Cyber Exploration and Hang-out as Determinants for Adolescents’ Parental Disobedience

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ABSTRACT

The world at large is experiencing reformation as a result of the advent of modern technology: this has brought about beneficial things to the whole universe. More so, the major area that has influence on human behaviour is the advent of the Internet, which is widespread all over the world. The Internet is easy to use, with no barrier of time, space and distance. This has allowed many people to have easy access to information. Due to this, it serves as a source of many benefits. However, always there is other side to the coin. As a result of the easy access to the Internet and the varieties of programs designed on it, most adolescents are engrossed in the cyber world. Therefore, the quest of this study is to find out whether cyber exploration as well as hanging-out is determinants for parental disobedience. This research is a quantitative study, by which exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was designed to test the internal consistency of the items, whereas multiple regression was used to determine whether cyber exploration as well as hang-outs are determinants for adolescents’ parental disobedience. The samples of the study were 211 adolescents from the International Islamic University Malaysia. From the study, we found that some of the major predictors of adolescent disobedience to their parents are hanging-out and cyber perception. This study has implications for societal practices, especially in assessing parents’ causal judgments of their ability to successfully train their adolescent, in the face of modern technology. Thereby, improving the moral standards of the adolescents and enhancing parent-child relationship.

Keywords: Cyber exploration, hang-out, adolescents, parental factors, cyber perception

INTRODUCTION

Things that used to be constant in this modern world are changing. New inventions and technology advancement are some of the great challenges to the world. As the world changes, human beings have to move along with these changes. One of the greatest characteristics of this era of technological progression is the cyber world, which has a wide-range impact on the whole of the universe. The Internet has brought about a new type of communication for adolescents whose use of e-mail, websites, instant messaging, social networking sites, webcams, and text messaging is exploding worldwide (Faye, 2011). It is reported that almost 95% of Canadian youth access the Internet from their homes and spend an average of 2-4 hours online each day (Media Awareness Network, 2005, cited by Faye, 2011). As a result, cyber world has become the second home to some adolescents and youth. This cyber usage has both positive and negative impact on its user. It provides uncountable possibilities for growth among adolescents and youth, such as psychosocial benefits like identity exploration and social support, as well as educational benefits generated from expansive access to knowledge, academic support and worldwide cross-cultural interactions (Raskind, Margalit and Higgins, 2006). However, it is presently a possible site for abuse of children and adolescents-bullying, stalking, solicitation and pornography, (Faye, 2011). These activities
have dissuaded some of the adolescents from doing more important things in their lives. The children of the Internet Age are ready to bare their body and soul in a way their parents never could (Tony, 2008). Therefore, it could serve as a distraction from other responsibilities.

As a result, the issue of cyber exploration which is supposed to be the source of benefit to us has posed a lot of problems to so many families. Past studies have indicated that majority of adolescents spend their time with Internet exploration. The question now is do adolescents see cyber exploration as more important than their daily routine activities, which are prescribed for them by their parents, or do they see cyber exploration as an avenue to vent their stress, enjoy themselves, spent their leisure and also as a place of refuge from family responsibilities? Many studies have answered some of the questions raised, but past literature has not been able to research on the issues of cyber space being a place of hanging out as well as a source of disobedience to their parents. Hence the present study wishes to find out whether cyber exploration as well as hanging-out is determinants for parental disobedience. This study will serve as a source of enlightenment for adolescents, parents and the society at large. Equally, it will serve as the blue print for governments concerning the issue of adolescents and cyber exploration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adolescence is a transition period between childhood and adulthood; it is a critical period in the life of an individual. That is why a lot researches have been carried out on the issue of adolescence. It is period marked by a number of physical, cognitive, and social changes. These interact to create a number of developmental needs specific to this age group (Laura, 2006). These needs as identified by Laura, (2006) as identity, autonomy and peer identification. These needs bring about some characteristics they are likely to exhibit during this period, such as identity experimentation and exploration, intimacy and belonging, separation from parents and family and venting of frustrations (Suler, 2004). When exhibiting these characteristics, adolescents explore many things and try to be free from others, most especially those that can mount pressure on them. As a result they find a place to spend their leisure time outside their family. (Edward, Lily, Julia & Michael, 2008) assert in their study that there is increasing evidence showing that adolescents are likely to occupy their leisure time with online games or something similar. Therefore, there is high possibility that adolescents might see cyber space as a place to hang out. Suler, (2004) makes a similar statement that adolescents might frequent themselves in cyberspace to engage in Internet surfing, chatting, blogging, etc. However, it must not be concluded that the interaction of adolescents with anything that is related to cyber exploration is always negative. The study carried out by Annahite, Michelle, Megan, Brandy, Down and Amber (2010) found that blog of adolescents seems to be positive, age-appropriate activity as they communicate with friends, build social networks, and share updates on various pro-social activities. However, other studies also reveal that most adolescents in cyber space engage in cyber bullying in order to get attention from others, to make themselves feel better, to get their own way and to pick on someone who is different (Cortney & Marrilyn, 2011). Meanwhile, some adolescents who feel that they are lonely believe that they can always turn to their online partners in time of need (Subrahmanyam & Lin 2007). With all these assertions, there is high possibility that adolescents’ interaction with exposure to the Internet can improve. Rik, Jascha, Wendy, Anki, Johannes and Nanne, (2008), found that there are several factors which are likely to improve exposure to Internet-delivered interventions such as the use of “word of mouth” marketing, comparison of own behaviour with friends and the use of reminders. Hence,
adolescents could spend more time on Internet usage more than the time spent or the attention
given to their significant others such as parents.

Meanwhile, when there is an increase in exposure to the Internet, it is also likely for other
things to suffer in terms of attention, time and responsibility, which could greatly affect the
parents. As a result, conflict of interest and disagreement will creep in between them. Nancy,
Katherine and Patricio, (2000) assert that there is a trend indicating that older adolescents and
those who see their mothers as unresponsive are less likely to agree with them. This could
result from the premise that these adolescents had an alternative avenue to channel their
interaction against their parents. More so, the presence of disagreement or conflict between a
parent and adolescent could elicit some behaviour from both parties. The likely behaviour
that could come from the parent is criticism, which could have another negative effect on the
adolescent. Irving & Howard, (1984) explain that with regard to the effects of parental
criticism of specific behaviours, it appears that for both boys and girls the more widespread
and frequent the perceived parental criticism, the greater is the teenager's feeling of
unacceptability and negative self-image; this action by parents may bring about more gaps
between them and their adolescents. That is why parents should learn the proper way of
bringing up their children especially during this period of adolescence. Parents, who are
favourable in relating to their children, will make their adolescents socially competent and
goal directed. Parents who exert control without force, monitor adolescents’ activities and
promote self-autonomy are found to have the most positive effects on adolescents’ behaviour.
Uninviting parents who are also non-reactive to adolescents’ needs have negative impacts on
their behaviour (Okorodudu, 2010). Countless studies have been carried out on adolescent
usage, interaction and activities with the Internet. Equally, the amount of time spent on the
Internet and the perceived interest of the adolescents towards cyber exploration have been
researched. However, the question which has not been asked is is, is cyber exploration
responsible for adolescents disobedience to their parents, and consequently, it serves as a
place of hanging out for them?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The foundation of this study is built on the social impact theory developed by Latane (1981).
This theory explains the level of influence others have in a given setting, stating how people
influence others. According to the social impact theory, the influence that people have on
others is determined by three factors: number of, strength, and immediacy, (Frenzoi, 2009).
The ‘number’ in this context may mean the frequency of the desired behaviour of the
influencer on its victim, or the number of people that present the desired behaviour to the
victim. This is in consonance with the report by Pew Research centre (2012) which reveals
that 93% of teens aged 12-17 go on-line, as do 93% of young adults aged 18-29. Three
quarters (74%) of all adults aged 18 and older go on-line. Over the past ten years, teens and
young adults have constantly gone on-line, even as the Internet population has grown and
notwithstanding the documented larger increases in a certain age group (e.g. adults 65 and
older). In this context adolescent might be influenced by the number of people engaging in
cyber exploration.

The second factor is ‘strength’ which could mean the importance, and inevitability of the
influencer on the victim. Today the usage of the Internet pervads all aspects of life, such as
school, home, business, office, recreation centres and so on. Therefore, there is high
possibility that adolescents will usually have contact with the Internet from school, home or
recreation center, Rik, et.al, (2008) found in their study that numerous factors are probable to
improve exposure to Internet-delivered interventions, such as the use of “speech” marketing,
comparing behaviour with friends as well as the usage of reminders.
The third factor identified by the theory is immediacy, which is the closeness of the influencer to its victim. It shows from the above cited literature that Internet usage is very close to adolescents, since they have access to it at home, school and are always reminded by their peers and used by their parents.

More so, the intimacy with the Internet, due to the influence may equally lead to parental disobedience, if the parents do not know what it takes to deal with their adolescents. Okorodudu (2010) asserts that uninvolving parents who are also non-responsive to adolescents’ needs have negative impacts on their behaviour. If the parents are hard on their children, this could cause parental disobedience causing them to find intimacy from other things. Irving and Edward (1984) state that the further parents try to criticize their adolescents the more they are likely to continue with the same behaviour they are being criticized for, consequently, rejecting their parents’ instruction. Due to this one could arrive at the following hypothesis:

H⁰: Cyber exploration does not determine adolescents’ disobedience to their parents.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Sample**

Based on the objectives and the subject of this study, the study uses purposive sampling technique to choose newly admitted undergraduates, within the age range of 16 to 19 for its sample. A total number of 250 questionnaires were distributed but 211 were returned and analysed.

**Instrument**

Based on the theory, the instrument used in this study had two parts. The first part was on demographic information about the respondents, which included gender and parental status of the respondents. The second section had 30 items of three dimensions, namely cyber exploration, parents, and hanging-out. These items explored how cyber exploration and hanging-out can cause adolescents’ disobedience to their parents. The scale used was Likert scale, which was graded between 5 and 1 from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’. However, the instrument was a self-generated one by the researcher; therefore, a preliminary exploratory factor analysis was carried out.

Thereafter, 30 items of cyber exploration, parental disobedience, and hanging-out were subjected to principal component analysis (PCA) using SPSS Version 20. Prior to performing PCA, the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. The inspection of the correlation matrix revealed that the presence of many coefficients of .3 and above was detected. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .862, exceeding the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser, 1970) and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1951) reached statistical significance supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. KMO and Bartlett’s Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. Chi-Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Principal component analysis revealed the presence of four components with eigenvalue exceeding 1, explaining 25.14%, 18.05%, 9.180% and 7.85% of the variance respectively. Total variance explained was 60.230%. An inspection of the scree plot revealed a clear break after the fourth component.

Table 2. Pattern Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prent3</td>
<td>.797</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prent2</td>
<td>.736</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prent8</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prent5</td>
<td>.716</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prent10</td>
<td>.713</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prent1</td>
<td>.589</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber2</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.850</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber8</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.823</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber1</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.819</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber7</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.760</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber4</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.731</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber6</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.654</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hang5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.942</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hang4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.894</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hang8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.728</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cyber11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.481</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
N= 212

Reliability Analysis

In order to ensure reliability of each construct, Cronbach’s Alpha reliability test was conducted on cyber exploration (CE), cyber perception (CP), hang-out (HO) and parental disobedience (PD). With the regard to the result from the exploratory factor analysis, the
researcher carried out reliability analysis on each component with 212 samples. The result of the present research reliability is illustrated in table 3 below.

**Table 3. Reliability of the Constructs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Cronbach Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>cyber1, cyber2, cyber4, cyber6, cyber7, cyber8</td>
<td>0.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>cp3, cp5, cp11</td>
<td>0.518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HO</td>
<td>hang4, hang5, hang8</td>
<td>0.835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD</td>
<td>prent1, prent2, prent3, prent5, prent8, prent10</td>
<td>0.815</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: CE: Cyber Exploration, CP: Cyber perception, HO: Hang out PD: Parental Disobedience
N= 211

CE α=.865, HO α=.835, and PD α=.815 demonstrated very high reliability value. Whereas, CP α=.518 show low reliability value. However, the major constructs are those CE, HO, and PD that have high reliability value.

**Multiple Regression Analysis**

H⁰: Cyber exploration does not determine adolescent’s disobedience to their parents.

**Table 4. Summary of Multiple Regression Statistics for the predictor Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hang-out</td>
<td>.584</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>.343</td>
<td>5.220</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyber Perception</td>
<td>.296</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>2.175</td>
<td>.031</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B= Un-standardized beta coefficient, SE B = Standard error, β = Standardized beta coefficient, t = t-test statistics P = Significance value

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between parental disobedience and some predictors such as cyber exploration, cyber perception and adolescents’ hanging-out. The model with all three predictors produced R²=.140, F(1,208) = 34.950, P˂ .000, indicating those adolescents “hang-out” had significant positive regression weight. “Cyber perception”, R²=.155, F(2,207) 20.155, P˂ .031, also had significant positive regression weight. However, cyber exploration did not contribute to the multiple regression models.

**DISCUSSION AND RESULT**

As can be seen from the analysis, the results indicate that adolescents’ hang-out as well as their cyber perception had significant positive regression weight, meaning that, both constructs could influence parental disobedience. In essence, this study shows that adolescents’ hang-out could cause them to disobey their parents. It may be caused by many variables, which are not within the range of this study. Equally, adolescents’ perceptions about cyber exploration, such as their understanding, beliefs, interest and feelings could promote disobedience toward their parents. However, according to the study, cyber exploration could not predict parental disobedience.
CONCLUSION
This study has evaluated the four constructs. The findings indicated that both ‘hang-out’ and ‘cyber perception’ could negatively influence adolescents’ behaviours negatively towards their parents. This study has implications for societal practices, especially in assessing parents’ causal judgments on their ability to successfully train their adolescents, in the face of modern technology, thereby, improving the moral standards of the adolescents and enhancing parent-child relationship. However, it should be noted that, only internet exploration on its own could not bring about adolescent disobedience to their parents. What is required of parents and teachers is to give proper orientation on Internet surfing as early as possible to their children or students respectively. Equally, parents should endeavour to monitor with care where their children go, what they do, and the types of friend they have. This will go a long way in assisting their younger ones to be obedient children to their parents and their country.

REFERENCES


