OBJECTIVES

This report seeks to study the social phenomenon of Short Messaging Service (SMS) and youths in Singapore. The motivation behind this project is due to the increasing number of SMS users especially among the youngsters. This reports not only gives the chronology of how SMS evolved, but also the basic background to SMS in Singapore, explaining the environment, organisations, people and technology involved. The analysis of the pros, cons and social impact of SMS on youths will also be explored. On top of that, a survey will be done to substantiate some of the more important findings. In addition, a case study on SMS and youths in Australia will be discussed, with certain comparing and contrasting to the situation in Singapore.

INTRODUCTION

The use of mobile phones has gained worldwide popularity with the youth. From the report of mobileYouth 2003, there are currently 239 million youngsters aged 5-24 in 2003 in 20 important markets and they own 104 million mobile phones (a penetration rate of 44%). [8] Closely integrated with the use of mobile phone is the use of Short Messaging Service (SMS). As the name suggests, SMS is, simply put, a service whereby a user types a message in his mobile phone and sends it to other users. This SMS service is instantaneous, private and user-friendly. A single SMS has an inherent limitation to a maximum of 160 characters per SMS and contain no images or graphics. Thus, "devoid of colour, graphics, audio, video, and confined to 160 characters per message, SMS hardly seemed the most radical of new media technologies." [16] However, it has taken the world by storm, particularly among the youths. In this project, we have narrowed the definition of youths to that of the Generation-Y (below 21 years of age), as this is the age group that has generated a lot of media attention, and hence interests us more.

We shall first look at the chronology of events that lead to SMS, and the background of SMS in Singapore, before explaining this phenomenon of the popularity of SMS among youths. Specific points will be backed up with a survey conducted. The survey is in the form of a questionnaire (Appendix 2) and was completed by 20 youths, age 13 to 21. The data collected in summarised in a table (Appendix 3) for easy reference.

CHRONOLOGY OF SMS

In 1982, the Europeans recognised that a single, transnational wireless phone system was a good way to ensure efficient roaming of subscribers among countries. This led them to develop the

mobile communications technology, known as the Global System for Mobile communication (GSM), from the ground up "as a system for analog voice with modulated digital capabilities built in." [3] SMS was then created as part of this GSM standard as "a way of sending call set-up information to mobiles from an SMS center." [16]

Later, during the 90s, SMS further developed, such that the first SMS was "sent from a computer to a mobile phone via the UK's Vodafone network." [16] From then, SMS took full advantage of the technology to send short bursts of text-based messages across the GSM networks. The technology of the 2 way SMS, as we now use, was concluded in 1994. [16] Interestingly, however, SMS was never developed to be used as a form of mass communication. [16]

In the late 90s, full network connections were established between rival UK networks. [16] The technology then spread globally. Today, the more developed form and modern type of SMS is Multimedia Service (MMS). It has additional features than SMS, and incorporates graphics, sounds, and animation. At this point, however, it is difficult to gauge if SMS or MMS will dominate in the future, as there are benefits and costs to both. Ultimately the user will decide which suits his lifestyle more. Also, in the near future, due to better technology, perhaps more interesting applications of SMS will evolve.

After stating the chronology of SMS, we shall explore the background of SMS in Singapore.

BACKGROUND OF SMS IN SINGAPORE

In Singapore, the number of mobile phones users owning a mobile phone has increased tremendously recently. Compared to 2 in 10 people in 1998, the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore reports that now the number has increased to 8 in 10 people. [19] This amount corresponds to the increase in talktime, and SMS sent. In fact, users spend "202,940,000 hours on the mobile phone and 82 billion text messages a year". [19] Generally, the people involved in this telecommunications market are the consumers (users), and the companies (organisations) that offer such services. Together, they determine the demand and supply of the SMS market. However, the focus of this paper is on SMS and youth, and thus, we will focus on youths instead of all users.

As mentioned, companies offer the SMS service that we have in Singapore. The organisations involved here in the telecommunications market are Singtel, M1 and Starhub. These

organisations are quick to capitalise on the increasing trend among youths using SMS so commonly. For instance, Singtel recently started a "*Ideas" scheme whereby users can subscribe and obtain latest information through SMS. Some of the most sought after information are English Premier League results and Games Arcade. [9] Starhub, too, recently collaborated with cable television in launching of MTV Code, a youth-oriented service that "provides SMS updates on the music scene, discounts and privileges and access to the latest MTV events, parties, concerts and movies." [1]

From the above examples, we can see that dominant players in the telecommunications market are indeed capitalising on the increasing trend of SMS to make profits. Perhaps summarising this phenomenon very well is a comment made by MTV Networks Asia's vice-president of network development and licensing and merchandising, Mr Christopher James: "'With mobile technology at the very core of the Singaporean youth lifestyle...the new plan brings us one step closer to being on the pulse of the local youth culture.'" [1]

After identifying the organisaions involved, we shall now touch on the technology involved in SMS. Firstly, mobile phone usage is largely based on the Subscriber Identity Modules (SIM) card, without which, the mobile phone is akin to a pile of metal. This SIM card is mainly used for subscriber-profile purpose and as such identifies who the sender and recipient of the SMS are. When a person sends a SMS, it will first go to its desired Short Message Service Center (SMSC). [2] In Singapore, the SMSC has its own telephone number, and has already been set for all users. Hence users usually use SMS without realising the existence of this service center. In contrast, in countries like Hong Kong and China, users have to set the service center by themselves by calling their own network's SMSC.

Upon reaching the SMSC, a SMS Request will be sent to the Home Location Register (HLR) to find the roaming customer. [2] Once the HLR receives this request, it will respond to the SMSC with the subscriber's status: inactive or active. If the response is "inactive", meaning that the subscriber is out of reach of the network system or in poor reception areas, the SMSC will hold onto the message for a period of time. [2] This means that SMS is based on a 'store and forward' technology, which allows the intended recipient to receive the message instantaneously it if his mobile phone is switched on, else it will be stored in the SMSC. [16] Subsequently when the user switches on his mobile phone, the HLR sends a SMS Notification to the SMSC, and the SMSC will

attempt delivery. [2] Once the message is sent, the SMSC receives verification that the message was received by the recipient, after which this message will be classified as "sent".

After focusing on the different aspects of SMS in Singapore, we shall now turn to the reasons why SMS is so popular among youths in Singapore today.

REASONS FOR POPULARITY OF SMS AMONG YOUTHS

Today SMS has become such a common mode of communication between youth peer groups that it has now become a "mindset" or "norm" amongst this young community and is no longer something that the youths even think about when using. [7] Of the 20 youths polled in our survey, 40% of the youths send between 5 and 10 SMS daily, and 20% send 15 or more SMS per day (Appendix 1, Figure 1).

The reason for the enormous popularity of SMS amongst the youths in Singapore is, firstly, due to the fact that this mechanism of sending and receiving messages costs less. Sending an SMS message costs only five cents with some organisations offering users 500 free SMS messages a month. SMS is particularly suited for short messages like "see you in the canteen at 2pm" because SMS is much cheaper than calling someone and giving the same message. Calling someone to give the same message would invariably take more time and hence more cost.

Secondly, sending SMS helps to save time, as it is an instantaneous form of communication. This is especially useful for youths in school, because very often they can only use their mobile phone in the strict constraints of break times. Also, SMS provides a very convenient method of exchanging small bits of information between young mobile users. The convenience of leaving messages when the other party is unreachable is one of the pros of SMS. Using SMS, one can get the message across even if they are unable to contact their friends. This function of SMS allows youths to have greater accessibility to their friends, hence its popularity.

Thirdly, SMS allows the youth to feel more comfortable contacting people that they do not know very well because in contrast to voice communication, SMS is considered less personal. Certain things that teens dare not say to another person face-to-face can be done on SMS. Where shyness used to prevent some from communicating their feelings, text messaging has fully opened

the gates. [10] Texting is considered less nerve-wracking and embarrassing than asking a girl for a date face-to-face. [10]

Fourthly, at functional and symbolic levels, SMS allows youngsters to demonstrate that they are part of a social network and elevate their status within that network. The use of SMS consolidates a community of peers and allows them to differentiate themselves and their peers from others, such as adults. Within their small social networks, the use of particular words and symbols that are incorporated as "SMS language" also helps differentiate the networks through such common and "tacit" knowledge that is only shared by the community members. It provides a way of signifying group or community membership, as a way of marking outsiders and giving the group a clearer identity.

Among the reasons for the popularity of SMS, most of the youths polled indicated that the convenience of SMS is the most favourable outcome of SMS. Also the survey shows that the greater accessibility to people and the time-saving factor are important outcomes of SMS (Appendix 1, Figure 2).

CONS OF SMS TO YOUTH

As described above, SMS has gained popularity among the youths due to its many advantages. However, there are also cons of SMS to the youth. In our survey, most youths indicated that addiction to SMS and language usage are unfavourable outcomes of SMS (Appendix 1, Figure 3). Now we shall go on to explain in detail the cons of SMS.

Firstly, SMS is helpful and convenient to the youths, and hence they are in danger of getting addicted to SMS. A news report in London states that not finding a new message could be upsetting, especially for youngsters. [20] To them, receiving a message implied importance, boosted self-esteem, and knowledge that somebody cared and thought of them. [20] Many youngsters were paranoid and started worrying upon not receiving text messages. [20] Hence, they were constantly checking their mobile phones for new messages. It is clear that SMS addiction can potentially lead to serious distraction for the youth, especially when they start to expect people to drop them messages all the time. Furthermore, SMS is also distracting for youths who are still schooling. They can send SMS when the lessons are being delivered, dividing their attention span between listening to the teacher or lecturer. Thus these youths are unable to concentrate in class.

Since SMS addiction has such serious repercussions, we are interested to find out what the youths feel about it. One question in our survey seeks to establish if the youths themselves think they are indeed hooked to it. The survey results (Appendix 1, Figure 4) show that 45% of the youths pooled stated that they are either addicted, or most probably addicted to SMS. A further 20% were neutral to the idea, and 35% indicated that they are either probably not addicted, or not addicted at all. These results are relatively close to one another, and hence not very conclusive. As such, we shall look at another question that asked what is the longest period they have gone without SMS. As high as 75% of the youths revealed that they have only gone without SMS for about 1 to 3 hours (Appendix 1, Figure 5). This time frame is rather small, and as such, we conclude that youths here do show some signs of being addicted to SMS.

Secondly, just like the Internet, SMS has its side effects. Spam SMS is common nowadays as messages, especially jokes, are just forwarded blindly to anyone. Many parents worry that messages carrying fraudulent and pornographic content may harm their teenager children. However, from our survey, we learn that SMS spam is not ranked very highly as an unfavourable outcome of SMS (Appendix 1, Figure 3). This could be because messages with vulgar contents are relatively less common than jokes, and thus perhaps youths like the jokes sent, such that spam generally does not bother them.

Thirdly, SMS serves as a threat to the youth relationship with their peers too. Misunderstanding and miscommunications can arise due to SMS. It is extremely difficult to discern tone in SMS, just as in email. What seems to the sender to be a completely innocuous message may be grossly misinterpreted by the recipient, causing certain discomfort if not irreparable harm. Also, there might be occasions when they compose a message and sent it to the wrong person. If the message happens to be about the person that they sent to, their relationship would be soured.

Finally, using SMS will also cause loss of verbal communication, and affect our language usage. These aspects lead to stronger implications on the youths, and as such, they will be discussed in further details in the following section, which explain the social impacts of SMS on youths.

THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF SMS ON YOUTH

After ascertaining the reasons on why SMS is so popular, and the cons of SMS, we shall now focus on the social impact of SMS on youths.

Firstly, one important social impact that SMS has on the youths is that it has altered the means of communication among the youths. Nowadays, some of them rely more on SMS than verbal communication. Indeed, this trend is shown through our survey: 70% of the youths polled prefer SMS to verbal communication (Appendix 1, Figure 6). As briefly mentioned under the cons of SMS, this has serious implications as the loss of verbal communication could cause youths to become shy, and be unable to express themselves effectively in future. In many situations too, one is relatively more comfortable sending a message via SMS than talking over the phone. Hence, SMS is seen as an easier method to get certain messages across such as "breaking up with a girlfriend". This could be why young people breaking up via SMS is common.

Furthermore, SMS has altered the means of communication by decreasing physical interaction among youths with people around them. Though due to its many advantages, SMS helps youths keep in touch with a greater number of people, this form of interaction be lose out in significance to the traditional form of meeting up and chatting with friends. This could have an important long-term effect on culture, interaction and attitudes of the youth within society. In addition, another way of how SMS has altered the means of communication is that, unlike in the past, arranging an outing beforehand is no longer needed, as SMS is instantaneous. People are now no longer as difficult to reach as before, and so a simple SMS message is often enough to arrange a physical meeting and night out with friends.

Secondly, another social impact that SMS has on the youths is that there is now a change of language among the young SMS users. Due to the inherent limitations of 160 characters per SMS, there is a need for abbreviations or short-forms to save space, so as to squeeze as many ideas as possible in one single SMS. Sending messages like "See you tonight at 830pm" could be replaced by "c u tonite, 830". Spelling out the entire word would take up more spaces such that more than one message would need to be sent, increasing the cost of sending. Hence short-forms have evolved to make SMS more efficient, less time consuming and cheaper. From our survey, we can conclude that 90% of those polled use short–forms in their SMS (Appendix 1, Figure 7). Hence, we can infer that SMS "encourages a certain inventiveness to a language", [16] because the youths make use of abbreviations and smileys to maximise space, and to express emotions. As such, SMS is sometimes seen as "a new language to youth culture". [16] Now, the word manipulations that the youths use, are increasingly being understood by other users. [16]

As briefly mentioned under the cons of SMS, the form of language manipulation due to SMS usage has a detrimental effect on language as too many short-forms are used. Dr. Cynthia McVey, a psychology lecturer at Glasgow Caledonian University, summed this up very well, "Texting was second nature to a generation of young people. They do not write letters, so sitting down to write or type an essay is unusual and difficult. They revert to what they feel comfortable with. Texting is attractive and uncomplicated." [12] Hence some youths even unconsciously carry on with the usage of short-forms in their daily schoolwork, not only irritating their teachers, but also causing themselves to lose marks.

Thirdly, another social impact that SMS has on youths is that youths may become over-reliant on SMS. Unlike SMS addiction, over-reliance on SMS means that youths find it difficult to do without SMS, not because they are addicted to it, but because they simply prefer this form of communication to others. For these young people, letters, phone calls and even emails have lost out in importance and popularity to SMS. Thus it is not surprising that youths today send more SMS than emails or making voice calls. [16] As such, SMS is going to eclipse other forms of communication such as these. [11]

This over-reliance of SMS may create problems such as a communication divide between mobile phone users and non-mobile phone users. This may not be significant to people around 17-21 years old, as they can generally afford a mobile phone. However, this could be important to youths below 17, who may feel inferior to their peers who have mobile phones. Also, another form of communication divide could be between youths and the older generation. The latter may not be as receptive to SMS as the former are, thus potentially causing a breakdown in communication between them.

Fourthly, another social impact that SMS has is that it has caused the Generation-Y youth culture to gradually shift towards that of the West. [15] Interestingly, SMS has diverted the youth from their own traditional culture and they are now following the western trend of dating. [18] Also, leaning more to the West, youths strive to exhibit their personalities and individualities more through the use of mobile phones. Having a mobile helps reflect a youth's personal tastes through the choice of ring tones and screensavers. On top of that, due to the formation of mini social networks, youngsters in this age group are under increased pressure to keep "up to date" with the latest usage of SMS, such as entering competitions, making donations and checking movie timings.

This not only maintains their "street cred" image among their peers, but also ascertains their influence and reputation within their social networks. [6] Many a times too, receiving an SMS is a symbol of status, and acceptance and popularity of youth could sometimes be measured by the number of SMS the youth receives.

In addition to the above social impacts, SMS has contributed to the increasing phenomenon "*oya yubi sedai* - thumb tribe or thumb generation" amongst the youths. [17] This can be shown because few youngsters in Singapore do not know how to send a SMS. Their fingers can work nimbly on the keypad while typing out their messages on the mobile phone. This certainly makes them more susceptible to aliments such as Text Message Injury (TMI), which affects the fingers. Also another social impact of SMS to the youths is that SMS has the danger of causing youths to be inconsiderate individuals. The fact that SMS is a convenient way of communication means that youths can send SMS from any location at any time, and that they can just keep sending SMS as and when they deem fit. To some people, however, composing an SMS while one is in a face-to-face conversation with someone is just as rude as taking a voice call. [13] Very often too, youngsters assume that their SMS recipients are not busy. Thus, many a pleasant slumber have been interrupted by recurring "beep-beep...beep-beep of messages." [13]

In addition to the above social impacts on youths, SMS also has social impacts on the economy. SMS has helped reap huge profits for the SMS service providers due to the charges of exceeding SMS from their young subscribers. This could be due to the fact that SMS costs only five cents, which is considered cheap. As such the youths continue sending SMS, accumulating to huge amounts before they know it. Also youths can subscribe (for a fee) to entertainment news and advertisements for upcoming interesting events through SMS. Moreover, youths are spending a large percentage of their pocket money on paying the SMS download stations which offer a list of the latest ring tones, pictures and screensavers, some of which can be sent around by SMS. [14] Thus it could be said that SMS has spawned an industry that is on a roll when others are stagnating.

After looking at the social impacts that SMS has on the youths, we shall explore possible alternatives and solutions to the cons caused by SMS.

POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES AND SOLUTIONS TO SMS

SMS packs a range of communicative benefits into a simple and convenient way. As explained, SMS is instantaneous, and allows immediate communication. From this angle, one possible trusty alternative to SMS would be to make phone calls. Like SMS, a phone call is instantaneous and allows transfer of information in a quick and simple manner. Furthermore if the call is made from home/office, the cost per call is very low. Also looking from the cost side, one possible alternative of SMS is the use of emails. Sending emails are simple, and the cost is negligible. Thus through the use of emails, a possibly a wider larger of people could be reached within a short time. However, emails cannot be checked if there is no network or connection.

Another interesting alternative is the "text to voice" SMS. This is a new form of technology conducted by Singtel, and is currently undergoing testing. [9] This service basically allows users to type in their message and send to a residential number. The message is picked up by a computer, and turned into a voice message. However, it has not been too successful, because the voice is generated by a computer, which may not understand short-forms / abbreviations used in normal SMS. When implemented, this could undoubtedly be a new and interesting application.

With all the possible alternatives, there is no one single perfect alternative to SMS due to its advantages. Some have come close, but in the near future, SMS should still be the dominant player in the mobile market. Since this is the case, we shall look at some of the solutions to the cons of SMS, so as to alleviate the negative aspects of SMS and better integrate it into our lives.

One solution to the issue of SMS spam is to encourage youths not to forward any messages blindly. This could also help them to save cost. Also, to prevent miscommunication through SMS, perhaps youths should gauge the sensitivity level of the message, as well as the recipient. If the recipient is generally more sensitive, perhaps it would be better to make a voice call instead.

One possible solution for youths who are less seriously addicted to SMS is to encourage the youths to switch off their phones for half an hour per day to prevent them from staring at the mobile phone so frequently. As time passes, the length of the time switching off the phones could be increased. In the long run, perhaps they would spend be conditioned to spend less time checking for SMS. Counselling for the "hard core" addicted youths could also help to lessen the problem of SMS addiction. As for the language of SMS, perhaps it would be harder for youths to change, due to the

limitation of characters per SMS. Instead of "forcing" them to give up short-forms in their SMS, perhaps a more effective way will be to encourage them to check through their work thoroughly and consciously to check for errors in their work that are associated with the language usage of SMS. As long as these youths are able to distinguish between formal and informal language, the negative effects of SMS on language usage would be minimised.

After exploring the impact of youths and SMS in Singapore, we shall now present our case study of SMS among youths in Australia as a comparison to that of Singapore.

SMS AMONG YOUTHS IN AUSTRALIA

Like Singapore, Australia has a great number of mobile phone users. Experts predict that by 2004, the mobile will be driven by youngsters, with 80.3% of them either "owing a mobile phone or having access to one." [4] Unlike Singapore youths, however, young Australians are less excited over their mobile phones and "consider the phone as more of a luxury item than a necessity". [4] This can be seen because the Australian youths are more likely to reject an incoming call than their Singaporean counterparts. [4] Also another difference lie in the fact that youths in Singapore are more keen on personalising and differentiating their mobile phones, while youths in Australia are more concerned about the possible health problems that their mobile phones bring. [4]

After comparing and contrasting the general attitudes towards mobile phones in Singapore and Australia, we will touch on mobile marketing, the usage of SMS as an advertising medium, in Australia. We chose to focus in this advertising aspect because the use SMS as an advertising tool has proven to be successful in the Australian youth market.

In Australia, the use of SMS as an advertising medium is increasing in popularity. This is because youths are more open in accepting new ideas and methods, and find that they can obtain a lot of information that they need through the SMS. Hence to capitalise on this market, many companies have started SMS advertising. Naturally, the youths' markets are heavily targeted. [5]

Current research conducted by the Wireless Internet Panel in Europe indicates that youth will not accept SMS advertising at first. [5] However 64% of the same respondents changed their opinion if the SMS advertisements offered them some benefit. [5] One such benefit includes providing timely information to the youths. By providing the youths with preferred and important

information, companies can build and develop a relationship with these youths. Another benefit comes from informing the youths, especially the young women, of promotions, special offers, and trial prices.

Like Australia, Singapore does have come form of mobile marketing. For instance, Singtel has provided the "Star - Send" service for their users to check out the info like movie timings and weather. [9] Among the people using this SMS function, almost 95% are the youths. [9] However this form of marketing is still largely unexploited in Singapore. Since SMS marketing can be a valuable advertising tool for the wireless generation, which is almost exclusive to the youths, perhaps the marketers in Singapore could look more into this form of advertising.

The ascending popularity of SMS as a medium for advertisements, whether in Australia, Singapore, or any other country, may lead to unnecessary or detrimental effects on youths today. Some of them may blindly believe the gimmicks or lies that are sent to them on their mobile phones. Therefore, perhaps SMS marketers should seek parental opinion before engaging youths with their campaigns. Strict guidelines should also be drawn up to ensure the proper and ethical use of SMS as an advertising mean.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, it is clear that SMS has changed the way in which youngsters interact and communicate. It will continue to do so in the years to come, judging by the growth and impact of SMS in the 13-21 years age group. This trend will also incorporate SMS advertising in future generations. While SMS have increased communication and expanded their network of contacts through ease of accessibility and through offering greater freedom amongst others, at the same time, there are risks associated in terms of over reliance on SMS, SMS addiction and issues of SMS etiquette. No new technology is "hiccup free" however, and thus we believe that over time as this growth continues, many of the negative impacts associated with SMS will automatically remedy themselves as the youth become increasingly socially aware of this impact and take steps to rectify them.

Figure 1: Pie Chart Showing Average Number of SMS Sent by Responents Each Day
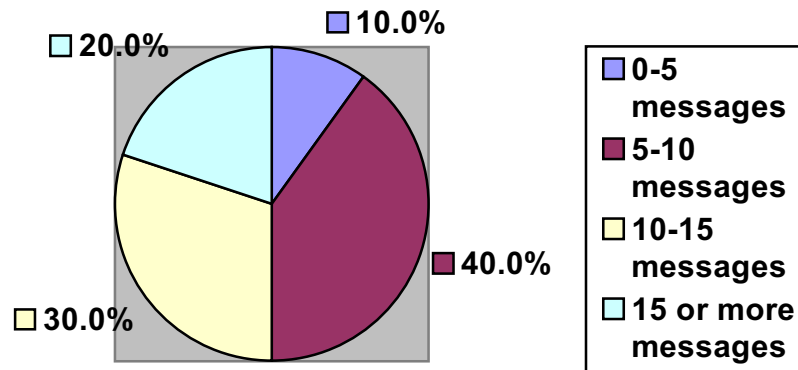

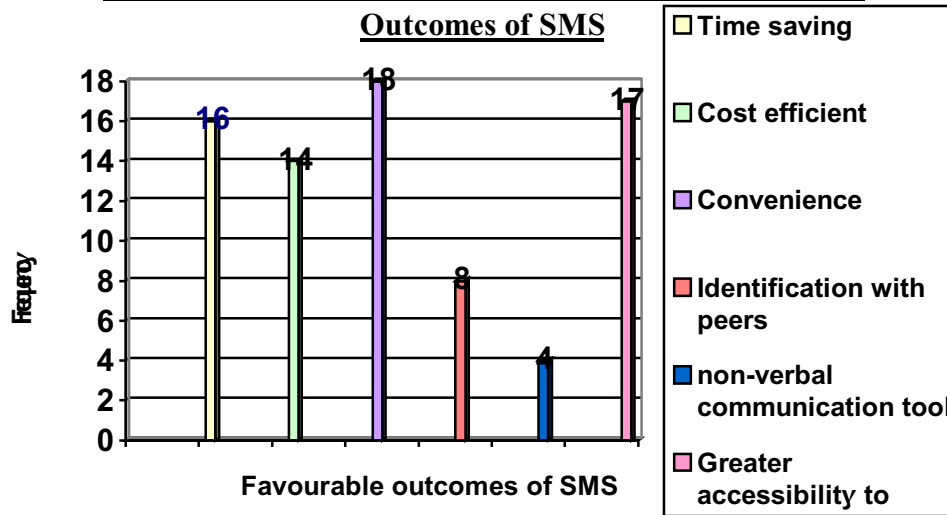**Figure 2: Histogram Showing Frequency of Favourable Outcomes of SMS**

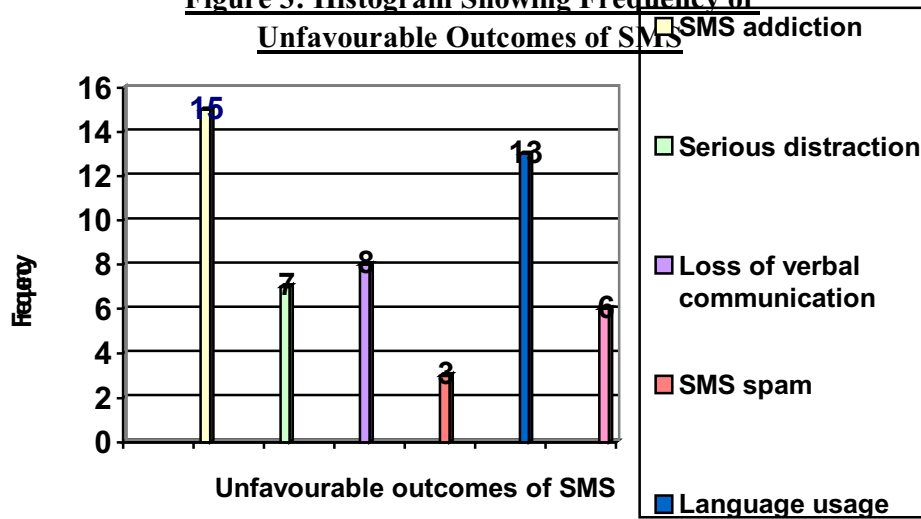**Figure 3: Histogram Showing Frequency of Unfavourable Outcomes of SMS**

Legend:
- SMS addiction
- Serious distraction
- Loss of verbal communication
- SMS spam
- Language usage

Y-axis: Frequency (0 to 16)
X-axis: Unfavourable outcomes of SMS

Values: 15, 7, 8, 3, 13, 6

Figure 4: Pie Chart Showing Respondents' Views on Whether They Are Addicted to SMS

- 20.0% — Yes
- 25.0% — Most probably
- 20.0% — Neutral
- 20.0% — Probably not
- 15.0% — No
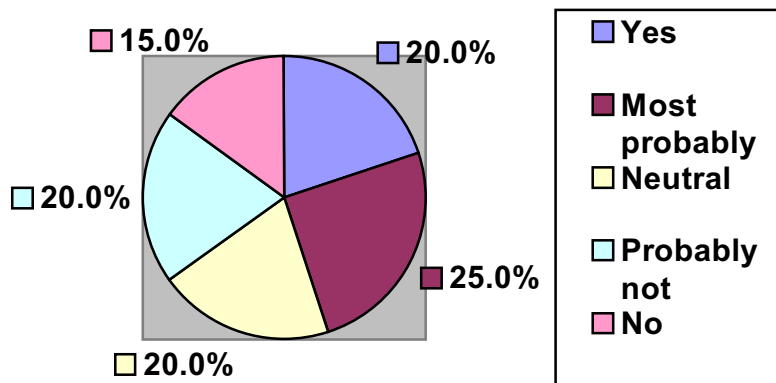
Figure 5: Pie Chart Showing Longest Period Which
Respondents Have Gone Without SMS-ing

5.0%   5.0%

15.0%

	0-1 hour
	1-3 hours
	3-6 hours
	6 hours or more

75.0%
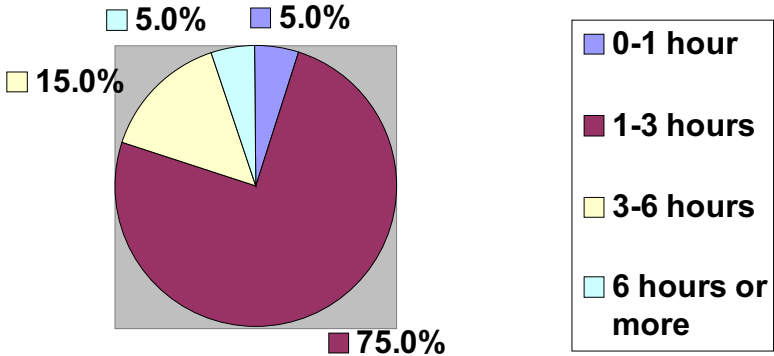
Figure 6: Pie Chart Showing Respondents' Preferred Mode of
Communication

30.0%

	SMS
	Verbal Communication

70.0%
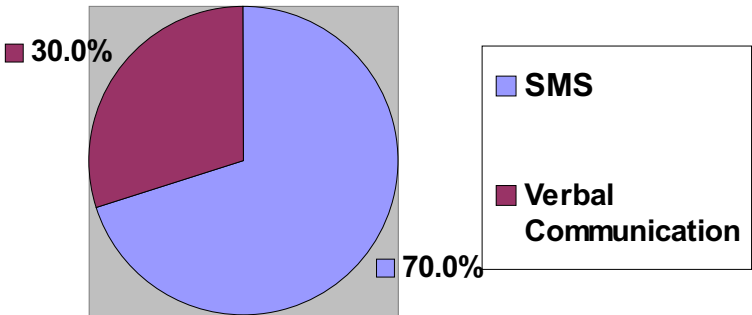
Figure 7: Pie Chart Showing Proportion of Respondents
Who Use Short Forms in Their SMS

10.0%

	Yes
	No

90.0%
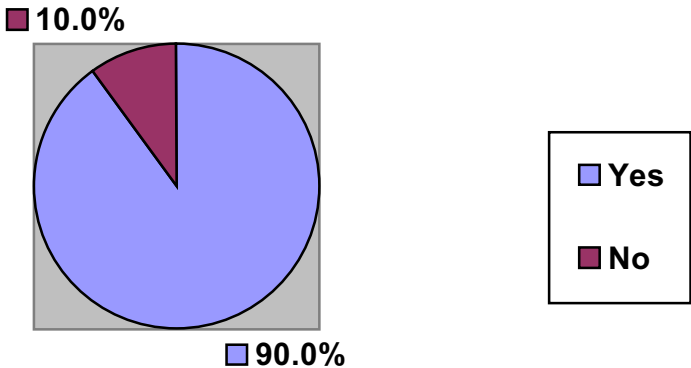
Survey on Youth and SMS Usage

We are conducting research on the social impact of Short Message Service (SMS) on the youth as part of our undergraduate dissertation. We would appreciate it if you could take a few moments to complete this survey to aide our research. All information is confidential and will not be used for any other purpose other than this study.

Particulars   Age: _____

                    Sex: M / F

1. Which is your preferred mode of communication: SMS or verbal communication?

- ☐ SMS
- ☐ Verbal communication

2. How many SMS messages do you send on average each day?

- ☐ 0-5 messages
- ☐ 5-10 messages
- ☐ 10-15 messages
- ☐ 15 or more messages

3. Do you use short forms in your SMS?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4. Do you think you are addicted to SMS?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Most probably
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Probably not
- ☐ No

5. What is the longest period which you have gone without SMS-ing?

- ☐ 0-1 hour
- ☐ 1-3 hours
- ☐ 3-6 hours
- ☐ 6 hours or more

6. In your opinion, what are the favourable outcome(s) of SMS?
(You may tick more than one.)

- ☐   Time saving
- ☐   Cost efficient
- ☐   Convenience
- ☐   Identification with peers
- ☐   A good non-verbal communication tool
- ☐   Greater accessibility to people
- ☐   Others: (please specify) _____

7. In your opinion, what are the unfavourable outcome(s) of SMS?
(You may tick more than one.)

- ☐   SMS Addiction
- ☐   Serious Distraction
- ☐   Loss of verbal communication
- ☐   SMS Spam
- ☐   Language usage
- ☐   Possibility of miscommunication or misunderstanding
- ☐   Others: (please specify) _____

<u>This is the end of the survey, thank you for your time.</u>