The Modern Filipino Family Under Pre-Pandemic (COVID 19) Conditions And The New Media: Quality Time Redefined

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Abstract

The research centered on the redefinition of quality time in a scenario of the modern family under pre-pandemic (Covid 19) conditions where new media is a concern. A little less than half are still going to school (45.455%) and (36.364%) are private employees. All of the respondents (100%) have access to the internet. More than half are provided with PLDT. (66.67%). An equal proportion of the respondents uses laptop, desktop, and tablet and uses a cellphone. More than half (66.67%) use the internet from five to nine hours a day. The respondents mostly visited sites are Facebook and YouTube on the internet. When the family members arrive from school or work, the usual scenario is to immediately connect to the internet and check Facebook or YouTube to watch a series. There is no conversation happened between the members of the family because each is busy on their gadget connected to the internet. Dinner together is still observed by the three families being studied. Because they still believe that this is the only time wherein they can talk together, share what had transpired the whole day outside the home. Personal interaction and communication between family members in the home have lesser time compared to when there was no internet connection. Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays are a time to spend quality time with the family members where everybody has longer hours of staying in the home.

Keywords: modern Filipino family, pre-pandemic (Covid 19) conditions, new media, quality time Conversation, interaction,

Introduction

A modern Filipino family evolved with industrialization, science, and technology. With the growth of a high standard of living, the resources of the salaried family and the number of people who could be supported by wage-earners were fixed. Living space in the neighborhood of factories and other specialized worksites was expensive and non-expansible. Where neighbors were strangers, the modern family became a "haven in a heartless world" (Lasch 1977). Because of the transition of the lifestyle of this modern Filipino family and the socio-economic condition, the modern family has an idea of two to three children because both parents are working.

Change is constant & the basic unit of society- the family- is not immune to it. It is composed of human beings & human beings naturally adapt to the environment to survive. The environment is continually changing prompting people to change their interaction with it & one another also. To this, we are challenged as Filipinos to see if the changes we welcome in our homes are working to our

advantages- do these promote better relationships & worthwhile companionship among family members & families in the society? Everything has a consequence. (Dr. Belen T. G. Medina, PhD & Dr. FlorentinoT. Timbreza, Ph.D.).

The change that affects modern family ties is the introduction of the new media which comprises the internet which is accessible on any digital device, usually containing interactive user feedback and creative participation. Common examples of new media include websites such as online newspapers, blogs, wikis, video games, and social media.., New Media transmit content through connection and conversation. It enables people around the world to share, comment on, and discuss a wide variety of topics. With the invention of new media, the closeness of the family was affected by this technology where each member is busy with their gadgets, it could be an iPod, a laptop, a cellphone, and a tablet. The role of cellular phones, such as the iPhone, has created the inability to be in social isolation, and the potential of ruining relationships. The iPhone activates the insular cortex of the brain, which is associated with feelings of love. People show similar feelings to their phones as they would to their friends, family, and loved ones. Countless people spend more time on their phones, while in the presence of other people than spending time with the people in the same room or class.

"The family was in the same room but not together, one family, one room, four screens, four realities." Families sharing a common space but plugged into entirely separates planes of existence through technology. (New York Times) A scene like this has become an increasingly familiar scenario in a modern Filipino home.

Based on nationally representative data, a study conducted by Kaiser Family Foundation in five-year intervals from 1998 to 2009 found that with technology allowing nearly 24-hour media access, but with the introduction of social media, people have 24/7 access to it. With this, the amount of time young people and adults as well spend with entertainment media has raised dramatically, especially among teenagers that live in the city where signals of the internet are strong.

Today, teen-agers devote an average of 7 hours and 38 minutes to using entertainment media in a typical day (more than 53 hours a week) – about the same amount most adults spend at work per day. Since much of that time is spent 'media multitasking' (using more than one medium at a time), they manage to spend a total of 10 hours and 45 minutes worth of media content in those 7½ hours per day. According to the Pew Internet & American Life Project, 96% of 18- to 29-year-olds and threequarters (75%) of teens now own a cell phone, 88% of whom text, with 73% of wired teens using social networking websites, a significant increase from previous years, many underage children use social media sites despite the site's stated age requirements, and many youths lack the digital skills to use social networking sites safely.

The invention of new media affects the quality of time spent by a modern Filipino family. Each member-owned a gadget that could intervene with the family interaction any time of the day. A scenario in the dining room or even in the living room where a place for each family member to interact with each other, a time to bond or just to chat, but because of new media, each family member is busy from each gadget, with this scenario wherein each member of the family is hooked with the new media technology… Quality time was redefined.

Objectives of the study

The research centered on the redefinition of quality time in a scenario of the modern family under pre-pandemic (Covid 19) conditions

where new media is a concern. Three complimentary objectives were pursued:

1. To describe the socio-economic profile of the family.
2. To determine the extent of the use of the internet in the house of the family being studied along with the internet access, their internet provider, the gadgets each family member used when surfing the internet, the particular site most visited.
3. To identify how each family spends quality time together.

Review of Related Literature

Our families are where we experience our biggest triumphs and our deepest vulnerabilities—and they are where we have the greatest potential to do well. We believe the family is divine and that God designates it as the fundamental building block of society, both on earth and through eternity. As such, it becomes the foundation for civilization and a sanctuary for the individual. It is where we learn the social graces of loyalty, cooperation, and trust. It is where we learn to love ourselves and each other, to bear one another's burdens, to find meaning in our lives and to give purpose to others' lives, and to feel the value of being part of something greater than ourselves. (Book of Mormons).

The modern Filipino family encounters changes because of the fast development of technology that affects their entire life. Forget the cliché of teenagers spending their lives glued to their phones, sending Snapshots, messaging friends, and running the risk of cyberbullying – digital technology is offering a whole host of brand-new ways to bring families and friends closer together for happier relationships. (Carrie Dunn, 2014). This is a situation for families where one or two members are working abroad, with the use of technology, they can still interact with each other, through Skype a member of the family who is far away can be a part of any occasion because they are connected.

"These technologies are good at sustaining relationships when there's distance involved," said clinical psychologist Lucy Maddox. Sophie Linnington of digital parenting resource The Parent Zone agreed, talking about the experience of families playing online games with relatives across continents. And it's not just about linking parents with children, or cousins of the same age – the silver surfers also have a raft of opportunities to connect with their young relatives.

Louise Chunn, the founder of the self-improvement site welldoing.org, agreed that mindset was understandable: "It's like putting something over their mouth – all their friends are talking, and they can't." Similarly, it's tough for schools to issue blanket bans on particular apps or devices, because, as Humphries pointed out, it is simply unenforceable – not all students can be searched and not all devices can be checked over."Parents have been shocked to find out that their kids can access porn – that's a really big deal to get their heads around," pointed out Chunn.

Kim Williamson, (2017) said, that kids who get too much "screen time" -- through watching lots of TVs, surfing the Internet, and playing video games -- tend to perform poorly at school. Researchers have found the brain releases dopamine, a chemical related to attention and focus when kids watch TV or play video games -- something that gives the child a "stimulus surge." Another study examined boys aged 6 to 9 and the relationship between video games and their declining reading skills. The boys didn't seem to have any underlying reading problems; researchers speculate that their desire to play video games just surpassed the time they devoted to reading and writing, bringing down their abilities. (Kim Williamson, 2017).

Technology and families don't always play nice together. (Posted March 13, 2013).

Nowhere is the impact of popular culture and technology on children's relationships more noticeable than in families. Both influences have contributed to a growing divide between the traditional roles that children and their parents play a while, at the same time, blurring those same lines between parents and children. Over the past two decades, children who, for example, watch television, have received messages from popular culture telling them that parents are selfish, immature, incompetent, and generally clueless, for example, from Malcolm in the Middle, Tool Time, Family Guy, Two and a Half Men, and I Hate My Teenage Daughters, not to mention reality TV shows such as Super Nanny and the Housewives franchise.

.Eating together at mealtime provides opportunities for the family to communicate with one another. In sharing stories, ideas, thoughts, and feelings strong and meaningful relationships are formed. Eating together as a family has several critical benefits for a child's development including physical, social, emotional, academic, behavioral, and for the overall development of family connections (Bowen, 1998). Current research suggests that there are many aspects of family mealtimes that are correlated to children's health and wellbeing (Fiese, Foley & Spagnola, 2006).

Doherty says it is a place where a family can establish traditions, share experiences and feelings (1999). One study's conclusions suggested that family meals may be a useful mechanism for enhancing family togetherness (Fulkerson, Neumark-Sztainer & Story, 2006). Satter points out some of the major advantages of family meals, identifying that one benefit of eating meals together is the effect on strengthening family bonds; another is family meals provide a daily time for the whole family to be together; and ultimately for younger children, having routine family meals can provide a sense of security and a feeling of belonging in the family (1987). The conclusions

of another study state that, "previous research has supported the link between coherent accounts of family events and trustworthiness of relationships" (Fiese, Foley & Spagnola, 2006, p. 67). It is clear from much discourse on the topic, that mealtime is a critical aspect of family life and for the development of a strong family foundation. Rideout, Foehr, and Roberts found that many young people, 64% of all 8- to 18-year-olds, live in homes where the TV is usually on during meals (2010, p. 17). First, Schwartz and the Society for Research in Child Development examine the role of family interaction and the effects of having the television on during mealtimes (2008, p. 1).

Their findings conclude that watching TV at mealtime is a distraction and makes it difficult for family members to engage in conversation, therefore resulting in the prevention of important family connections that are made at mealtime (Fiese, Schwartz & Society for Research in Child, 2008, pp. 7-8). Another study on the topic suggests, "Similar to TV, all of the gadgets and 7 Villegas: The Influence of Technology on Family Dynamics Published by DOCS@RWU, 2013 gizmos we have these days can be a distraction from what matters at mealtime, leaving these things in another room will allow the whole family to participate in mealtime conversation and receive the benefits of a meaningful family meal" (Scoville, p. 2; The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2009).

Another study found that children were generally independent in their use of the computer and little social conversation was reported between them and their parents (Orleans & Laney, 2000). In Silicon Snake Oil: Second Thoughts on the Information Highway it is noted that some analysts have argued that the Internet socially isolates people and cuts off genuine social relationships (Stoll, 1995). These beliefs about the computer and the Internet as alienating devices have been explored and

openly disputed on several occasions as the medium, and its ubiquitous accessibility has dramatically expanded.

The opposing views of several critics are just as certain that the Internet can be a source of support for family relationships. In their research, Orleans and Laney did not find that computer use resulted in individual isolation or social decay (2000). Mickelson believes that the Internet can foster relationships between family members and social networks through online support groups dealing with family-related issues, among them divorce (1997). Others advise families to structure more family activities around computers given they can promote family interaction (Kraut, Sherlis, Mukhopadhayay, Manning, & Kiesler, 1996). Hughes and Hans found that several family life educators and therapists have begun to explore ways the Internet can be employed for helping families (2001).

In their report in 2000 analyzing the way Americans were using technological tools, the U.S. Department of Commerce found that among home Internet users, 96.6% of women and 93.6% of men reported using the Internet to communicate with friends and family (2000). This is not surprising since communication is one of the greatest attributes of media. In another report, interviews revealed that many participants kept up with physically distant parents or siblings, and were able to correspond with children when they went off to college (Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kiesler, Mukophadhyay, Scherlis). This affirms that media can have a positive effect on family relationships outside of the home, providing the platform to uphold the fabric of family bonds. However, their research concludes with observations that acknowledge, "The Internet is a social technology used for communication with individuals and groups, but it is associated with declines in social involvement and the psychological well-being that goes with social

involvement" (Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kiesler, Mukophadhyay, Scherlis, 1998, p. 1029).

Others predict that the Internet will create better social relationships due to the lack of constraints on place and time (Katz & Aspden, 1997). In a survey performed by Katz and Aspden, results indicate that the vast majority of users reported that time spent with family members in face-to-face contact had not changed since they started using the Internet (1997). Furthermore, they have data to suggest that the Internet is becoming a medium that facilitates contact with family members (Katz & Aspden, 1997). 11Villegas: The Influence of Technology on Family Dynamics
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With the development of new technologies, things will always be lost while simultaneously new things are gained. "Our media-saturated social worlds influence family relationships and dynamics. Traditional evenings spent together eating around the family table and telling stories are now long gone," wrote Elisa Pigeon, in her investigation of family socialization strategies and children's media involvement (2009, p. 56). She is correct in her claim that the media we interact with daily does influence family relationships and dynamics. But, as Hughes and Hans point out, "we have limited evidence about how these communication technologies are altering family relationships" (2001,).

Another negative finding was that media present during the ritual of family mealtime could have detrimental effects on the development of a family system. There are key benefits that result from families sharing a meal, along with important aspects of child development, and with media devices present it distracts family members from engaging in healthy conversations that ultimately form strong relationships. It was discovered that communal television viewing as a family is

regarded as fulfilling a social function, therefore having a positive impact on family development. (Proceedings of the New York State Communication Association, Vol. 2012 [2013],)

Fischer, 1992. Hughes and Hans conclude their study by stating that, "we are unlikely in the short run to understand the implications of new technologies and that these changes deserve study and analysis" (2001,).

Research Methodology

This study entitled "The Modern Filipino Family and the New Media: Quality Time Redefined" is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research that attempts to accumulate existing information and data regarding the redefinition of quality time spent by modern Filipino families because of the new media. The method used in collecting data is through the use of a questionnaire. The respondents of this study comprise 3 families selected according to their internet connection. It was also considered that each family is an active user of the internet and belongs to the modern-day family according to their lifestyle wherein both parents are working and children are in the school. They belong to the middle-class family

Results and Discussion

Socio-Economic Profile of the family

Table 1 presents the age, gender, educational attainment, annual family income, occupation, and several children of the 3 families being studied. Most of the respondents are from the age bracket of 51 and above (36.364 %) followed by a younger generation (27.272%) and an equal proportion (18.182%) of the respondents are 41-50 years old and 19 and below. There are more males (54.55%) than females (45.45%). All of the three families have 1-3 children each (100%)

Less than half are college graduates (36.3645), (27.273%) are college level and some (18.181%) are high school level and an equal proportion (9.091%) of the respondents are elementary graduate and with advanced studies. Most receive a monthly salary of 16,000-30,000 and with no income reported (36.364%), less than one-fourth receives a salary of 31,000 and above (18.181%) and the rest receives 15,000 and below (9.091%). A little less than half are still going to school (45.455%) and (36.364%) are private employees and some (18.181%) are government employees.

Table 1.Socio-Economic Profile of the family

CHARACTERISTICS	Family 1	Family 2	Family 3	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Age					
51 and above	2	2		4	**36.364**
41-50			2	2	**18.182**
30-40					
20 – 29	1	2		3	**27.272**
19 and below		1	1	2	**18.182**
Total	**3**	**5**	**4**	**11**	**100%**
Gender					
Male	2	3	1	6	**54.55**
Female	1	2	2	5	**45. 45**
Total	**3**	**5**	**3**	**11**	**100%**

Education					
Advanced studies	1			1	**9.091**
College Graduate	1	2	1	4	**36.364**
College Level	1	1	1	3	**27.273**
High School graduate					
High school level		1	1	2	**18.181**
Elementary graduate		1		1	**9.091**
Elementary level					
No schooling					
Total	**3**	**5**	**3**	**11**	**100%**
Monthly Family Income					
31,000 and above		2		2	**18.181**
16,000 – 30,000	1	1	2	4	**36.364**
15,000 and below	1			1	**9.091**
No income reported	1	2	1	4	**36.364**
Total	**3**	**5**	**3**	**11**	**100%**
Occupation					
Government employee		1	1	2	**18.181**
Private employee	2	1	1	4	**36.364**
Businesswoman/man					
Farming					
housekeeping					
others	1	3	1	5	**45.455**
	3	**5**	**5**	**11**	**100%**
Number of Children					
1-3	1	1	1	3	**100**
4-6					
No child					
Total	**1**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**100%**

Internet Access

The table shows that all of the respondents (100%) have access to the internet. Indicating that they have internet connections in their houses provided by the PLDT (66.67%), and Globe telecom (33.33%).

Table 2 - Internet Access

Access	Family 1	Family 2	Family 3	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Yes	1	1	1	3	**100**

No					
Total	1	1	1	3	**100%**
Provider					
PDF		1	1	2	**66.67**
Globe Telecom	1			1	**33.33**
Total	1	1	1	3	**100%**

Gadgets used by each member of the family

An equal proportion (13.33%) of the respondents uses laptop, desktop and tablet, and (60%) uses a cellphone. The brand of gadgets used by the respondents, one-fourth (25%) uses Samsung. An equal proportion (8.33%) of the respondents uses Toshiba, Cloud Phone, Huawei, Nokia, and Lenovo; (16.67%) uses Asus and Apple.

Table 4 – Gadgets used by each member of the family

Gadgets	Family 1	Family 2	Family 3	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Laptop	1	1		2	**13.33**
Desktop	1	1		2	**13.33**
Tablet	1	1		2	**13.33**
Cellphone	2	4	3	9	**60**
Total	**5**	**7**	**3**	**15**	**100%**
Brand					
Toshiba	1			1	**8.33**
Asus	1	1		2	**16.67**
Cloud phone	1			1	**8.33**
Samsung	1	1	1	3	**25**
Apple		1	1	2	**16.67**
Huawei		1		1	**8.33**
Nokia		1		1	**8.33**
Lenovo			1	1	**8.33**
Total	**4**	**5**	**3**	**12**	**100%**

Number of hours a day browsing the internet at home and site visited

More than half (66.67%) use the internet from five to nine hours a day and (33.33%) are browsing or uses the internet from ten to fourteen hours a day. The respondents are almost proportionately comparable. An equal proportion (20%) of the respondents mostly visited Facebook and YouTube on the internet.

(13.33%) visited Google and Lazada, while the rest (6.67%) visited Yahoo, Putlocker, Skype, Kissanime, and IFlix

Table 6 – Number of hours a day browsing the internet at home and site visited

Number of Hours	Family 1	Family 2	Family 3	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
20-24 hours					
15-19 hours					
10-14 hours		1		1	**33.33**
5-9 hours	1		1	2	**66.67**
1-4 hours					
Total	**1**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**100%**
Site Visited					
Facebook	**1**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**20**
You tube	**1**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**20**
Putlocker		**1**		**1**	**6.67**
Skype		**1**		**1**	**6.67**
Kissanime		**1**		**1**	**6.67**
Iflix			**1**	**1**	**6.67**
Google	**1**		**1**	**2**	**13.33**
Yahoo	**1**			**1**	**6.67**
Spotify					
Pinterest					
Viber					
Whatsapp					
Lazada	**1**		**1**	**2**	**13.33**
Zalora					
Total	**5**	**5**	**5**	**15**	**100%**

Quality time of the family

The usual scenario in the home when the family members arrive from work or school

When the family members arrive from school or work, the usual scenario is to immediately connect to the internet and check Facebook or YouTube to watch a series. One family answered that upon arriving home; they have to change clothes first then connect to the internet to browse and update on what is new.

There is no conversation happened between the members of the family because each is busy on their gadget connected to the internet. A short hi and no more words heard from each. Usually, each member stays in the living room together their attention is focused on their gadget, together but there is no interaction. One family is separated in the home, one is in the room gaming, the other is on the porch browsing and the other one is in the living room watching you tube on the smart TV. After an hour upon arriving home, the one who is in charge of

cooking prepares the dinner while cooking still connected with the internet.

Family dinner together

Dinner together is still observed by the three families being studied. Because they still believe that this is the only time wherein they can talk together, share what had transpired the whole day outside the home. But the dinner will not take long because some members especially the youth are hurrying to get back to the internet. Often, the scenario at present generation is the so-called "eat and run" due to the standard of leaving that we have; we do everything in a hurry. After dinner, wash the dishes, clean up everything, prepare themselves to sleep, but before going to bed, each member will go back to the internet, and the same scenario upon arriving from work or school, hooked in their gadgets browsing to their favorite sites until the late night where everybody is sleepy that is the only time that they will log out in the internet.

Time spent interacting with the members of the family with the internet connection.

Personal interaction and communication between family members in the home have lesser time compared to when there was no internet connection. The reality of the influence of the internet on all members of the family is that strong that it could captivate the attention of each member to the sites offered on the internet than the usual interaction between members of the family. There are scenarios wherein they communicate through group chat but the scenario was, they are in the same house, separated by the gadgets they are holding or walls of their rooms. Parents commented that to get the attention of their children, they would chat them like reminding them of their

assignments, because if the mother will ask the child in person she expects that she will get a shrug of a shoulder, so decided to send a message in the chat group to get a simple reply of "yes " or
"later".

Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays are a time to spend quality time with the family members where everybody has longer hours of staying in the home. These are days for doing household chores, going out for church after is a lunch or dinner together, going to the mall for shopping, or just simply going to the grocery to buy stuff for each. There are other ways of getting the attention of the children like having a long drive in one car; they call it a "joy ride" singing songs played in the car stereo. Through these activities, the family can have an interaction with each other and time to communicate and unwind.

Advantages of the internet

From the questionnaire floated plus interview, the respondents cited advantages of the internet according to their needs.
- For faster research
- Faster communication through group chat
- It makes the globe smaller where we can talk with our loved ones who are abroad, they can participate in every special occasion through Skype or video call
- Everything you want to know is on the internet

Disadvantages of the internet

- No more quality time with the members of the family

- When one is hooked or addicted to computer games, it could ruin their future because of the tendency of not attending classes.
- If cannot be controlled, one will do everything just to have money for him/her to play computer games.
- It is also similar to drugs, that once abused could lead to addiction.

Conclusions

Family quality time has been defined and re-defined repeatedly, as generations change and technology advances. Indeed, from the definition of quality time taken from the respondents, quality time is the time where we give special attention to the family members, not necessarily every day but when important matters arise which will benefit the members of the family, it is also a way of bonding, talking and eating, where each member feels the joy and happiness being together. To the family quality time is spent to give special attention to a family problem if there is.

Quality time is an informal reference to time spent with close family, partners, or friends that are in some way important, special, productive, or profitable, it is that is set aside for paying full attention to the person or matter at hand.

The quality of time in the home of a modern Filipino family is affected by the new media.

"One family, one room, different screens, different realities, basically this is the scenario of a modern Filipino family. Since the members of the family are outside the whole day, upon arriving in the house, automatically, they will check their account on Facebook for updates, browse the internet and watch in YouTube as a way of relaxing instead of conversation on what has transpired for the day and the day ahead. Since the trend especially the youth is their connection with their friends through group chat, parents have to access those group chats for them to get the attention of their children or just to check on homework or a simple reminder. With this scenario in the home, quality time is made in a different scenario; quality time is spent outside the home where internet access is out of the picture.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered to the following:

1. To the parents – given the changing nature of technology especially the internet, it is advised that we should never give up nor sacrifices the time spent with our children in the home. We must strictly implement a certain time for each family member to have interaction or just talk about the day and the day ahead. Let us set the best example of not using the internet often so that we can give time to each other. Don't let social media handicap your family.

2. To the youth – while the current trend of the youth today is to update yourself of what is happening around through using the internet, having blogs, an expert in the different sites, do not make the internet as your necessity and" breathe and eat the internet." Take time to mingle with your family while at home, treasure each moment with your parents and siblings because we can never give back time once you realize that your parents are no longer with you.

3. To the future researcher – given that this study provides a basis for concluding that the internet itself contributes to the redefinition of what family quality time is, a bigger scope is made to measure how wide this problem could reach. Such an effort would enable our government especially educators to derive an alternative to the use of the internet in the home.

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