Impacts of the Internet on Parent-child Communication: A Case Study in Hồ Chí Minh City

Nguyễn Thị Thái Lan*, Lê Thị Kim Dung**, Nguyễn Thị Nha Trang**

Abstract: With the speedy development of the Internet since its introduction in Vietnam in November 1997, the Internet has been influencing all aspects of social and family life, including the way in which parents and their children communicate. This paper reports the main findings of surveying 151 parent-child dyads in Hồ Chí Minh City to discover parent and children's Internet usage and its consequences on parent-child communication. The results demonstrate that parents and children spend much time on various forms of communication, including face-to-face and virtual applications. Notably, the Internet's negative impact on communication is recorded, such as reducing time, quality, and interest in face-to-face communication. Moreover, using the Internet applicants for communication also reveals many limitations, showing the need to limit the consequences of the Internet on parent-child's communication. It is suggested firstly to change parents and children's mindsets of how to properly use and control the time spent on Internet. Furthermore, prohibiting or reducing Internet time use should be replaced by focusing on healthy Internet purposes. Being a smart Internet user at home helps enhance communication between parents and children.

Keywords: Internet use, influences, parent-child communication, supportive solutions, Hồ Chí Minh City.

Subject classification: Sociology.

1. Introduction

Globalization has created profound and comprehensive changes worldwide. As a result, connection has become critical, and the Internet soon becomes an effective way to maintain and strengthen that connection. In recent years, with the increasing use of the Internet, interest in its social impact on daily life has been an attractive topic for study (Haythornthwaite, 2001). Various studies have demonstrated the multidimensional effect

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* University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi.
Email: lanctxh@ussh.edu.vn
** University of Social Sciences, Hue University.

of the influence of the Internet on interpersonal communication, specifically family communication (Kraut et al., 1999; Lee & Chae, 2007; Ling & Haddon, 2008; Greenfield, 2014; Gapsiso & Wilson, 2015; Moawad & Ebrahem, 2016). Scholars highlight the vital role of the Internet in adolescent development, particularly in relation to identity development and social relationships, relationship aggression, and personal safety. However, despite the growing attention from the scientific communities and the mass media, the influence of the Internet from a home perspective remains unclear (Williams & Merten, 2011). At the beginning of the 21st century, Merkle and Richardson (2000) argued that a new type of interpersonal relationship, created by social technology complements previously established relationships, formed by face-to-face interactions. The Internet also enables family members to maintain and strengthen interactions when physically apart. However, the ability to form real and meaningful linkage between family members under the influence of the Internet still has much to be elucidated. Ling and Haddon (2008) note that improper usage of Internet-connected devices can lead to negative consequences, such as increased dependence on mobile phones, which inadvertently affects interpersonal relationships. Other studies show that the abuse of technology devices and the Internet can cause problems for family members and weaken the parent-child relationship (Nguyễn Thị Hồng Hạnh, 2017) and affect parent-child interactions (Tadpatrikar et al., 2021). Furthermore, the generational gap in families is increasingly expanding when teenagers spending significant amount of time on the Internet, at the same time with their parents lack of technical knowledge and access that furthers deepening the problem of forming meaningful connection with their children (Ling & Haddon, 2008). Mesch (2006) asserts that introducing new technology, such as the Internet, into households can change the quality of relationships in the family. His research on developing and testing the family boundaries approach shows that the frequency and type of Internet use are negatively related to family time and positively related to family conflicts, leading to a general perception of low family cohesion.

The effect of the Internet on family interaction and relations is an exciting topic in the last few years. Moreover, the perspective and assessment of the influence of the Internet on communication shows different results due to research contexts. Undeniably, the Internet affects every aspect of social life, and no area is more affected by the Internet than how people communicate with others (Williams & Rice, 1983).

Vietnam is a country with a high rate of Internet usage with a total of 77.93 million Internet users, (equal to 79.1% of the total population) (VNETWORK, 2023), and higher rate in urban area (UNCEF, 2022). Vietnamese scholars have studied the positive and adverse sides of Internet use on family relation and communication. It is confirmed the Internet's impacts on family relationships that come directly from the influence of the Internet on communication between family members (Đặng Văn Luận, 2018; Huỳnh Văn

Thông, 2014; Lê Trần Hoàng Duy et al., 2017; Nguyễn Hà Vy, 2016). On the one hand, Đặng Văn Luận (2018) states that modern technology, such as mobile phones, Internet with Skype, Facebook, Twitter, Email etc., provides convenient communication means that can be used anytime, anywhere, creating favorable opportunities, events for family members, especially parents and children, to get closer. So, the Internet helps family members stay connected when they are apart and diversify the family's communication channels (Đặng Văn Luận, 2018). Hence, the Internet provides connection between parents and children, so the frequency of their communication is more efficient in a timely manner. Other researchers acknowledge the convenience and flexibility of the virtual applicants for family communication (Huỳnh Văn Thông, 2014; Lê Trần Hoàng Duy et al., 2017).

On the other hand, some studies analyze the adverse influences of the Internet on family communication (Lê Trần Hoàng Duy et al., 2017; Nguyễn Phương Hồng Ngọc & Trần Văn Công, 2017; Nguyễn Thị Hồng Hạnh, 2017; Đặng Văn Luận, 2018; Nguyễn Thị Thái Lan et al., 2021; Nguyễn Thị Thái Lan et al., 2022) that point out that the Internet reduces the time of face-to-face communication and limits the transmission of emotions when talking among family members. Accessing the Internet from a mobile device will not only change the way people communicate, but it could also change the content and meaning of interpersonal communication. Lê Trần Hoàng Duy et al. (2017) suggest that the quality of family communication using technology is positively correlated with the purpose of using technology devices and the time children use the phone during the day is negatively correlated with the level of communication between parents and children. Đặng Văn Luận (2018) further comments that the conveniences of modern technology are also gradually making the distance in relationships further and further away. Nguyễn Thị Thái Lan et al. (2022) show that "the harmful effects of Internet use are very worrying. Even when the Internet is used for communication, it reveals limitations and cannot replace face-to-face communication in the family" (p.35). Moreover, parents who abuse technology devices and do not have much time to interact with their children lead to the parent-child relationship becoming loose and distant (Nguyễn Thị Hồng Hạnh, 2017). Smartphones and Facebook take away one third of the family time of young urban couples, and 25 million Vietnamese households are at risk of loose family relationships (Song Liễu, 2020).

Thus, like other countries in the world, the Internet has a multi-dimensional influence on family and family communication in Vietnam. Studies have shown that the Internet brings convenience and new channels of communication to families but also takes away most of the time parents and children could spend in face-to-face conversations. Although it has reflected many aspects of the Internet's impact on family relationships, previous studies seem to limit in selecting their participants separately (either parents or children). There has not been an in-depth study based on a comparative study between parents and children to examine the impact of the Internet on family communication with a control data

source between two groups of parents and children. That fact further requires an accurate assessment of the influence of the Internet on parent-child's communication in Vietnamese families. This study examined the current situation of Internet usage in families, particularly assessing the influence of the Internet on parent-child's communication in Hồ Chí Minh City – the biggest populated city in Vietnam. The research results provide the basis for proposing some practical solutions to solve problems caused by Internet abuse in Vietnamese homes.

2. Methods

The study seeks to address the following questions: First, what is the status of parents and children's' Internet usage in city families in a dynamic and big urban like Hồ Chí Minh City? Second, what are the impacts of Internet usage on the parent-child communication; and how parents and children should respond to address the Internet impacts on their communication?

To answer the above study questions, this study employed a quantitative approach with a survey of 151 parent-child dyads. The data collection took place in April 2022 in five secondary and high schools in two selected districts in Hồ Chí Minh City. Two questionnaires (one for teenagers and one for their parents) were designed and finalized after a pilot test using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for testing the reliability of the scale. 151 pairs of parents and children were voluntary participated in the survey. First invitation letters of participation into the study were sent to schools in the selected districts. After the school leaders agreed and allowed the research team to conduct the survey in their schools, two classes in each grade 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 were selected. From each class list of students, students were randomly selected in steps 1, 3, 5, and 7... until the number of each class's participants reached to 20 people. Based on the list of selected students, parents were sent an invitation to participate in the survey and were asked to sign written consent for their child to participate in the survey. Parents and children were provided with full information about the study as well as issues related to the right to participate, the right to withdraw and the privacy policy. All of the participants took part in the study with informed consent. The study followed the research ethic code approved by the University of Social Sciences and Humanity, Hanoi. The data after cleaning was processing with SPSS 20 software.

Demographic characteristics of the study population

The surveyed parents age ranges from 45 to 47, with a high gender disparity (74.5% female and 25.5% male). Parents' educational level is relatively different, with 36.0% holding university degrees and 11.8% with graduate degrees, while 21.7% of parents have not graduated from lower secondary school and 16.1% have not graduated from high school. The parents' occupation is very diverse, of which the highest proportion is self-

employed and service (24.2%), followed by labor workers (14.9%), teachers (11.8%) and other jobs, such as freelance workers, office workers, working in the military, housewives. Families' income also has a high difference, whereby many low-income families are below 10,000,000 VND/month (49.1%), followed by the group with income from 10,000,000 to 20,000,000 VND/month (32.9%). Families with income from 20,000,000-30,000. VND/month account for a very modest proportion of only 7.5%, while only 10.6% of families with income over 30,000,000 VND/month.

Children participating in the study are between the ages of 12 and 18, and there is less gender disparity than the parent group (with 42.9% boys and 57.1% girls). Of the 151 children in the study, 59% were junior high school students, and 41% were high school students. 47.2% of studied children achieved a good level of academics, and 28.6% with excellent level.

3. Research results

Status quo of Internet use by the parents and their children

The survey results show that parents and children in Hồ Chí Minh City spend much time accessing the Internet daily. Moreover, there was a change in the amount of time parents and children accessing the Internet before and after the Covid-19 pandemic. In the group of parents, most of them used the Internet for 1-3 hours per day before the Covid-19 pandemic (43.5%). Survey results reveal that 9.9% of parents used the Internet minimally (less than 1 hour/day); this rate dropped to 8.1% during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, it is worth noting that 8.1% of parents used the Internet for more than 7 hours a day; this rate increased to more than double during the Covid-19 pandemic (18%). There is a positive correlation between parents' education qualification (r = ,260**, Sig. (2-tailed) = 0,001); and the parents' income (r = ,275**; Sig. (2-tailed) = 0,001) and the time spent on the Internet.

In the group of children, the time spent on the Internet is higher than that of the parents. Out of 151 children, only 2.5% used the Internet for less than 1 hour a day. There is a positive correlation between the children's age (r = .205*, Sig. (2-tailed) = 0,012) and children's grade (r = .239**, Sig. (2-tailed) = 0,003). When there was no Covid-19 pandemic, children's Internet use from 3-5 hours a day accounted for the highest rate (32.9%). Notably, up to 19.3% of children used the Internet for more than 7 hours a day before the Covid-19 pandemic; this rate nearly tripled to 56.5% during the Covid-19 pandemic.

A promising sign from the survey results is that although parents and children spend much time accessing the Internet, most of their purposes for accessing the Internet are

positive. 93.8% of the parents used the Internet for communication. This is followed by the purpose of information search (71.4%). The work and entertainment purposes were at the same rate (67.1%). The two lowest reasons for internet usage were about expressing personal opinion (11.2%) and seeking help (12.4%). For the teenagers, the highest percentage of Internet use was for entertainment (93.2%), followed by study (84.5%) and communication (75.8%). This result is relatively consistent with the age characteristics of the children; at the age of 12 to 18, children tend to have more free time for entertainment compared to their parents. A possible explanation for the popularity of using the Internet for children's learning purposes is that it can enable them to easily access a variety of information sources. Furthermore, using the Internet for learning also helps children participate in online classes, share documents, and conduct discussions or group activities.

Analyzing the purpose of Internet usage has shown the important role of the Internet in communication and maintaining connections when up to 93.8% of parents and 75.5% of children use the Internet for this reason. Also, parents and children used the Internet to establish and maintain relationships (51.6% and 52.2%, respectively) (Table 1).

Table 1: Parents' and Children's Internet Use Purposes

Internet use purposes	Parents (%) (n=151)	Children (%) (n=151)
Making contacts	93.8	75.8
Searching information	71.4	73.9
Entertainment	67.1	93.2
Purchasing goods	39.8	35.4
Work	67.1	19.9
Study	23.6	84.5
Establishing & maintaining relationships	51.6	52.2
Presenting personal characteristics and perspectives	11.2	31.1
Seeking support	12.4	35.4

The influence of the Internet on parent-child communication

Parents and children in Hồ Chí Minh City communicated with each other through many forms, such as face-to-face communication, calling and texting via phone, calling and texting via Facebook, calling and messaging via Zalo, emailing, and interacting via social networks. Among those forms of communication, face-to-face communication was still the

main channel. The time for face-to-face communication between parents and children was relatively high: parents spent more time (199.19 minutes/day) compared to their children (165.42 minutes/day). This result proves that parents and children still prefer direct communication despite the availability of Internet and technology.

Parents and children use up to four methods of communication via the Internet. This proves that the Internet has played an important role in supporting family communication. Especially for the children, although they spent less time in face-to-face communication compared to the parents, they used the Internet more per day for family communication purpose with 79.04 minutes of calling and texting via Facebook, 50.25 minutes of calling and texting via Zalo, 44.45 minutes of interaction via social networks (Table 2). Although parents do spend a significant amount of time on direct communication, they also use the Internet as a method to connect with their children. This result shows a shift and adaptation from both parents and children in taking advantage of technology and the Internet in daily communication. This is also true to claim that with its enormous influence, the Internet is fundamentally changing human communication (Shim, 2007). And many families use different communication methods through social media and other technologies over a long period (Blinn-Pike, 2009).

Table 2: Parents and Children Types and Amount of Time for Communication

Type of communication	Parents (minutes/day) (n=151)	Children (minutes/day) (n=151)
Face-to-face	199.19	165.42
Making calls and texts via phone	33.43	35.72
Making calls and texts via Facebook	23.64	79.04
Making calls and texts via Zalo	31.09	50.25
Sending email	7.98	10.30
Interacting via social networks (comment, like, share)	15.06	44.45

The above data reveals that the total time of teenagers using virtual applications for communication, such as Facebook, Zalo, email and interaction via social networks is higher (184.4 minutes/day) than direct communication (165.42 minutes/day). The time for face-to-face communication of parents is much lower (77.77 minutes/day) compared to their children (199.19 minutes/day). It can be seen that the Internet has become an important connection tool in family communication, particularly among young people.

27

Parents and children rate a high degree of satisfaction with certain aspects of their communication with each other. However, it seems that parents have higher satisfaction than their children with all aspects of communication mentioned (Table 3).

Table 3: Parents and Children's Satisfactory on Their Communication

	Participants	Mean	Standard deviation
Total time duration for communication	Parents	3.60	0.90
	Children	3.60	0.85
Time spent on direct communication	Parents	3.64	0.89
	Children	3.53	0.92
Moment of communication	Parents	3.67	0.83
	Children	3.53	0.85
Ways of communication	Parents	3.72	0.86
	Children	3.47	0.94
communication content	Parents	3.76	0.85
	Children	3.51	0.89
Listening to each other in communication	Parents	3.73	0.90
	Children	3.35	1.02
Showing real emotion during communication	Parents	3.65	0.84
	Children	3.37	0.94
Parent's attitude toward their children in their communication	Parents	3.62	0.88
	Children	3.26	0.98
Children's attitude toward their children in their communication	Parents	3.60	0.92
	Children	3.27	0.93
Effectiveness of the communication	Parents	3.73	0.87
	Children	3.43	0.97

Parents expressed the highest satisfaction with the content of communication (3.76), followed by listening to each other in communication and the effectiveness of communication (3.73). Teenagers showed the highest satisfaction with the total communication time (3.60) and the least satisfaction with the child's reaction attitude towards parents in communication (3.26). Both parents and children had high satisfaction with face-to-face communication time (3.64 and 3.53 respectively). Although communication between

parents and children in the family is supplemented with other convenient and diverse communication channels, parents and children still spend a lot of time communicating directly with each other. This is important because satisfaction is the motivation for parents and children to maintain face-to-face communication. Thus, parents and children in families in Hồ Chí Minh City have made appropriate adaptations in the aspect related to family communication even in the presence and strong influence of the Internet.

Table 4: Negative Impacts of the Internet on Parent-child Communication

Negative impacts	Participants	Mean	Standard deviation
Spending much time on the Internet reduces the time of face-to-face communication	Parents	3.77	0.89
	Children	3.57	1.05
Reducing the direct communication	Parents	3.74	0.87
	Children	3.50	1.06
Interrupting and reducing the enthusiasm in communication	Parents	3.66	0.99
	Children	3.54	1.01
Reducing the sharing and empathy	Parents	3.65	0.98
	Children	3.49	1.06
Cannot make body interaction	Parents	3.83	0.85
	Children	3.75	0.97
Cannot observe the real reactions	Parents	3.75	0.88
	Children	3.65	0.99
Difficult to understand and focus on emotion	Parents	3.69	0.91
	Children	3.67	0.92
Increasing conflicts	Parents	3.29	0.96
	Children	3.25	1.12

Besides the benefits and convenience of the Internet, there are also adverse effects that need to be addressed. The data in Table 4 shows that the Internet has considerable negative

influences on family connection for both parents and children, with a relatively high mean score from 3.25 to 3.75 in the child group and from 3.75 to 3.75. 3.29 to 3.83 in the parent group. Parents and children selected and rated high Internet use that reduced face-to-face communication time at a relatively high mean score (3.77 and 3.57, respectively). Although the data in Table 2 shows that parents and children spent more time in face-to-face communication than other forms of communication, it is clear that they still considered the Internet a contributing factor to the reduction in face-to-face communication time (mean score of 3.74 with parents and 3.50 with children).

Even when the Internet is used for parent-child communication, the negative influence of the Internet on communication is still worth worrying about. Communication via Internet tools has certain limitations that directly affect communication efficiency. According to the studied parents and children, communication via the Internet could not perform physical interactions (mean score of 3.83 and 3.75 respectively); could not observe the other's real reactions (mean score of 3.75 and 3.65 respectively); was challenging to understand and focus on real feelings (mean score of 3.69 and 3.67 respectively); and was a risk of increasing conflict due to lack of understanding (mean score of 3.29 and 3.25 respectively).

Hence, with the increased time spent accessing the Internet, communication between parents and children in the family also faces many challenges. The easier it is for individuals to access the Internet, the higher the personal isolation risk can be because family members will gradually tend to use technology devices alone instead of together (Lê Trần Hoàng Duy et al., 2017). Consequently, the more people use the Internet, the lonelier they feel and the less they engage in interpersonal communication, including with family members (Kraut et al., 1999). Even when the Internet is used for communication, it cannot substitute for face-to-face interaction because messages have no value in terms of emotional support compared to verbal communication tools (Seltzer et al., 2012). This further reinforces the foreseen opinion of scholars Williams and Rice (1983) that family communication is most strongly influenced by the Internet.

4. Discussions

Research results show that parents and children in families in Hồ Chí Minh City spend a lot of time using the Internet. This result is quite similar to the results of some studies showing that children and adolescents have the highest rate and frequency of Internet use (Tokunaga, 2010); most children use the Internet daily (Lenhart & Madden, 2007). Although the purpose of using the Internet can be positive, spending most of the day

using the Internet can still have serious consequences for children, both in terms of physical and mental development, psychology, and communication ability (Ko et al., 2009; Lam et al., 2009).

Parents and children in this study use the Internet for many different purposes. The participants' response presents that the Internet becomes a useful means of communication to help parents and children connect with each other and with other people. The Internet has brought a new communication channel that is very convenient and effective. This result is consistent with the general trend among many families in most countries that many families make different choices through social networks and technologies over a long period of time (Blinn- Pike, 2009). Smart phones help family members communicate with each other, and they find a lot of joy and happiness through video calls (Wang et al., 2015; Shen et al., 2017). Therefore, the Internet aids in maintaining family boundaries by supplementing parent-child communication tools (Hughes & Hans, 2001) and helping individuals supplement face-to-face interactions in the family via computer interactions (Pénard et al., 2013). The study's finding reinforces the view that the quality of family communication by using technology is positively correlated with the purpose of using that technological device (Lê Trần Hoàng Duy et al., 2017).

The results of this study again confirm that the negative influences of the Internet on communication are worrisome. It is particularly creating impacts on face-to-face communication and showing emotions when talking among family members as other studies have shown (Huỳnh Văn Thông, 2014; Lê Trần Hoàng Duy et al., 2017; Nguyễn Hà Vy, 2016; Đặng Văn Luận, 2018). It seems that parents and children can easily make calls and send messages to each other, but in reality, the physical and emotional interactions when communicating through the intermediary channel are really limited. This has been confirmed through the research results of Seltzer et al. (2012) that the emotional support capacity of messages cannot be achieved as in face-to-face communication, so the more connections there are on social network, the more lonely that the users have to suffer (Turkle, 2017).

Proposed suggestions to limit the negative influence of the Internet on parent-child communication

In the context where the Internet is indispensable, solutions to limit the adverse effects of the Internet as extreme such as prohibiting Internet use in the family are no longer feasible. Furthermore, focusing on how to control the Internet use time is no longer appropriate. Therefore, instead of trying to reduce the amount of time family members using the Internet, it is better to focus more on increasing healthy Internet use behavior. The study results provide some implications for solutions.

Firstly, changing the perception of the Internet's influence on users is necessary. Acknowledging both the positive and negative influence of the Internet shows that we

should not focus too much on the negative influence of the Internet on communication or unduly controlling Internet usage. These inappropriate actions are negatively associated with family attachment and relationships. Internet use can become a positive or negative activity in the family life cycle, depending on the characteristics of each stage in that life cycle. Each family needs to identify the characteristics of each stage in the family cycle and has an appropriate Internet use strategy to enhance the positive values of the Internet.

Secondly, it is suggested to reduce the time of Internet use when family members are together. For example, if dinner time is a space to connect family members, this should also be considered an ideal time for direct communication. The principle of turning off appliances during dinner (Wajcman et al., 2008) is a good strategy to ensure a shared space where all family members can focus on face-to-face interaction.

Thirdly, it is crucial to focus on Internet access purposes and develop healthy and purposeful Internet usage habits. The purpose of using the Internet is confirmed to have an important meaning in deciding actions in the Internet environment. As Shim (2007) once commented, the essence of the problem of Internet use lies in the users themselves. Humans are the subject of Internet use behavior, so how to use the Internet properly depends entirely on them. For example, using the Internet for study or school-related purposes, such as downloading software or finding information, is unrelated to family conflict, family time, and family bonding (Mesch, 2006).

Fourthly, family members should make use of the Internet for communication. By being online, individuals can virtually connect with each other every day, so relying on these connections to enhance personal and family communication is a viable suggestion. This proposal is also based on the recommendations from various previous studies, such as the long-term habits of using social networks and technologies (Blinn-Pike, 2009), communication via smartphones (Wang et al., 2015), and being happier through video calls (Shen et al., 2017). Thus, communication at home is supplanted not by total time spent on the Internet but by functionally equivalent online activities (Lee & Chae, 2007).

Fifthly, it is appropriate to change the way of thinking about protecting children and families from harmful influences from the Internet. Research by Williams and Merten (2011) shows how parents and adolescents negotiate the role of the Internet in their families impacts adolescents' exposure to potential harm from outside the family system. The main concerns are how parents and their children interact with each other concerning teenagers' Internet activities, how parents are aware of the Internet, how their children are engaged with it, and parental supervision in keeping their kids safe online. It is also vital to examine effective ways to protect the privacy of children and families in the online environment, thereby limiting the risks the Internet can pose about children and families. Mesch (2006) suggests that social networks are the most common form of revealing family information to non-family members. In addition, using the Internet for social purposes can

expose adolescents to dangerous situations, including sexual harassment (Ling & Haddon, 2008). Family conflicts can occur when parents try to protect their children through rules governing the type of use. Therefore, parents and children should sit down and discuss to reach an agreement on safe Internet use for children. It is suggested to set up family safety rules about how to use the Internet.

Generally, there are both positive and negative aspects to Internet use and its role as an essential part of the lives of parents and young people. However, the line between "risks" and "benefits" of Internet use for family communication exists in many different family contexts, and it is not easy to separate them. Many of the "risk" factors associated with the Internet and social media can actually be beneficial in the proper context (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008). For example, social networks pose risks to the security of personal and family information but provide an effective communication platform. Therefore, the distinction between the risks and benefits of Internet use can be regulated by family cohesion.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study show that the Internet has become an indispensable part of family everyday lives in the city. While the Internet has demonstrated considerable value, it also poses several risks for its users. While acknowledging the positive benefits of the Internet for family communication, we also need to increase vigilance of using the Internet so as not to affect communication in the family negatively. The previous core solutions, such as reducing Internet time at home and parents strictly monitoring their children's Internet use seem no longer appropriate. The current family and social context requires parents and children to change their perceptions and strategies to prevent the negative influences of the Internet on family communication.

Utilizing the Internet for communication enhances the diverse and convenient channels between family members, as well as expands and strengthens one's social networks. Many cases have proven that the Internet cannot replace face-to-face communication; however, too much focus on connecting with other social networks outside the family can be a factor that reduces interest in family communication. Therefore, the most profound lesson learned is that parents should be encouraged to change their perception of the influence of the Internet and how they behave when family members use it at home. Focusing on discussion and forming healthy Internet use habits, is necessary to promote effective communication in the family. These suggestions can help parents and children properly understand the role and influence of the Internet so that they can maximize the positive benefits of the Internet in daily life while still maintaining family communication.

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