

**Technology Usage, Face to Face Communication and Romantic Partner
Relationships
A Case of the Uganda National Police Force**

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Declaration

I Kaula Haggai Jonathan, declare to the best of my knowledge this research dissertation, “Technology Usage, Face-to-face Communication and Romantic Partner relationship. A Case of the Uganda National Police Force” is my own original work and has never been presented for any award in any University.

Signature: 

Date: 11th / 11 / 19

Dedication

To my parents and siblings who have been there for me

The face-to-face concept is described as a social interaction that is carried out without the mediation of technology (Allwood, 2008). According to Allwood (2008), this means that individuals are involved in a process of co-construction and co-ordination of meaning. Face-to-face communication is the mutual influence of individual's direct physical presence with his/her body language. Face-to-face communication manages to cover many important elements of conversation that text or email simply can't encompass (Sternberg, 2012). Tone, body language, emotions, all of these things can be easily read and conveyed in a face-to-face conversation with a partner, but are very difficult to pick up on through text conversations, Emoji's can only do so much of the work (Sternberg, 2012).

Face-to-face communication involves both the verbal and non-verbal cues during a conversation. Verbal cues consist entirely of the words that are spoken. Verbal cues include the information contained in those words, as well as the level of self-disclosure they contain. Higher levels of self-disclosure are associated with higher partner relationship intimacy (Guerrero, Jones & Burgoon, 2000). Greater conversational fluency, with fewer pauses, has also been found to be associated with greater perceived intimacy and with greater conversational involvement, a concept associated with intimacy. Nonverbal cues, such as tone of voice or body language, provide information beyond the actual words used in an interaction. Touching has been found to be associated with greater partner intimacy (Guerrero et al., 2000). Eye contact, gazing, or looking at the face of a conversational partner

Approval

This is to certify that this research report “Technology Usage, Face-to-face Communication and Romantic Partner relationship. A Case of the Uganda National Police Force” has been submitted with our approval as the University Supervisors.

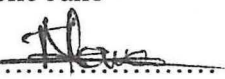
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Abstract

The study was a correlational quantitative analysis of the relationship between technology usage, face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationships, using a case of the Uganda police force. The study was underpinned by the couple and family technology theoretical framework by (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014). The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between the variables and assess the predictive potential of technology usage and face to face communication on romantic partner relationship. Three hundred twenty seven police officers were sampled for the study and data was collected using self-administered questionnaires. Findings show that there was a positive relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication, ($r=.069$, $p>.212$). This suggested that positive changes in technology usage were related to positive changes in face-to-face communication. The study also showed that there was a significant positive relationship between face-to-face communication, ($r= .424$, $p< .01$). This suggests that positive changes in face-to-face communication do significantly increase romantic partner relationship. The study went ahead to show that there was a significant positive relationship between technology usage and romantic partner relationship, ($r= .191$, $p< .01$). This suggests that positive use of technology usage leads to an increase in romantic partner relationships significantly. The study also showed that technology usage and face-to-face communication had a 20.1% predictive potential on romantic partner relationships meaning that the other 79.9 % was predicted by other factors.

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter presents the background, theoretical framework, contextual background statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study and the conceptual framework.

Background

The last decade has brought a lot of global changes made possible with technology development and usage (Smith, 2012). Technology usage has become an intricate part of daily lifestyles in modern society. With all the technology advancements made in the information and telecommunication technology, the way we communicate has changed and this has affected people's relationships profoundly (Duggan & Brenner, 2013). As one example about 16.8 million individuals in Uganda are connected to the internet (Mugume, 2017). According to Mugume (2017), this is due to an increase in the available cheap smart phones on the market now days. Of those individuals connected online, about 96% preferred social networking sites and phone calls as their primary source of communication with their loved ones (Mugume, 2017).

According to Borgmann (2006), Technology can be described as an activity that forms or changes culture. Additionally, technology usage is the application of math, science, and the arts for the benefit of life as it is known. The fourth industrial revolution gave rise to the digital revolution, representing new ways in which technology can be embedded within societies and in our everyday

life (Prakash, & Ashraf, 2018). Technology development in a number of fields including the personal computers, the internet and information and communications technology has lessened barriers to human interaction and as a result has helped spawn the rise of cyber-culture (Shah, 2013). For example In Uganda over 70.9 % of the population own a mobile phone which is capable of connecting to the World Wide Web that is according to the National IT survey of 2017/2018 conducted by The Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA).

Technology was designed to increase efficiency and productivity in our every sphere of life; it was also expected to increase people's leisure opportunities (Albrechtsen, 2001). Individuals use technology for a variety of purposes, including for work, entertainment, and information and as part of their relationships with others; technology is being used to initiate new romantic intimate relationships and maintain old ones (Helsper, & Whitty, 2010). Many couples integrate technology into their everyday interactions with one another (Coyne, Stockdale, Busby, Iverson, & Grant, 2011). With cheap internet connection fees and cheap smart phones, this has given rise to the age of cyber chatting and texting in Uganda. People are starting to push aside actual human contact in communication (Mugume, 2017). Emails, texting, social media, and phone calls are becoming the preferred means of keeping in touch with each other (Mugume, 2017). More and more people prefer not to see the other person when speaking; they often forget the importance of face-to-face communication.

The face-to-face concept is described as a social interaction that is carried out without the mediation of technology (Allwood, 2008). According to Allwood (2008), this means that individuals are involved in a process of co-construction and co-ordination of meaning. Face-to-face communication is the mutual influence of individual's direct physical presence with his/her body language. Face-to-face communication manages to cover many important elements of conversation that text or email simply can't encompass (Sternberg, 2012). Tone, body language, emotions, all of these things can be easily read and conveyed in a face-to-face conversation with a partner, but are very difficult to pick up on through text conversations, Emoji's can only do so much of the work (Sternberg, 2012).

Face-to-face communication involves both the verbal and non-verbal cues during a conversation. Verbal cues consist entirely of the words that are spoken. Verbal cues include the information contained in those words, as well as the level of self-disclosure they contain. Higher levels of self-disclosure are associated with higher partner relationship intimacy (Guerrero, Jones & Burgoon, 2000). Greater conversational fluency, with fewer pauses, has also been found to be associated with greater perceived intimacy and with greater conversational involvement, a concept associated with intimacy. Nonverbal cues, such as tone of voice or body language, provide information beyond the actual words used in an interaction. Touching has been found to be associated with greater partner intimacy (Guerrero et al., 2000). Eye contact, gazing, or looking at the face of a conversational partner

has been found to be associated with greater intimacy in romantic partner relationships (Guerrero et al., 2000).

A romantic partner relationship is a relationship that involves love and physical intimacy; it is characterized by friendship and platonic love or sexual activity (Miller, Rowland, Perlman, & Daniel, 2008). Love is one of the most profound emotions known to human beings. There are many kinds of love, but most people seek its expression in a romantic relationship with a compatible partner (Ben-Ze'ev, & Goussinsky, 2008). Strong partner relationships are continually nurtured with care and communication (Guerrero, Andersen, & Afifi, 2017).

Although relationships can take many forms, certain traits have been shown to be especially important for healthy relationships (Hazan, & Shaver, 1987). Rabstejnek, (2012) notes that both partners should feel confident that their partner is willing to devote his/her attention to the other through technology mediated and face-to-face interactions on a daily basis and that they are committed to accommodating the differences and challenges that inevitably emerge.

In the 21st century, good relationships are generally marked by a sense of fairness in the distribution of the chores of maintaining a household. Partners also feel grateful for one another, openly provide and receive affection, and engage in honest face-to-face discussions about different issues in their lives. In good relationships, partners always afford their partner's the benefit of doubt, which

creates a sense of being on the same team in life, a feeling that can help couples overcome many difficulties (Nehring, 2009).

Theoretical perspective

The study was underpinned by the Couple and Family Technology theoretical Framework advanced by Hertlein and Blumer, (2014). According to this model technology impacts relationships because, (1) technology impacts the ecological environment surrounding couple and family life, (2) families experience structural shifts resulting from their integration with technology, and (3) communication and other relational processes change due to influences of technology. In all, technology fundamentally shifts how intimate relationships are formed and maintained over time, and it also introduces new potential areas of problems and vulnerabilities that couples may experience (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014).

Contextual Perspective

The police force is a constituted body of persons empowered by a state to enforce the law, to protect the lives, liberty and possessions of citizens, and to prevent crime and civil disorder (Lioe, 2010). According to Lioe (2010) their powers include the power of arrest and the legitimized use of force. In their quest to protect and serve the people of Uganda, police officers are transferred from district to district and from police station to police station from time to time. Police officers who are lucky get to go with their families every time they are moved but very many are not so lucky and when the time comes, they are faced

with the dilemma of having to leave their families behind. They are left with only the option of staying in touch via phones and the occasional visits. According to Nakabugo (2014), when police officers are transferred, sometimes these transfers become a nightmare for the police officers involved. This is because they are of immediate effect. According to the oath they take when entering the police, so they do not get a warning to prepare but just move on to where they are deployed and work even when it's not in their families' best interest (Nakabugo, 2014).

Nakabugo (2014), presents a case of a one constable ochwo (not real name), who received a transfer order relocating him from his duty station at the police headquarters in Kampala, with immediate effect where he had worked for two years and gotten used to the environment enabling him to settle into his job and start a family. With this new transfer Ochwo's family dynamics changed forcing him to depend on technology to keep in touch with his family since he couldn't make the move with them to Mubende. With this separation and having to depend on technology to stay in touch, new dynamics are created within the family as their ecological environment is impacted and communication and other relational processes change due to influences of technology.

Problem Statement

Technology usage and face-to-face communication if used properly improves partner relationships (Hertlein, 2012). When couples have a shared intention of using technology to connect with one another this results in good quality time spent together (Henline, 2006). Technology usage such as phone

calls, text messages and social networking sites increase intimacy when used by couples in relationships; however this technology is being abused (Manning, 2006). Technology usage has provided couples with access to opportunities to engage in infidelity both emotionally and sexually (in person and virtually), leading to suspicion resulting in couples using various forms of technology to monitor their partners' behaviors which includes reading one partners emails, text messages, call logs and using specially designed monitoring software (Helsper & Whitty, 2010). Technology misuse has resulted in very many relationships ending up in separation and a breakdown of communication in police homes; this is why there is need to pay attention on technology usage and face-to-face communication in order to maintain romantic partner relationships.

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between technology usage, face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationships using a case of the Uganda police force.

Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives;

1. Examine the relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication
2. Examine the relationship between face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationships
3. Examine the relationship between technology usage and romantic partner relationship.
4. Assess the predictive potential of technology usage and face-to-face communication on romantic partner relationship.

Hypothesizes

The study was guided by the following hypothesizes;

1. There is a negative relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication.
2. There is a significant positive relationship between face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationships
3. Thereis a significant positive relationship between technology usage and romantic partner relationships.
4. Technology usage and face-to-face communication have a significant predictive potential on romantic partner relationships.

Scope

The scope of the study involved the geographical scope, time scope and content scope.

Geographical scope

The study was carried out in Kampala metropolitan area and the target population was officers in barracks housing. The population was chosen because it provided an appropriate research context to test the hypotheses regarding the relationships between the variables (technology usage, face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship).

Content Scope

The study examined the relationship between technology usage, face to face communication and romantic partner relationships, using a case of the Uganda police force.

Time scope

The research was confined to be conducted from the month of January 2019 to July 2019.

Significance of the Study

This study aimed to add to the existing body of knowledge that exists in the field of technology usage, face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationships. Very many studies have been conducted using different groups of people to study the effects of technology use on their face-to-face interaction and

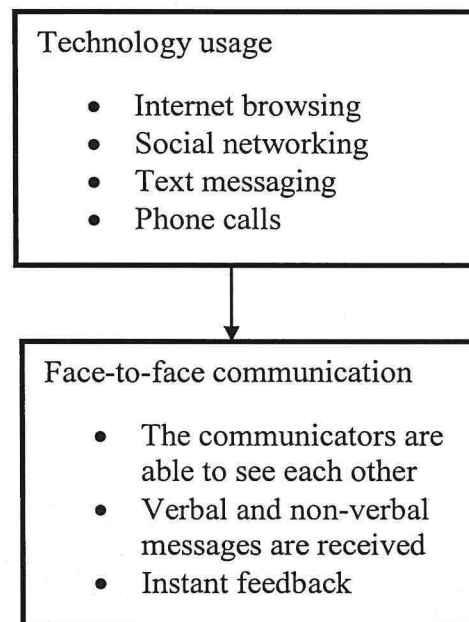
their romantic relationships but no study has been conducted on police officers and their partners.

The findings may be a useful source of information for any future research. Results from the study can be used by therapists to come up with new therapy techniques that may help clients having problems with their research.

The finding may help the government realize the importance of telecommunication technology hence come up with rules and regulations that prevent its misuse.

Conceptual Frame work

Independent variables



Dependent variable

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Retrieved from literature review (Hertlein & Blumer, 2016, Guerrero, Jones & Burgoon, 2000)

As shown in fig 1, technology usage plays a central role in everyday life; internet browsing, social networking, text messaging and phone calls are an everyday thing for many couples in love. Technology mediated communication helps increase intimacy between couples which strengthens their emotional connection when used appropriately between them. Technologies like snap chat and face time play a central role in promoting face-to-face interactions between couples separated by distance between them, using such forms of communication, they are able to see each other and are able to pick up on both the verbal and non-verbal cues of each other and come up with appropriate instant feedback which promotes intimacy between them.

Operational Definition of Terms

Technology usage

Technology is a body of knowledge devoted to creating tools, processing actions and the extracting of materials. We use technology in almost everything we do in our daily lives; this study mostly focused on the communication technology and how we use it in our relationships (Pierce, 2009).

Face-to-face communication

Face-to-face communication is the process by which people exchange information, feelings, and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages: it is also referred to as interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication is

not just about what is actually said, the language use, but how it is said and the non-verbal messages sent through tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures and body language (Pierce, 2009).

Romantic partner relationships

Romantic Partner relationships can be defined as any intimate and emotional relationships built between two individuals (same-sex or heterosexual) (Miller, et al., 2008). Due to changing norms on what an intimate partner relationship is, the definition was left up to the discretion of the participants for the purpose of this study.

Police officers

Police officers are service men or women who are mandated to serve and protect people and properties of the people of Uganda.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter examined the theory underpinning the study and literature related to the research objectives; examining the relationship between technology usage and partner relationship, the relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication and the relationship between face-to-face communication and partner relationship.

Theoretical review

The study was underpinned by the Couple and Family Technology theoretical Framework advanced by Hertlein and Blumer (2014). This is a framework for understanding technology in couple and family life (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014). The integration of technology into our lifestyles has changed the structures, boundaries and processes within the relationship system. As human interactions are altered, boundaries and rules for commitment and intimacy are blurred (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014).

The Couple and Family Technology Framework integrate three theoretical perspectives: family ecology, structural functional, and interaction constructionist (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014). The ecological perspective emphasizes how changes to humans' surrounding environment, influence smaller systems like couples and families.

The ecological perspective includes seven elements; accessibility, affordability, anonymity, acceptability, approximation, ambiguity and

accommodation to describe the ways in which the environment can influence individual and relational systems (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014). Ecological perspective causes two types of change to relationship systems; change to the structure of relationships and change to the process of relationships (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014).

Structural changes identified by the structural functional perspective, inherently redefine each system's set of rules, boundaries, and roles in relationships. Nine Changes to relationship processes emerge from the interaction constructionist perspective, Human interactions are altered because of technology advancements (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014). Thus, relationship development and intimacy are redefined because interactions for initiating, maintaining, and terminating relationships have expanded to include interactions through technology (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014). As a result, couples' relationship commitment and intimacy are affected by technology (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014).

According to the couple and family technology framework, relationship commitment and intimacy are products of relationship maintenance. Relationship intimacy emerges through communicative interactions and is redefined when interactional processes are mediated through technology. Thus, intimacy can be enhanced through technology use, such as for the initiation and maintenance of romantic relationships (Hertlein & Blumer. 2014). Also, intimacy can be hindered when technology is used for terminating relationships, fostering deviant behaviors, or detracting time from one's intimate partner (Hertlein & Stevenson. 2010).

Relationship between Technology Usage and Face-to-face Communication

The technology world has been growing and flourishing, the interest in designing technologies that mediate and create a feeling of relatedness within interpersonal relationships beyond the explicit verbal communication (Hertlein, & Ancheta, 2014.). Yet communication technologies such as cell phones, the Internet, and social networking sites still have gained a central feature in people's lives as tools for establishing and maintaining these relationships (Bergdall, Kraft, Andes, Hatfield, Timajchy, & Hock-Long, 2012). For instance, Bargh and McKenna (2004) stated that over a billion text messages are sent through mobile phones around the world every day (Coyne, Stockdale, Busby, Iverson, & Grant, 2011).

Interest in the relationship between information and communication technologies and the potential for new modes of communication has grown since initial efforts to document a shift in the wealthy economies from their reliance predominantly on manufacturing to services (Beniger, 2009). The spread of the Internet and access to the World Wide Web, together with the convergence of communication services around digital platforms since the mid-1990s, has intensified that interest. For some, it is an article of faith that these technologies hold the solutions to economic, political and cultural problems (Beniger, 2009). Golding (2000), argues that if the spread of these technologies makes information easily accessible from multiple sources and on multiple platforms, then the information and communication needs of all segments of the population

world-wide potentially can be met while Others argue that the many different forms of the digital divide make it unlikely that these technologies will alleviate deeply rooted social and economic problems (Golding, 2000).

In fact, the relationships between communication and technology are embedded in unequal institutionalized power relations. This has implications for the way they become embedded in the workplace and in the everyday lives of users. Such power relations are rarely stable. It is crucial therefore to examine these relationships empirically to understand whether and how they intersect with developments in the offline world (Mansell & Silverstone, 1996).

Many studies have been conducted regarding technology's effect on social interaction and face-to-face communication since the rise of cellphone and social media usage in the late 2000s, as Przybylski and Weinstein (2013), stated recent advancements in communication technology had enabled billions of people to connect more easily with people great distances away, yet little has been known about how the frequent presence of these devices in social settings influences face-to-face interactions. Technology has increasingly taken the place of face-to-face communication in couple and family relationships and many individuals fear that people may be too immersed in the digital world and not presents enough in the real world (Misra, Cheng, Genevie, & Yuan, 2014).

One study examined the relationship between the presence of mobile devices and the quality of real life, in-person social interactions, and researchers found that conversations in the absence of mobile communication technologies

were rated as significantly superior compared with those in the presence of a mobile device (Misra et al., 2014). People who had conversations in the absence of mobile devices reported higher levels of empathetic concern, while those conversing in the presence of a mobile device reported lower levels of empathy (Misra et al., 2014).

Przybylski and Weinstein (2012), showed similar results that proved the presence of mobile communication devices in social settings interferes with human relationships. In two separate experiments, there was evidence to show that these devices have negative effects on closeness, connection, and conversation quality, especially notable when individuals are engaging in personally meaningful topics. Though much research has shown the negative effects of technology on face-to-face interaction, one study found that cell phone use in public might make individuals more likely to communicate with strangers (Campbell, & Kwak, 2011),

Campbell and Kwak (2011), examined whether and how mobile communication influences the extent to which one engages face-to-face with new people in public settings. By accounting for different types of cell phone uses, the study found evidence that mobile phone use in public actually facilitated talking with complete strangers, for those who frequently rely on cell phones to get and exchange information about news.

Brignall and Van Valey (2005) analyzed the effects of technology among “current cyber-youth” those who have grown up with the Internet as an important

part of their everyday life and interaction rituals. Results showed that due to the pervasive use of the Internet in education, communication and entertainment, there has been a significant decrease in face-to-face interaction among youth.

In conclusion the spread of the internet and easy access together with the convergence of communication services around digital platforms, for example social networking sites like twitter, Facebook, whatsapp, Instagram etc. and emailing services like Gmail, Yahoo have lessened barriers that existed in communication, police officers are able to communicate with their partners and families even when they are separated by great distances. According to Przybylski and Weinstein (2013), Billions of people are able to stay in touch more easily with loved ones over great distances away with the help of communication technologies at their disposal, however very many people are too immersed in the digital world forgetting they have other relationships in the real world which they need to engage with (Misra et al., 2014). This is why users of these technologies shouldn't focus too much on their relationships in the digital world to the extent that the ones they have in the real world end up suffering, the advantages gained by these communication technology will be for nothing.

Relationship between Face-to-face Communication and Romantic Partner Relationship

People have turned to the Internet to take away some of the nervousness that some may find in trying to start a relationship with another person. Social media is a driving force behind these changes. These sites want people to use them

as frequently as possible. When they see that they could get more traffic from those people having interactions with their online resource, they jump at the chance to take advantage of the situation, (Cecilia, 2015).

All of these sites use advertisement revenue to generate a lot of their profit and thus, more traffic equates to higher net monetary gains. Although money is the primary focus for these companies, people never focus on this when they are utilizing their services. The only thing that seems to happen is that the general populous becomes normalized to this instantaneous and constant source of news, gossip, and other forms of media that are at their fingertips at a moment's notice, (Irwin, 2016).

Many other authors have focused specifically on technology's effect on personal relationships. Turkle (2012) examined the effects of technology on familial relationships. After interviewing more than 300 young people and 150 adults, Turkle (2012) found that children were often times the ones complaining about their parents' obsession with technology. He discovered that many children believed their parents paid less attention to them than to their smartphones, often times neglecting to interact with them face-to-face until they had finished responding to emails.

Contrary to many researchers' beliefs that technology impacts face-to-face communication negatively, Baym, principal researcher at Microsoft Research, does not share these concerns. Rather, Baym believes that research suggests digital communications enhance relationships and that the evidence consistently shows

that the more you communicate with people using devices, the more likely you are to communicate with those people face-to-face (Adler, 2013).

The literature to date reveals that technology assisted communication impacts people in relationships in a variety of ways (Bargh, & McKenna, 2004; Brown, 2006; Caplan, 2007; Hertlein, 2012). They can find partners independent of a geographic region and maintain long-distance relationships as well as instantly share videos, music, photos, and other links, which can enhance the development of intimacy and the progression of a relationship (Hertlein, & Piercy, 2008).

In general, young adult's report that they often prefer to use technology assisted communication because it gives them control over the social interactions (Madell & Muncer, 2007). People who struggle with offline relationships seem to frequently prefer online relationships as a safer medium (Buote, Wood, & Pratt, 2009). Technologies have created additional spaces for individuals to pursue intimacy, including chat rooms, dating sites, virtual worlds, and social networking sites. Dating sites, social networking sites, and virtual worlds are attractive ways that individuals are now connecting with others when in search of new relationships (Valentine, 2006).

In particular, individuals with social anxiety report feeling safer to disclose personal information and to show their true self with other individuals when the interactions are mediated through a technology medium (Henline, 2006). This form of communication may provide socially introverted users with a vehicle

through which they can increase risk and connect and develop more intimacy in a way they could not through face-to-face contact (Brown, 2006). However, this preference for the distance, control, and anonymity provided by online communication can lead to more Internet use which, in turn, often leads to negative personal outcomes in social settings (Caplan, 2007).

Anonymity refers to the fact that a user of technology may control his or her own self-presentation in a way that is impossible in face-to-face interactions in which one is under direct observation and judgment (Cooper, 2002; Hertlein & Stevenson, 2010). While Internet-based communication lacks the same verbal and facial cues important in social interaction, the level of anonymity also allows users to risk more self-disclosure, plan more carefully how they will interact, and orchestrate connection in personal relationships based on values and similar interest rather than basing connection on initial physical attraction (Bargh, & McKenna, 2004). These may be positive indicators for the early formation of romantic relationships.

After initial relationship formation, when the relationship is established, partners increase face-to-face contact and do not necessarily seem limited by the initial nature of Internet communication (Bargh, & McKenna, 2004). In particular, the use of texting with cell phones can increase intimacy by making partners more available and expanding their repertoire of connection (Henline, 2006). One study of text messaging patterns revealed that people in relationships use texting as an

additional way to stay connected, and that increased availability may enhance certain romantic relationships (Pettigrew, 2009).

A study comparing phone versus Internet communication in college students' romantic relationships found no difference in relational quality (Baym, Zhang, Kunkel, Ledbetter, & Lin, 2007). It was found that computer use by young people was associated with higher friendship quality, perhaps because technology has created a normative standard for connecting in peer relationships among youth (Willoughby, 2008). They suggest that the decrease in the amount of time youth spend interacting face-to-face may eventually have significant consequences for their development of social skills and their presentation of self.

In conclusion although face-to-face interaction is important in initiating new relationships, young adults report that they often prefer to use technology assisted communication because it gives them control over social interaction (Madell, & Muncer, 2007), technologies that give access to dating sites, virtual worlds and social networking sites are attractive ways that individuals are now connecting with others when in new relationships. Even though partners met online as they get to know each other they eventually met face-to-face when they feel that they can trust each other.

Relationship between Technology usage and Romantic Partner Relationships

With the increasing use of technology to achieve social connection, questions arise as to what the implications are for face-to-face interactions within couple relationships. Hertlein and Blumer (2013) posited that a technological

revolution has intruded into couple's life in subtle ways causing a lack of presence with each other even when in the same room together. With such advances of technology and communication, it changes how couples relate to one another and the effects it has on their relationships (Coyne, et al., 2011). Couples cite, for example, the importance of accessibility of one's spouse when there is an emergency situation, when one partner is reaching out for contact, or if a partner is experiencing stress and needed reassurances or emotional soothing (Currin, Jayne, Hammer, Brim, & Hubach. 2016). Reviews of research by Hertlein, (2012), indicate that technology usage may contribute to a couple's ability to fantasize in their relationship, acquire and improve socialization skills, and an ability to better understand their partner's.

On the other hand, technology introduces a potential to misinterpret messages between partners, may create barriers in problem solving and intimacy development (Henline & Harris, 2006). For example, online gaming in relationships may disrupt intimacy processes and introduce feelings of exclusion from one area of their partner's life, potentially resulting in perceived neglect and jealousy (Hawkins & Hertlein, 2013). Whitty (2003) found that if a partner's computer is left accessible or a spouse's password is known, partners will often engage in investigatory behaviors that lead to the discovery of infidelity activities.

In addition, social networking sites such as one of the most popular sites, Facebook, also introduce a potential to misinterpret messages and provide access to users to post messages on another's profiles, comment on one another's

photographs, send private messages, and chat online. Lumpkin (2012) stated that 33% of divorce cases mentioned Facebook in 2011 while the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers stated that the top Facebook concerns are inappropriate messages to individuals of the opposite sex (Cravens, Leckie, & Whiting, 2013).

Furthermore, users are able to easily access their social networking sites at work or home without promoting suspicion or getting into trouble due to the privacy kept from others. Despite the potential disadvantages of the use of technology, it also provides unique opportunities for couples to connect to satisfy both function and emotional needs (Parker et al., 2012). For instance, Pettigrew (2009) found that specific use of text messaging provided couples the ability to stay connected throughout the day based in interviews of dyads that were dating, engaged, married, or cohabiting. Most of the couples perceived the use of text messages as a useful way of staying connected to their partner and provided an enriched or increase in their communication. Pettigrew (2009) also found that text based nature of text messages allows for information to be communicated without those around the sender or receiver overhearing, which can affect the increase of intimacy and the feeling of closeness with one's partner.

Similarly, Coyne, Stockdale, Busby, Iverson, and Grant (2011) explored the communication technologies individuals within romantic relationships were using to communicate with one another, its frequency of use, and the association between the use of these technologies and couple's positive and negative communication. Married individuals reported using texting, instant messaging,

social networking, blogs, and webcams more frequently than couples that were dating. Technology provides a quick and accessible way to deal with marital concerns at any time, such as discussing responsibilities throughout the day. Coyne et al., (2011) found that individuals who were more satisfied in their relationship reported using the media more frequently to express affection toward their partner. It is likely that highly satisfied individuals are more likely to express affection toward their partner in multiple communication contexts; the media simply provides yet more ways.

Coyne et al., (2011) also found that less satisfied individuals, however, were more likely to report using the media to attempt to broach a confrontational subject with their partner such as individuals sending text messages to their partners after an argument to gauge their feelings on the topic of discussion. Couples' patterns of technology use are influenced by several variables, including their relationship duration, status, and satisfaction, as well as individual age (Coyne et al., 2011). Couples in long lasting (i.e., postdating status) romantic relationships use technology less to communicate with their romantic partners. However, when these couples use technology, they are more likely to communicate affections (Coyne et al., 2011). In comparison, couples in shorter-term relationships are more likely to use technological devices impulsively to discuss confrontational and hurtful messages (Coyne et al., 2011).

The advancement of technology, particularly with the mobile phone, has introduced a process of distraction and separation in couple relationships

(Hertlein, 2012). Jarvenpaa and Lang (2005) described an engaging/disengaging paradox in relation to mobile phone use, where the mobile phone provides a means to disengage regularly from face-to face interactions with increasing SMS, email, and social media technology.

Mobile phone users frequently disengage from meetings, face-to-face conversations, parties, and family in order to engage with their devices. On the other hand, technology has been shown to positively impact relationships, as the increased accessibility means an increase in connection, especially when couples are apart. What happens, then, when a couple is face-to-face and using technology separately?

Conjoint use of technology within romantic relationships can have positive effects on intimacy (Henline, 2006). Conjoint use occurs when couples have a shared intention of using technology to connect with one another that results in quality time spent together (Henline, 2006). For example, couples in long distance relationships may set a time to talk via visual video chat system at the end of each day. Similarly, couples can conjointly engage with entertainment (e.g., television) to create more opportunities for intimate moments (i.e., laughing, crying, and physical touch). Interactive forms of technology create opportunities for couples to enhance their closeness and connection (Coyne et al., 2011).

Technology has created new obstacles for couples to overcome (Hertlein & Stevenson, 2010; Hertlein & Webster, 2008). Technology is appealing, accommodating, accessible, and affordable (Hertlein, & Stevenson, 2010) and

grants easy access to gratifying activities. Although technology is valued for these features, it also can undermine intimate interactions for couples (Hertlein, & Stevenson, 2010; Hertlein & Webster, 2008). Partners' investment in technology absorbs time that otherwise could be invested in their relationship. Intimacy is negatively impacted when a person consistently chooses to use technology for individual fulfillment instead of spending time with their partner (Henline, 2006).

Similarly, social networking sites can contribute to feelings of discontentment in romantic relationships. Self-comparison is a negative by product of social networking sites, when people compare the positives and negatives of their relationship to others' relationships (Henline, 2006). This can cause conflict and discontentment within one's own relationship (Hand, Thomas, Buboltz, Deemer, & Buyanjargal, 2013). In addition, social networking sites provide an array of alternative relationship options, detracting efforts toward mending the current relationship, especially if that relationship is under a high level of distress. Romantic partners with a high investment in technology may be infiltrated with images that are unrealistic, unconsciously fostering unrealistic expectations for their significant partner and the romantic relationship (Zurbriggen, Ramsey, & Jaworski, 2011).

The ease of connecting through technology can create enmeshed relationships. This is considered a negative implication when too much connecting inadvertently decreases the autonomy necessary for healthy romantic relationships (Duran, Kelly, & Rotaru, 2011). For example, romantic partners may start

expecting their partners to always be available or to respond immediately to communication, such as text messages. On the other hand, partners may impulsively respond to emotionally triggering stimuli. When technology is used impulsively, meaningful interactions between couples may decrease (Scott, Mottarella, & Lavooy, 2006).

Finally, the absence of nonverbal communication via technology can increase misunderstandings between partners (Pettigrew, 2009). With the exception of video chat programs, the lack of nonverbal (i.e., tone of voice, facial expressions, body language) communication cues can cause partners to misinterpret what is being communicated (Pettigrew, 2009).

In conclusion when couples use technology together in their relationships this has a positive effect on their intimacy, this occurs when couples have a shared intention of using technology to connect with one another which results in quality time spent together. This is truer in long distance relationships where couples set time to talk to each other via long phone calls at night and through whatsapp and text messages throughout the day. In situation where partners are staying together watching a movie creates more opportunities for intimate moments (Henline, 2006). However technology has brought new obstacles in relationships, it undermines intimate interaction if partners are using it separately from each other, men have been found to use the internet to frequent pornographic sites (Bergner & Bridges 2002) and the internet is also a forum through which committed partners can pursue extramarital intimacy with other people.

Hypothesizes

The study was guided by the following hypothesizes;

5. There is a negative relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication.
6. There is a significant positive relationship between face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationships
7. There is a significant positive relationship between technology usage and romantic partner relationships.
8. Technology usage and face-to-face communication have a significant predictive potential on romantic partner relationships.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

The chapter mainly presents the methods that were adopted in the study. It includes research design, target population, sampling design, measurements, instruments, data collection procedure, data management and analysis, validity and reliability, and ethical considerations.

Research design

The research design adopted for this study was a correlational quantitative design. A correlational design is where a researcher measures two variables, understands and assesses the statistical relationship between them with no influence from any extraneous variables (Cook, & Cook, 2008).

The target population

The target population contained police men and women in Kampala metropolitan area, Naguru and Nsambya barracks were chosen to provide the sampling frame. According to the 2015 Uganda police force statistical abstract final report, Naguru barracks had a total population of 1635 police officers and Nsambya barracks had a population of 1895 police officers, this made the total target population of 3530 police officers. The population was chosen because it provided an appropriate research context to test the hypotheses regarding the relationships between the variables

Sample design and sample size

The sample was selected using a stratified proportionate random sampling strategy. Since the target population was made up of police officers living in two different locations i.e. in Naguru and Nsambya barracks, this provided greater precision when selecting the sample size.

According to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970), table of determining sample size, the sample size was 346. The stratification factors were based on gender and age of the respondents. Both males (57%) and female (42.5%) were chosen and majority of the participants were in age brackets of 24-29 years of age (47.7%) and 30-35 years (30.9%).

Table 1: stratified proportionate sampling

Proportionate scores	Total sample size
Naguru barracks $\frac{1635}{3530} \times 346 = 160$	160 + 186 = 346
Nsambya barracks $\frac{1895}{3530} \times 346 = 186$	

Measurement of variables

Technology usage

This variable was measured on a five point Likert scale with 28 items. The respondent had the opportunity to answer; very rarely, rarely, sometimes, often and very often. It was adopted from Leggett and Rossouw (2014) and it was piloted to test its reliability and validity.

Face-to-face communication

This variable was measured on a five point Likert scale with 19 items. The respondents had the opportunity to answer; strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree and strongly agree. It was adopted from spitzberg (2006) and it was modified to fit this specific study. It was piloted to test its reliability and validity.

Romantic Partner relationship

This variable was measured on a five point Likert scale with 34 items. The respondents had the opportunity to answer; never, rarely, occasionally, most of the time and all the time. It was also adopted from Leggett and Rossouw (2014) and it was piloted to test its reliability and validity.

Instrumentation

This data was obtained by the use of a questionnaire that was self-administered to the various respondents. The questionnaire had four sections, section A for bio data, B for technology usage, C for face-to-face communication and D for romantic partner relationship.

Data collection procedure

The research got an introductory letter from university which he used to identify himself in the field. The researcher then proceeded to distribute and retrieve the questionnaires from each respondent; it would then be checked to see if all questions were answered before moving on to the next respondent.

Data processing and Data analysis

Once the data was collected, the questionnaires were edited for accuracy, consistency and completeness. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (measures of central tendency and measures of variations). Tables were used for presentation of findings. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20 was used to facilitate the analysis.

Hypothesis 1, 2 and 3 were measured using Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the relationship between the variables and hypothesis 4 was measured using the multiple linear regression tests to assess the predictive potential of technology usage and face-to-face communication on romantic partner relationship.

Validity

Validity was checked through discussions with the supervisor, the researcher checked for ambiguity, simplicity, clarity and relevancy of the instrument used. In addition exploratory factor analysis was conducted to test validity of the instruments. Factors with eigenvalues greater than one were considered, the factors were rotated so as to get factor that are as different from each other as possible which enabled putting each variable primarily on one of the factors. An oblique solution was chosen, using a Varimax rotation to have factors that are correlated with one another

Technology usage

The rotated component matrix below shows that the aspects of technology usage that load strongly, on 8 factors. All the eight factors had eigenvalues greater than 1 and account for 81.2 % of the variation in technology usage. This suggests that they are strong indicators of technology usage.

Table 2: Rotated factor matrix for technology usage

Components	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Use (DT) separately from partner	.880							
use your (DT with your partner	.879							
how often do you use (laptop) separately from your partner	.873							
how often do you use your laptop with your partner	.865							
extent do you feel close to your partner while engaging laptop	.826							
extent do you feel close to your partner while engaging desktop	.819							
Do you use a laptop	.674							
Do you use a desk top	.590					.553		
what is it like using your phone in the presence of your partner		.814						
what is it like using your laptop in the presence of your partner	.501	.769						
what is it like using your desktop in the presence of your partner	.541	.747						
what is it like watching TV in the presence of your partner		.738						
how often do you use your phone with your partner			.803					
how much time do you spend on your phone being on face book			-.697					
to what extent do you feel close to your partner while engaging_ phone			.618		.544			
how much time do you spend on your phone texting				.815				
how much time do you spend on your phone browsing the internet			-.448	.620				
to what extent do you feel close to your partner while engaging_TV					.909			
how much time do you spend on your phone talking					-.404	.735		
how often do you watch TV with your partner						.733		
Do you watch TV							.819	
Do you use smart/ mobile phone use				-.495			.644	
how often do you use (TV) separately from your partner								.840
how often do you use (smart/mobile phone) separately from your partner	.433							.536
Eigenvalues	7.05	3.16	2.31	1.90	1.56	1.35	1.17	1.01
% of Variance	29.37	13.17	9.61	7.91	6.48	5.63	4.88	4.19

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Face-to-face communication

The rotated component matrix below shows that the aspects of face-to-face communication load strongly on the seven factors.

Table 3: rotated factor matrix for face-to-face communication

Components	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
my partner and i have more productive conversations when using f2f communication	.908						
i enjoy communicating using f2f interaction	.762						
using this method of communication for a discussion of this nature would be common for us	.562				.532		
i would recommend that others use face-to-face communication	.542						
i have a positive attitude about using f2f communication		.795					
i am motivated to use f2f interaction to communicate with others		.708					
i feel face-to-face interaction improves communication	.452	.698					
i liked communicating with my partner this way			.838				
this mode of communication felt natural			.800				
i use f2f to clarify a point made during a phone conversation				.746			
during this discussion i wished that i could switch modes of communication to finish the conversation				.684			
i look forward to sitting down f2f to communicate with other		.450		.680			
i am nervous about using f2f interaction to communicate with others					.835		
i have a negative perception of using f2f interaction to communicate					.724		
the mode of communication slowed us down						.847	
when communicating with my partner using f2f clears misunderstandings			.427			.478	
i prefer to use f2f to discuss important issues on which my partner and i have differing opinions							.781
when debating an issue of contention, i like to use f2f as a method of communication			.423				.561
my preference is to use tech sparingly with my partner						.493	-.523
Eigenvalues	3.95	2.27	1.93	1.66	1.41	1.27	1.90
% of Variance	20.8	12	10.2	8.7	7.4	6.7	5.7
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.							
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.							

All the seven factors that loaded strongly accounted for 71.5 % of the variation in face-to-face communication. This means they are strong indicators of face-to-face communication

Romantic partner relationship

The rotated component matrix showed that the aspects of romantic partner relationship load strongly on eleven factors. All the eleven factors account for 77.9 % of variation in romantic partner relationships. This means they are strong indicators of romantic partner relationships

Reliability

The consistence Cronbach's alpha which is the most common measure of internal consistence was used to measure reliability based on the acceptable value equal or above .70 by Nunnally (1978). The researcher also carried out a pilot study to check for reliability of the research instrument.

Table 4: Cronbach's alpha reliability scores

Variables	Cronbach's alpha
Technology usage	.798
Face-to-face communication	.725
Romantic partner relationship	.896

Ethical issues

An introductory letter from Kyambogo University was obtained and was used by the researcher to introduce himself to the authorities in the police who then gave him the opportunity to collect the data.

The respondents were briefed about the purpose of the study and their informed consent was obtained before handing them the questionnaire for filling.

The study also considered respect and ensured the confidentiality of the information and anonymity of the respondents throughout this study. The data obtained was used only for academic purposes.

Chapter Four

Presentation of Findings, Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, which examined the relationship among technology usage, face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship a case of the Uganda police force. The study specifically examined the relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication, assessed the relationship between face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship, ascertained the relationship between technology usage and romantic partner relations and examined the predictive potential of technology usage and face-to-face communication on romantic partner relationships. Data analysis is presented using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, exploratory factor and hierarchical regression analysis.

Response Rate

The study targeted 346 police officers in Kampala metropolitan area living in barracks houses. This population was chosen because police officers are subject to transfers in their line of work which on many occasions forces them to leave their families behind while they go to fulfill their duties creating a distance between the couples. Three hundred forty six questionnaires were administered to the respondents and 327 questionnaires were filled in and returned to the researcher, representing a response rate of 94.5%. This is a reliable response rate for data analysis as Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) pointed out that for

generalization, a response rate of 50 % is adequate for analysis and reporting, 60% is good and 70 % and above is excellent.

Table 5: Response rate

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Filled in Questionnaires	327	94.5
Un returned Questionnaires	19	5.5
Total	346	100

Source: Primary data from the field (2019)

Demographic characteristics of the Respondents

The researcher asked the respondents about their age, gender, relationship status and the period they have been together with their partners.

Age of the respondents

Table 6: Age of respondents

Age bracket	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-23 years	12	3.7
24-29 years	156	47.7
30-35 years	101	30.9
36-41 years	27	8.3
42 years and above	31	9.5
Total	327	100

Source: Primary data from the field (2019)

The results in table 6 show that almost half of the respondents were in the age bracket of 24-29 years of age (47.7%). This means that most of the information that was provided in the study had more of the youth opinion. This is intentional because at this age the youth are more interested with engaging with technology in their everyday lives.

Gender of Respondents

Table 7: Genders of respondents

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	188	57
Female	139	42.5
Total	327	100

Source: Primary data from the field (2019)

The results in table 7 show that the majority of the respondents were male (57%). This means that most of the information that was provided in the study had more of the male opinion. This is so because the issue affects more of the men because they are the biggest population in the police force.

Relationship Status of Respondents

Table 8: relationship status

	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Dating	79	24.2
Cohabiting	50	15.3
Married	191	58.4
Separated	7	2.1
Total	327	100

Source: Primary data from the field (2019)

The results in table 8 show that more than half of the respondents were married (58.4%). This means that most of the information that was provided in the study had more opinion of married participants. This is intentional because the researcher wanted to hear more from the married participants.

Period Participants Have Stayed Together With Their Partners

Table 9: how long participants have been with there partners

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5 years	196	59.9
6-10 years	67	20.5
11-15 years	45	13.8
16-20 years	19	5.8
Total	327	100

Source: Primary data from the field (2019)

The results in table 9 show that more than half of the respondents had been with their partners for less than 5 years (59.9%). This means that most of the information that was provided in the study had more opinions of participants that have been with their partners for less than 5 years. This is intentional because it's at this stage that couples need to see more of each other to overcome the challenges of staying together and giving up their independence.

Relationship between Study Variables

The relationship between the study variables was first explored before regression analysis was done. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to explore the relationship among the variables. The descriptive statistics of the variables are given first in table 10 and the correlation matrix in table 11.

Table 10: Descriptive statistics of the Study variables (n=327)

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	STDV	Variance
Technology usage	35	102	65.4	13.7	187.1
Face-to-face communication	54	90	73.8	7.1	50.1
Romantic partner relationship	83	161	135.2	16.3	266.2

Source: Primary data from the field (2019)

The findings in table 10 show that the scores for technology usage were, (mean=65.4, SD= 13.7), those of face-to-face communication were (mean= 73.8, SD= 7.1), and those for romantic partner relationship were (mean=135.2, SD=

16.3). The minimum and maximum values point to a positive relationship among (n=327) the variables.

Table 11: Correlation matrix of the study variables

		Technology Usage	Face-to-face Communication	Romantic Partner Relationship
Technology Usage	R	1		
Face-to-face Communication	R	.069	1	
Romantic Partner Relationship	R	.191**	.424**	1
	P	.212	0	

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis One: Technology usage and face-to-face communication

The study had hypothesized a negative relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication. To establish this relationship, Pearson correlation analysis was used. The findings in table 11 show that the correlation between technology usage and face-to-face communication was ($r=.069$, $p>.212$). Therefore a positive relationship existed between technology usage and face-to-face communication. This suggests that positive changes in technology usage increase face-to-face communication between police officers and their partners. This also refutes the hypothesis that there is a negative relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication.

Hypothesis two: Face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship

The study had hypothesized a significant positive relationship between face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationships. The findings in table 11 show that the correlation between face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship was ($r = .424, p < .01$). Therefore a significant positive relationship existed between face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship. This suggests that increased face-to-face interactions between police officers and their partners significantly increase intimacy and emotional connection between them.

Hypothesis three: Technology usage and romantic partner relationship

The study had hypothesized that there is a significant positive relationship between technology usage and romantic partner relationship. The results in the table 11 show that the correlation between technology usage and romantic partner relationship was ($r = .191, p < .01$). This implies that a significant a positive relationship existed between technology usage and romantic partner relationship. This suggests that as technology usage between police officers and their partner increased so did their romantic partner relationships. Hence technology usage significantly influences romantic partner relationships positively.

Hypothesis four: The predictive potential of technology usage and face-to-face communication on romantic partner relationship.

The study had hypothesized that technology usage and face-to-face communication had a significant predictive potential on romantic partner relationships. To confirm this, a hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis was used. Before running the regression, data was tested to ascertain if it meet the requirements for regression. Normality was tested using a histogram of the residuals. The histogram in figure 2 shows that data of the residuals were normally distributed and so data normally distributed. The p-p plot in figure 3 shows that the data was linear enough. Therefore data meet the key requirements of multiple regressions.

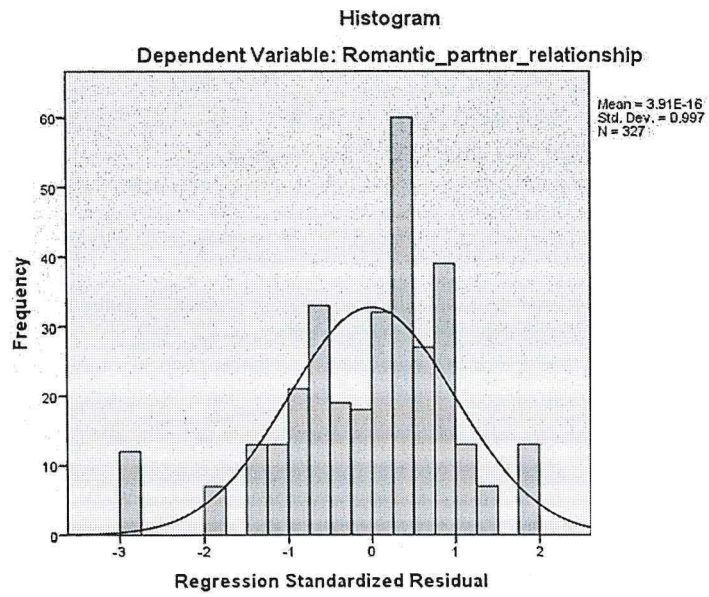


Figure 2: test for normality of data

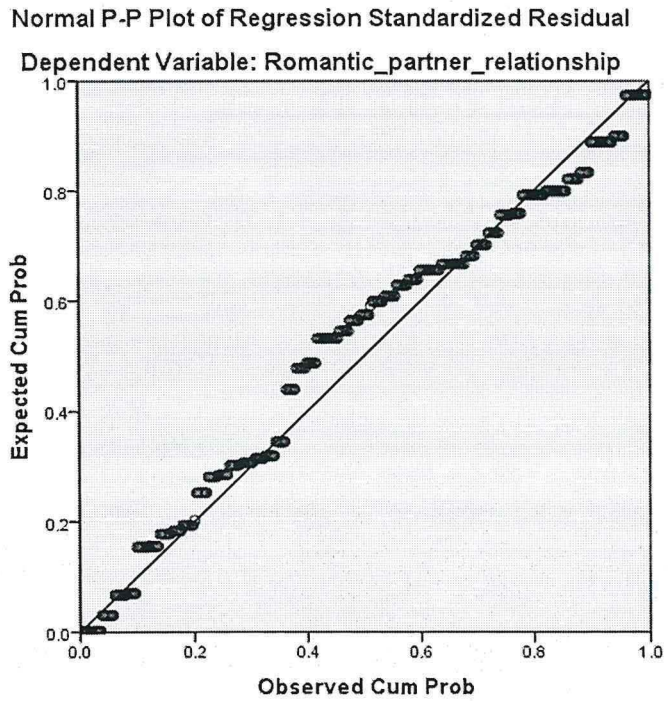


Figure 3: test for linearity of data

Linear regression

Table 12: linear regression

Model	R	R ²	Ad R ²	Std. Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R ² Change	F Change	Sig. F Change
1	.454 ^a	.206	.201	14.58503	.206	41.984	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Technology usage, face to face communication

Hierarchical regression results of the variables

In doing multiple regressions, each variable was entered as a separate step, with the intention of knowing the most effective. The results are shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13: hierarchical regression results of the variables

Model	R	R ²	Ad R ²	Std. Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R ² Change	F Change	Sig. F Change
1	.191 ^a	.036	.033	16.04140	.036	12.254	.001
2	.454 ^b	.206	.201	14.58503	.169	69.146	.000

Parameters of hierarchical regression

Table 14: Parameters of hierarchical regression

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
		B	Std. Error	B	Sig.
	(Constant)	120.279	4.34		0
Step 1	Technology usage	.227	.065	.191	.001
	(Constant)	52.318	.076		0
Step 2	Technology usage	.193	.059	.162	.001
	Face-to-face communication	.952	.144	.413	0

The results in table 12 indicated that technology usage and face-to-face communication can predict 20.1% of the variance in romantic partner relationship (adjusted $R^2=.201$). These results showed that the regression model was both statistically significant and had a good fit of the data gathered from the field ($F=41.984$, $sig<.01$) and the results therefor suggest that if technology usage and face-to-face communication are improved, they should significantly improve romantic partner relationships.

The results in table 14 show that among the predictors face-to-face communication (beta= .413, $sig<.01$) was revealed to be a better predictor of romantic partner relationships than technology usage (beta=.162, $sig<.01$). Finally the other remaining percentage (79.9%) of the variance in romantic partner

relationship is affected by other variables other than those studied and literature states them as follows demographic characteristics such as age, educational background and many others, the literature also mentions a person's personality as one of the factors that can affect romantic partner relationships.

Chapter Five

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results and draws on the theoretical framework used in the study and related literature which was reviewed in chapter two. As well as the objective of the study to enable the researcher draw conclusions and make recommendations for future studies. This study sought to find the relationship among technology usage, face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship and assess the predictive potential of technology usage and face-to-face communication on romantic partner relationship using a case of Uganda police force. A 94.5 % response rate was achieved and answers provided by respondents to questionnaires they were given and summarized according to the research objectives of the study.

Discussion

Hypothesis one: Technology usage and face-to-face communication

The study had hypothesized that there was a negative relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication. Results from this study found that there was a positive relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication, ($r=.069$, $p> .212$). This means that positive changes in technology usage influence face-to-face communication between police officers and their partners. This is most particularly true where police men and women and partners use all forms of technology while engaging and interacting with one another. The

findings from this study are in agreement with the study by Coyne et al., (2011) which showed that Married individuals reported using texting, instant messaging, social networking, blogs, and webcams more frequently for their communication. Such technologies provide a quick and accessible way to deal with marital concerns at any time such as discussing responsibilities throughout the day.

Murray and Campbell, (2015) also showed that technology can enhance communication in relationships. According to Murray and Campbell, (2015), technology usage provides ways for couples to keep in contact when they are apart, to share information and news with one another, and offer diverse ways to communicate so that communications can be maintained in virtually any circumstance. However, Murray and Campbell, (2015), also note that technology can compromise communication and lead to more superficial and inauthentic forms of communication. Therefore, depending on the context, technology can be viewed as both helping and hindering communication within intimate relationships.

Misra et al., 2014 also says that technology use has increasingly taken the place of face-to-face communication in couple and family relationships and many individuals fear that people may be too immersed in the digital world and not presents enough in the real world. A study which examined the relationship between the presence of mobile devices and the quality of real life, in person social interactions found that conversations in the absence of mobile communication technologies were rated as significant superior compared with

those in the presence of mobile devices (Misra et al., 2014). This suggests that people who had conversations in the absence of mobile devices reported higher levels of empathy.

Przybylski and Weinstein (2012), showed similar results that proved the presence of mobile communication devices in social settings interferes with human relationships. In two separate experiments, there was evidence to show that these devices have negative effects on closeness, connection, and conversation quality, especially notable when individuals are engaging in personally meaningful topics (Przybylski & Weinstein, 2012). This explains why the correlation between technology usage and face-to-face communication was not significant between police men and women with their partners because it also presents obstacles in their relationship that have to be overcome.

Hypothesis two: Face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship

Objective two of the study was to examine the relationship between face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship. The study had hypothesized that there was a significant positive relationship between face-to-face and romantic partner relationship. Results from this study found that a moderate positive relationship existed between face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship, ($r = .424$, $p < .01$). This suggests that Positive changes in face-to-face communication do significantly increase romantic partner relationship. These findings are not consistent with previous research done by Madell &

Muncer, (2007), which showed that young adults often preferred to use technology-assisted communication because it gives them control over their social interactions.

According to Madell and Muncer (2007), People who struggle with offline relationships seem to frequently prefer online relationships as a safer medium. Technologies have created additional spaces for individuals to pursue intimacy, including chat rooms, dating sites, virtual worlds, and social networking sites. Dating sites, social networking sites, and virtual worlds are attractive ways that individuals are now connecting with others when in search of new relationships (Valentine, 2006).

Henline (2006) goes on to say that individuals with social anxiety report feeling safer to disclose personal information and to show their true self with other individuals when the interactions are mediated through a technology medium. According to Brown (2006), technology mediated communication provides socially introverted users with a vehicle through which they can increase risk and connect and develop more intimacy in a way they could not through face-to-face contact.

However Bargh and McKenna, (2004) state that after the initial relationship formation online, when the relationship is established, partners increase face-to-face contact and do not necessarily seem limited by the initial nature of Internet communication. This may explain why there is a positive significant relationship between face to face communication and romantic partner

relationship among police officers and their partners. Although they may spend most of their time communicating using technology to maintain and increase intimacy between them this does not limit their off line relationship in the real life.

Hypothesis three: technology usage and romantic partner relationship

Objective three of the study was to examine the relationship between technology usage and romantic partner relationship. The study had hypothesized that there was a significant positive relationship between technology usage and romantic partner relationships. Results from this study showed that there was a positive significant relationship between technology usage and romantic partner relationship, ($r = .191, p < .01$). This suggests that as technology usage between police officers and their partners increased so did their romantic partner relationships. This finding confirms the research findings by Henline, (2006) which state that conjoint use of technology with in romantic relationships can have positive effects on intimacy.

According to Henline (2006), conjoint use of technology occurs when couples have a shared intention of using technology to connect with one another that results in quality time spent together. For example, police officers who are separated from their partners because of transfers can set time to talk via visual video chat systems at the end of each day. Similarly, they can conjointly engage with entertainment (e.g., television) to create more opportunities for intimate moments (i.e., laughing, crying, and physical touch). Coyne et al., (2011) further

goes on to say that interactive forms of technology create opportunities for couples to enhance their closeness and connection.

However other studies by Hertlein and Stevenson, (2010) and Hertlein and Webster, (2008) disagree with the results of the study. According to them technology has created new obstacles for couples to overcome. Technology is appealing, accommodating, accessible, and affordable (Hertlein & Stevenson, 2010) and grants easy access to gratifying activities. Although technology is valued for these features, it also can undermine intimate interactions for couples (Hertlein & Stevenson, 2010; Hertlein & Webster, 2008). According to Henline, (2006) Partners' investment in technology absorbs time that otherwise could be invested in their relationship. Intimacy is negatively impacted when a person consistently chooses to use technology for individual fulfillment instead of spending time with their partner.

Hypothesis four: The predictive potential of technology usage and face-to-face communication on romantic partner relationship.

The last objective of the study was to establish the predictive potential of technology usage and face-to-face communication on romantic partner relationship. The study had hypothesized that technology usage and face-to-face communication had a significant predictive potential on romantic partner relationships. The results showed that technology usage and face-to-face communication predicted 20.1% of the variation in romantic partner relationship among police officers, this means that 79.9% is explained by other factors. The

results also indicated that among the predictors face-to-face communication ($\beta = .413$, $\text{sig} < .01$) was revealed to be a better predictor of romantic partner relationships than technology usage ($\beta = .162$, $\text{sig} < .01$).

The results agree with the couple and family technology framework, according to this model technology impacts relationships because, (1) technology impacts the ecological environment surrounding couple and family life, (2) families experience structural shifts resulting from their integration with technology, and (3) communication and other relational processes change due to influences of technology. In all, technology fundamentally shifts how intimate relationships are formed and maintained over time, and it also introduces new potential areas of problems and vulnerabilities that couples may experience (Hertlein & Blumer, 2014).

Conclusions

The study findings showed that there was a positive relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication, ($r = .069$, $p > .212$). This suggests that positive changes in technology usage result in positive changes in face-to-face communication. Advances in communications technology such as smart phones, the internet and social networking sites have changed ways in which couples interact and communicate in relationships. According to Bergdall, et al. (2012), these communication technologies have gained a central feature in people's lives as tools for establishing and maintaining relationships.

The study findings also showed that there was a moderate positive relationship existed between face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship, ($r=.424$, $p<.01$). This suggests that positive changes in face-to-face communication do significantly increase romantic partner relationship. Couples cite, for example, the importance of accessibility of one's spouse when there is an emergency situation, when one partner is reaching out for contact being able to reach them face-to-face helps reduce stress and provides reassurances and emotional soothing (Currin, et al., 2016).

The study went on to show that there was a positive relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication, ($r=.191$, $p<.01$). This suggests that as technology usage between couples increased so did romantic partner relationship. One study of text messaging patterns revealed that people in relationships use texting as an additional way to stay connected, and that increased availability may enhance certain romantic relationships (Pettigrew, 2009).

The study finally showed that technology usage predicted about 3.3% variation in romantic relationships and both technology usage and face-to-face communication predicted 20.6 variations in romantic partner relationships. This means that 79.4 % is explained by other factors which the study didn't look at. It was also confirmed that face-to-face communication was the dominant predictor of romantic partner relationship in the study.

Recommendations

In this study, it was established that face-to-face communication was the dominant predictor of romantic partner relationship, it is recommended that couples in relationship find time where they can put their technology gadgets down and talk to each other face-to-face and discuss how their day was with each other when they get home. By doing this they will develop more intimacy between them.

The study also showed that there was significant a positive relationship between technology usage and romantic partner relationships, counselors can encourage couples to use technology together and by so doing they will grow closer to each other. According to Henline (2006), conjoint use of technology creates more opportunities for intimate moments between couples hence strengthening the relationship.

The study also showed that there was a positive relationship between technology usage and face-to-face communication, couples who find themselves in long distance relationship can use this technology to remove the distance barriers between them hence create intimate moments between them. According Coyne et al. (2011) married couples reported using webcams more frequently in their communication to bridge the gap between them to discuss marital concerns and responsibilities at any time of the day.

The study showed that technology usage plays an important role in romantic relationships, therefore the government of Uganda should scrap the over

the top tax (OTT) to make the internet affordable for ordinary married couples so that they can engage via social networks minus incurring extra charges. This will create more opportunities for couples to create intimate moments via social media.

Recommendations for further research

Future research could benefit from exploring how couples manage technology use within their relationship and provide further insight into how individuals can enhance control over their negative use of technology. This study only looked at the correlation between technology usage, face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationships which limited the scope of the study.

The study used a correlation quantitative design, which only tried to explore the relationship between the three variables, (technology usage, face-to-face communication and romantic partner relationship) this limited the scope of the study. Future research could be done using a qualitative study design to elicit rich and in-depth data findings

The study showed that technology usage and face t face communication predicted about 20.6 % variation in romantic partner relationship, suggesting that 79.4% variation is predicted by other factors. Future research can be done to identify these other factors.

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Appendices

I. Questionnaire

I am Kaula Haggai Jonathan, a student of Kyambogo University pursuing a master's degree in counseling psychology and as a requirement for the course, am expected to investigate "Technology Usage, Face-to-face Communication and Romantic Partner Relationship a Case of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Uganda Police)" and generate a report on the findings. You have been identified as one of the principle key informant on the research topic and we would like to hear what you have got to say, please answer as honestly as possible to the entire questionnaire items. The information provided will only be for the purpose of this study and it will be confidential at all times

Section A: Bio data

What is your gender?

Male	
Female	
Other	

How old are you?

.....

What is your Relationship status?

Dating	
Cohabiting	
Married	
Separated	
Divorced	

How long have you been with you partner?

.....

Section B

This section outlines your use of technology and how you perceive your partner's use of technology.

1) Do you use technology every day?

Yes	
No	

2) What do you mainly use your internet for?

Facebook	
Email	
Google search	
Whatsapp	

3) Which of the following do you use?

	Very seldom	Rarely	Some times	Often	Very often
Television					
Smart phones/ mobile phones					
Desk top Computer					
Laptop					
Others, please specify					

4) When using your smartphone/ mobile phone, on an average day how much time would you spend;

	Less than 1 hour	1-2 hours	2-3 hours	3-4 hours	4 hours and above
Talking					
Texting					
Browsing the internet					
Being on face book					
Others, please specify					

5) In general, how quickly do you respond to your phone?

Immediately	
As soon as possible	
At dedicated times	
Every few days	
Hardly ever	

6) In general how quickly do you respond to your email?

Immediately	
As soon as possible	
At dedicated times	
Every few days	
Hardly ever	

7) What is it like for you using technology while being in the presence of your partner?

	I tend to be uncomfortable	Somewhat uncomfortable with it	Okay with it	Somewhat comfortable with it	I tend to be comfortable with it
Television					
Smart/ mobile phones					
Desk top Computer					
Laptop					
Others please specify					

8) How often do you use technology with your partner (e.g. watching television together, reading emails together etc.)?

	Never	Not usually	sometimes	Most of the time	always
Television					
Smart/ mobile phones					
Desk top Computer					
Laptop					
Others please specify					

9) To what extent do you feel close to your partner while engaging with technology (e.g. watching television while holding hands, sitting close, sharing an idea, and/ or showing affection)?

	I never feel close	I don't usually feel close	I sometimes feel close	I feel close	I feel very close
Television					
Smart phones/ mobile phones					
Desk top Computer					
Laptop					
Others please specify					

10) How often do you use technology separately from your partner while being physically together with your partner (e.g. Reading text messages while eating dinner, watching television while in the middle of a discussion)?

	Never	Not usually	sometimes	Most of the time	Always
Television					
Smart phones/ mobile phones					
Desk top Computer					
Laptop					
Others please specify					

Section C: Face-to-face communication

Please answer the following questions based on the use of face-to-face communication

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I feel that face-to-face interactions improve communication with my partner					
2. My preference is to use Technology sparingly with my partner					
3. When debating or discussing an issue of contention, I like to use face-to-face interaction as a method of communication					
4 When communicating with my partner using face-to-face interaction clears misunderstandings					
5. I prefer to use face-to-face interaction to discuss important issue on which my partner and I have differing opinions					
6. My partner and I have more productive conversations when using face-to-face communication					
7. I have a negative perception of using face-to-face interaction to communicate with others					

8. I use face-to-face communication to clarify a point made during a phone conversation					
9. I have a positive attitude about using face-to-face communication					
10. I enjoy communicating using face-to-face interaction					
11. I am nervous about using face-to-face communication to communicate with others.					
12. I look forward to sitting down face-to-face to communicate with others.					
13. I am motivated to use face-to-face communication to communicate with others.					
14. I would recommend that others use face-to-face communication					
15. The mode of communication slowed us down					
16. I liked communicating with my partner this way					
17. This mode of communication felt natural					
18. Using this method of communication for a discussion of this nature would be common for me and my partner					
19. During this discussion I wished that I could switch modes of communication to finish the conversation					

Section D: Partner relationship

1) In terms of your relationship how often would agree on;

	Always Disagree	Almost always disagree	Occasionally disagree	Almost always agree	Always agree
Amount of time spent together					
Matters of recreation					
Handling relationship finances					
Aims, goals and things believed to be important					
Making minor decisions					
Making major decisions					

House hold tasks					
Leisure time interest and activities					
Career decisions					
Amount of time being intimate together					

2) How often do you

	Never	Rarely	occasionally	Most of the time	All the time
Confide in your partner					
Show affection to your partner					
Complement your partner					
Listen your partner					
Share ideas					
Laugh together					
Work on a project together					
Feel tired for sex					

3) Do you feel;

	Never	Rarely	occasionally	Most of the time	All the time
Respected by your partner					
Attracted to your partner					
Supported by your partner					
You are in a team with your partner					
Challenged by your partner					
Angry or frustrated by your partner					
You want your relationship to improve					
Satisfied with your sex life					
Satisfied with the time spent together					
Satisfied with the communication between you and your partner					
You partner attends to you when you need					
Your partner focuses on you when you are speaking					
Listened and heard by your partner					

Relaxed and calm with your partner					
Vulnerable with your partner					
Satisfied with your partner					

Sample Determination Table

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

able