Technoference: Technology as 'Third Person' in Romantic and Family Relationships

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ABSTRAK

Di era digital seperti sekarang ini penggunaan teknologi sudah menjadi kebutuhan bagi manusia. Teknologi tidak hanya memfasilitasi interaksi, tetapi juga dapat menjadi gangguan dalam hubungan yang disebut "technoreference". Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dampak negatif penggunaan teknologi terhadap hubungan interpersonal. Topik mengenai isu technoference dalam hubungan interpersonal meliputi: (1) konsep technoference dalam penggunaan smartphone; (2) technoference dalam hubungan percintaan; (3) technoference dalam hubungan keluarga. Penelitian ini menggunakan tinjauan literatur sistematis. Data penelitian ini dikumpulkan dari makalah penelitian sebelumnya yang diperoleh dengan mengumpulkan dan menganalisis 17 artikel jurnal ilmiah yang diterbitkan. Kemudian data yang relevan diekstraksi dari literatur yang dipilih. Berdasarkan temuan beberapa kajian dan penelitian ilmiah terkait, technoference merupakan gangguan yang terjadi dalam interaksi sehari-hari sebagai akibat dari penggunaan perangkat teknologi. Technoference dalam hubungan romantis menunjukkan kualitas hubungan yang buruk dan ketidakpuasan hubungan. Sementara itu, technoference dalam hubungan keluarga berkontribusi terhadap kurang optimalnya interaksi orang tua-anak dan perilaku bermasalah anak.

ABSTRACT

In the digital age, using technology has become a necessity for humans. Technology not only facilitates interaction, it can also be a distraction in relationship termed "technoreference". This study aims to analyze the negative impact of technology use on interpersonal relationships. Topics concerning the issue of technoference in interpersonal relationships include: (1) the concept of technoference in smartphone use; (2) technoference in romantic relationships; (3) technoference in family relations. This study is using systematic literature review. The data for this study were collected from previous research papers, which were obtained by collecting and analyzing 17 published scientific journal articles. Then relevant data is extracted from the selected literature. According to the findings of several relevant scientific studies and researches, technoference is a disruption that occurs in everyday interactions as a consequence of the usage of technological devices. Technoference in romantic relationships indicates poor relationship quality and relationship dissatisfaction. Meanwhile, technoference in family relationships contributes to suboptimal parent-child interactions and child problem behavior*s.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology is the application of science and engineering for practical purposes. It includes everything from tools, machines, software, systems, to methods and procedures used to achieve specific goals. Technology can range from simple technologies such as simple tools to advanced technologies such as computers, robots and artificial intelligence. Technology has both positive and negative impacts on our lives. Among the positive impacts are increased efficiency, access to information, medical advances, and global connectivity (Kumar et al., 2021; Suwartono & Aniuranti, 2019). However, technology can also have negative impacts, such as technology addiction, privacy issues, cybersecurity issues, and social isolation if not used wisely.

Technoference is a term used to describe the disruption or intervention of technology in interactions between individuals, especially in the context of romantic and family relationships. This phenomenon refers to situations when technological devices such as smartphones, tablets, computers, or

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social media interfere with or dominate important moments in human interaction (McDaniel & Coyne, 2017; Stockdale et al., 2018). For example, when a couple is getting together for quality time together, but one or both parties are too glued to their devices, ignoring their partner. Something similar can happen in families, when family members may not get enough attention because technology takes over the attention of their loved ones. The impact of Technoference can include poor communication problems, feelings of being ignored or let down, and a decline in the quality of relationships (Komanchuk et al., 2023; McDaniel & Radesky, 2019). It can also cause increased stress in families and romantic partners. In the long term, Technoference can contribute to relationship breakdown and individual well-being issues, as too much time spent on technology can interfere with quality time with loved ones.

In an increasingly advanced digital era, the role of technology in everyday life is increasingly important. One aspect that needs to be understood is the impact of technology on romantic and family relationships. The phenomenon called "Technoference," which refers to the intervention of technology in interactions between individuals, has been the subject of significant attention in research on human relationships (McDaniel & Coyne, 2017; McDaniel & Radesky, 2019). Technoference describes situations when technological devices such as smartphones, tablets, or laptops interfere with or dominate interactions between family members or romantic partners. The use of technology in romantic and family relationships has grown rapidly in recent years (Carayannis & Morawska-Jancelewicz, 2022; Chuntala, 2019). Couples getting together for quality time or families seeking to engage emotionally may find themselves distracted by cell phone notifications, social media, or other digital content. This raises questions about how technology becomes the "third person" in the relationship and its impact on communication, relationship quality, and individual and family well-being.

Technology, particularly information and communication technology, has improved dramatically in recent years. According to Telecom Statistics Indonesia, technology use increased by 62.41% in 2018. (the latest data update can be found on his website of the Central Bureau of Statistics). This was followed by a rise in the number of people who possess technological devices and use the internet at home, which reached 66.22%. The smartphone is one of his most often used technological devices. Smartphones are particularly appealing when compared to other technological gadgets due to their sophisticated and appealing features.

The use of smartphones contributes to human relationships by making it easier to communicate and stay connected even from a distance. However, the necessary innovations and features have transformed the functionality of smartphones from communication tools to entertainment and work tools. This leads to greater personal attachment to smartphones and causes problems in family relationships, partners and the environment. This phenomenon is known as technoference, which is a daily disturbance that occurs in individual interactions with partners or other people due to the use of technological devices (McDaniel & Radesky, 2019; Roberts & David, 2016). This disturbance can be in the form of using a smartphone when communicating directly or face-to-face with a partner or family (McDaniel & Radesky, 2019; Wang et al., 2019).

Technoference can arise in many forms of interpersonal relationships. The impact of excessive technology usage can threaten emotional intimacy between parents and children, as well as decrease the level of satisfaction with partners (Komanchuk et al., 2023; McDaniel & Coyne, 2017). Technoference adversely affect conflict in relationships. People or couples who are subjected to technoference have lower levels of relational well-being and satisfaction. In addition, technoference can increase couples' daily conflicts and reduce the quality of direct or face-to-face interactions (McDaniel & Drouin, 2019; Sundqvist et al., 2020).

Numerous studies have found that using electronic gadgets has a detrimental influence on children development. Psychological correlates of problematic mobile technology use have included anxious dependence in relationships (Stockdale et al., 2018; Tarigan, 2008). A lack of good parent-child interaction might contribute to future behavioral issues in children (Patrikakou, 2016; Purnama & Dwikurnaningsih, 2021). When the function of the home as the first place for children to learn about relationships and interaction gets tainted by technology, it becomes dysfunctional. This study aims to analyze the impact of technoference on romantic and family relationships. This study is intended to offer an overview of the harmful effects of technology on interpersonal interactions, particularly romantic and family ties. As well as growing understanding about the present technoference phenomena that is occurring in the digital era.

2. METHOD

This study is using systematic literature review method is a structured approach to identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing relevant literature in a research field. This study used literature review to investigate the previous studies that have explained technoference phenomenon from a psychological

perspective (Snyder, 2019). Technoference will be discussed in this study, including the concept of technoference in smartphone use, technoference in romantic relationships, and technoference in family relationships. Additionally, literature review study is a type of qualitative descriptive research.

The data for this study were collected from previous research papers, which were obtained by collecting and analyzing 17 published scientific journal articles on APA PsycInfo, Springer, Elsevier, Semantic scholar, Centre of Excellence for Scientific & Research Journalism (COES&RJ LLC) related to the topics. The review includes research study published in English with no time limit that identify the impacts of technoference on romantic and family relationship, parent-child relationships, couple's relationship satisfaction, emotional well-being, and problem behavior outcomes.

Then relevant data is extracted from the selected literature. These may include key findings, methodology, results, and other important information. Analysis and synthesis of extracted data. Compare findings from multiple sources and identify trends, similarities, or differences. Write a systematic literature review based on the analysis and synthesis that has been carried out. Throughout the entire process, it is important to keep accurate records of the steps you have taken, including the search, selection, and assessment of the literature.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Viewing technoference as a "third person" in romantic and family relationships refers to the concept that technology becomes a presence with its own influence within these relationships, much like a third individual would. This idea stems from the observation that technology, such as smartphones, tablets, and computers, often occupies a significant portion of individuals' time and attention, which can impact the dynamics within relationships. Technoference refers to the interference or intrusion of technology in everyday life, particularly in face-to-face interactions and relationships. Technoference encompasses the negative impacts that excessive technology use can have on personal relationships, emotional well-being, and overall quality of life. It highlights how the constant connectivity and notifications from digital devices can intrude upon people attention, affecting their ability to engage fully with those around them and engage in important activities.

Technoference Concept in Smartphone Usage

The phrase technoference is derived from the combination of technology and interference. Technology interference or technoference includes when and how to use technological devices that interfere with or hinder partners and families when communicating or interacting in everyday life. Technoference also refers to disturbances in communication between individuals due to the attention paid to personal technology devices. This can be construed when people focused on their smartphone, they fail to pay attention on their partner, family or the other person with whom they are interacting.

Technoference includes activities with personal technology devices such as checking or monitoring message notifications, playing social media while eating together, gathering with family, or conversing with partners. The behavior of paying attention to cellphones or smartphones rather than people around is known as phubbing. Disruption of this interaction (phubbing) is specific to technological devices such as cellphones or smartphones, while technoference includes all technological devices used individually. Phubbing is is a type of technoference that happens most frequently in interactions or communications with partners, family and other people. In fact, the use of smartphones really influences individual communication behavior. Now the smartphone has become the main medium of communication. This can be proven by the reality on the ground. Everyone certainly can't be separated from gadgets, both in communicating or just uploading on social media. This shows that the intensity of smartphone use affects changes in individual behavior.

Technoference in Romantic Relationships

Romantic relationships are defined as interactions between people with similar intentions where each person becomes a significant aspect of life. Theory of love, there are three components that build romantic relationships: intimacy, passion, and commitment. The presence of technology in romantic relationships can encourage intimacy or closeness between couples which is not limited by space or time. Technology, on the other hand, has the potential to disrupt relationships and cause conflict between partners.

A romantic relationship can develop when two people experience mutual dependency, attachment, and their psychological needs are fulfilled. Unrestricted use of technology in romantic relationships can reduce the attachment between partners. The presence of the phenomena of technoference reduces the

quality of the relationship and has an impact on relationship satisfaction. Phubbing refers to technological interruptions or technoference that commonly occur in romantic relationships, as people tend to focus on smartphones when meet or along with their partners.

Phubbing partners or couples that frequently use smartphones when with their partners indicate a low-quality relationship. Mobile phones demand individual attention and can undermine romantic relationship satisfaction because a person will focus more on his cell phone than talking to his partner. Phubbing behavior, which also includes phubbing, has an impact on one of the most important things in interpersonal interaction, namely eye contact with a partner. If individuals engage in phubbing behavior when interacting with partners, eye contact between them will be significantly reduced. This causes a decrease in the quantity and quality of interactions, causing negative affiliation (Boelen, 2014; Drago, 2015).

Technoference in Family Relations

In today's digital age, technology provides many advantages for facilitating work and meeting demands. Access to information, interaction with coworkers, financial administration, health consultations, and shopping have all become more efficient. Even with the convenience, technology makes it tough to support healthy family relationships. Some parents understand that using technology interferes with their interactions with their children (Stefanski et al., 2019; Zurcher et al., 2020). Furthermore, according to research data, 77.5% of adolescents claimed their parents' use of gadgets was disruptive, and 11% said it was difficult to obtain their parents' attention when they were using their gadgets (Stockdale et al., 2018).

Technoference includes any disruption or interruption in the parent-child relationship caused by the use of technology. Face-to-face interactions, routines such as mealtimes and playtime, or family members' perceptions of distraction when interacting with technology devices during gatherings can all lead in technoference. Even minor technological disruptions or technoference might affect parents' attention to their children. As parents use technological devices, they tend to lose attention on their children, making them feel ignored. According to previous research, technoference in family interactions is associated with problems in children's emotional well-being, parenting stress and child behavior problems, and suboptimal parent-child interactions (Sundqvist et al., 2020). Parent-child interactions are associated with effective parenting. Parent-child relationship is expected of having a significant impact on a child's emotional, cognitive, and linguistic development. Children's perceptions of their parents' attendance can help them develop positive experiences related to social-emotional relationships (Beamish et al., 2018; Ouyang & Scharber, 2017). Longitudinal research by previous study explains that children experience technological interference or technoference from their parents tend to have externalizing behavior problems, such as aggression, disobedience, hostility, antisociality and theft (Karim, 2015; Saputra & Ekawati, 2017). This is possibly due to the lack of parental response to children's needs, so that children tend to develop problem behaviors in order to gain attention or response from parents.

Discussion

In today's digital era, mobile gadgets such as cellphones or smartphones are the closest technological devices to people and build attachments to them. Previous study explained several factors that contribute to more frequent use of cell phones than other (Carbonell et al., 2013). Technological devices, including (1) cell phones can give a feeling of euphoria, a feeling of being valued and loved when they interact or receive messages from other people; (2) expensive cell phones can create personal bonds and are considered as self-projections related to social class, attitudes and personality; (3) mobile phones have become multifunctional technological devices with many features; (4) Cell phones have evolved into a source of entertainment in one's leisure time or while waiting in line.

The appealing features of smartphones cause people to adopt unhealthy habits for using technology in personal and social interactions. People become more comfortable when they are together and keep connected with their smartphones even while they are having a conversation face-to-face (Anshari et al., 2017; Roy, 2019; Suki & Suki, 2013). This is one of the challenges and distractions in daily interactions that might affect the level of interpersonal relationships (Ricchiardi & Emanuel, 2018; Yang et al., 2022). This is consistent with research, which found that technoference is a predictor of declining quality and relationship satisfaction (McDaniel & Drouin, 2019).

According to several studies, excessive use of technology, such as video games and social media, can increase conflict in couples and lead to violent behaviors (Uusiautti & Määttä, 2017). Disputes and aggressiveness in romantic relationships sometimes occur when partners are irritated with the amount of time, they spend using technology compared to the relationship they are currently (Acker & Davis, 1992; Roberts & David, 2016). Ignoring a partner by focusing on gadgets or smartphones is included of people violence against their partners. This violence is related to the partner's emotional and well-being. Hence, technology use within the context of couple interactions has the potential to disrupt positive interactions

and spur negative feelings and conflict, and conflict and anger have the potential to contribute to relationship dissolution (Islam et al., 2022; Sternberg, 2019).

According to previous study partner pubbing is associated to relationship dissatisfaction among married women. Based on a survey of 143 married women, 70% reported that smartphones adversely affected their interactions with their partners (Griffiths, 2002). Additionally, previous study found that partner's smartphone use predicted jealousy, and this predicted lower relational cohesion (Krasnova et al., 2016). Notably, none of these groups of researchers reported on dyadic couple data, and they all measured technology interference, as well as the other outcome variables, at a single time point.

Research conducted by previous study also supports the results of this study, namely the low relationship between phubbing and romantic relationship satisfaction is influenced by higher levels of mobile phone use, causing phubbing to be seen as commonplace and tends to be socially accepted by society (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2018). According to other study this happens because in social psychology, the concept of reciprocity plays an important role in understanding human interaction and social exchange, whereas in the case of phubbing, ignoring other people because of mobile phones can cause the behavior to be reciprocated intentionally or unintentionally (Nevo & Vaknin-Nusbaum, 2020). Intentionally so that the person will also do the same thing or become a phubbing actor (phubber) in return for the phubbing behavior received.

4. CONCLUSION

Many conclusions are reached based on the findings of this study related to the influence of technology on romantic and family relationships. First, the term 'technoference' is described as daily disruptions experienced by couples or families as a result of using technological devices (such as smartphone, gadget) in face-to-face interactions. Second, technoference in romantic relationships, indicates poor relationship quality and relationship dissatisfaction. Third, technoference in family relationships provokes suboptimal parent-child interaction, which can contribute to child behavior problems in the long run. Implication of this study It's important to note that while technoference has negative impacts, technology also offers numerous benefits. Striking a balance between technology use and maintaining meaningful in-person interactions is crucial for overall well-being and relationship satisfaction.

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