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Families and Technologies. What about the Phubbing in Mexico?

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE: The aim of this article is to call the attention to specific social behaviors that have been generated by the indiscriminate use of the technologies. We want to make evident that those behaviors cause a detriment of the communication between the members of the Mexican families, causing in consequence that minors are being neglected by parents and the lack of adequate parental control in the face of the risks associated with the use of certain technologies.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODS: The presented study involves the relation between people's behaviors related to their access to certain technologies face to the concept of family and its importance in the society for an interconnected world. We make an in-depth study of the academic and informative literature which deals with the phenomena called phubbing. We refer to varied research, both technical and empirical and applied the inductive method and critical analysis, taking into consideration previous official, as well as non-official, researches that demonstrate phubbing adverse effects in communication between Mexican family's members.

THE PROCESS OF ARGUMENTATION: In the first part of the research we defined the concept of family in Mexican Law and how the political agenda proposes the use of technologies in order to have a greater development of the society that can turn in better opportunities and conditions of life of the individuals in general and families in particular. In a second part we refer the specific Internet penetration in Mexico as a consequence of the above mentioned agenda. Finally, in a third part, we analyze the phenomena called phubbing and its impact in Mexican Families that is the essential part of our argumentation.

RESEARCH RESULTS: The result of this argumentation ends to some advices that deal with better practices in the usage of technologies in order to prevent adverse effects in Mexican families without renouncing to the incorporation of technologies in our daily life routines.

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CONCLUSIONS, INNOVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Even though the consequences of phubbing in our society are evident, we cannot yet accurately count its effects. There are data regarding the time that parents spend with their children compared to the average time they spend using applications, video games, e-mail, social networks, and media in general. The disorganization in the time we spend in leisure, work and family life turns evident. This situation invites us to reflect about the role technologies play in relation to our family integration or disintegration. Hyper-connectivity has generated adverse conditions for individuals, both physical and psychological, that result in an affection towards the fundamental pillar of our society that is the family. It is noted that the Mexican government needs to face the growing wave of phubbing, by informing its society about the risks of the abuse of the use of technologies in one hand, and to promote programs to invite people to a more conscious access to social networks by best practices of the other. Only in that way we can grant the principle of freedom and family autonomy in Mexico. Otherwise, how can we refer to a family autonomy if its members that make up the core of society have stopped communicating?

→ **KEYWORDS: PHUBBING, FAMILY, SOCIAL BEHAVIOR, IoT**

Introduction

Nowadays, there is a technological boom. The citizens of the world suddenly began to use mobile phones, wi-fi connections and social networks. Little by little we began to see in a natural way that a telephone was not only used to make phone calls, but to send messages, take photos, make notes, share videos in real time. It was the arrival of the Internet of Things (IoT).

IoT, term that

was first coined by Kevin Ashton in 1999 in the context of supply chain management [concept that after become into... A radical evolution of the current Internet into a Network of interconnected objects that not only harvests information from the environment (sensing) and interacts with the physical world (actuation/command/control), but also uses existing Internet standards to provide services for information transfer, analytics, applications, and communications (Gubbi, Jayavardhana, Buyya, Rajkumar, Marusic, Slaven, Palaniswami, & Marimuthu, 2013).

Hence these new technological tools, modify our conducts.

The impact of technologies on societies varies depending on whether they are societies in developed countries or in developing ones. The latter, are societies that import the technologies from developed countries, technologies that are designed for different needs and therefore societies

in undeveloped countries are less prepared for this type of technological changes.

Societies have the Right to Know (Emerson, 1976), however, nobody is alerting or informing citizens about the possible consequences, both favorable and adverse, on the use of these new technologies.

In this way technologies have been incorporated in the daily life activities. Little by little social behaviors and lifestyles are being transformed. Technologies have promised to improve individual's standards life but they are instead affecting people's health both physically and psychologically.

For this reason we consider pertinent to review the importance of technologies in people's life and in the interaction they have with their relatives.

In first instance we present the meaning of family in the Mexican context, after we refer how technologies have influence the social behaviors. We are in favor to build better societies and families by promoting more communication among individuals and creating a more aware networks connection.

Family concept in Mexican Law

The concept of family has evolved in the Mexican legal system. Its origin trace back to the 1870 Mexican Civil Code. The first part of this Code was dedicated to the concept of Person, which after evolved to what is family law today.

Marriage was the institution considered as "The legitimate society of a single man and a single woman who join in the indissoluble bound to perpetuate their species and help carry the weight of life" (Baqueiro Rojas, 2013, p. 381).

The 1870 Code was derogated by the 1884 Code, and according to Baqueiro Rojas (2013, p. 379) "Its provisions passed almost entirely and literally to constitute the new code whose validity went until the revolutionary renewal of the Family Relations Act of 1917."

This 1917 Act incorporated a new concept of marriage because it was defined by the first time as a civil contract (Adame Goddard, 2004).

Today is the 1928 Civil Code that rules the family law in Mexico. According to it there are two familiar relationships: consanguinity and affinity.

The Civil Code states that family is usually defined as the institution formed by persons united by blood ties. As it can be seen, the concept evolved and it does not refer to the link between a single man and a single woman, leaving enough space for the possibility of different types

of family: Nuclear, single parent, extended or enlarged, assembled, and society of coexistence.

Nevertheless, family in any of its forms is the natural and fundamental element of society as constitutionally established, it requires protection in attention and benefit of all the individuals that conform the family to fulfill its social function.

That is to say, family interest should be understood as the means of protecting the interest and rights of family members based on the fulfillment of family goals, which are for instance mutual-assistance, solidarity, subsistence, reproduction, socialization, affective relationship, education.

The State intervention should be just as to grant the enjoyment, exercise, recognition and enforceability of the rights, duties and obligations derived from family ties.

The Mexican Constitution recognizes the organization of the family and its development on the basis of respect for equality, non-discrimination and human dignity. Article 4 states that: The law will protect the family organization and its development.

Article 16 states that no one may be disturbed in his person, family, domicile, papers or possessions, but by virtue of a written order from the competent authority, which merges and motivates the legal cause of the proceedings.

Finally, on the suspension of rights and guarantees in cases of invasion, serious disturbance of public peace or any case that puts Mexican society in serious danger or conflict article 29 establishes that: "...protection of the family... may not be restricted or suspended."

In addition to the Mexican Constitution, there are some international legal instruments that foster the protection of the family in Mexico, because our government have ratified them.

Article 23 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states that: 1. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

The Preamble of the Convention on the Rights of the Child indicates

the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community...

Article 4 of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and eradication of violence against women "Convention of Belem Do Para" states

Every woman has the right to the recognition, enjoyment, exercise and protection of all human rights and freedoms embodied in regional and international human rights instruments. These rights include, among others:
e. The rights to have the inherent dignity of her person respected and her family protected.

Mexican government has expressed its conviction that the use of technologies will contribute to the development and improvement of the quality of life of its citizens and in turn fulfil their obligations both regional and international.

The post-2015 development agenda considers as goals the following: End of poverty, zero hunger, health and welfare, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure, reduction of inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, responsible production and consumption, climate action, underwater life, life of terrestrial ecosystems, peace, justice and solid institutions, alliances to achieve the objectives (PNUD, Agenda post-2015).

Along with technologies it was supposed that there would be a greater development of the society and in turn in better opportunities and conditions of life of the individuals.

...new information technologies have facilitated communication and coordination of efforts and show us an irreversible path towards a renewed relationship between citizenship and government that should be characterized by efficiency, efficiency and transparency (PND, 2013-2018).

Thus Mexico opted to include the technologies in a series of situations like digital government, digital education, and the greater Internet penetration for its society.

President Peña Nieto pointed out in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2013-2018 that one of the diagnoses of the opportunity areas was the access to Information and Communications Technologies.

Improving access to information and communication technologies, as well as telecommunication and broadcasting services, serves a dual purpose; on the one hand, they are economic activities that produce strategic inputs for the increase of the productivity of the companies in Mexico. On the other hand, they are instruments that promote the strengthening of the fundamental rights of the people, which represents the guiding axis of the Telecommunications Reform.

Hence, the possibility of universal access to culture through the use of technologies is part of the Digital Agenda for Culture within the framework

of the National Digital Strategy established in the NDP that contemplates as action lines:

- Define a national policy for digitization, digital preservation and on-line accessibility of Mexico's cultural heritage, as well as the use of technological systems and devices in the diffusion of art and culture.
- Stimulate creativity in the field of applications and technological developments, based on the digitization, presentation and communication of cultural heritage and artistic manifestations.
- Create digital platforms that favor the widest possible offering of cultural content, especially for children and young people.
- To stimulate the creation of projects linked to science, technology and art, which offer content for new platforms.
- Equip the country's cultural infrastructure with spaces and means of public access to information and communication technologies.
- Use new technologies, particularly in relation to mass transmissions of artistic events.

Internet penetration in México

In Mexico, according to official figures

In the second quarter of 2015, 57.4 percent from a population of six years of more declared to be Internet users, 70.5 percent of the country's households have an Internet connection. The use of the Internet is associated with the level of studies; so the more studies, the more use of the networks. Obtaining information and communication are the main activities carried out on the Internet, 7.7. Millions of people use the cell phone and two from three users have a smartphone (INEGI, 2016).

On average, the population of Internet users in Mexico went from 21% in 2006 to 59% in 2015, this represents 65 million compared to a population of 119.5 million Mexicans. (UNDP, Progress Report 2013). Of these 20% of users are 25 to 34 years old followed by 19% of users aged 13 to 18 years and after them there comes the group of 19- to 24 years old that represent the 17% of the Internet users. This universe (aged 13-34) represents more than half of Internet users in Mexico (AMIPCI, 2016, p. 4-5).

The average connection time is 7 hours and 14 minutes. Home is the place where they most connect to the Internet with 87% followed by a mobile device anywhere, subsequently work and school, leaving public places and cyber-cafes last (AMIPCI, 2016, p. 7-8).

Smartphone is the device most used to access the Internet (77%) and after laptops and desktop computers (69%). Access to social networks is the main activity over e-mails, instant messages or information search (AMIPCI, 2016, p. 9-10).

In this same study 41 percent of respondents noted that the Internet has changed their habits of leisure, finance, training, government efforts, being in contact with friends (AMIPCI, 2016, p. 10).

There is a today a right to know. It is true that this right was created in a different context such as the risks to environmental damage, still it is not unreasonable to think that the effects of the use of certain technologies should have been warned to avoid the risks they can represent for our societies today due to the excessive use of these technologies.

Cases of diseases such as obesity caused by spending many hours sit in front of the computer or playing video games, or psychic damages like the nomophobia that is the fear of leaving home without the mobile phone ("No mobile phone phobia"), or the phubbing that is the behavior of individuals to ignore people by answering phone calls in the mobile phone or responding messages in Networks are just some examples.

Alterations in social behaviors are observed related to hyperconnectivity.

If there is one point that stands out in our information society it is that we are in the midst of a technological invasion and that we, (...), feel the need to be permanently connected. These and other traits are what give shape to the era of hyperconnectivity (Reig y Vilchez, 2013 cited by Naval, Concepción, Serrano-Puche, Javier, Sádaba, Charo y Asbués, & Elena, 2016, p. 73).

Networks (Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Linkedin, Draugiem, Cloob, Zing Me, Q zZone, V Kontakte, Odnoklassnik, Whatsapp) (Consenza Vincos & Vincenzo, 2017), today are very important. Their utility make possible the interaction between human beings and thus with their way to communicate their interest almost immediately.

The effects that concern us the most are that minors are being neglected by parents and on the other hand there is a lack of adequate parental control in the face of the risks associated with the use of certain technologies.

Thus it is necessary to call the attention to the challenges of the abusive use of technologies and the inattention that is generated towards individuals as a consequence.

The results of these behaviors can be observed in the less communication in interpersonal relationships. Therefore, it is necessary to

emphasize the need that, respecting family autonomy, the State also contributes to avoid such situations by promoting best practices in the use of technologies.

Since to speak about regulation of the networks becomes a subject much more complex and that is not subject of this contribution. It is, however, the role that social networks play in the decomposition or neglect of individuals who are members of a family that is the core of our society and which has gradually been transformed. And it is particularly about the behavior called phubbing that we consider we can work.

What is phubbing?

Phubbing can be described as an individual looking at his or her mobile phone during a conversation with other individuals, dealing with the mobile phone and escaping from interpersonal communication (Karadağ, 2015, p. 60).

This behavior has been increased in time. Mexican Internet users use networks around 7 hours and 14 minutes as we noted above. These habits of networks consumption represent a lack of control between the time spend at work, in leisure and in family life.

In Mexico, today it is very common to receive e-mails from work at out-of-office hours. This labor time disorder obviously interfere in the life quality and family time of people who are unable to disconnect from work and to achieve a healthy family life time.

The research called "Digital orphans" of the University of Casa Grande, in Equator shows the orphanage in which parents left minors since the abuse in the use of the social networks. Minors have been left in an abandonment especially we call the attention in the lack of parent control on the contents to which they have access in Internet.

While countries as Australia or the United States of America, there are some authorities that monitor and classify the contests of videogames for example, little is said about it in Mexico.

Part of the research done by the University of Casa Grande can be consulted in a video available in YouTube. In this video we can see some mothers doing phubbing to their children.

According to experts, with this behavior mothers are encouraging their children to do the same. Besides an indiscriminate use of social networks in minors has emotional repercussions that will affect their emotional connection with the family in general.

Furthermore, minors in Mexico already spend more time using video games and applications as YouTube, than attending cultural programs or doing sports. This situation should alert us to become aware of the consequences of phubbing.

The phubbing solution seems far away if the government trying to regulate the access to Networks because these actions can be confronted to other rights such as freedom of expression or of information.

Phubbing needs to be stopped in favor to rescue interpersonal relationships.

As mentioned before, technologies should help people to communicate, now the result is just the opposite.

Data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) detail that the mobile phone is the technological tool that has increased the most in Mexico, its use increase by 70% in recent years. The abuse in the use of tools like smartphones, tablets, or computers leads to an addiction.

If children are taught to over use the technological devices, in the future they will become technological addicts.

According to the World Health-Organization (WHO), the excessive use of these devices can have a great repercussion, especially in children causing them attention deficit, little capacity of retention, learning problems and hyperactivity.

The expert in social conducts García Jane indicates to this respect that the interest on technological devices over the family can cause future problems as: less physical activities, less reading, and less interest to learn new stuff, and that in a society as ours can be a real big mistake (NOTIMEX, 2016).

INEGI adds that 70% percent of Mexicans use the Internet more for entertainment than for educational purposes.

We consider that Mexican government should promote best practices in the use of technological resources for Mexican families in order to avoid phubbing. It is impossible to think that a family is still autonomous when the members that integrate it are not communicating, or at least they communicate less.

Conclusions and proposals

Regarding this reality, there are those who see a certain technological fatigue amongst users, and so, from certain perspectives, there is a feeling that we need to rethink the technological approach, to reconsider the effects that technology has on our lives. The suggestion is digital

unplugging, a proposal which can be included in a broader movement, the Slow Movement, which champions a more unhurried lifestyle (...). This does not mean eliminating online life completely, but rather establishing regular periods of digital time-out in order to develop face-to-face communication; they suggest cultivating leisure periods which, to a certain extent, would dispense with digital technology and would reconstruct the borders between the time for work and the time for rest (...) (Naval Durán, Serrano Puche, Sádaba Chalezquer, & Arbués Radigales, 2016).

Here we have some advices that can be implement.

5. Find a balance between time for leisure, time for work, time for yourself, and time for your family.
6. As parents are always the main referent for children, we have to promote good practices in the use of technologies. We need to avoid future technologies addicts.
7. It is needed to set limits for children in the use of smartphones, tablets, and computers.
8. We need to diversify the usage of those devices. Children need to know that they are useful not only for leisure purposes but also to carry out school tasks and to disconnect while spending time in family as while having dinner or when carry out activities before bedtime. In general fomenting the disconnection.

Mexican government must also be aware that the pillar of society is family and that its development is favorable to incorporate technologies promoted programs of inclusion in public policy technologies such as electronic tablets, internet in gardens and public squares, digital government ...But should not ignore the importance of the abuse of technologies with their respective consequences.

The degree of penetration has benefited however has not been given due attention to effects such as hyper connectivity in individuals.

Finally, in this reality, both the family and the government must work to achieve a society interconnected by technologies but without neglecting the component of interpersonal communication as the main ingredient.

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