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Emerging trends in Communication

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Abstract : *It seems pretty obvious that the use of technology in communication has changed the way we communicate. Now our personal network is no more local. Decades ago, we primarily spoke with our neighbors, nearby friends and family members. Now with the advent of technology in the field of communication, the world has converted to McLuhan's 'Global Village'. Emoticons have provided us a substitution of facial expressions. We can express a smile or frown by combination of various characters from keyboards without actually having to write it. Due to all these reasons communication through Social Media is often referred as lazy form of communication. To explore these facts a study is conducted on 100 students of C.C.S. University, Meerut. They were asked to fill a questionnaire which was specially designed to find out the changing communication habits in students after using technology in communication. Chi-square is used to evaluate the result. After analyzing the results it could be said that by the advent of technology in communication the basic communication habits is changing. Thus, we can say that the use of technology in communication has changed the overall process and definition of communication.*

Keywords: social media, global village, off-line communication, device, emoticons

INTRODUCTION

It is obvious that the current digital world has changed the entire dynamics of communication across all age levels; the way we work, the way we live, and the way we make and maintain friendships have so far taken a different twist. Everyone remembers that the advent of email literally destroyed letter writing and even the art of writing altogether. Email, SMS and social media communication tools have made irreversible impact on the way we write and communicate. We use the Internet for e-mail, with 150 billion messages sent per day, of which 69% are spam (Radicati Group, 2012). Today, many of us tend to be much more revealing in business and personal communications than ever before. Social media quickly breaks down personal barriers. Today, we can Skype our colleagues on different continents, use Twitter to track for global trends, manage our multiple email accounts from our Smartphone, coordinate with fellow professionals on LinkedIn, share photos and stories from last night on SnapChat and WhatsApp, launch a brand on Instagram, create a community on Facebook, stream our favourite global podcasts, get breaking updates from our news apps, order a taxi to the office with Uber and monitor our daily calorie usage with our FitBit. We use the Internet for social media, spending an average 3.2 hours a day on sites such as Facebook, where 500 million people log in every day; Twitter, where 175 million tweets are sent every day, and YouTube, where 4 billion videos are viewed every day (Pring, 2012). On Instagram, 40 million photos are uploaded every day and 1,000 comments are made every second, along with 8,500 likes (Valant, 2013). However, one of the newest social media eclipses its adolescent siblings: Snapchat users send an astounding 400 million photos and videos each day (Colao, 2014). Surprisingly, we can do all of these activities without even getting out of bed. Half of 18- to 34-year-olds check Facebook as soon as they wake up each day and nearly a third do so on their mobile phones before getting out of bed (Pring, 2012).

Our friends and relatives living in different continents are just a click away from us which means physical boundaries no more matters. We have to just type the message on our device and click on 'Send' option. Technology has completely changed the way we communicate and express ourselves to others. Google the question, "How is the Internet changing the way we communicate?," and you will find no shortage of opinions, and fears, about Internet-based communication altering the way we think, write, and speak (Arnett, 2012; Chopra, 2013; Leonardi,2012; and the mother lode, nearly 200 essays in response to The Edge Annual Question [Brockman, 2010], "How is the Internet changing the way you think?")

Internet-based communication is not necessarily less formal (Baron, 2002; Feenberg, 1989). More often we share those issues on Social Media which seems to be impossible in case of off-line communication. Sure, some of us raised our eyebrows when we saw Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the U.S. National Institutes of Health, the world's largest medical research and funding agency, end his tweet about the U.S. Supreme Court case decision disallowing DNA patenting, with the slang expression, "Woo Hoo!!!" (complete with triple exclamation points; Collins, 2013).

The use of technology has also invented many new terms or rather we can say use of technology in communication gave birth to a new language which is often reflected in our messages while using Facebook, Twitter and other applications. The advent of technology in communication also gave new meaning to already existing English words. 'Friended' and 'Unfriended' are also examples of words that have been given a new meaning due to their usage online. Similarly, the word 'friend' and 'befriended' is from old English originating in the 13th century but it has been given an entirely new meaning. Now, it means the process of adding or removing someone from your circle of friends. 'Like' and 'viral' are other popular examples of words that have had their meaning re-appointed by Social-Media.

The need for fewer sentences has pushed for many short-forms that we find ourselves using in our daily communication. LOL-Laughing Out Loud, OMG- Oh My God, LMK-Let me know and IDK-I Don't Know are just a few acronyms we find ourselves typing from our varied gadgets. Due to the use of short-forms, communication through Social Media is often referred as a lazy form of communication.

Non-verbal cues are a significant and substantial aspect of face-to-face communication (Argyle 1994; Rezabek and Cochenour1994). In the online world, many of these cues are missing or attenuated. For example, many forms of computer-mediated communication (CMC) are chiefly text-based, meaning that traditional non-verbal cues like facial expressions and eye contact are unavailable to communicators. Research has begun to explore CMC substitutes for non-verbal cues in an attempt to compare their use with traditional "face-to-face" cues. A pertinent example would be the use of emoticons, which have been cited as a potential means of reducing the limitations of cue restriction (Fullwood and Martino 2007). Emoticons are generally associated with female expression (Wolf 2000) and are sometimes referred to as "graphical accents" (Witmer and Katzman1997) or "graphic icons" (Baym 1995), but perhaps most commonly as "smileys." They are created using several keyboard characters to denote a facial expression and are assumed to act as emblems for emotion (Derks, Fischer, and Bos 2008). In many online environments, for example, chat rooms, more sophisticated graphical representations of emoticons can be created automatically by combining appropriate keyboard characters or selecting them from a list.

The current study is conducted to find out what new trends are emerging in the field of communication and how it is changing the communication habits of students in off-line communication..

The study will also try to find out whether students agree with the fact that Social Media is a lazy form of communication. Efforts are also made to know whether social Media is introducing a new trend of writing and how often this habit of using new vocabulary affecting their writing in classroom.

Methods

Participants

The study is made over 100 randomly selected students of C.C.S. University Campus, Meerut. Among these 100 students there are 42 males and 58 females. These students were further divided as 65 Post Graduate, 25 M.Phil. and 10 Ph.D. Students.

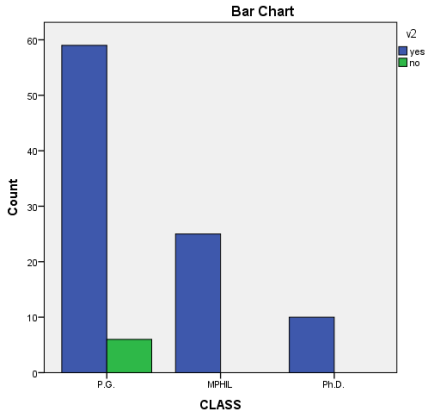
These selected students were asked to fill a close-ended questionnaire. Data Analysis software SPSS is used for data analysis. Chi-square test is used to calculate the association between different classes and variables. Study is also made to find out the association between gender of students and variables. Level of significance is checked at 5%.

Table 1

Social Media is a convenient way of interacting:

Count

		v2		Total
		yes	no	
CLASS	P.G.	59	6	65
	M.PHIL	25	0	25
	Ph.D.	10	0	10
Total		94	6	100



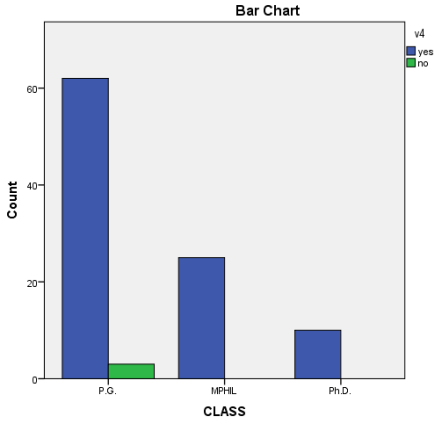
Chi-square analysis indicates a non-significant association across the categories (χ^2 (df=2) = .179; p>.05). All categories (PG, M.Phil., Ph.D.) equally agree that Social Media is a convenient way of interacting.

Table 2

Social Media has introduced a new vocabulary:

Count

		v4		Total
		yes	no	
CLASS	P.G.	62	3	65
	MPHIL	25	0	25
	Ph.D.	10	0	10
Total		97	3	100



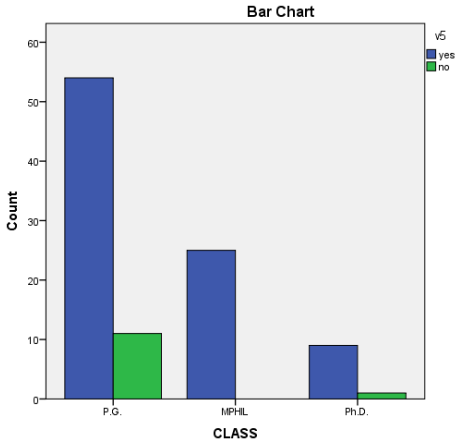
Chi-square analysis indicates a non-significant association across the categories (χ^2 (df=2) = .435; p>.05). Hence we conclude that there is no association between classes and all the students agree with the fact that Social Media has introduced a new form of language.

Table 3

New vocabulary developed by Social Media effect the off-line communication:

Count

		v5		Total
		yes	no	
CLASS	P.G.	54	11	65
	MPHIL	25	0	25
	Ph.D.	9	1	10
Total		88	12	100



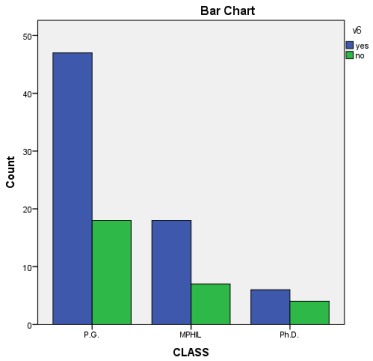
Chi-square analysis indicates a non-significant association across the categories (χ^2 (df=2) = .085; p>.05). Hence we conclude that there is no association between classes and all the students agree with the fact that the new vocabulary introduced by Social Media effect their off-line communication.

Table 4

Social Media has given new meaning to already existing words:

Count

		v6		Total
		yes	no	
CLASS	P.G.	47	18	65
	MPHIL	18	7	25
	Ph.D.	6	4	10
Total		71	29	100

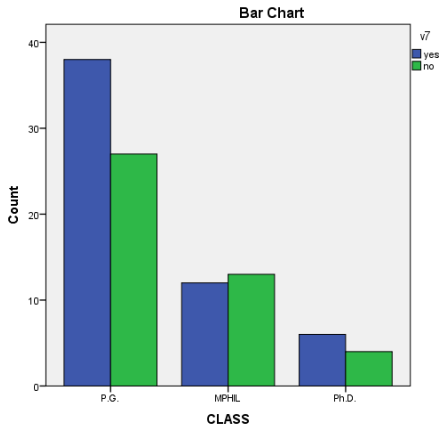


Chi-square analysis indicates a non-significant association across the categories (χ^2 (df=2) = .721; p>.05). Hence we conclude that there is no association between classes and all the students agree with the fact that Social Media has given a new meaning to already existing words.

Table 5

New form of language (using short-forms) affect daily writing of the students in class-rooms:

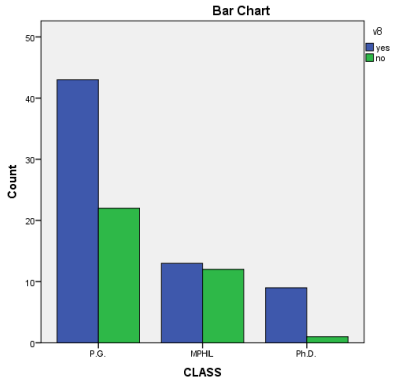
		v7		Total
		yes	no	
CLASS	P.G.	38	27	65
	MPHIL	12	13	25
	Ph.D.	6	4	10
Total		56	44	100



Chi-square analysis indicates a non-significant association across the categories (χ^2 (df=2) = .646; p>.05). Hence we conclude that there is no association between classes and all the students agree with the fact that using of short-forms on Social Media affects daily writing of students.

Table 6
Social Media encourages a lazy form of writing:

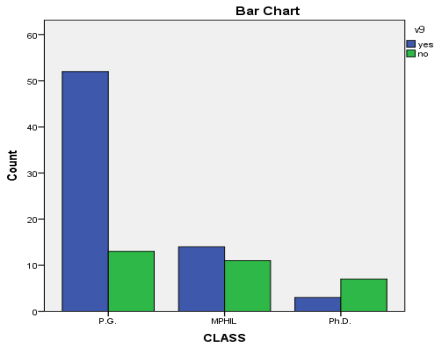
		v8		Total
		yes	no	
CLASS	P.G.	43	22	65
	MPHIL	13	12	25
	Ph.D.	9	1	10
Total		65	35	100



Chi-square analysis indicates a non-significant association across the categories (χ^2 (df=2) = .098; p>.05). Hence we conclude that there is no association between classes and all students agree with the fact that Social Media encourages a lazy form of writing.

Table 7
Social Media is a platform for sharing personal feelings:

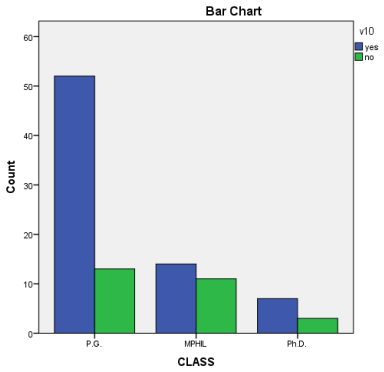
		v9		Total
		yes	no	
CLASS	P.G.	52	13	65
	MPHIL	14	11	25
	Ph.D.	3	7	10
Total		69	31	100



Chi-square analysis indicates a significant association across the categories (χ^2 (df=2) = .002; p<.05). Hence we conclude that there is association between classes and all students do not agree with the fact that Social Media encourage sharing of personal feelings. Here Ph.D. students do not agree with the fact that Social Media encourage the sharing of personal feelings.

Table 8
Use emoticons on Social Media:

		v10		Total
		yes	no	
CLASS	P.G.	52	13	65
	MPHIL	14	11	25
	Ph.D.	7	3	10
Total		73	27	100



Chi-square analysis indicates a non-significant association across the categories (χ^2 (df=2) = .070; p>.05). Hence we conclude that there is no association between classes and all students agree with the fact that they use Emoticons on Social Media.

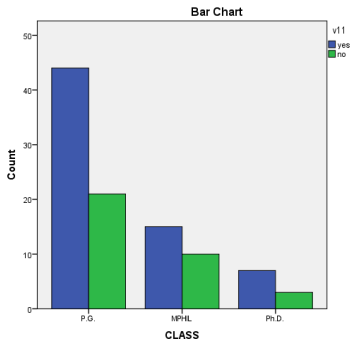
Table 9

Emoticons are used as the replacement of words and feelings on Social Media:

CLASS * v11 Crosstabulation

Count

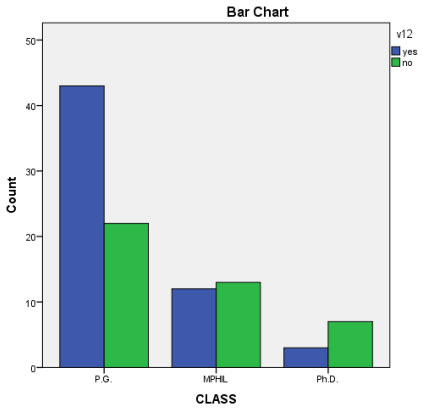
		v11		Total
		yes	no	
CLASS	P.G.	44	21	65
	MPHIL	15	10	25
	Ph.D.	7	3	10
Total		66	34	100



Chi-square analysis indicates a non-significant association across the categories (χ^2 (df=2) = .758; p>.05). Hence we conclude that there is no association between classes and the students of all categories agree with the fact that the use Emoticons is the replacement of words and feelings on Social Media.

Table 10
In the absence of Emoticons, messages are often misunderstood on Social Media:

		v12		Total
		yes	no	
CLASS	P.G.	43	22	65
	MPHIL	12	13	25
	Ph.D.	3	7	10
Total		58	42	100



Chi-square analysis indicates a significant association across the categories (χ^2 (df=2) = .049; p<.05). Hence we conclude that there is association between classes and the students of PG and M.Phil. They agree with the statement that messages are often misunderstood on Social Media in the absence of emoticons.

CONCLUSION

The Study findings reveal that most of our respondents (94%) agree with the fact that Social Media is a convenient way of interaction. 97% of the respondents agree that Social Media has introduced a new vocabulary. Very often they use this vocabulary in off-line communication as well. The use of the words like "Google' instead of 'Search' is agreed by 88% of our respondents. Social Media has given new meaning to already existing words is accepted by 71% of the respondents. 56% respondents agreed that the terms used on Social Media are often used by the students in class-rooms. They often use short-forms in class-rooms while writing in their note-books. Social media is a lazy form of writing is accepted by 65% of our respondents. The respondents agree that they check their Social Media accounts before getting out of bed in the morning; this supports Pring's (2012) findings. Social Media is a convenient platform to share personal feelings is accepted by 69% of the respondents. However, Chi-square analysis

indicates a significant association across the categories. There is association between classes and all students do not agree with the fact that Social Media encourage sharing of personal feelings. Here Ph.D. students disagree with the fact that Social Media encourage the sharing of personal feelings. We can say that as our respondents get matured, they limited the content to be shared on Social Media. The use of Emoticons on Social Media is supported by 73% of our respondents. Here, the use of Emoticons by males is 73.8% and by females is 72.41% this supports Huffaker and Calvert's (2005) findings. Emoticons prove to be a replacement of words and feelings by 66% of the respondents. 58% of our respondents revealed that their messages are often misunderstood in the absence of emoticons on Social Media.

Thus, it could be said that emergence of technology in communication effects the off-line communication as well. The overall communication habits of off-line communication are changing. Social Media has generated a habit of writing short sentences due to which we often write wrong spellings of very simple words. This communication habit is changing and affecting the communication and writing skills of students.

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