%) now has some occurrence on one or more social networking sites (such as MySpace). Again, Church volume was an issue in this with larger Churches being more than double as likely to have such an occurrence (20% vs. 47%). Charismatic

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

Churches were particularly more likely (38%) than either mainline or evangelical worshipers to use such pages in their ministry efforts. Podcasting has been adopted by one out of every six Churches (16%). Again, larger Churches stood out in their cuddle of this communications tool, with half of the Churches attracting more than 250 adults (47%) exploiting pod cast technology.<sup>194</sup> Blogging is also occupying the ministry world. One-eighth of Protestant Churches (13%) now have blog sites or pages through which people can interrelate with the thoughts posted by Church leaders.

### *Satellite Technology*

One technology that has not exhibited any apparent development in the past several years is that of satellite broadcasting. In 2000, a little amount of 7% of Protestant Churches had a satellite dish for getting programming and training. That number has been virtually unaffected since then, registering 8% in 2005 and the same 8% in 2007.

### *Technology and Longevity*

The incorporation of digital technologies into Church based ministry is an essential edge for Churches to master, according to George Barna, who intended for these studies for The Barna Group over the itinerary of the decade. “The Internet has befallen one of the crucial communications and community-building instruments of our life extent. Churches are well-advised to have an intelligent and prudence Internet strategy in order to assist meaningful ministry,” Barna mentioned. He also recognized that small Churches are less technology-gracious. “Many small Churches seem to suppose that new instruments for ministry are outside of their resources range or may not be important for a

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

Church of their size. It may be, though, that such thought contributes to the sustained small size of some of those Churches.” Barna also addressed the slowing development of convinced tools in the Church market. “The fact that market saturation of digital technologies seems to top out around two-thirds of the market could easily change if the digital-resistant Churches envisaged ways of facilitating their hallucination through the deployment of such instruments. That is what made these tools so attractive to larger Churches: being able to apply the tools to furthering their ministry goals.”

CHAPTER FIVE  
HYPOTHESIS TESTING

*Hypothesis # 1*

Main and sub hypotheses to be tested in the study are as follows:

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not enhance the efficiency in the working place.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does enhance the efficiency in the working place.

*Hypothesis # 2*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does have an adverse effect on the mind of adolescents.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does not have an adverse effect on the mind of adolescents.

*Hypothesis # 3*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not increase the level of spiritual development among adolescents.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does increase the level of spiritual development among adolescents.

*Hypothesis #4*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not curtail the cost and other expenses of the organization.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does curtail the cost and other expenses of the organization.

*Hypothesis #5*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not increase the level of competency of the employees.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does increase the level of competency of the employees.



## CHAPTER SIX RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to find out the true result, the sample questionnaire has no specific question that asks the name and address of the person. The researcher keeps the identity of the peoples anonymous to limit the problem of biasness from the research. No personal data was collected except some basic demographic info such as age, education, status and tenure. In this study, the respondent has been selected accordance with their status and designation like pastors, subordinates and holy priests.

### ***Purpose of Study:***

The Study is descriptive in nature, as a number of researches had already performed in this area.

### ***Types of Investigation:***

The Study is causal in nature, because the researcher wants to analyze the cause and effect relationship of enhancement of technology on the productivity of the organization and also on the spiritual development of the adolescent.

### ***Research Interference:***

The researcher uses Excessive Interference because he had asked the questioner to be solely filled by the respondent.

***Research Setting:***

The study is non-contrived in nature, because the researcher goes in the field to accumulate the data, to identify cause and affect relationship.

***Unit of Analysis:***

The Unit of Analysis is “Individual” because the researcher has approached each and every employee of the organization to congregate the data.

***Time Horizon:***

It takes around two months for the researcher to accumulate and compile the data from 25-June-2009 to 25-Aug-2009, so the time horizon is “Cross-Sectional” in nature.

## CHAPTER SEVEN ANAYLIS AND FINDINGS

### DEMOGRAPHIC RESULTS

The below mentioned table reveals the descriptive statistics demographic of the employees, working in the public organizations. In our survey, employees between the ages of 27-33 are keener towards providing the in-depth and right knowledge relative to our research. Predominantly, most of the participants, pastors and their subordinates along with holy priests were males.

Variables	Group	Frequency	%
Job Status	Pastoral/Subordinate/Holy priests	50	100%
Age	26 and below (Subordinate)	30	60%
	27-36 (Holy priests)	12	24%
	37 and above (Pastors)	08	16%
Gender	Male	38	76%
	Female	12	24%
Total		50	100%

The table revealed that, total 50 pastors, subordinates and holy priests have participated in our research by duly filled our questionnaire. Probabilistic frequency revealed that the pastor, subordinates and holy priests comprises on the age between 26 and below were actively participated in the research as 60% of them filled our questioner followed by 27 and above and 37 and above by 24 and 16% respectively.

## ANALYSIS OF DATA

Q-) Are you satisfied with the stance of the current technology adopting by the organizations?

### *Hypothesis # 1*

Main and sub hypotheses are to be tested in the study are as follows:

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not enhance the efficiency in the working place.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does enhance the efficiency in the working place.

### *Questionnaire Result:*

Group	Completely Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied	Total
Pastors	10	2	0	0	12
Holy priests	11	3	1	1	16
Subordinate	15	3	2	2	22

After fulfilling and compiling all the questionnaires, our main prospective is to figure out a meaningful result from the accumulated data. To do this particular activity in a plausible manner, we applied Goodness of Fit test to analyze and estimate the result.

**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

Attributes	Observed	Expected	$(O.F-E.F)^2$	$(O.F-E.F)^2/E.F$
	Frequency	Frequency		
	O.F	E.F		
Completely Satisfied	36	12.5	552.25	44.18
Somewhat Satisfied	8	12.5	20.25	1.62
Somewhat Dissatisfied	3	12.5	90.25	7.22
Completely Dissatisfied	3	12.5	90.25	7.22
Total	50			60.24

The researcher wants to gauge his result on the 95% confidence level; it means the result will show the result which is 95% correct, by leave the 5% margin of error in the analysis.

**ANALYSIS:**

We have calculated the value, by applying the Goodness of Fit test which is mentioned above manifested a figure of 60.24, which we have calculated on the degree of freedom (d.f = 3), at the level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$  and consensus that, the estimated result is way beyond the actual result against the statistical Chi-Square table. As per the chi-square statistical table the value on the same degree of freedom is 7.815, so by considering the same result, we have rejected the null hypothesis, and by contrast accept the alternative hypothesis, because the calculated value lied way beyond the area of the critical region.

The result reveals that the usage of the technology will surely be beneficial from the churches viewpoint as it enhances the efficiency in diversified departments. Rejecting the null hypothesis means, that according to the upper management of the church, the uses of technology is inevitably made their life easy as far as the spiritual promotion and other operating and production is concerned. The questionnaire had been filled by almost all the major hierarchical levels like the pastors, than the holy priests and subordinates, so the result can be consider as a whole because the result shows the generalization, which shows that the utilization of the technology does have a positive effect in the long run of churches. Not only will this cut down on different problems that churches frequently encountered but also have a positive effect on the bottom line of the Churches.

***Hypothesis # 2 (Tested)***

Q-) *Are you satisfied with the effects technology leaves on adolescents?*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does have an adverse effect on the mind of adolescents.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does not have an adverse effect on the mind of adolescent.

A large number of contradictions have been found in this particular question because this particular issue had became one of the recurrently asked question, let's see what the analysis revealed.

***Questionnaire Result:***

Group	Completely Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied	Total
Pastors	18	2	1	0	21
Holy priests	13	3	1	1	18
Subordinate	7	2	1	1	11

After we fulfilled and compile the questionnaire, our main prospective is to excrete out a consistent result from the accumulated data. To do this particular activity in a plausible manner, we applied Goodness of Fit test to analyze and estimate the result.

#### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Attributes	Observed	Expected	(O.F-E.F) <sup>2</sup>	(O.F-E.F) <sup>2</sup> /E.F
	Frequency	Frequency		
	O.F	E.F		
Completely Satisfied	38	12.5	650.25	52.02
Somewhat Satisfied	7	12.5	30.25	2.42
Somewhat Dissatisfied	3	12.5	90.25	7.22
Completely Dissatisfied	2	12.5	110.25	8.82
Total	50			70.48

#### ANALYSIS:

We have calculated the value, by applying the Goodness of Fit test which is mentioned above manifested a figure of 70.48, which we have calculated on the degree of freedom (d.f = 3), at the level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$  and consensus that, the estimated result is way beyond the actual result against the statistical Chi-Square table. As per the chi-square statistical table the value on the same degree of freedom is 7.815, so by considering the same result, we have rejected the null hypothesis, and by contrast accept the alternative hypothesis, because the calculated value lied way beyond the area of the critical region. The result shows that the usage of technology does not have an adverse effect on the mentality of the adolescent. However, a number of times, it has been a

consensus that excess usage of the technology devastate the health of a person. As I have discussed earlier, a lot of contradictions have been found in this particular issue, which made this particular question problematic. Rejecting the null hypothesis means that the usage of the technology does not have an adverse effect on the mentality as well as on the health of the adolescent, because the questionnaire had been filled by almost all the major hierarchical levels like the pastors, than the holy priests and subordinate, so the result can be consider as a whole because the result shows the generalization, although this particular issue needs further clarification and research to be analyzed plausibly.

***Hypothesis # 3 (Tested)***

*Q-) Do you agree with the fact that the usage of technology increases the level of spiritual development among adolescents?*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not increase the level of spiritual development among the adolescent.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does increase the level of spiritual development among the adolescent.

***Questionnaire Result:***

Group	Completely Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied	Total
Pastors	06	02	1	1	10
Holy priests	14	05	4	2	25
Subordinate	8	4	1	2	15



After fulfilled and compile the questionnaire, our main prospective is to excrete out a consequential result from the accumulated data. To do this particular activity in a plausible manner, we applied Goodness of Fit test to analyze and estimate the result.

**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:**

Attributes	Observed	Expected	(O.F-E.F) <sup>2</sup>	(O.F-E.F) <sup>2</sup> /E.F
	Frequency	Frequency		
	O.F	E.F		
Completely Satisfied	28	12.5	240.25	19.22
Somewhat Satisfied	11	12.5	2.25	0.18
Somewhat Dissatisfied	6	12.5	42.25	3.38
Completely Dissatisfied	5	12.5	56.25	4.5
Total	50			27.28

**ANALYSIS:**

We have calculated the value, by applying the Goodness of Fit test which is mentioned above manifested a figure of 70.48, which we have calculated on the degree of freedom (d.f = 3), at the level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$  and consensus that, the estimated result is way beyond the actual result against the statistical Chi-Square table. As per the chi-square statistical table the value on the same degree of freedom is 7.815, so by considering the same result, we have rejected the null hypothesis, and by contrast accept the alternative hypothesis, because the calculated value lied way beyond the area of the critical region. Statistical analysis divulges that the usage of technology like increasing the forms of it will certainly revamps the performance measures of different departs and

also the spiritual developments in the adolescents'. The main performance measure on which the adolescents' mainly call attention to is the measuring their spiritual health of themselves along with their attention to the society. Usually pastors and the high level priests use different kind of technologies and media source in order entertain an individual in respect to develop and enhance his/ her religious knowledge, which is one of the dominant kinds of the technology. The spiritual outcomes can be easily compared with the social and psychological functions of that individual; that how is he/ she pretending in their daily spiritual and social life. Rejecting the null hypothesis means, that according to the pastors their subordinates and holy priests the spiritual development in adolescents' is inevitably made their holy life easy as far as the performance measure is concerned by condensed the biasness among the complex calculations and produces the result impeccably.. The questionnaire had been filled by almost all the major hierarchical levels like the pastors, than the holy priests and subordinate, so the result can be consider as a whole because the result shows the generalization, which shows that the spiritual development in adolescents certainly helps the pastors and the analyst to measure the performance of the Churches in a plausible manner.

***Hypothesis #4 (Tested)***

*Q-) Are you satisfied with the fact that the usage if technology provides a cost effective essence for the organizations?*

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not curtail the cost and other expenses of the organization.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does curtail the cost and other expenses of the organization.

**Questionnaire Result:**

Group	Completely Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied	Total
Pastors	10	2	0	0	12
Holy priests	11	6	1	1	19
Subordinate	15	2	1	2	19

After fulfilling and compiling the questionnaire, our main prospective is to protract out a meaningful result from the accumulated data. To do this particular activity in a plausible manner, we applied Goodness of Fit test to analyze and estimate the result.

**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

Attributes	Observed	Expected	$(O.F-E.F)^2$	$(O.F-E.F)^2/E.F$
	Frequency	Frequency		
	O.F	E.F		
Completely Satisfied	36	12.5	552.25	44.18
Somewhat Satisfied	8	12.5	20.25	1.62
Somewhat Dissatisfied	3	12.5	90.25	7.22
Completely Dissatisfied	3	12.5	88.25	7.22
Total	50			58.34

**ANALYSIS:**

We have calculated the value, by applying the Goodness of Fit test which is mentioned above manifested a figure of 58.34, which we have calculated on the degree of freedom (d.f = 3), at the level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$  and consensus that, the estimated result is way beyond the actual result against the statistical Chi-Square table. As per the chi-square statistical table the value on the same degree of freedom is 7.815, so by considering the same result, we have rejected the null hypothesis, and by contrast accept the alternative hypothesis, because the calculated value lied way beyond the area of the critical region. The result reveals that the usage of the technology will surely be beneficial from the organization viewpoint as it enhances the efficiency by curtailing the expenses and other cost of the organization in an impeccable manner. Rejecting the null hypothesis means, that according to the upper management and other officials of the organization the utilization of the technology is inevitably made their life easy as far as the cost effectiveness is concerned which has a direct contact with the net earning of the organization. The questionnaire had been filled by almost all the major hierarchical levels like the pastors, than the holy priests and subordinate, so the result can be consider as a whole because the result shows the generalization, which shows that the utilization of the technology does have a positive effect in the long run of the organization which not only cut down different menace which the churches frequently encountered but also have a positive effect on the bottom line of the churches. We are well aware with the fact that the organization are merely accentuate to cut down its mounting expenses and increase their surplus and the usage of the technology do the same in a professional manner.

***Hypothesis #5 (Tested)***

Q-) *Are you in agreement with the fact that the usage of technology enhances the competency and compatibility among adolescents and youth people?*

***Hypothesis # 5***

H<sub>1</sub>: Increase in technology does not increase the level of competency of the adolescent and youth people.

H<sub>A</sub>: Increase in technology does increase the level of competency of the adolescent and youth people.

***Questionnaire Result:***

Group	Completely Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied	Total
Pastors	18	2	1	0	21
Holy priests	13	3	1	1	18
Subordinate	7	2	1	1	11

Our main desire is to excrete out a consequential result from the accumulated data. To do this particular activity in a plausible manner, we applied Goodness of Fit test to analyze and estimate the result.

**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

Attributes	Observed	Expected	(O.F-E.F) <sup>2</sup>	(O.F-E.F) <sup>2</sup> /E.F
	Frequency	Frequency		
	O.F	E.F		
Completely Satisfied	38	12.5	650.25	52.02
Somewhat Satisfied	7	12.5	30.25	2.42
Somewhat Dissatisfied	3	12.5	90.25	7.22
Completely Dissatisfied	2	12.5	110.25	8.82
Total	50			70.48

**ANALYSIS:**

We have calculated the value, by applying the Goodness of Fit test which is mentioned above manifested a figure of 70.48, which we have calculated on the degree of freedom (d.f = 3), at the level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$  and consensus that, the estimated result is way beyond the actual result against the statistical Chi-Square table. As per the chi-square statistical table the value on the same degree of freedom is 7.815, so by considering the same result, we have rejected the null hypothesis, and by contrast accept the alternative hypothesis, because the calculated value lied way beyond the area of the critical region. The result divulges that the usage of technology does increase the level of competency among the adolescents. Holy institutions are found spectacularly eager to facilitate their members in a proficient and impeccable manner and that is why the church spends billions of dollars in order to entertain their members and to have a definite edge over their competitors. Rejecting the null hypothesis means that the usage of the

technology does increase the level of compatibility and competency among the adolescent and youth people which either beneficial for them and also for the society as well. The questionnaire had been filled by almost all the major hierarchical levels like pastors, than the holy priests and subordinate, so the result can be consider as a whole because the result shows the generalization. The overall result reveals that the essence of the technology enhances the compatibility of the adolescent and youth people as well as the holy institutions. Enhancement in the compatibility will certainly enhance the satisfaction level of the adolescent and youth people and satisfied adolescent are more productive than the unsatisfied youth people.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout history, technology has helped spiritual develop children, youth and adolescents and has become more of a global issue. Many people have begun to understand children's development through technology. Some of these development include whether to create opportunities for adolescent people's voices to be heard, push for ethical coverage of children, youth and adolescent, and endeavor for (self) regulation of the technology and for quality spiritual education.

A broad range of proposals and activities curtail to the mounting desires to understand children's privileges through technological and spiritual developments. Many meetings, and conferences have taken place on the subject of technology and its effects on children and adolescent spiritual development. Legislation has been passed necessitating television and radio stations to dedicate a percentage of airtime to quality children's programming. Many technology consumer and watchdog groups challenge technology companies to report when they do not live up to minimum principles and their social errands toward the public, including children.

While these are certainly positive signs, serious obstacles for children, youth and adolescents through technology remain. Among them are the lack of funding and political will, cultural differences, low funding in churches and the need for far more guidance for the next generation and for those designing material for young spectators. Such strategies must continue to harness the many positive prospective of the increasingly powerful worldwide technology to make a real differentiation in adolescent lives around the world



by informing them, listening to them and eventually equipping them to protect themselves.

### *Personal Research Findings*

Technology has made our life as easy as the work which the men had performed in hours or sometimes in the days before, now can be done in a few hours. The main prospective of this thesis report was to examine the fact that the stance of the technology has diversified effects on the mentality of the adolescent. I have done a number of statistical analyses to get the same idea. The analysis not only focuses on a particular issue but it also reveals some interesting facts regarding the applicability and implacability of the technology and its importance. I have analyzed five hypotheses out of which 3 were merely designed to measure the importance of the technology from the organization viewpoint.

Almost in every statistical analysis, I have found that the essence of technology increases the efficiency and the compatibility of teenagers and children. Research has revealed the consensus that excess usage of the technology devastates the health of a person. This particular analysis disclose that the usage of the technology does increase the spiritual development among adolescents, which shows its importance. Below are several other personal conclusions and findings gained from this research.

- While new technology and its tools cause material progress, this is of little assistance for lasting inquiry into the human condition.
- Mass media is making the world smaller, and culture and media are increasingly entangled, especially for teens.

- The unbridled consolidation of commercial media has meant that the influence of adolescents through television is in the hands of only a handful of large and powerful companies.
- Young people use the Internet principally for communicating (email and chat rooms); downloading (computer games, software and music); and obtaining information (about education, entertainment, sports, “taboo” topics not addressed by adults, and news that may be concealed for political motives).
- Teenagers want to limit rejection and value immediate gratification. The Internet enables the opportunity of small, intimate social environments geared for faster and immediate communication.
- Parental concerns are legitimate, especially considering that teens are essentially free to view and post anything they choose and communicate with whomever they intend.
- Monitoring and controlling youth contact to these communication forums is growing ever more demanding, and it is noteworthy for parents to educate themselves about these online forums so they can have meaningful conversations about them with their adolescents children.
- Cyber-bullying demonstrates how traditional offline adolescent matters are moving to the electronic stage.
- Unintentional contact to sexual media in childhood and adolescence often has negative psychological effects, such as disgust, shock or embarrassment, and that these effects can be continuing. We need to be avid defenders of what our children see and hear.

- This study shows that relationships move from online to offline only infrequently; however, given that the newer friendship forms of networking center on making “friends,” this matter needs further examination.
- One widespread study of the responses and posts on self-injury message boards establishes that such forums gives emotional help to youth filled with fear and anxiety.
- Online relations with strangers also puts adolescents at risk for sexual solicitation and sexual utilization by predators, though such risks were far higher in the former days of the Internet before the extensive recognition of the possible dangers intrinsic to online stranger relations. There are very few safe environments that involve consistent relationships with strangers.
- Analysis has also revealed that the characteristics of electronic communication technology intrinsically change social relationships.
- Teachers and school administrators need to be familiar about adolescent use of electronic media technology and how such technologies might be effectively incorporated in school settings.
- Healthy Christian living is evident by growth in understanding and an intensifying relationship with God.
- Not only can we teach faith and principle as a cause of identity, but we can also call teenagers to promise; identity achievement needs promise.
- The line between a chosen and assigned religious identity becomes more blurred in adolescence when heavily influenced by technology.

- When parents include their children in religious activity participation and/or stress the importance of their religion, children may accept a religious identity much like an assigned identity rather than a chosen identity.
- In early adolescence, individuals also begin to become more focused on the psychological as well as to introspect more about their inner life.

### *For Supporting Adolescent Spiritual Development*

It is this researcher's surveillance that the practical lives of most churches have more in common than what might be supposed. Calvinists are eager to offer an explanation for this similarity by reduction the "second blessing," while Wesleyans description for it by signifying that some of the renewed view have established the second crisis but mislabeled it "the satisfying of the Holy Spirit," "re-perseverance," etc. As with the description of sin, expressions seem to cause more intricacy than lifestyle does. Disagreement will still exist on issues, which have long separated Calvinists and Arminians (e.g., predestination, eternal security, etc.). However, Darling's replica of the stages of spiritual development is a challenging perception for all Christian. His fusion of these two theological perceptions, combined with a human development model from the Bible and the psychological world provide exciting proof for the importance of studying technological influence. Darling's model should be a catalyst for further discourse between all evangelicals.

The bottom line of agreement is that we all need to be actively involved in the spiritual development of the next generation. Parents, pastors and Christian schools need to be corporately and individually supporting positive adolescent spiritual growth. Below

are some practical, yet non-exclusive, steps that can be taken to move in the right direction.

- Promote a wholehearted commitment to Christ. Surrendering to the Lordship of Christ in all of life can be implicit and intentional by adolescents. They can handle commitment. This may include commitment ceremonies, public pledges or documenting commitments in journals.
- Promote students as well as allocate good books on spiritual construction. Encourage them to never to stop being avid learners. Summer reading lists, book studies and a basic library exchange are helpful tools.
- Use biblical values, in order to help students analyze the current youth culture. Connect students with parents and leaders to discuss current topic and common youth struggles. Encourage parents and teachers to be updated on basic youth culture terminology as well as current trends. It is impossible to over communicate with adolescents.
- Promote and discuss spiritual experiences. This should include putting what they are taught into action, including missions trips, work projects, as well as developing new areas of technological evangelism and discipleship.
- Research with students the lives of Christian history and sacrifices of the past and present, including accounts of their spiritual practices. Highlight how they opposed some of the cultural forces of their day.

- Promote an active approach to Christian living. This might engage community outreach, overseas missions practices, letter writing and other political action and methodical prayer for problems in the world.
- Most importantly, live a life consistent with biblical ideals, including an active refusal of anti-Christian values in the mainstream society. Share some of your own spiritual practices and things God has taught you. Your example may help your students refuse features of youth culture, as well as reproduce upon and illustrate their own spiritual practices.
- Consider spiritual counseling. Promote mature adults and exemplary citizens, to volunteer as counselors. Counselors may need guidance. Promote students to convene regularly with their counselors. Though, do not automatically suppose a youth leader is adult; adolescents can be influenced and expressively abused yet not say anything. Allowing teens to attend another church is better than losing them altogether.
- Be open in conversations; do not exaggerate when students are merely experimenting with ideas. Hesitant ideas offered by teenagers can sound very much like firm assumption. Harsh rebuke may end the discussion on everything, permanently.
- Promote parents and teachers of school-aged children and younger, to establish and support spiritual practices. If these are concealed in children, it may be very difficult to invalidate that pattern and promote spirituality in adolescence.

*For Additional Study*

Many imperative studies have been done exploring young people's technology experiments and the effects of technology on youth attitudes, emotional behavior and religious attributes. However, this topic has barely been breached. Attached are additional topics that have been birthed from this study and require additional research and discussion.

- Gatekeeping: How much of Internet content should a private school/church block?
- Online churches. Is a physical presence necessary for a biblical model of church?
- At what age should adolescents be able to get their own social network page?
- Revivals: the past, present and future connections between advances in technology and spiritual revivals.
- Virtual schools. Is physical contact with other students part of healthy educational development?
- The Internet and deceit. Are we teaching people to deceive and provide a "what you see is what you get" mentality?
- Inspect the effects of students who grow spiritually from multiple technological sources outside of the church and have neglected the influence of the local church.
- Effects of secondary Internet use on people's time-efficiency.
- Text messaging overuse of Middle and High School students.
- The influence of Internet bullying on social development.
- Comparing adolescent enticement to real versus virtual advertisements.

- Time wasting: Define and analyze the amount of time wasted on the Internet.
- Investigate Internet ethics in the workplace.
- How can teenagers in the Internet world deal with a senior citizen in the real world?
- The influence of social networking on Christian marriage and divorce.



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