

TRUST AND SELF-DISCLOSURE
IN THE CONTEXT OF COMPUTER MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

TÜRKÜLER ERDOST

IN PARTIAL FULLFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

APRIL 2004

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Sencer Ayata
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nebi Sümer
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bengi Öner-Özkan
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bengi Öner-Özkan

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Deniz Şahin

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Yüksel

ABSTRACT

TRUST AND SELF-DISCLOSURE IN THE CONTEXT OF COMPUTER MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

Erdost, Türküler

M. S., Department of Psychology

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bengi Öner – Özkan

April 2004, 120 pages

This study was aimed to shed light on the effects of computer mediated communication on self-disclosure and trust which appear to be the two important concepts within interpersonal relations. To what extent the computer mediated communication differs from or similar to face-to-face communication in terms of trust and self-disclosure which play a key role in the establishment, development and maintenance of relationships was explored. Results were obtained from 100 people

who participated in synchronous communication via Internet. Computer administered multi scaled questionnaire was used for data collection. Results of 2 (communication medium: face-to-face vs. computer mediated communication) X 2 (intimacy of relationship: trust vs. self-disclosure) repeated measures of ANOVA revealed a significant main effect for communication medium and intimacy of relationship indicating that subjects reported more intimate relationships for face-to-face communication and the reported levels of self-disclosure were found to be higher than the reported levels of trust. Also an interaction was found for communication medium and intimacy of relationship. Although in terms of face-to-face communication no significant differences were found between trust and self-disclosure scores, trust scores were found to be significantly lower when people communicate via Internet. In addition, findings revealed that both measures of trust and self-disclosure were significantly lower in computer mediated communication condition than in face-to-face communication. Findings which did not completely but partially supported the hypothesis of the study were discussed within the context of literature and in terms of their theoretical as well as practical implications. Limitations and possible confounds were also mentioned for their potential influence on the results.

Keywords: Internet, Computer Mediated Communication, Self-Disclosure, Trust.

ÖZ

İNTERNET ORTAMINDA İLETİŞİM BAĞLAMINDA GÜVEN VE KENDİNİ AÇMA

Erdost, Türküler

Yüksek Lisans, Psikoloji Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Bengi Öner – Özkan

Nisan 2004, 120 sayfa

Bu çalışma, İnternet ortamında iletişimin kişilerarası ilişkilerde güven ve kendini açma gibi iki önemli kavram üzerindeki etkilerine ışık tutmayı amaçlamıştır. İnternet ortamında iletişimin yüzyüze iletişimden, ilişkilerin kurulması, geliştirilmesi ve sürdürülmesinde anahtar role sahip güven ve kendini açma kavramları bağlamında ne ölçüde farklılaştığı veya yüzyüze iletişime ne ölçüde benzediği araştırılmıştır. Sonuçlar İnternette eşzamanlı iletişimde bulunan 100

kişiden elde edilmiştir. Verilerin elde edilmesinde İnternet ortamında uygulanan, birçok ölçekten oluşan bir anket kullanılmıştır. 2 (iletişim ortamı: yüzyüze iletişim – İnternet ortamında iletişim) X 2 (ilişkide yakınlık: güven – kendini açma) ANOVA tekrarlı ölçüm sonuçları iletişim ortamı temel etkisi ve ilişkide yakınlık temel etkisi açısından anlamlı bulunmuştur. Yüzyüze iletişim sözkonusu olduğunda ilişkide yakınlık açısından daha yüksek değerler elde edilmiş ve kişilerin kendilerini açma ölçümleri güven ölçümlerine oranla daha yüksek bulunmuştur. İletişim ortamı ve ilişkide yakınlık açısından aynı zamanda etkileşim saptanmıştır. Yüzyüze iletişimde , kişilerin güven ve kendilerini açma puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark bulgulanmamışken, İnternet ortamında iletişimden elde edilen güven puanları, kendini açma puanlarından anlamlı derecede düşük bulunmuştur. Buna ek olarak, sonuçlar, hem güven puanlarının hem de kişilerin kendilerini açma puanlarının İnternet ortamında iletişimde, yüzyüze iletişime oranla anlamlı derecede düşük olduğunu göstermektedir. Çalışmanın hipotezlerini tam olarak olmasa da kısmen destekleyen sonuçlar, literatür kapsamında teoride ve pratikteki etkileri açısından tartışılmıştır. Sınırlılıklar ve olası farklı durumlar da sonuçlar üzerindeki potansiyel etkileri bakımından belirtilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İnternet, İnternet Ortamında İletişim, Kendini Açma, Güven.

To my mother and father, Gül and İlhan Erdost...

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the most tolerant supervisor in the world, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bengi Öner – Özkan for her guidance, encouragement and support. She did not only direct this thesis study but also met me with a bright smile whenever I got into trouble. Without her, this thesis project would have not been able to succeed.

Secondly, my gratitude is also extended to my examining committee members, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Deniz Şahin and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Yüksel for their invaluable effort, recommendations and support. At the date of my thesis' defense, my anxiety turned into enjoyment and satisfaction with their encouraging suggestions.

Specifically, I would like to express my thanks to Ali Demirbağ for his expert eyes and unbelievable and admirable energy.

I am also thankful to Prof. Dr. Ayşe Akın, for her tolerance, understanding and support. I appreciate her intelligence, experiences and kind heart.

I wish to express my appreciation to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tlin Genoz, Yonca Toker, Perihan Gler, Hatice Ayas and Selin Metin for all their contributions and help. I am also very grateful to Corinne Weisgerber, although she is far away from here, she did not withhold her interest to this thesis study.

I would like to offer special thanks to my dear friend Pelin Kaya. We have been together since many years and surely we will always be.

I feel grateful to Erdem Erdem. My attempts to bring his attention to scientific field did not succeed. Although during this process, he showed that he could have a great future as a social psychologist, he still has musical dreams. Thanks for his existence.

Finally, my whole family; my aunt Gven Bakır; my cousins Barıřta Erdost, zm Diner, Onur Utku, İpek Utku; Ali Nizamettinođlu; řurup; especially my dear mother Gl Erdost and my dear sister Alaz Erdost. I feel the distinct pleasure of having such a special family. They taught me how to believe in myself and they give their fondest love to me which is the most valuable thing I have in my life. They deserve this graduate degree more than I do.

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Date: 09.04.2004

Signature:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ÖZ.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	xi
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xv
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. The Definition of Self-Disclosure.....	3
1.2. Self-Disclosure as a Process and Its Importance.....	6
1.3. The Appropriate Self-Disclosure.....	10
1.4. Self-Disclosure, Gender and Culture.....	12
1.5. A Theoretical Approach About Self-Disclosure: Social Penetration Theory.....	14
1.5.1. Theory's Assumptions About Personality Structure.....	17
1.5.1.1. Breadth and Depth Dimensions.....	17
1.5.1.2. Reciprocity of Self-Disclosure.....	18
1.5.2. The Stages That Self-Disclosure Pass Through.....	20
1.6. Trust and Self-Disclosure.....	23
1.7. What is Computer-Mediated Communication?.....	24
1.7.1. Theories of Computer-Mediated Communication.....	26
1.7.1.1. The Cues Filtered-Out Theory – Reduced Social Cues Approach.....	26

1.7.1.2.	The Social Identification / Deindividuation Theory.....	30
1.7.1.3.	The Social Information Processing Theory.....	32
1.7.1.4.	The Hyperpersonal Perspective of CMC.....	33
1.8.	The Extent to Which Computer Mediated Communication is Similar to or Different from Face-to-Face Communication.....	35
1.8.1.	Importance of Verbal Communication.....	36
1.8.2.	Impression Formation.....	36
1.8.3.	Searching for Friends.....	37
1.8.4.	Nonverbal Cues.....	38
1.8.5.	Physical Environment and Physical Proximity.....	39
1.8.6.	Self-Disclosure and Development of Relationships.....	40
1.8.7.	Communication Context.....	46
1.8.8.	Equality that is Provided by the Communication Medium.....	47
1.8.9.	Social Norms.....	49
1.8.10.	Fake Identities.....	50
1.8.11.	Interaction Between The Two Medium.....	52
1.9.	Trust.....	55
1.9.1.	Trust Within Computer Mediated Relationships.....	58
1.10.	Uncertainty Reduction Theory.....	62
1.10.1.	Uncertainty Reduction in Computer-Mediated Communication..	62
1.11.	Statement of the Arguments.....	65
1.12.	Hypothesis of the Study.....	68
2.	METHOD.....	70
2.1.	Participants.....	70
2.2.	Materials and Measures.....	71
2.2.1.	Demographic Information.....	71
2.2.2.	Wheeless and Grotz' Revised Self-Disclosure Scale.....	71
2.2.3.	Rempel & Holmes' Trust Scale.....	73
2.2.4.	Miller Social Intimacy Scale.....	75
2.2.5.	Relationship Assessment Scale.....	76

2.2.6. Personal Report of Communication Apprehension – Dyadic Interaction Subscale.....	77
2.3. Validity Testing.....	78
2.4. Procedure.....	82
3. RESULTS.....	84
4. DISCUSSION.....	89
4.1. Limitations and Implications for Future Study.....	101
REFERENCES.....	105
APPENDICES	
A. Demographic Information.....	111
B. Wheelless and Grotz’ Revised Self-Disclosure Scale.....	113
C. Rempel & Holmes’ Trust Scale.....	115
D. Miller Social Intimacy Scale.....	117
E. Relationship Assessment Scale.....	119
F. Personal Report of Communication Apprehension – Dyadic Interaction Subscale.....	120

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE

1. Gender and Age Characteristics of the Participants.....	70
2. Pearson Correlations Between Scales.....	80
3. Means and Standard Deviations of the Scales.....	85
4. Means and Standard Deviations of Self-Disclosure and Trust In Terms of Gender.....	87

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE

1. Statement of the Argument (1) 66
2. Statement of the Argument (2) 68
3. Graph of Trust and Self-Disclosure Within Two Mediums..... 86

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Computer mediated communication (CMC) has recently become a new style of communication by which people are able to be in touch with one another and share information. The developing technology made it possible for people to discover new ways of communication to participate in social interaction. The concept of interpersonal processes itself is a problematic and complicated subject matter; but when computer mediated communication is also considered, it becomes much more puzzling to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon. Although previous researchers of communication have carried out various studies and ended up with new models in order to make sense of this complex process, as a first step it is necessary to understand the distinct nature of the alternatives to the face-to-face (FtF) relationships including CMC. It challenges our past assumptions about communication and close relationships. Internet provides an alternative social domain to its users and Internet's influence on our society is very important. It destroys the features of traditional interpersonal communication, allowing for "new opportunities and risks for the way individuals relate to one another" (Lea &

Spears, 1995; Williams & Rice, 1983; cited in Parks & Floyd, 1996a, p.1). Using Internet for technology, information processing, playing computer games, transferring files between computers and so on, now has moved to a different direction, from an “information superhighway to a communication superhighway” (Weisgerber, 2000). As being the members of society, people not only search for information but also need friends, social support, trust, love, attachment, companionship and being a part and member of a group, in short a sense of belonging. Existing literature about Internet also indicates the fact that, Internet is mostly used for the purposes of interpersonal communication recently (Kraut, Patterson, Lundmark, Kiesler, Mukophadyay, and Scherlis, 1998) and it is changing the way people communicate. This necessitated new researches that analyze this new context from a social science perspective rather than computer technology.

In the light of the existing literature, the current research addresses the relationship between trust and self-disclosure concepts with the moderating effect of CMC, which created a new social domain. Our cultural understandings of the nature of relationships may be changing with the existence of Internet. This study tests the hypothesis of “stranger on the train phenomenon” and “uncertainty reduction theory” by focusing on the relation of self-disclosure and trust in the CMC.

Stranger on the train phenomenon, proposed by Thibaut & Kelley (1959; cited in Altman & Taylor, 1973), asserts that sometimes friendships can be an obstacle for

intimate disclosure to occur. In some instances it is easier to reveal intimate information to a stranger, especially when there is no anticipated future interaction. That person does not threaten the discloser, as he/she will not behave in a way that would be to discloser's disadvantage. This phenomenon is also valid for CMC but two differential aspects should be mentioned while adapting this theory to computer context. One of them is, strangers who meet online can form relationships that last a long time. Further, although in real life, strangers who meet each other get the physical appearance information, people meeting online do not have a chance to obtain any physical cue. Taken into consideration all these factors, CMC can be suggested to facilitate self-disclosure rather than inhibit it.

Uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975; cited in Tidwell & Walther, 2001) proposes that, for the development of interpersonal relationships, uncertainty reduction is a fundamental prerequisite. With regard to limited nonverbal and social context cues in CMC, uncertainty reduction process is expected to be slower in that medium. As uncertainty was found to be related with low levels of trust (Dainton & Aylor, 2001), people are expected to experience lack of trust in CMC setting.

1.1. The Definition of Self-Disclosure

We live in a society composed of interpersonal bounds and communication gives people a chance to control their physical and social environments. Communication is a dynamic concept that involves exchange and interaction; and it is accepted as a

part of social system. Self-disclosure, named also as “social accessibility” (Rickers-Ovsianka, 1956) and “verbal accessibility” (Polansky, 1965) plays a major role in close relationships (cited in Wheelless & Grotz, 1976). Derlega, Metts, Petronio & Margulis (1993, p.9) claimed that self-disclosure and relationship development are associated in complex ways and they are “mutually transformative”. They argued that, as well as self-disclosure changes the direction and context of a relationship, sometimes the nature of the relationship also changes the meaning or impact of self-disclosure (Derlega et al., 1993) by which they clarify that both self-disclosure and relationship development are dynamic and subjective concepts.

Among many definitions of self-disclosure, Wheelless and Grotz (1976, p.338), defines “the process of disclosure as the process of communication through self-disclosive messages”. Cozby's (1973, p.73) definition of self-disclosure is: “any information about himself, which person A communicates verbally to a person B” which underlines the three aspects of self-disclosure, (1) information about the self, (2) verbal communication, and (3) interpersonal behavior (cited in Fisher, 1984). Archer (1980, p.183) defined self-disclosure as an “act of revealing information to others” (cited in Joinson, 2001). According to Chaikin and Derlega (1974, p.1), self-disclosure is the “process by which one person lets him/herself known by another person”. Bayne, Horton, Merry and Noyes (1994, p.136) have noted three types of self-disclosure: “(a) historical revelation (e.g., I felt the same way too), (b) expressing here and now reactions (e.g., I am feeling angry)” and a

one that is not relevant for computer mediated communication, “(c) non-verbal disclosures (e.g., facial expressions)” (cited in Weisgerber, 2000).

DeVito (1983, p.95) defined self-disclosure as “a type of communication in which information about the self which is normally kept hidden is communicated to another person,” and stated that self-disclosure facilitates the development and formation of genuine and meaningful interpersonal relationships (cited in Nakanishi, 1986). Fisher (1984, p.278), conceptually defined self-disclosure as “verbal behavior through which individuals truthfully, sincerely and intentionally communicate novel, ordinarily private information about themselves to one or more addresses”. Sydney Jourard (1971) defined self-disclosure as making ourselves "transparent" to others through our communication by reflecting them the unique aspects of ourselves.

Altman and Taylor (1973) have suggested that there are three basic components or dimensions of self-disclosure including; breadth (amount of information disclosed), depth (the intimacy of information disclosed), and duration (the amount of time spent disclosing). Jourard (1971) adds one more dimension to this aspect as honesty of the disclosure. Pearce and Sharp (1973) made another definition of self-disclosure and they underlined the private, voluntary, conscious, intimate and not readily available nature of self-disclosure (cited in Wheelless & Grotz, 1976).

1.2. Self-Disclosure As a Process and Its Importance

Self-disclosure is an essential aspect when our interactions are taken into consideration and it has the greatest importance. It has been suggested by others as well that self-disclosure plays a key role in the development of relationships of any kind and described as a fundamental aspect (Jourard, 1971; Altman & Taylor, 1973). People may be attempting to reach many types of goals when they disclose information to others as self-disclosure functions differently in a relationship. First, it contributes to the establishment, development, maintenance, and disengagement of relationships. Self-disclosure can improve interpersonal communication. The more people reveal information about themselves, the more the recipient builds complex cognitive models of him/ her.

Self-disclosure has not been only recognized as an important concept for social relationships, it is also important in psychotherapy (Fisher, 1984). Jourard (1971) suggested that openness and accessibility of the self to others is often related to general psychological health and adjustment. He claimed that low self-disclosure leads to increased tension, repression and suppression as defense mechanisms and a tendency to see others as threats. He mentioned self-disclosure's positive effect on feelings of guilt, shame and other difficulties people face with and keep hidden. Non-disclosure is stressful and gives harm to physical and psychological health. Contrary to this suggestion, privacy is also important for people at times. Derlega & Chaikin (1975) found a curvilinear relationship between mental health and self-disclosure and they claimed that very high and very low levels of self-disclosure

are associated with poor adjustment. They concluded that, the moderate level of disclosure is positively correlated with mental health.

The process of self-disclosure is not an easy process, or activity, to take part in. Self-disclosure is seen as a useful strategy for sharing information with others. By sharing information, we become more intimate with other people and our interpersonal relationship is strengthened. Researchers generally equalize intimacy with the degree of depth of self-disclosure (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Derlega et al., 1993; Jourard, 1971). According to Waring (1987), “self-disclosure is one aspect of how close a couple feels towards one another and thus a factor that could increase the couple’s intimacy” (cited in Derlega et al., 1993, p.18).

Reis and Shaver (1988) suggested that, intimacy is mainly a process of an escalating reciprocity of self-disclosure in which each individual feels his or her innermost self validated, understood, and cared for by the other (cited in Aron, Aron and Smollan, 1992, p.598).

“In self-disclosure research, the *norm of reciprocity* refers to the tendency for recipients to match the level of intimacy in the disclosure they return with the level of intimacy in the disclosure they receive”. (Derlega et al., 1993, p.33) According to this norm, people want to maintain equity of exchange by equalizing both the rewards and the risks of self-disclosure (Derlega et al., 1993). Derlega et al. (1993) suggests that because friends already have developed a level of trust and confidence in each other, they do not need to show and prove that trust by reciprocating each time (Derlega et al., 1993).

According to the “social attraction explanation” of disclosure reciprocity:

1. A reveals intimate information to B.
2. B infers that A’s disclosure was based on his liking for him.
3. B likes A.
4. B reveals intimate information to A (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975, p.40).

Zick Rubin’s (1974) theory of reciprocity is based on the principals of modeling and trust (cited in Derlega & Chaikin, 1975). He argued that reciprocity is a function of modeling: “Especially when norms of appropriate behavior are not clearly defined, people look to one another for cues to what sort of response is called for.” (cited in Derlega & Chaikin, 1975, p.43-44). In other words people use their behaviors as a guide. However, occurrence of modeling of intimate self-disclosure is slightly related with the level of trust (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975). The existence of trust is an indication for people that the discloser will reciprocate in a positive manner like acceptance, social approval and so on and this will not threaten him/her. So, from this point of view we came to the consequence that another person’s disclosure is a powerful sign for us to trust him/her as well as she/he also trusts us. The reason why patterns of self-disclosure reciprocity differs between strangers and friends is that, first of all, “the obligation to reciprocate disclosure may be stronger between strangers than between friends” (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975, p.50). Especially this is true for the early stages of the relationship development as it is found to be necessary to prove trust for the advancement of the relationship. However, later on, after the partners establish a level of trust and closeness, they do not need for a strict reciprocation (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975).

Another purpose of self-disclosure is social validation, getting feedback or getting help (Derlega et al., 1993). Self-disclosure increases the self-awareness (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975). In the process of describing yourself to others, you get a clearer view of your inner self. Moreover, feedback after self-disclosure has a positive effect on problem solving. With the help of feedback, people get more aware of themselves. When people disclose information to others, they may be attempting to present a positive, likable or true image of themselves and to create a good impression by selectively presenting information, to get information from others or even to give a message about what they want.

In self-disclosure researches it is very difficult to end up with consistent findings, as self-disclosure is a very problematic concept to make generalizations. Miller and Read (1987) claimed that those inconsistencies are because of discloser's goals and they attributed the intimacy and amount of the information disclosed to the disclosers' goals (cited in Oguchi, 1991). Oguchi's research confirmed the effectiveness of the goal-based model of self-disclosure.

The goal-based model of self-disclosure postulates four sets of components; goals to be attained in relationship with another (e.g., making a friend), strategies to attain the goals (e.g., disclose appropriately), resources available to carry out the strategies (e.g., good social skills), and beliefs about the world (e.g., people are fun) (Oguchi, 1991, p.180).

Oguchi also suggested that depending on the goals, differential strategies are used and depending on the strategies differential levels of self-disclosure is seen. When the goal was to make a positive impression, subjects express sympathy and

selectively self-present themselves more. Moreover, in many ways, the norm of reciprocity functions as a goal too. In order for people to get information from others, people self-disclose themselves and make other people feel to reciprocate.

1.3. The Appropriate Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure is an intentional act. Because of its risks such as threats to privacy, people are very conscious about the process of self-disclosure. Although people need to share personal information, they also have a need to preserve privacy (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975; Derlega et al., 1993). They asserted that people should balance their needs of maintaining relationship intimacy versus preserving their personal autonomy and individual identity and they should know the responsibility of revealing their own secrets, as overdisclosure also leads to deviant and maladaptive behavior. “In a privacy regulation model of self-disclosure, privacy represents control over the amount and kind of information exchange that persons have with one another” (Derlega et al., 1993, p.67). The more individuals determine the amount of information they reveal about themselves, the more their sense of privacy is maintained. Derlega et al. (1993) shed light on the distinction between private information and secrets. According to their explanation, private information is the information that others know only when we want to disclose like our opinions, beliefs and so on. However, secrets include information that is kept hidden or concealed from others because of their embarrassing or threatening nature. Secrets end up with the responsibility of the information for the receiver. Derlega et al. (1993) also notes that one can lose his/her privacy by choosing an

inappropriate recipient, such as someone who shares your secrets with others, abuses your trust or who uses your secrets against you. Self-disclosure has been seen as a prerequisite for healthy emotional functioning but also, it could be inappropriate and self-defeating when it is not done at the correct time, in the correct context, in the correct way and to the correct recipient (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975; Derlega et al., 1993). So, appropriate self-disclosure is related with context, time, physical setting, topic, goal and the target.

According to Altman (1975, p.6), privacy is conceived as an “*interpersonal boundary process* by which a person or group regulates interaction with others” (cited in Derlega et al., 1993). Derlega & Chaikin (1977) points out two kinds of boundaries about self-disclosure (cited in Derlega et al., 1993). One of them is the *dyadic boundary*, which is seen by the individual as safe to disclose information to the recipient and within which the self-disclosure will be kept by the recipient. The second one is the *self (or personal) boundary* pointing to the information about oneself, which is withheld or concealed from the other because of the perceived risks. As, self-disclosure gives the recipient a sense of power over the discloser, people must be careful about the intention of the target.

So, the decision to self-disclose depends on the degree of risk that a person perceives. According to Kelvin (1977), a person’s *tolerance of vulnerability* determines the probability of disclosure of private information (cited in Derlega et al., 1993). Rather than only one factor, there are many factors which determine

one's tolerance of vulnerability. Rawlins (1983) indicated trust as a critical factor and suggested that trust of the recipient is a component that affects people's judgements of risk (cited in Derlega et al., 1993). He stated, when people need to reveal private information with a high level of trust, their tolerance level increases towards possible vulnerabilities. However, in case of low trust and high need to reveal personal information, the person must decide carefully whether to reveal or not. When there is a low desire to be open and a high trust level, the person may reveal that information for the enhancement of the relationship. When there is low desire to be open and a low trust, they tend not to reveal and keep the information hidden (Derlega et al, 1993).

1.4. Self-Disclosure, Gender and Culture

The most common explanation about self-disclosure focuses on a gender perspective. In general women are found to be more expressive, high in socio-emotional content, concerned about establishing lots of interpersonal relationships, whereas men are expected to be less expressive, low in socio-emotional content and competitive (Jourard, 1971; Shaffer & Ogden, 1986; Derlega et al., 1993). According to Derlega et al. (1993), gender role expectations make women and men assign different goals for self-disclosure other than using it for communication purposes. Men are expected to hide their feelings and be more objective whereas the opposite is valid for women; they are expected not to avoid openness and intimacy (Shaffer & Ogden, 1986).

For mechanisms underlying gender differences in self-disclosure, Derlega et al. (1993), mentioned three topics. One of them is “the different value placed on self-disclosure in male and female subcultures” (p.55) which means, females disclose their affections and they like talking about their relations more than males do. Secondly, they mentioned “gender-related social norms about appropriate self-disclosure for males and females” (p.56) (including the recipient, the topic, the context of self-disclosure and the level of intimacy) as determining gender factor of self-disclosure. Lastly, “different expectancies about self-disclosure” (p.57) affects the self-disclosure for males and females in terms of gender perspective. People may perceive that men are unwilling or less comfortable while talking about personal feelings than are women, in turn, while talking with men, people choose topics other than personal feelings, and this discourages men from talking about intimate topics.

It is important to note that communication is a product of culture as well as culture is a product of communication. So it is logical to expect different communication patterns in different cultural contexts. The culture we live within affects all aspects of our communication. According to Greetz (1973, p.89) culture is a

historically transmitted patterns of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life (cited in Stamp, 1999).

In the literature wide variability was found across cultures in terms of racial and ethnic differences in self-disclosure (Deering, G., 1999). It can be said that, gender

differences within self-disclosure are also shaped by the cultural differences. Gender differences emerge from our evaluations of life events which are influenced crucially from cultural stereotypes.

1.5. A Theoretical Approach About Self-Disclosure: Social Penetration Theory

An interpersonal theory that has been used to examine and explain the development of FtF relationships is “social penetration theory” (Altman & Taylor, 1973). Social penetration theory is developed by Irwin Altman and Dalmis Taylor and it emphasizes the importance of viewing interpersonal relationships from a multilevel behavioral perspective including cognitive, verbal, nonverbal and environmentally oriented behaviors.

Both “social penetration theory” and “incremental exchange theory” are theories which assume that more intimate disclosures occur as a relationship progresses. Within these theories, rewards and costs are also considered as the major determinants of the progress of the relationship in accordance with the social exchange theory’s assumptions (Chaikin & Derlega, 1974). According to them, within any interpersonal interaction there is an “exchange” and self-disclosure is the major determining component of relational development. Although interpersonal exchange involves many aspects such as verbal (information exchange, etc.), nonverbal (the use of body, gestures, postures, facial expressions,

etc.) and environmentally oriented behaviors (personal distance, use of physical objects, etc.), in this research the focus is on the verbal part.

“‘Social penetration’ refers to (1) overt interpersonal behaviors which take place in social interaction and (2) internal subjective processes which precede, accompany and follow overt exchange” (Altman & Taylor, 1973, p.5). The fundamental assumption of this theory is that “social penetration process is orderly and proceeds through stages over time” (p.5). According to this theory “interpersonal exchange gradually progresses from superficial, nonintimate areas to more intimate, deeper layers of the selves of the social actors” (p.6). The conversation between partners moves from superficial biographical features to more intimate levels such as emotions and attitudes. So, by considering the past interactions and future predictions, partners decide whether to proceed the relationship further or not.

The second assumption of the theory is that, people try to obtain the most profitable outcomes for themselves in social relationships by increasing the rewards and decreasing the costs. Thibaut and Kelley (1959, p.12) summarize rewards as “pleasures, satisfactions, and gratifications the person enjoys” (cited in Altman & Taylor, 1973, p. 31). They equalize rewards with drive reduction or need fulfillment and they conceptualize costs as any factor that inhibits or deters any action (quoted in Altman & Taylor, 1973). They indicate that embarrassment, conflict or anxiety necessitates great physical or mental effort, so that they can be

defined as costs. Thus, people try to elicit the behaviors from others that will satisfy their own needs and try to be away from aversive aspects of an interaction. According to the theory, “the reward/cost ratio” refers to the balance of positive and negative aspects in a social interaction. The greater the ratio of rewards to costs, the more satisfying the relationship and the more rapid the penetration process.

According to social penetration theory, people not only assess the reward/cost balance of an interaction but also predict implications of future interactions. If the evaluation of the obtained rewards and costs, prediction of future outcomes and comparison of the relationship with the alternative ones result in a favorable decision, the next process would be to continue the relationship and the developing stages of an interpersonal relationship would be oriented to positive or rewarding aspects.

From another point of view, one may also feel satisfied as a receiver because others’ self-disclosures are the signs of trust towards the recipient. Intimacy and self-disclosure are two key concepts that increase during relationship development according to social penetration theory. Barriers towards intimacy are removed with self-disclosure process and self-disclosure can also function as a direct reward or cost by itself (Altman & Taylor, 1973). Having a relationship with others, mutual satisfactions, overcoming your own loneliness are all considered to be rewards all

of which stresses the importance of communication, more specifically self-disclosure.

1.5.1. Theory's Assumptions about Personality Structure

In order to explain the nature of the self-disclosure, social exchange theories make certain assumptions about the structure of personality. Altman & Taylor (1973, p.15) describe personality as the “systematic organization of an almost indefinite numbers of items” including people’s “ideas, beliefs, feelings and emotions about themselves and others and the world”.

1.5.1.1. Breadth and Depth Dimensions of Personality

Within this framework there are two major dimensions of personality which are *breadth* and *depth*. The *breadth* dimension refers to the number of major areas and categories of personality each of which contains a number of specific aspects. The *depth* dimension mentions the personal significance of the topical areas. Fundamentally, Altman and Taylor compare people to onions to mention the multilayered nature of personality and the complexity of verbal communication. More available aspects exist at the outer-peripheral layers (biographical information) whereas, more fundamental and core characteristics of their personality (political views, self-image, trust in others) exist at the inner-central layers. “The more central areas have a greater impact on peripheral areas and have more linkages to other aspects of personality” (Altman & Taylor, 1973, p.18). Even one central property gives the general idea about many peripheral personality

properties, as at central layers information is unique than common, socially undesirable than desirable and invisible than visible. “The greater the depth of a characteristic, the greater the probability that it represents a vulnerable aspect of personality” (Altman & Taylor, 1973, p.18). As people continue to interact and maintain a relationship, they gradually move toward deeper areas of their mutual personalities. Altman & Taylor (1973) stated that early attraction of people is based on superficial characteristics which are at outer, peripheral layers of personality such as similarity of biographical characteristics but later in the relationship, more central aspects of personality become important like attitudes and values. New areas of personality become accessible and more intimate exchange develops. But, this is not a mechanical process so there can be changes. Moreover, as it is mentioned before, all these are complex structures and people need their privacy even in an intimate relationship. Because of this we cannot talk about a total self-disclosure and total intimacy (Simmel, 1950; cited in Derlega & Chaikin, 1975). So there should be balance between self-disclosure and respect for privacy.

1.5.1.2. Reciprocity of Self-Disclosure

People are searching for an equal exchange between their own communication and their partners’ in their social relationships which Altman and Taylor (1973) asserted as an important aspect of interpersonal relationships, “reciprocity” of communication exchange and disclosure as mentioned before. Jourard (1971) also views self-disclosure as a reciprocal process. That means, openness and intimacy

by one person leads to openness and intimacy in the other person. Jourard labeled the phenomenon of 'disclosure reciprocity' as 'dyadic effect'. From the perspective of the social penetration framework, dynamics of the relationships between people, level of intimacy topics discussed, properties of the situation, and characteristics of the participants are the conditions which operate the reciprocity process. What this function provides is a sense of trust that deepens in the relationship. According to Altman & Taylor (1973), disclosure demands trust or a trustworthy recipient. As a result of revealing, the recipient perceives that the other person has trusted him or her, which is also a rewarding fact. This leads to the recipient's reciprocation with his or her own disclosure. So, it appears that trusting and being trusted is necessary while talking about reciprocity of exchange.

Fisher (1984) mentions three hypotheses that explain "the reciprocity effect" or "the dyadic effect" in his article. The first one is the *trust attraction hypothesis*. This claims that disclosure is the proof of trust in the recipient which is an attractive thing and leads to reciprocal disclosure as an evidence of mutual liking. *The social exchange hypothesis* suggests that as a result of the norm of equity, people feel an obligation to reciprocate the self-disclosure. The third hypothesis is stated as *the modeling hypothesis*, and Fisher suggests that mostly when the situation is found ambiguous, people respond according to the available cues and they reciprocate in case of self-disclosure. Fisher (1984) asserts that, trust and attraction go together, which means the lower the levels of trust and attraction, the lower the likelihood of self-disclosure to occur.

Another point that social penetration theory gives importance is the personal characteristics of people which they think affects the penetration process. For instance people who have communication problems do not want to enter into relationships with others whereas people who are outgoing reveal themselves much more to others. As well as personality characteristics, situational factors are also important according to social penetration theory's assumptions. If people are unable to leave a relationship and if they feel that dealing with that person is an obligation for them, they feel restrained and this has a negative impact on the process of exchange. However if they know that they will not see that person again people let others know them in details.

Another hypothesis of the theory is about the depenetration (dissolution) process suggesting that, relationships do not just grow forever or remain stable, they sometimes break up. According to this theoretical framework, at this dissolution stage of interpersonal relationships, the process is just like the development stage. In spite of the orderly and gradually progression model, at this stage there is gradually and orderly dissolution. Communicative action move to a lesser extent as well as the amount of rewards and the level of satisfaction.

1.5.2. The Stages That The Pattern of Disclosure Pass Through

Social penetration process is said to be a multistage phenomenon (Altman & Taylor, 1973). The first stage is called as *orientation stage*. This is the earliest

stage of an interaction where individuals reveal only the stereotyped, most superficial, socially desirable aspects of their personalities. They tend to form a favorable image and they tend to behave in a gentle and culturally approved manner. At the second stage, *exploratory affective exchange stage*, although growth is still at superficial areas and there is a limit at private areas, people represent an increased uniqueness and a greater willingness to make themselves accessible. At the *affective exchange stage*, the third one, individuals interact with one another in more personal areas and this stage characterizes close friendships. Criticism is done without any threat to the relationship. Very intimate information is still limited and stereotyped. Barriers removed at most of the intimate areas. The fourth and the last stage is the *stable exchange stage*. At this stage individuals know one another very well and there is synchrony and mutuality. They can interpret and predict their behaviors and feelings so it can be said that there exists high level of trust towards each other. Although we can talk about some stages that relationships go through, social penetration process does not have a static functioning and all relationships do not proceed to the same point in the same way.

Social penetration theory has been one of the most widely accepted descriptions of how disclosure functions in the development of relationships. It forms the basis of Knapp and Vangelisti's (1991) "staircase model of relationship stages" (cited in Derlega et al., 1993). Knapp and Vangelisti (1991) suggest two processes as coming together and coming apart. The stage of coming together, involves five stages including; initiating (small talk and role appropriate behavior),

experimenting (questions mostly about similarities and common interests, demographic information, no negative and highly personal self-disclosure), intensifying (self-disclosure breadth and depth increases, commitment is expressed verbally), integrating (increased levels of self-disclosure, becoming a couple, future plans together, a joint identity) and bonding (marriage). Five-stage process is relevant for disengagement also, including differentiating, circumscribing, stagnating, avoiding and terminating. According to this, people do not become intimate randomly but this process is very systematic and sequential same as social penetration theory's assumptions.

Another theory that resembles social penetration theory in terms of its stage-like framework is incremental exchange theory (IET; Huesmann & Levinger, 1972; Levinger & Snoek, 1972; cited in Chaikin & Derlega, 1974). This theory suggests three levels for relationships. According to IET, at the first stage, *awareness stage*, people are making evaluations about rewards of having a social contact with that person. The second stage is *surface contact stage* at which people have a superficial and stereotyped interaction and with this information they decide whether to continue this relationship or not. The last stage is called as *mutuality* and at that level they begin to disclose personal feelings and they talk about their expectancies.

1.6. Trust and Self-Disclosure

Since trust is an important factor in interpersonal relationships, a research studying self-disclosure must also focus on the relationship between trust and self-disclosure. In most relationships trust must exist before the disclosure of critical information can occur. Steel's (1991) study's results suggest that trust is necessary for self-disclosure to occur and self-disclosure is in part a product of trust.

“Altman & Taylor (1973) assumed self-disclosure as the barometer of trust and also a platform for its development” (cited in Holmes, 1991, p.70). They also argued that development of trust is affected by reciprocity of self-disclosure and especially the balance of exchange in the early stages of the relationships. “Intimate disclosure indicates that the discloser trusts his listener” (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975, p.3) and according to Wheelless & Grotz (1977), self-disclosing acts leads to trust towards the revealer (cited in Mitchell, 1990).

Altman and Taylor (1973) declared that in order to reach a sense of mutual trustworthiness in a relationship, breadth and depth of self-disclosure should be equalized between the communication partners. In addition, according to them, by reciprocal self-disclosure, partners both take risk and this also provides a security and equal involvement. Equal and growing involvement results in high levels of trust as it reduces uncertainty. Here the perceived quality is also very important as well as the balance of exchange and quantity.

“Mutual openness helps accelerate the development of a relationship, and development of trust” (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975, p.58). It is declared in McKenna, Green and Gleason’s (2002) study that, self-disclosure and also the partner disclosure results in increased experience of intimacy. They also pointed out that, “disclosing quite intimate information about oneself normally occurs only after liking and trust have been established between relationship partners” (p.10).

Derlega and Chaikin (1975) claimed that people do not prefer disclosing intimate aspects of their selves until they are confident that this information will not pass to others. This is in order not to risk being rejected or making fun of by other people. Results of the Wheeler and Grotz’s study (1975) indicated that, “more consciously intended disclosure and greater amounts of disclosure were related to higher trust in disclosure targets”. Another explanation about trust and self-disclosure relationship was done by D. V. Fisher (1984). He mentioned that as social penetration process develops up to a certain point, trust and attraction have been also developing as mutually reinforcing processes. He asserted “the lower the levels of trust and attraction found in long-term relationships, the less likely is the occurrence of self-disclosure” (p.290).

1.7. What is Computer-Mediated Communication?

Computer mediated communication (CMC) is a process in which there is a level of connection between individuals including dialogs and group conversations by having verbal communication or information exchange through the use of a

computer network or a computer conferencing system. It is a communication that takes place in the Internet domain in which people do not have an opportunity to be with others physically and spatially, although they share a common space, Internet medium. According to Walther (1992, p.52), CMC is “synchronous [simultaneous] or asynchronous [delayed] electronic mail and computer conferencing, by which senders encode in-text messages that are relayed from senders’ computers to receivers” (cited in Cornwell & Lundgren, 2001). Synchronous CMC refers to computer-mediated interaction in which participants communicate simultaneously and have to meet on-line at the same time like real life FtF communication in which they share a common time context. “Asynchronous CMC by contrast, allows participants to read and write messages at independent times without having to be online at the same time” (Walther, 1994; cited in Weisgerber, 2000, p.2). This study examines synchronous (simultaneous) communication which is called as “chatting” excluding the electronic mail. In Internet communication people need to transform their thoughts and feelings into words so that they can be read on the computer screen. In order for this, people join channels according to their interests, which are called as “chat rooms”. “Chat rooms are electronic venues on the Internet where people can communicate with other Internet users” (Cornwell & Lundgren, 2001, p.198). Cyberspace is called as a “fertile ground for new social relationships, roles and a sense of self” (Riva & Galimberti, 1997, p.142). In cyberspace, people form groups consist of people who share similar interests and relationships, culture, community and a sense of presence are products of verbal communication. As

cited in Riva & Galimberti's (1997) study, De Kerckhove (1988) claimed that, although television made us "image consumers" cyberspace give us a chance to produce information. Also, more than being aware of themselves, people have social relationships. So, different from other technological instruments, cyberspace gives us an active position.

1.7.1. Theories Of Computer Mediated Communication

The dynamics of cyberspace demands special effort and work on the existing theories of interpersonal communication. Other than examining the adaptability of traditional theories, studies focus on clearly defining new approaches for this new communication context. In this part, these new theoretical frameworks of CMC will be discussed.

1.7.1.1. The Cues-Filtered-Out Theory – Reduced Social Cues Approach

CMC is determined as poorer in social quality than FtF communication by most of the researchers. They argued that, interacting via Internet is impersonal and people do not communicate really with people (Parks & Floyd, 1996a). There are two approaches that should be mentioned, which were based on the assumptions of "social presence theory" (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976; cited in Walther, Anderson & Park, 1994) to explain the impersonal nature of CMC relating: "cues filtered out theory" and "reduced social cues approach". Social presence theory's fundamental concept is the social presence or the salience of the person's physical appearance in an interaction. They suggest that, as there are fewer channels in

communication medium, people pay less attention to the presence of others (Walther et al., 1994). From this point of view, as the nonverbal channels are eliminated in CMC, social presence would be lower and messages are said to be more impersonal (Walther et al., 1994). People become depersonalized because the attention focuses on the written text, not the social context (Kiesler, Siegel & McGuire, 1984).

In 1987, Culnan and Markus described an approach called “cues filtered out theory” (CFO) which states that computer medium filters out some aspects of social interaction such as visual cues, physical proximity and it has a low social presence when compared with FtF communication (cited in Parks & Floyd, 1996a; Walther et al., 1994). This theory suggests that, as a result of reduction of nonverbal cues in CMC, depersonalized communication occurs and this leads to decreased awareness of others. Walther et al. (1994) define “cues filtered out perspective” as an “umbrella term” of theories that deal with antisocial and impersonal communication in CMC.

Another very influential model is the “reduced social cues approach” (RSC; Kiesler et al., 1984) which also argues that text-only communication filters out some social contextual cues and because of this it leads to limited interaction. Social cues are determining factors for social interaction and they define the aspects of social context in which interpersonal communication occurs. In CMC there is no physical environment and nonverbal cues are said to be absent and this

situation is called as the reason of uninhibited communication such as impolite statements, swearing and sexually explicit conversations by most of the computer communication researchers (Kiesler & Sproull, 1992; cited in Parks & Roberts, 1998). The lack of cues undermines the perception of leadership, status, and power, and leads to reduced impact of social norms and therefore to antinormative behavior (Kiesler et al., 1984). The resulting disinhibited behavior is called as “flaming”. “Flaming” which means “practice of expressing oneself more strongly on the computer than one would in other communication settings especially in an aggressive, antinormative manner” (Kiesler, et al., 1984, p.1130) causes a hostile, impersonal atmosphere and because of its linguistic features it has been criticized by most of the people. It can be speculated to have also negative effects on the development of relationships.

So, according to those two approaches, people while relating via Internet form more static and less intimate relationships as Internet reduces their perception of presence and connection. In order for the relationships that are formed, developed or maintained on Internet to reach the same intimacy level with real life relations, more stimuli including the five sensations are needed (Kiesler, et al., 1984; Parks & Floyd, 1996a; Walther, et al., 1994). Some researchers (Beninger, 1987; Berry, 1995; Heim, 1992; Stoll, 1995) argue that “the illusion of community can be created” via computer-mediated communication (cited in Parks & Floyd, 1996a, p.1). Dubrovsky, Kiesler and Sethna (1991) suggested in their study that, because of the reduced cues in CMC, people loose their sight that the messages are more

than monologs and they are a part of communication (cited in Hancock & Dunham, 2001). All these may lead to problems and miscommunications. Lacking auditory, spatial and visual cues, a message is ambiguous. While reading typed messages people wear glasses made up of their expectancies, wishes, and so on. This distorts the intended meaning of the person who writes it and leads to misunderstandings and conflict.

Walther (1992) argues that people have a chance to use remaining cues available in CMC such as “content and linguistic strategies” instead of nonverbal cues (cited in Walther & Tidwell, 2002). People find ways of expressing nonverbal behavior in the Internet through the use of smilies (Rintel & Pittam, 1997) by using keyboard keys to express emotion within text. Also special kinds of writing styles, particular abbreviations, personalized communication styles and so on act much like a nonverbal behavior and they can be used to overcome the deficiencies of the medium (Rintel & Pittam, 1997; Riva & Galimberti, 1997).

In addition, within the Internet, people reach more information with the increasing use of pictures, sound and video in World Wide Web (Parks & Floyd, 1996a). As technology improves, the reduced cue theory seems to lose its popularity in recent researchers. However, although attempts are being made to remedy this limitation problem, the five sensations will never be integrated into this medium different from FtF communication.

Two important theories that challenges and opposes “cues filtered out theory” and “reduced social cues approach” are “social information processing theory” and “the social identification/deindividuation theory”. These are positive approaches to CMC which demonstrate that CMC does carry emotional and impression-forming content. They also argued that having limited social cues does not make computer medium impersonal.

1.7.1.2. The Social Identification / Deindividuation (SIDE) Theory

“The social identification / deindividuation theory” (SIDE, Lea & Spears, 1992) has its roots at Tajfel’s (1972) “theory of social identity” (cited in Amaral & Monteiro, 2002). “Social identity, social categorization and social comparison are the core concepts of theory of social identity” (Amaral & Monteiro, 2002, p. 576). According to Leamine, “ ‘I’ is constructed within the course of social interactions and only acquires any sense when it relates to a symbolic universe shared by others” (cited in Amaral & Monteiro, 2002, p. 576). So, it is important to find out how people evaluate being a member of Internet community as his/her sense of self is bounded to that membership.

SIDE theory gives importance to social identity rather than personal identity and predicts that, in order to form impressions people use social identity information and social category information in computer settings, not the individual level information and interpersonal cues. “Spears and Lea (1992) argue that the anonymity inherent in most CMC, when a social identity is salient, serves to

strengthen the impact of social norms, and hence normative influence” (cited in Joinson, 2001, p.179). In other words model suggests that, CMC’s anonymous feature can act to emphasize the salience of group membership and the influence of group norms. Theory focuses on the cognitive processes as well as on the social identity variables, as people make overattributions for the things about which they have less information. According to the theory, as a result of physical isolation and visual anonymity, deindividuation occurs and this leads to more stereotyped and exaggerated representations of the others (Hancock & Dunham, 2001).

Anonymity of others to the self (i.e. visual anonymity) leads to heightened self-awareness, and thus to greater adherence to group norms when a social identity is salient. On the other hand, anonymity of the self to others, (i.e. lack of identifiability) allows ‘one to express ones true mind, or authentic self, unfettered by concerns of self-presentation’ (Spears & Lea, 1994, p.430), and might lead to a reduction in conformity to group norms (cited in Joinson, 2001, p.180).

According to Postmes, Spears, Sakhel and Groot (2001), the SIDE model is related with self-categorization theory. They also underlined the importance of the difference of the SIDE model and de-individuation theory which also deals with the anonymity within the group (e.g., Zimbardo, 1969). They asserted that both the classical de-individuation theory and SIDE theory have a common suggestion that, they talk about a diminished sense of self. However, de-individuation theory proposes that anonymity leads to “reduced self-awareness (a state of de-individuation), which results in antinormative behavior” (Postmes et al., 2001, p.1244) whereas SIDE theory proposes that anonymity enhances conformity to group norms and unlike classical de-individuation theory, SIDE theory underlines

an increased sense of group identity (Postmes et al., 2001; Coleman, Paternite & Sherman, 1999). Postmes et al.'s (2001, p.1252) study also demonstrated that anonymous people conform to social norms and standards which are consistent with the predictions of SIDE framework and their results showed that “the effect of visual anonymity on normative behavior is mediated by identification with the group”.

1.7.1.3. The Social Information Processing Theory (SIP)

The theory of social information processing (SIP, Walther, 1992; cited in Walther et al., 1994) is an alternative for cues filtered out approach. This theory proposes that, although CMC has a slower communication rate due to its limitations about typing requirements, social context and nonverbal cues, by CMC people could reach the same relational outcome as they reach in FtF communication when enough time is given for them to equalize the message exchange.

Although according to SIDE theory social identity cues lead to uncertainty reduction, SIP theory predicts that verbal and paralinguistic cues lead to uncertainty reduction in CMC setting. People need uncertainty reduction and for this they adapt different strategies. In CMC they transfer every detail into words. As typing is slower than speaking and as when compared to face-to-face communication CMC lacks some nonverbal information, uncertainty reduction takes longer. For this reason, in order to build up trust and develop relationships people need more time. Although the social information processing theory

suggests different rates and patterns of impression development, according to its assumptions, impression formation process does not change but slow down. So Walther et al. (1994) suggests that, while doing between-condition comparisons, the faster message exchange rate of FtF communication should be taken into consideration. Contrary to previous theories indicating that development of close on-line relationships is rare when compared to face-to-face relationships Walther's theory demonstrated that, the more people eliminate time constraints, the more they reach same levels of intimacy with real life groups.

1.7.1.4. The Hyperpersonal Perspective of CMC

The “hyperpersonal perspective of CMC” (Walther, 1996; cited in Tidwell & Walther, 2002) demonstrates that, people try to compensate the limitations of CMC by hyperpersonalizing their interactions. Walther (1996, p.17) points that “CMC groups were rated significantly more positive than FtF counterparts on several dimensions of intimacy as well as on social (vs. task) orientation” (cited in Weisgerber, 2000). Walther (1997) reported four underlining features of hyperpersonal communication in CMC as,

- (a) idealization of the communication partner through overattribution, (b) selective self-presentation, (c) affordances for editing and off-line processing, (d) intensification of these processes through behavioral confirmation (cited in Weisgerber, 2000, p. 6).

He also suggested that channel characteristics of the medium also lead to heightened positive impressions as this medium allows people to have more control over the interaction and selective self-presentation. They have time to think

about how to present themselves, can choose the positive aspects and eliminate the negative appearances to reveal. Especially, asynchronous communication is called as “a powerful self-monitoring tool” by Weisgerber (2000) because of its nature which increases the probability and possibility of selective self-presentation. The ability to express emotions and do self-presentation in text is very important for a social and intimate atmosphere, which leads to the development of friendships. As the interaction proceeds, participants begin to actively use adaptive strategies for reducing uncertainty (Walther, 1996; cited in Hancock & Dunham, 2001). According to the theory, absence of nonverbal cues lead to selective self-presentation and an idealized perception by the perceiver. CMC users build up positive and perfect images of their virtual counterparts by generalizing the positive cues on other unknown information. This results in partner idealization and when compared with FtF communication, more intimate levels can be achieved. Bargh, McKenna and Fitzsimons (2002, p. 45) also suggested that Internet “fosters *idealization* of the other in the absence of information to the contrary”. So, the hyperpersonal theory’s overattribution assumption is similar with the SIDE model’s basic assumption of overattribution resulting from limited aspects of computer medium (Hancock & Dunham, 2001). Hancock and Dunham’s (2001) findings were consistent with this aspect of communication.

1.8. The Extent to Which Computer Mediated Communication is Similar to or Different from Face-to-Face Communication

Theories about social issues need to be validated or reexamined for CMC settings, in order to define the special conditions of CMC. Norms are fundamental signs for people to decide how to control and direct their behaviors and physical environment is an important component in determining social concepts. CMC has recently involved into our lives and for that reason, we do not have a certain and detailed idea about the social interaction processes that guide social relationships in CMC considering its similarities and distinctive features compared to face-to-face settings. While relating on the net, people may have difficulties and they may automatically behave in the way they get used to. Moreover, the basic principles valid for offline relationships may also be applicable to the online environment with some changes. Although people may have a tendency to act in the same manner as they do in their face-to-face relations, in time they can discover new patterns of behavior for this unfamiliar environment. In recent years, research in the area of CMC has begun to pay greater attention to the social psychological dynamics involved in computer mediated relations (Walther et al., 1994; Parks & Roberts, 1998; Postmes et al., 2001, Hancock & Dunham, 2001; Amaral & Monteiro, 2002; Bargh et al., 2002, Kraut et al., 2002) in order to have a better understanding of CMC by comparing it with FtF communication.

1.8.1. Importance of Verbal Communication

In CMC, the only way of interpersonal relating is verbal communication. People need to transform every single detail into words including their opinions, emotions and even their physical appearances to the strangers with whom they engage in social interaction which is not the case for face-to-face interpersonal relating. Communication, more specifically, self-disclosure is the only vehicle to form, develop and maintain relationships, in other words to get closer with the communication partners. In CMC since physical and environmental aspects are removed or eliminated, self-disclosure is much more central and important.

1.8.2. Impression Formation

In CMC impression formation is different from it is in FtF communication as this medium modifies and reduces some of the cues and visual information. First impressions are formed on the basis of communication partner's self-disclosing acts (McKenna et al., 2002). Cues that are hidden in the speech, nicks and more generally communication styles are the concepts people use in order to form impressions. However, in FtF communication, when forming impressions, people use direct and indirect information that emerge during social interactions like physical appearances, material possessions, behaviors, other aspects of language use and so on (Hancock & Dunham, 2001). Although in real life names do not give any cue about people as their families give their names when they were born, in CMC they determine their names by themselves and nicknames are critical in reflecting people's personalities and shapes the way they are perceived by others.

Their nicknames take the place of their physical appearances in Internet communication. According to Lea and Spears (1992), social categorization processes are the underlying factors for impression formation while communicating online (cited in Hancock & Dunham, 2001). In accordance with social information processing theory's suggestions, it can be said that in computer settings, initial impressions are said to be incomplete when compared with FtF, but over time they become more developed and comprehensive.

1.8.3. Searching for Friends

From another point of view, “we tend to be more attracted to others who are similar to ourselves and share our opinions (e.g., Byrne, 1971)” (cited in McKenna et al., 2002, p.11) and Internet is a medium where people who share similar interests can easily have a contact with each other. This is very important in the formation of the relationships and relationships that are formed are expected to develop faster over the Internet as people who have shared interests engage in mutual self-disclosure more easily, form deeper and stable relationships (McKenna et al., 2002) and even turn their computer mediated relationships into marriages (Parks & Floyd, 1996a). People may benefit from communicating with similar others as they feel accepted, valued, supported, encouraged; they understand and give advices one another while coping with a problem (Derlega et al., 1993). There exists some contrast ideas to this as Hobfoll and London (1986) claimed that, revealing information to people who are also undergoing the same unpleasant experiences may increase psychological distress which is called as “pressure

cooker” effect (cited in Derlega et al., 1993, p 105-106) but this is a very rare happening and can not be generalized to all situations.

1.8.4. Nonverbal cues

Although language is the most important concept for self-disclosure, information about the self can sometimes be revealed with nonverbal behaviors (gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, body language and so on) and paralanguage (voice inflection, pitch, stress and so on) (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Chaikin & Derlega, 1974). The discloser has more control and awareness over the information that he/she communicates verbally (Chaikin & Derlega, 1974). In computer settings, people transmit information when they intend to do so as the medium lacks necessary channels for transmission of nonverbal behaviors. However, lacking nonverbal cues, Internet has many problems related with understanding what sender intended to mean. Medium also can be argued to place people in a more passive position as it eliminates some environmental and physical components and people communicating via Internet type their messages and wait for the recipient to read and reply. Many researchers have found out that in order to overcome the shortcomings of CMC as it lacks nonverbal cues, people try different strategies like using abbreviations (C U L8R) or they join together punctuation marks and symbols and form miniature faces (:)) (e.g. Parks & Floyd, 1996a; Riva & Galimberti, 1997; Rintel & Pittam, 1997; Joinson, 2001).

In real life relations some people may have difficulty or trouble in starting up a conversation because of a fear of rejection and ridicule, social anxiety or low self-esteem. However, these barriers can be overcome through communicating via Internet. According to De Sola Pool (1977), intimate disclosure increases where there are no visual cues because people are less likely to perceive the situation as embarrassing in that case (cited in Weisgerber, 2000). McKenna et al. (2002) have noted another reason for greater self-disclosure in CMC as the lack of “gating features” to the establishment of any close relationship such as physical appearance (attractiveness), stuttering, shyness or social anxiety. Although in real life people who are less physically attractive or less socially skilled, were prevented from developing relationships because of these gating features (McKenna et al., 2002), Internet brings together many people by giving them a chance to form fulfilling, meaningful and rewarding relationships without worrying about their physical appearances and physical as well as social intimacy.

1.8.5. Physical Environment and Physical Proximity

According to Altman & Taylor (1973), social interaction involves active use of the environment. In computer-mediated interactions the environment is the computer medium and the chat rooms. Altman & Taylor (1973) points out that the closer the distance between people the greater their social contact and bonds whereas in computer mediated relationships either people give a different meaning to “the distance” concept or they are not restricted by physical distance. Internet lessens the need for geographical proximity. People just ignore the geographical

accessibility and they give importance to psychological and mostly verbal accessibility by which they have the opportunity to communicate easily at low cost and over long distances.

Although people share various activities on the net, Internet doesn't provide powerful physical or spatial feelings as activities in FtF relations. We even tend to lose sight of the fact that we are communicating with a human (Perolle, 1991; Parks & Floyd, 1996a). Cobb's definition (1999, p.393) validates this aspect of CMC as according to her: "Cyberspace is a particularly disembodied medium, a space of thoughts, ideas and information communicated in words and images; it is not a place where our bodies participate" and she posits that, cyberspace has the potential to split the mind from the body by pulling away people from the physical world and distorting cognition. Some people tend to separate their online lives from their offline lives. For them, the two worlds are distinct from each other, involving different mental mechanisms and reflecting distinct cognitive styles. If a person wants to eliminate the split between his/her online life and offline life, he/she may consider letting online interactants know about their offline lives: work, family, friends, home. Another way is telling offline companions about the online life. If a person lets his/her family and friends know about his/her online activities, he/she may be allowing them to see parts of his/her identity that he/she otherwise did not fully express. The third way is to meet online interactants in real life settings. As friendships evolve on the Internet, people eventually want to talk on the phone and meet FtF. The relationship can deepen when people see and hear

each other and this helps with getting rid of this division. These strategies, however, disturbs the authentic nature of the medium.

1.8.6. Self-Disclosure and Relationship Development

In Internet, relationships are expected to develop more quickly when compared with traditional way of relating as anonymity speeds up the penetration process. The results of the Joinson's (2001) experiment confirmed that, when there is a video picture of the participant, the amount of self-disclosure was significantly low. However, when CMC replaces FtF communication, the quality of the interaction is argued to change due to the removal of some aspects by the medium. As an example, the lack of touch can significantly reduce the experience of intimacy in text relationships. Rice and Love (1987) have also argued that because CMC is visually anonymous and textual, it lacks richness of real life relationships and therefore low in socio-emotional content (cited in Joinson, 2001).

Patterns of self-disclosure between CMC and FtF communication also appear different. According to Mark Knapp (1984), relationships go through different stages of development (cited in Derlega et al., 1993). He argues that, in early stages, as uncertainty is high, communication is said to be "awkward, stylized, impersonal and nonjudgmental" (cited in Derlega, et al., 1993, p.11). In later stages, as uncertainty decreases, "communication might become smoother, more spontaneous, more personal, more judgmental and affection might be exchanged" (cited in Derlega, et al., 1993, p.11). Also, in ordinary everyday life, individuals

tend not to disclose intimate information about themselves unless they feel free from anxiety or they perceive the situation as comfortable, whereas in Internet, self-disclosure is richer, faster and enables people to form rapidly growing relationships as individuals do not feel risk. Although according to social penetration theory, the social interaction is predicted to proceed gradually and systematically from superficial to intimate, this is not the case for CMC. So, in computer mediated relations, social penetration process is not expected to proceed systematically and gradually or it can be argued that this gradual development progresses quicker when compared with face-to-face communication. Altman and Taylor (1973) define formality as an important situational determinant of social penetration process as social penetration slows down in formal settings. Kerr and Hiltz (1982) have argued that within computer mediated interaction people do not deal with social protocols which are normally observed in real life situations and thus, this facilitates the intimacy process (cited in Weisgerber, 2000). As people communicating via Internet feel that the setting is informal, they reveal more about themselves in contrast with the newly established relationships in face-to-face settings. Nothing intimate or personal is concealed which results in removing the obstacles in the way they get closer and this accelerates and fastens the early stages of the process and they pass through the stages of relationship development quicker. Even though, for offline relationships, quickly breaking down the barriers may lead to extremely weak, easily broken relationships, conflict, low levels of trust and may result in greater loneliness and even alienation, in CMC as people can manage the communication in the way they want, the effects of these rapidly

proceeding relationships may not point to potential danger signals but to mutually satisfying relations.

Self-disclosure may sometimes not succeed in doing what it is supposed to do in face-to-face relationships. Disclosing intimate material makes people anxious about the potential unwanted results of disclosure as they become more vulnerable (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975; Derlega et al., 1993). They may get hurt because of rejection and ridicule (McKenna et al., 2002) or recipient may use that information against the discloser as well as he/she can tell that information to others, or as a result of disclosure the recipient may gain power. Fear of being negatively evaluated, fear of losing or damaging a relationship, fear of embarrassment, fear of social ridicule, risks of rejection, misunderstanding and discrimination all threatens the self-disclosure process (Derlega & Chaikin, 1975; Derlega et al., 1993). Because of this some people prefer isolation in ego threatening situations as a defense mechanism against negative consequences (Teichman, 1986). This makes some people underdisclosers who do not engage in spontaneous self-disclosive acts so that they can remain in control and cautiously express personal information. From this point of view, it can be claimed that CMC is an important medium for that, people do not have a chance to identify others and this does not inhibit affiliation. Just because of this, Internet users become intimate and they come to know each other quicker than in face-to-face relationships.

Self-disclosures within online acquaintances are similar to the 'stranger on the train' phenomenon (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959; Parks & Roberts, 1998; Bargh et al., 2002; McKenna et al., 2002), where there is no long-term commitment to future interactions, where people know that they will never see that person and their secrets will not be revealed. So they are not afraid of sharing intimate information with their anonymous partners and in CMC this anonymity and lack of identifiability stimulates and facilitates high levels of disclosure in the same way as stranger on the train. According to McKenna & Bargh (1999, 2000) the relative anonymity of Internet communication leads to more intimate disclosure with less fear of disapproval and rejection (cited in McKenna et al., 2002). It is claimed in McKenna et al.'s (2002) study that; greater anonymity produces greater intimacy and closeness but, as CMC provides its users to manipulate their identity by taking on different personas (Bargh et al., 2002), this may lead to false perception and illusion. In addition, "Derlega and Chaikin (1977) noted that people often engage in greater self-disclosure with strangers, because a stranger does not have access to a person's social circle, and thus the dyadic boundary cannot be violated" (McKenna et al., 2002, p.10). Another assumption similar to this has been made by Parks & Roberts (1998) and they argued that, because Internet relations are textual and anonymous in nature, because people have a chance to control disclosure of personal information and because there is no physical proximity, people's perceptions of risk decreases. Internet gives people a chance to communicate without physical or psychological risk as they have a great control over the time and steps of interactions. The medium provides individuals freedom to disconnect

when they find the person that they are communicating with, not safe or disturbing and annoying. The opportunity to leave the setting is an important determinant for individuals to feel safe and not restricted. This situation is called as “psychologically confining” by Altman and Taylor (1973). In Internet domain, communicators are less interdependent where we cannot talk about long term responsibility, so there is no sense of obligation. People are free from some demands and constraints, in other words responsibilities of FtF communication. Internet is free of danger of excessive expectations and dependency that real life relationships mostly suffer from.

Shaffer, Ogden, and Wu (1987) argued that perceived future interaction is one of the influential factors on self-disclosure and self-disclosure increases when there is no anticipated future interaction (cited in Pearce, 1991). Walther (1994) also mentioned the importance and positive impact of anticipated future interaction, rather than the duration of the relationship and impression formation, on the socio-emotional content in computer mediated relations (cited in Jettmar & Rapp, 1996). Additionally he hypothesized that the anticipated future interaction determines and affects the components of social relationships more than the medium does (cited in Jettmar & Rapp, 1996). Shaffer and Ogden (1986) claimed that, self-disclosure characterizes the developing relationships between new acquaintances and their findings supported the prediction that an anticipated future interaction is an important situational determinant of self-disclosure, which affects the self-presentational strategies of both men and women. Anticipated future interaction

explanation can be supported by the “stranger on the train” phenomenon as at that situation, people also do not worry about the future interaction and also they know that engaging in that relationship will not have any undesirable future outcomes. “Unlike with the stranger on a train, however, people often have repeated interactions with those they get to know on-line, so that early self-disclosure lays the foundation for a continuing, close relationship” (McKenna, et al., 2002, p.10).

1.8.7. Communication Context

Bargh et al. (2002) defined Internet as a “social laboratory” which supports the argument that people can first self-disclose their secrets or taboo topics to their Internet partners and then to their real life partners. According to McKenna and Bargh (1998), people who do not have “culturally valued identities”, in other words, who have “stigmatized identities” want to have a relationship with similar others whereas, this is not easy for them as their identities can not be seen and they do not want to declare their identities because of embarrassment. This leads to isolation, alienation and more estrangement from society. In chat rooms, people who have marginalized identities do not have to hide their selves because there is no societal disapproval in that community as well as there is anonymity. So, Internet is a much more important medium for people who are living in relatively more conservational societies and people who have marginalized identities as they do not feel themselves under pressure while communicating via Internet. Group acceptance and approval and a sense of belonging are important aspects for their psychological health as joining a group of similar others leads to socialization and

people gain support by this way (Derlega, et al., 1993; McKenna & Bargh, 1998). As cited in McKenna and Bargh's (1998, p. 692) article, Horney (1946) argued that the "conflicts between the public persona and the private self" or so called inner conflicts, "are the major causes of unhappiness and neuroses" which is the case for individuals who feel different from others like homosexuals, incest survivors and so on. People who reveal their hidden selves in the Internet are more likely to express their hidden feelings and thoughts to close family members and friends (Tyler, 2002). Here, we can come to the conclusion that, CMC may have an important impact on FtF relationships through which people realize their hidden selves. Although society devalues the marginalized identities and discourages people to reveal this aspect of their selves, computer interactions provide this opportunity to people which may encourage people not to live those culturally devalued identities in their minds but to carry them out of Internet.

1.8.8. Equality that is Provided by the Communication Medium

The online environment is free of existing hierarchies and social dependencies therefore leading to more equal community (Kiesler et al., 1984). Internet diminishes inequalities (Tyler, 2002) and allows people to have equal chance including women and minorities that Walther (1992) calls as "balancing of participation" (cited in Boudourides, 1995). Everyone has an equal voice and the only thing they have is their words. People have equal access to information and they are not restricted in terms of critical communication which can be argued to make people prefer CMC more. As Kiesler, et al. (1984) found out, although one

person's domination on the communication is a fact valid also for computer mediated interactions, it is less strong than it is in FtF communication and people participate more equally to the conversations. According to Kiesler et al. (1984), as CMC is relatively lack of the impact of status and dominance, people express more intimate and socially undesirable ideas and opinions. Flaming can be an example of this phenomenon. Hiltz et al. (1989) argued that anticipated future interaction and group history are important concepts on reducing the amount of flaming (cited in Walther et al, 1994). According to Morton (1976, p.26), "expressing negative feelings or opinions is riskier, less socially desirable and more intimate ['deep'] than expressing positiveness" (cited in Tolstedt & Stokes, 1984). So, here, it can be said that, "flaming" also can be considered as intimacy.

As it is mentioned before, there is no hierarchy in CMC so status and power do not affect the way people communicate which provides equality between the communication partners. According to Jurgen Habermas's theory of communicative action in which he views conversation as a fundamental basis for society, the ideal speech situation is the situation which gives all participants " an equal opportunity to participate in nondistorted, rational discourse (cited in Perolle, 1991, p. 350). He also mentions that when social status, authority and power exist within the communication process, this communication is said to be a distorted communication (cited in Perolle, 1991). Perolle (1991) stated that, in the computer mediated communication social context cues are not available as a result of absence of physical presence and communication is not distorted by status and

power factors to some extent. So, from this point of view, CMC is said to be an example for nondistorted communication. According to Habermas' theory, participants in communicative action need trust, in order to access meaningful, true, sincere and socially appropriate communication and mistrust leads to distorted communication. From this perspective and according to the hypothesis of this study however, CMC is an example of distorted communication as it is speculated in this study that there is no trust or low trust in computer mediated relations. In addition to these, Perolle (1991) stresses that after some time, in the absence of vision, people lose sight of communication partners and they direct their attention more to the message rather than the person who sent this message. In other words they concentrate on what is being said rather than who says it. When participants perceive this interaction as a computer-human interaction this too demonstrates that CMC is a distorted communication according to Habermas' theory.

1.8.9. Social Norms

Do people develop new norms is another point that should be underlined while studying this new social domain. Cyberspace is argued to be different from offline norms and relationships in the way that they define closeness. FtF relationships are considered as more closed when people become more interdependent; intimacy, breadth and depth of self-disclosure increase; participants' commitment levels increase; they waste less time to understand each other or they begin to understand each other better and use personalized ways of speech while communicating; their

social networks converge; they make future plans together more often and the amount of trust and predictability within the relationship increase (Parks & Roberts, 1998; Altman & Taylor, 1973). However, an intimate computer mediated relationship does not necessitate those rules. For instance, as pointed out in the Kiesler, et al.'s (1984, p.1126) study, "absence of norms governing the social interaction redirect attention away from others and toward the message itself" which also lessen the importance of trust on self-disclosure while communicating via computer. There are no societal norms so there is less pressure. As a consequence of this, people express themselves as they are whereas because of the societal norms, they feel more embarrassed, under severe control, pressure and anxious while communicating with one another face to face.

1.8.10. Fake Identities

One of the most essential problems people face while communicating via this medium is that, CMC does not offer that the communication partner's revealed identity is his/her real identity. Communicating with fake identities is very common within CMC. Roberts et al. (1996b) demonstrated that Internet provides a safe environment for social interaction where people can examine and discover all types of relationships (cited in Parks & Roberts, 1998) and their real identities as well as several others. As the medium is anonymous and they are invisible, people allow themselves to behave in ways different from their real lives. They can be whomever they want. They engage in conversations with many different kinds of identities and multifarious lives. People have the opportunity to "cross-dress" their

gender; “males are masquerading as females and females are masquerading as males” (Danet, 1998, p.129). As there is no physical cue, men are provided with the opportunity to experiment being a woman and vice versa. This has some advantages as women, for instance, avoid being harassed sexually while chatting on the net (Danet, 1998). In addition, they do not feel the pressure of heterosexist values that we get accustomed to in terms of physical appearances, as beauty and good looking loses its importance and function within cyberspace (Clark, 1998). Some people also communicate gender-free via Internet (Danet, 1998) although gender is an important culturally constructed aspect of the personality. Over time, as relationships proceed or as people communicate more on the net, they get knowledge of and become skilled about bringing out the special meanings of textual and linguistic information. Although the communication style and the experiences that people reveal others may have an impact on figuring out the gender and the personality of the people they communicate with, it is easier for the revealer to change the perception of the recipient as people have only what revealers’ declare and display. So, we cannot talk about a total confidence within Internet relations.

Cyberspace gives people a chance to access strangers and by this it encourages the establishment of new relationships between many people. Bargh et al. (2002, p.34), mentioned that

without the costs and potential dangers of making mistakes, the anonymity of the Internet enables people the opportunity to take on various personas, even a different gender, and to express facets of

themselves without fear of disapproval and sanctions by those in their real-life social circle

and this expression of the true self results in satisfaction. Bargh et al. (2002) argued that, disclosure of inner and true selves leads to empathy and understanding between interactants. This may also results in greater intimacy and closeness among Internet users. Bargh et al. (2002) also pointed out the importance of presenting the alternative, *desired self* and having it perceived and accepted by others which is necessary in forming more intimate relationships.

1.8.11. Interaction Between The Two Medium

Internet has a tendency to both threaten or confuse and affect positively the real life relationships. Kraut, et al. (1998) examined the effects of Internet on social involvement and psychological well-being and they come to the conclusion that heavy Internet usage leads to loneliness among users and in their study Internet use was associated with a restriction and narrowness of participant's social cycle and increase in their feelings of depression and loneliness. Cole's (2000) research as well, indicates that, people who use Internet heavily state that they spend less time communicating with family members (cited in Kraut, Kiesler, Boneva, Cummings, Helgeson and Crawford, 2002) and heavy Internet use leads to increases in loneliness, depressive symptoms, and daily life stress (Kraut et al., 1998). However, after a 4 year follow-up study, Kraut et al. (1998) found out that, those negative effects no longer existed and in the opposite dimension, they ended up with the results stating that Internet has a positive impact on social involvement and well-being except for its association with stress (Kraut et al., 2002). They

mentioned that, qualities of relationships that are formed online and total time that is spent on-line are important determinants of whether the Internet has positive or negative social influence. Similar with Kraut et al.'s (1998) previous findings Stoll (1995) and Turkle (1996) reported that, Internet causes social isolation (cited in Amichai-Hamburger & Ben-Artzi, 2003). The main contribution of Amichai-Hamburger & Ben-Artzi's (2003) study is its argument that, Internet use is not a direct cause for loneliness but people who are already lonely spend more time on the Internet. There exist some other theoretical frameworks other than Amichai-Hamburger & Ben-Artzi's, which relate personality aspects to Internet use and its impact. For instance, "rich get richer" model (Kraut et al., 2002) predicts that, those who are already highly sociable and extraverted will benefit more from using Internet and as a result they gain more social involvement and well-being. They can be argued to benefit from Internet both by adding new people to their social ties or by strengthening the existing social networks (Kraut et al., 2002). However, "social compensation" model claims that, people who are introverted and have pure, less satisfying real life relations benefit more from communicating online as this is a place where people have the opportunity to form connections with new people (McKenna & Bargh, 1998; cited in Kraut et al., 2002). Bruckman (1992) suggests that cyberspace brings new into existence an "identity workshop" in which people experience and test the ways of being (cited in Parks & Floyd, 1996a). Myers (1987) claimed that by communicating via Internet, some people were found to get rid of from their shyness that they suffer in real life (cited in Parks & Floyd, 1996a). This medium is also argued to be useful for people who

are isolated or disabled (Bock, 1994; Brennan et al., 1992; De Leon, 1994; Kanaley, 1995) if the probability of abuse has not been taken into consideration (Walther, 1995) (cited in Parks & Floyd, 1996a). Moreover, in order for a comprehensive understanding people should consider what kind of an activity is being done on the Internet and personality characteristics are also important determinants that are suggested to have an impact on the findings.

The users sometimes carry their relations that they developed in the computer context to other contexts. In their study, Parks and Floyd (1996a) found evidence for that. They demonstrated that, although online and offline lives can be seen as distinct lives, people first begin chatting, later they exchange pictures of themselves, and then they make telephone conversations and lastly they meet each other face-to-face. In other words they begin with verbal contact, after they obtain visual information, then they get the vocal information and lastly they meet each other outside. It can be speculated that, they try to build trust in the development stage of their on-line relationships. After they feel they reach the necessary and adequate level of trust with their communication partners, they decide to switch that relationship into face-to-face basis. In addition, the relationships formed on this ground should also be analyzed in terms of relational aspects, after they are transferred into face-to-face interactions.

Another aspect of this issue was pointed out within Parks & Robert's (1998) study, showing that partners introduce each other to their on-line contacts whereas they

prefer not to make their online friends known by their offline friends or offline friends known by their online friends. So they do not choose to mix the social environments of the two contexts. In their study, Parks & Roberts (1998) explain this with geographical distance of Internet users and the difficulty of introducing them to their offline counterparts. Although this may be an important reason, it is not the only one. Especially in the development stage of their relationships, they prefer laying down a boundary between their online and offline relations and they are cautious about this as well as shifting their relationships from computer mediated to face-to-face contact.

1.9. Trust

Interpersonal trust is one of the fundamental aspects of interpersonal relationships and Bennis et al. (1964, p.217) stressed that “a ‘normal’ facilitative interpersonal relationship” “begins when people trust each other enough to start exposing more and more of themselves to each other” (cited in Altman & Taylor, 1973, p.76). In the early stages of a relationship, trust is not at the center of people’s expectancies from their relationship counterparts and is not a salient issue. After they begin to depend on each other, people seek for trust more and also trust each other more as they had shared many things together and would share more.

As in the case of self-disclosure, trust was also conceptually defined different by different researchers. Rotter (1967, p.651) describes interpersonal trust as “an expectancy held by an individual or a group that the word, promise, verbal or

written statement of another individual or group can be relied upon”. He also defines trust as one of the most salient factors in the effectiveness of complex social environment. Another conceptualization of interpersonal trust was made as “Defined interpersonally, trust is an individual’s characteristic belief that the sincerity, benevolence, or truthfulness of others can generally be relied on (e.g., Rotter, 1967; Wrightman, 1974)” (cited in Gurtman, 1992, p. 989). According to Deutsch (1973) trust is the “confidence that one will find what is desired from another, rather than what is feared” (cited in Holmes, 1991, p. 62).

Rempel, Ross and Holmes (2001, p. 57), defined trust as “the confidence an individual has that another will act in ways that promote the fulfillment of desired goals”. In their study Rempel et al. (2001, p. 57) focused on the trust concept and by building on the definitions made by Holmes & Rempel (1989) and Rempel, Holmes and Zanna (1985) they stated that trust “provides a guiding framework for making causal connections and acts as a ‘filter’ through which events in a relationship are perceived and interpreted”. Rempel et al. (1985) pointed to another aspect of trust which is the partner’s willingness to be responsive to the person’s needs, even though this need appears to conflict with his/her own preferences.

Rempel et al. (2001, p.58) described high-trust individuals as people who “feel secure and confident that their partner can be counted on to care for them and be responsive to their needs” whereas low-trust individuals are defined as people who

“have little confidence that their partner is truly concerned about them and their relationship”. They also mentioned medium trust individuals “who are not yet seriously dissatisfied, but who are experiencing a degree of ambivalence about their relationship”.

Trust is suggested to contain three main components which are faith, dependability and predictability (Wieselquist, Rusbult, Foster, Agnew, 1999; Rempel et al., 1985). Faith is defined as

an emotional security on the part of individuals, which enables them to go beyond the available evidence and feel, with assurance, that their partner will be responsive and caring despite the vicissitudes of an uncertain future (Rempel et al., 1985, p. 97)

which is related with the amount of past experience in the relationship according to Rempel and his colleagues. Dependability aspect points that the partner can be “counted on to be honest, reliable and cooperative and essentially benevolent” (quoted in Holmes, 1991, p. 68) while predictability is the “ability to foretell our partner’s specific behavior, including things we like and dislike” (Rempel & Holmes, 1986, p. 29) which points to the consistency of the partner’s behavior (Wieselquist et al., 1999). Among those three components, dependability is argued to have a more generalized description which defines trust (Rempel et al., 1985). Also, women are found to have more integrated view of trust and they are also found to be more sensitive to relationship issues (Rempel et al., 1985). They also concluded that women’s feelings of faith are based on dependability and predictability which means that their future beliefs are much more based on the

past experiences. It can be argued that all these findings draw a disadvantageous position for women within computer relations.

Erikson (1963) mentioned 8 stages that individuals move through during their psychosocial experiences (cited in Mitchell, 1990). According to Erikson, if people can resolve the crisis of the first stage which he calls trust vs. mistrust, they become skilled to survive even in case of vulnerability. As Martin (1981) argued, trust is good for people's mental health (cited in Mitchell, 1990). Trust "develops from birth to eighteen months" and infant's relationship with the caregiver has a real effect on trust that will be built between people in the future (Mitchell, 1990, p.847).

Mitchell (1990) in his study points out that, sometimes lack of trust has an adaptive feature, however people also need trustworthy people in order to be loved, cared and sharing. Moreover he asserts that, people cannot develop enduring and intimate relationships when there is no trust, because satisfying relationships are based on trust. Larzelere and Huston (1980) defined trust as associated with love and intimacy of self-disclosure (cited in Rempel et al. 1985). Terrell & Barrett (1979) examined interpersonal trust from another perspective and they suggested that, trusting others has also a positive consequence on individual's faith and confidence in himself / herself (cited in Mitchell, 1990).

1.9.1. Trust Within Computer Mediated Relationships

“A bond of trust develops between the two persons as each steadily reveals more intimate and more guarded material” (Derlaga & Chaikin, 1975, p.8). According to Scanzoni (1979) trust cannot be thought away from “willingness to place oneself in a position of risk” and it needs time for its development (cited in Rempel et al., 1985, p, 95). He also claimed that trust cannot develop within newly formed relationships as we cannot talk about past experience within the process of relationship formation (Rempel et al., 1985). So, for Internet relations, it can be speculated that, especially for people who do not form long-lasting relationships via computer and prefers talking with strangers, development of trust is almost impossible as we cannot talk about a past experience within those relationships. Development of trust can be explained by “uncertainty reduction” process (Holmes & Rempel, 1989). In accordance with that assumption, Kelley and Thibaut (1978) also underlined the importance of uncertainty reduction in the formation of trust and they argued that people could have a chance to reach some level of trust by message exchanges (cited in Holmes & Rempel, 1989). People have a motivation to reduce uncertainty to develop a sense of trust. As Rempel et al. (1985) asserted, in ambiguous situations people need predictability to reduce uncertainty. Again in the relationships that are formed online, uncertainty reduction is expected to be slower when compared to FtF relationships and thus, so as the development of trust. Holmes (1985, p. 67) argues that “ inconsistent behavior by a partner would inhibit a sense of confidence and control, and would cause anxiety and attributional ambiguity as expectations are violated” which

relates to the social exchange theory, rewards and cost analysis. Trust is also found to be an essential issue for satisfying relationships (Mitchell, 1990). According to this study's arguments, although computer medium is a highly ambiguous and unstructured medium, where people have nothing to rely on because people tend to trust visual cues more than others, trust is not that much an important concept where there is low personal risk and cost and where there is self-control. In CMC although people do not have confidence, we can argue that they do not have anxiety too. As personal risk is low in CMC, cost is also suggested to be low. So this does not affect how satisfying they perceive their relationships.

Rotter's study (1967) concludes that, religious people are more likely to trust others when compared to people who are atheists. According to Rotter's (1967) study's results, trust was found to be negatively related with dependency. He also found no significant relationship between trust and gullibility but his study's results revealed a positive correlation between trust and humor, and, friendship and trustworthiness. Rotter (1980) suggests that distrust is related with poorer adjustment and to antisocial tendencies; which is not expected to be the case for the relationships which are developed within the computer context.

In addition, Rotter (1980, p.1) argued that, "as distrust increases, the social fabric disintegrates". He further suggested that, "the efficiency, adjustment, and even survival of any social group depends upon the presence or absence of trust" (Rotter, 1967, p.651). In Rotter's (1967) article, distrust of others correlates with

normlessness in the social organization and as the Internet community is a normless society, it can be the explanation of expecting low levels of trust in computer settings. Although there exists limited levels of trust in computer mediated interactions when compared to real life interactions, cyberspace is still popular and it is becoming more and more popular nowadays. So, Rotter's arguments seem to lose their popularity and validity with the developing technology which changes our previous perceptions of relationship issues.

Rotter (1980) assumes that, some people are more likely than others to behave in an untrustworthy manner when there is less perceived risk of being caught. The CMC medium is a communication medium which lacks being observed. People communicating via Internet know this and they do not have the moral pressure of being trustworthy and as Rotter (1980) claimed, they show the similar untrustworthy behavior patterns for defensive reasons. They think everybody is lying and cheating on the net and they also lie and cheat. Deutsch's (1960) assumption can be the explanation of the system that defines trust and trustworthiness within Internet relations. According to him, "*his behavior toward the other is congruent with what he expects from the other, and also, what he expects from the other is congruent with his behavior toward the other*" (Deutsch, 1960, p. 139). In accordance with this, Rotter (1980, p. 2) suggests that "people who act more trusting or say they are more trusting are themselves less likely to lie". Mitchell (1990) also discusses that people who define themselves as low in trustworthiness have a tendency to generalize this to others. So, while

communicating online, if people behave in a trustworthy manner toward the other, they are more likely to expect the same from the other. High trust people are predicted to less communicate via Internet for these reasons. However, this situation can be interpreted in the opposite way also. The medium by its nature is a communication context where people end up with quite intimate self-disclosure. Under the protective roof of anonymity people express their true selves to others and this is expected to result in mutual trustworthiness. Lastly, as the medium is an ambiguous one, and the mechanisms that underlie the dynamics of interpersonal relationships have not widely known yet, it is difficult to suggest a clear expectation. Thus, it is better not to make certain generalizations at present.

1.10. Uncertainty Reduction Theory

“Uncertainty reduction theory suggests that, in order for relationships to be maintained, relational partners must manage their uncertainty by constantly updating their knowledge of themselves, their partners and their relationship” (Berger & Bradac, 1982; cited in Dainton & Aylor, 2001, p.173). According to this theory, “uncertainty reduction is the exchange and collection of information that allows one to predict another’s attitudes and behaviors” (Berger & Calabrese, 1975, cited in Tidwell & Walther, 2001, p.321). The more people learn about their partners, the more they reduce uncertainty.

1.10.1. Uncertainty Reduction in Computer Mediated Communication

Uncertainty reduction theory (URT; Berger & Calabrese, 1975) is an important approach about initial relational development in FtF settings whereas Walther & Tidwell (2002) claim that there is no research that has studied the role of physical presence in uncertainty reduction theory, so, while explaining relational aspects within computer mediated communication, the reliability of applying uncertainty reduction theory's assumptions contains a question mark.

The information people obtain in CMC setting is limited when compared to FtF settings, thus the uncertainty reduction is expected to be slower in CMC (Walther & Tidwell, 2002).

The relative lack of social cues and the potential for feedback delays, for example, should lead both to higher uncertainty and more difficulty in reducing uncertainty about how to behave, how the partner will behave, and how to explain the partner's behavior. (Parks & Floyd, 1996a, p. 82).

So, based on "uncertainty reduction theory", in CMC unless uncertainty is reduced, the development of personal relationships will be prevented or personal relationships would be very difficult to develop. In CMC, it is hard to reduce uncertainty or uncertainty reduction process takes longer as a result of the nature of online communication. As in her study Weisgerber (2000) mentioned, people need to use written language even for transferring their physical appearance information which in FtF communication would be passed nonverbally and implicitly. So, as people are not in touch with each other physically and spatially and only have a chance to share written information over distances, a relatively

slower penetration process can be suggested for CMC relations (Weisgerber, 2000).

An early explanation about the relationship between the presence of uncertainty and low levels of trust was done by Holmes & Rempel (1987). In accordance with their explanations, Dainton and Aylor's research (2001) also provided support for the theory grounded in an uncertainty framework for the relationship between trust and long-distance relationships. They proposed that, physical distance leads to greater relational uncertainty and this leads to decreased relational trust. Their findings also supported their hypothesis that, people who lack FtF contact, experience increase in relational uncertainty and for this reason long-distance relationships were found to be distrustful. They called self-disclosure as a maintenance strategy and they proposed that, maintenance strategies themselves reduce uncertainty. They asserted that, although distance already produces uncertainty, lack of FtF contact is likely to increase it more which is also the case for computer mediated relations where people form and develop relationships without seeing each other and they do not share the same spatial communication context. Moreover, "the fewer the number of cue systems (i.e., verbal, aural, visual and their subcategories), the less the degree of social presence one experiences when using that medium" (Walther, Slovacek & Tidwell, 2001, pp. 106-107). As CMC setting is limited in its information richness which slows down the uncertainty reduction process, they argued that people while communicating via Internet experience less warmth and affection. Parks and Floyd (1996a, p. 85) explained that a personal relationship develops as "its participants come to depend

on each other more deeply and in more complex ways". In case of uncertainty people avoid from increasing dependability, vulnerability and they engage in less intimate relationships.

Walther (1992) asserts that people use different kinds of strategies such as interrogation, self-disclosure, deception, detection, environmental structuring and deviation testing to obtain information about other people (cited in Tidwell & Walther, 2002). Self-disclosure is defined as more effective, useful and much preferred strategy among them while communicating via Internet which is defined by Berger (1979) and colleagues as an interactive strategy (cited in Tidwell & Walther, 2002). Tidwell & Walther's (2002) findings also indicate that, uncertainty reduction theory is applicable to CMC settings too and self-disclosure is used more as a way of uncertainty reduction in cyberspace than in real life. They also underlined the fact that, people communicating online compensate the limitations of the channel by asking more intimate and personal questions to each other when compared to FtF interactants.

1.11. Statement of the Arguments

Assessing the relationship between self-disclosure & trust within CMC and FtF communication provides an opportunity to examine several theories about CMC and interpersonal interaction. In the light of the limited but growing literature about CMC, current thesis study addressed the followings (see Figures 1 and 2):

1) As “cues filtered out theory” (Culnan & Markus, 1987) and “reduced social cues approach” (Kiesler et al., 1984) suggested, computer mediated communication is limited in providing nonverbal cues. This makes the uncertainty reduction process proceed slower. In addition, Dainton & Aylor (2001) declared that individuals who are physically distant are expected to experience greater relational uncertainty and distrust if they did not have FtF contact before which is most of the case in relationships that are formed online. Although personal relationships can and do develop in computer medium, as a result of lacking cues and slower uncertainty reduction, development of trust takes longer when compared to FtF communication.

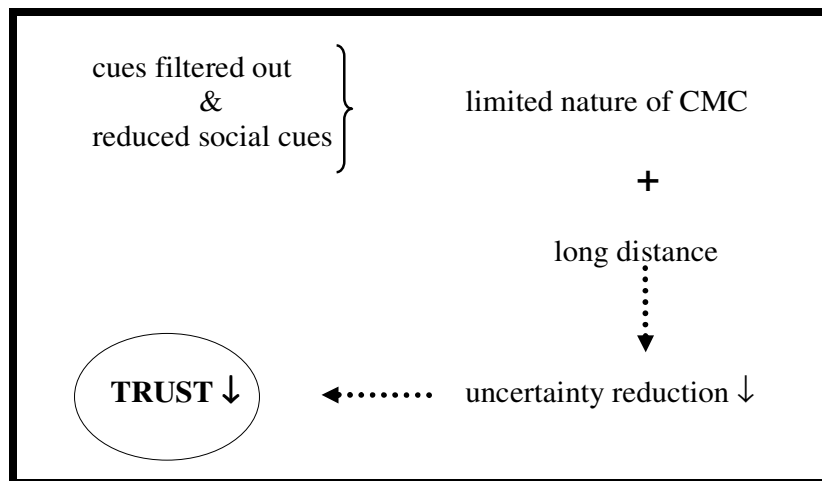


Figure 1. Statement of the Argument (1)

- 2) The patterns of self-disclosure were also expected to be different from traditional communication patterns. In real life people reveal little information until they feel comfortable and safe. Unless they trust the recipient, they do not self-disclose themselves. However, in computer mediated relations self-disclosure appears to be richer and quicker and Internet users come to know one another quicker when compared with FtF interactants as people are not under risk. This is also because their disclosures will not have a negative impact on them as they are talking with strangers who have no contact with their real life social circles. These assumptions are also supported by “stranger on the train phenomenon” (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959; cited in Altman & Taylor, 1973). CMC differs from that of “stranger on the train” phenomenon, first of all, by lacking of visual cues, absence of physical appearance and in addition, people communicating via Internet have a chance to develop and maintain their relationships whereas, “stranger on the train” phenomenon does not give people a chance to form long-lasting and continuous relationships which are expected to have favorable long-term effects on intimacy. The amount of self-disclosure level is argued to be heighten up in CMC as people need to reduce uncertainty more and the only strategy they can use is communication. Lastly, with regard to slower uncertainty reduction process, people need to talk more in order to explain the same thing when compared with FtF interactions.

- 3) Internet gives people the advantage to control physical and psychological risks and it provides individuals with the opportunity to engage in a relationship or

disengage from a relationship whenever they want by just simply disconnecting. Because of this special feature of Internet, it is asserted that people do not need to trust people to whom they would like to self-disclose themselves. So, based on this assumption, this study argues that individuals in CMC, who report higher levels of self-disclosure on the Wheelless and Grotz' Revised Self-Disclosure Scale, were expected to report lower levels of trust on the Rempel and Holmes' Trust Scale although this is not the case in real life relations.

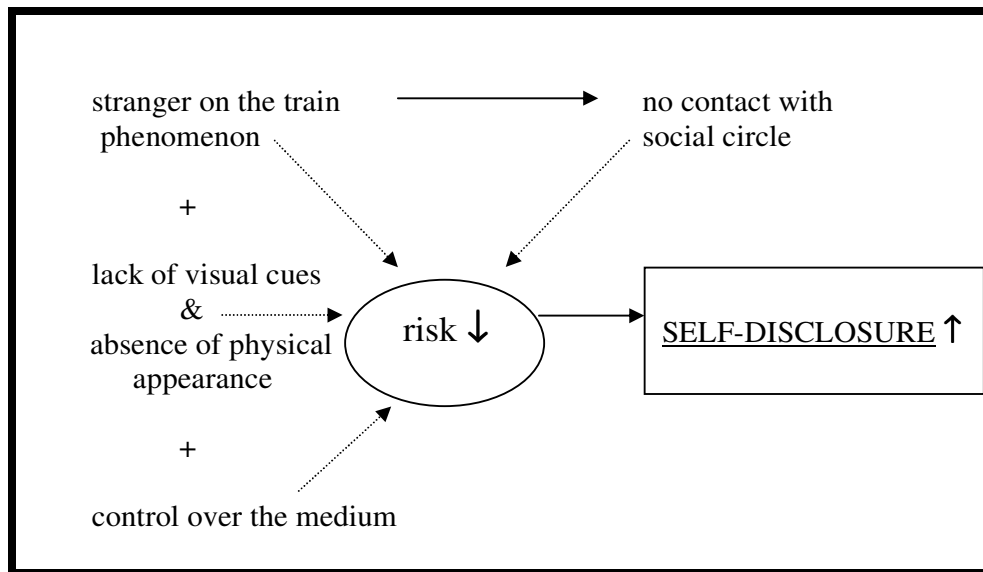


Figure 2. Statement of the Argument (2)

1.12. Hypothesis of the Study

Hypothesis 1: The amount of trust was expected to be lower in computer mediated communication when compared to real life communication.

Hypothesis 2: The amount of self-disclosure was expected to be higher in computer mediated communication when compared to face-to-face communication.

Hypothesis 3: In spite of the low levels of trust, self-disclosure levels would expected to be high in computer mediated communication. However, those who report high levels of trust, would expected to report high levels of self-disclosure in face-to-face communication.

Hypothesis 4: Subjects' reported levels of trust and self-disclosure were not expected to correlate in computer mediated communication but they are expected to positively correlate in face-to-face communication.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

2.1. Participants

The respondents of this study were an accidental and narrowed sample of 100 participants (46 Males and 54 Females) who were chosen from a greater sample for their valid data entering. Their ages were ranging between 16 and 47 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Gender and Age Characteristics of the Participants

Gender	<u>n</u>	Mean ± SD	Median	Min - Max
Female	54	26,7 ± 6,2	25	20 - 47
Male	46	25,5 ± 4,5	24,5	16 - 39
TOTAL	100	25,7 ± 5,6	25	16 – 47

67 % of them were graduated from university and 17 % of them had graduate education or more. 85 % of the sample had spent most of their lives in metropolis.

79 % of the participants were single and only 11 % of them were married (9 of them were women). 66 % of the participants had transferred their online relationships into real life and 67 % of them were talking with same people within computer mediated communication.

2.2. Materials and Measures

Multi scaled questionnaire was used as the data collection device. The scales that were given are listed below.

2.2.1. Demographic Information

The first part of the form consisted of questions about background and demographic information including sex, age, profession, education, marital status and some other information about their computer mediated relationships (see Appendix A).

2.2.2. Wheeless and Grotz' Revised Self-Disclosure Scale (RSDS) (1976)

Wheeless and Grotz defined self-disclosure as “any *message* about the self that a person communicates to another” (Wheeless & Grotz, 1976, p. 338). This 7-point Likert type scale (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree) is an 18 item self-report scale (see Appendix B). The first initial item pool was consisted of 32 statements. Finally, 18 items were chosen which met the criteria. This is a topic free measure and reflects the multidimensionality of self-disclosure by measuring a variety of features of self-disclosure: (1) consciously intended disclosure, (2) amount of

disclosure; including both frequency and duration time, (3) positive-negative nature of the disclosure, (4) honesty-accuracy of the disclosure and (5) control of general depth of disclosure (6) relevance of the disclosure to the topic of discussion.

The reason for them to work on a topic free instrument is the variety of people's perceptions about the intimacy level of the topics. Without specifying the topics, they allowed the respondent to infer how intimate his/her disclosure is. This scale measures self-disclosure both as a trait and a state construct (Weisgerber, 2000).

The reliability measures of those six dimensions were .64, .74, .62, .64, .72, and .25 for the intent, amount, positiveness / negativeness of self-disclosure, honesty / accuracy of disclosure, depth control of disclosure and relevance to the topic respectively. In this present study, estimates of internal consistency (alpha coefficients) were calculated for each of the 6 subscales and the total scale. The following alpha coefficients were observed for the factors of RSDS: intent, .75; amount, .66; positiveness / negativeness, .26; honesty, .64; depth, .23; relevance, .47 and total .56 for computer mediated communication and intent, .73; amount, .67; positiveness / negativeness, .34; honesty, .65; depth, .34; relevance, .26 and total .55 for face-to-face communication.

2.2.3. Rempel & Holmes' Trust Scale (1986)

It is an 18-item Likert-type scale (Rempel & Holmes, 1986) which is the revised version of the scale used before in another study conducted by Rempel et al. (1985) (see Appendix C). It was designed to measure levels of trust within close interpersonal relationships, trust referring to “the degree of confidence you feel when you think about a relationship” (Rempel & Holmes, 1986, p.28). Some items of this scale were obtained from Interpersonal Relationship Scale (IRS), which was designed by Schlein, Guerney, and Stover (cited in Rempel et al., 1985).

The scale has three subscales including predictability, dependability and faith. Predictability is defined as “our ability to foretell our partner’s specific behavior, including things we like and dislike” (Rempel & Holmes, 1986, p.29). A predictable person is expected to be someone whose behavior is consistent, even though this consistency is for negative aspects. Dependability is defined more central to trust emphasizing the confidence in the face of risk and potential hurt. The third dimension, faith “enables people to go beyond the available evidence and feel secure that a partner will continue to be responsive and caring” (Rempel & Holmes, 1986, p.31).

Responses are added up according to a 7-point Likert type scale (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree). Scale scores range from 18 (lowest trust) to 126 (highest trust). The reversed scored items were 3, 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16 and 17 for which the scores were converted while conducting analysis.

26 items were narrowed to 18 items after the analysis which was done to check the item's measurement quality of trust. Items with less than .40 factor loadings or .30 correlations were eliminated. The overall Cronbach alpha for the total scale was .81, with subscale reliabilities of .80, .72, and .70, for the faith, dependability and predictability subscales respectively. The three subscales were correlated as $r = .46$, $p < .001$ for faith and dependability, $r = .27$, $p < .05$ for faith and predictability and $r = .28$, $p < .05$ for dependability and predictability. In this study also Pearson correlation analysis was performed between the subscales. Faith and dependability were found to be correlated as $r = .80$, $p < .01$; faith and predictability as $r = .72$, $p < .01$; and dependability and predictability as $r = .73$, $p < .01$ within computer mediated communication. In addition faith and dependability were found to be correlated as $r = .75$, $p < .05$; faith and predictability as $r = .60$, $p < .05$; and dependability and predictability as $r = .59$, $p < .01$ within face-to-face communication. In this present study the coefficient alpha reliabilities were also computed for this scale and the subscales. The reliability coefficients for the subscale were, predictability, .72; dependability, .80; faith .67 for computer mediated communication and predictability, .54; dependability, .77; faith, .73 for face-to-face communication. The total scale's alpha coefficient was found to be .89 for computer mediated communication and .87 for face-to-face communication.

2.2.4. Miller Social Intimacy Scale (1982)

Miller Social Intimacy Scale (Miller & Lefcourt, 1982) is a 17-item instrument designed to assess the level of intimacy currently experienced in a relationship (see Appendix D). This is one of the few scales to measure intimacy in the context of interpersonal relationships. It is designed to assess level of intimacy in adult relationships. It is structured to assess intimacy in the context of both friendship or marriage.

Participants rated their agreement on a 10-point scale ranging from 1 (very rarely) to 10 (almost always) for the first 6 questions and from 1 (not much) to 10 (a great deal) for the remaining 11 questions with higher scores indicating higher levels of intimacy. Possible scores range from 17 to 170.

The MSIS examines two separate dimensions of intimacy including the frequency of the behavior and the intensity of feelings. The initial item pool of 30 was generated by intensive interviews with university undergraduates. Subsequent tests produced the current 17 items, 6 of which are frequency of intimate contact items and 11 of which measure intensity of those contacts. Items 2 and 14 were reversed scored.

In terms of internal consistency MSIS is found to be a valid instrument (alpha coefficients being .86 and .91) (Miller & Lefcourt, 1982). Test-retest reliability coefficients were reported for 2-month (.96) and 1-month (.84) intervals (Miller & Lefcourt, 1982). Construct validity correlates high scores on the MSIS to high levels of trust and intimacy on other scales. Moreover it was found not to be affected by social desirability effect (Miller & Lefcourt, 1982).

In this present study, the alpha coefficients of MSIS were calculated for both computer mediated communication and face-to-face communication and they were found to be .94 and .89 respectively.

2.2.5 Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988)

Relationship Assessment Scale is a short and a general measure of relationship satisfaction (see Appendix E). As the previous instruments related with satisfaction were all oriented to marital satisfaction, this instrument widens its focus and applicability and was designed to measure generic relationship satisfaction (Hendrick, 1988). It assesses relationship satisfaction of couples who are not necessarily married or living together.

This instrument was designed by changing some features of Marital Assessment Questionnaire. The word “mate” was replaced with the word “partner” and the “marriage” with “relationship”. The statements include several relationship dimensions such as love, problems and expectations (Hendrick, 1988).

It is a 7-item scale. Participants responded on a 5-point Likert type scale, 1 indicating low satisfaction and 5 indicating high satisfaction with high total scores indicating high satisfaction. Items 4 and 7 were reversed scored.

The scale was found to be correlated significantly with measures of love, sexual attitudes, self-disclosure, commitment and investment in a relationship. Correlations between the RAS and self-disclosure to a lover was determined as .41 ($p < .05$) and self-disclosure to a friend was stated as .10 (Hendrick, 1988).

Estimates of the internal consistency of RAS were calculated for both computer mediated communication and face-to-face communication in this study and alpha coefficients of .82 and .86 were found respectively.

2.2.6. Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) (McCroskey, 1982) – Dyadic Interaction Subscale

The PRCA-24 scale was designed to measure communication apprehension which is defined as “an individual’s level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or imagined communication with another person or persons” (McCroskey, 1978, p.78) (See Appendix F). It should be noted that the concept of communication apprehension that is planned to measure is different from speech anxiety that people experience in public speaking contexts (Robinson, Shaver and Wrightsman, 1991).

The PRCA-24 consists of 4 subscales including group settings, dyadic interactions, meetings and public speaking, which have 6 items each. The subscale’s intercorrelation scores range from .40 to .69 and the alpha coefficients were found as .90 for the total scale score and .75 for all subscales (Robinson et al., 1991).

Statements are responded on a 5-point Likert type scale (1 =strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). For the total scores ranging from 24 to 120, McCroskey determined scores that are lower than 52 as low communication apprehension and above 79 as high communication apprehension (cited in Robinson et al., 1991).

This scale was found to be both highly reliable and valid as a measure of apprehension regarding interpersonal communication and also the subscales contribute little unique variance to the total score, which means that these subscales measure a generalized score of communication apprehension (Robinson et al., 1991).

In the present study only the “dyadic interaction subscale” was used as the subject matter is about dyadic interactions. Items 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 were the items of “dyadic interaction subscale” and in this study those are used to measure the generalized communication apprehension in interpersonal communications. 14, 16 and 17 were reversed scored items. Reliability analyses conducted on this sample yielded an alpha of .76.

2.3. Validity Testing

Self-disclosure and trust is most often seen as a requirement for intimacy (Jourard, 1971; Altman & Taylor, 1973; Wheelless & Grotz, 1976; Parks & Floyd, 1996). So, high levels of intimacy would be expected to correlate positively with trust and self-disclosure. In order for analyzing the convergent validity of the scales, trust, self-disclosure and intimacy correlations were examined by using a Pearson correlation. For analysis the relationship between trust and self-disclosure measures were obtained from Rempel & Holmes’ Trust Scale (1986) and Wheelless & Grotz’ Revised Self-Disclosure Scale (1976) and intimacy measures were obtained from Miller Social Intimacy Scale (1982). Analyzed data yields that correlation between trust and social intimacy was significant at the 0.01 level (.58) so as the correlation between self-disclosure and intimacy (.38) in computer mediated communication. Results also

indicated significant correlation between trust and intimacy measures (.49) in face-to-face communication at .01 alpha level, whereas the correlation between self-disclosure and intimacy in face-to-face communication was found to be statistically significant at .05 alpha level (.26) (see Table 2).

Another scale that was used for the analysis of convergent validity purposes is the Relationship Assessment Scale (1981) by which subjects' satisfaction scores were correlated with their self-disclosure and trust scores. Measures derived from Relationship Assessment Scale were correlated with Wheelless and Grotz' Revised Self-Disclosure Scale (1976) and Rempel & Holmes' Trust Scale (1986) for both computer mediated and face-to-face communication. Correlations were found to be significant both for self-disclosure (.35) and for trust (.57) in computer mediated communication at .01 alpha level. Relationship assessment and trust were also found to be significantly correlated (.50) in face-to-face relationships when alpha coefficient was taken as .01. However, although self-disclosure in face-to-face communication and relationship assessment were positively correlated (.05), this was not found significant (see Table 2).

Table 2. Pearson Correlations Between Scales

		CMC SD	FtF SD	CMC Trust	FtF Trust	CMC SI	FtF SI	CMC RS	FtF RS	CA
CMC Self-Disclosure	Corr. Sign.	1,00	,68** ,00	,30** ,00	,09 ,37	,38** ,00	,22* ,03	,35** ,00	-,01 ,91	-,21* ,04
FtF Self-Disclosure	Corr. Sign.		1,00	,09 ,39	,10 ,31	,11 ,28	,26* ,01	,07 ,49	,05 ,65	-,20* ,04
CMC Trust	Corr. Sign.			1,00	,31** ,02	,58** ,00	,26* ,01	,57** ,00	,14 ,17	-,01 ,33
FtF Trust	Corr. Sign.				1,00	,18 ,08	,49** ,00	,17 ,01	,50** ,00	-,08 ,45
CMC Social Intimacy	Corr. Sign.					1,00	,54** ,00	,72** ,00	,15 ,13	-,12 ,25
FtF Social Intimacy	Corr. Sign.						1,00	,38** ,00	,60** ,00	-,24* ,02
CMC Relationship Satisfaction	Corr. Sign.							1,00	,27** ,01	-,09 ,37
FtF Relationship Satisfaction	Corr. Sign.								1,00	-,20* ,04
Communication Apprehension	Corr. Sign.									1,00

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

Since level of communication apprehension or unwillingness to self-disclose could influence the amount of self-disclosure obtained (Wheeless, Nesser & McCroskey, 1986), measures of Personal Report of Communication Apprehension Scale's Dyadic Interaction Subscale (1982) measures were analyzed with measures that were obtained from Wheeless and Grotz's Revised Self-Disclosure Scale (1976) for both computer mediated communication and face-to-face communication. As expected, they were all negatively correlated at .05 alpha level, having -.21 correlation with self-disclosure in computer mediated communication and -.20 correlation with self-disclosure in face-to-face communication which means that these measures have discriminant validity (see Table 2).

Factor analysis can also be used to examine the construct validity of a test. The internal factor structures of the two tests were empirically examined using principal component analysis. The factor analysis of the data was conducted with varimax rotation. Using the criterion of Cattell's (1979) scree test, 6 factors solution were found for Wheeless and Grotz' Revised Self-Disclosure Scale for face-to-face communication and 7 factors for computer mediated communication after varimax rotation. All factors explained 59.87 % of the total variance for face-to-face communication and 66.47 % of the total variance for computer mediated communication. A further factor analysis was conducted employing a forced 6-factor solution. After analysis, for computer mediated communication 60.66 % of the total variance was found to be explained by these factors. The same varimax rotation procedure was also done for Rempel & Holmes' Trust Scale and ended up with 3

factors for computer mediated communication and 4 factors in face-to-face communication. For face-to-face communication 58.62 % of the total variance was explained by the factors, whereas this percentage was 60.27 % for computer mediated communication. After forced 3-factor solution, factors were found to explain 52.86 % of the total variance for face-to-face communication. Both for RSDS and Trust Scale, including the two communication medium scores, majority of the factor loadings were found under the same factors of the original data.

2.4. Procedure

In this study a computer-administered questionnaire was used for which participants were needed to have an access on the Internet. For this reason IRC (Internet Relay Chat) was used as the channel in which people can chat with other people according to their interests by choosing their nicknames. IRC is defined by Riva & Galimberti (1997, p.149) as “a form of synchronous CMC which enables a group of users to exchange written messages and interact with each other in two different ways, by sending a message either to a specified user or to all members of the chat”. It is the most popular system that is used by people.

Participation in the study was on a voluntary basis. All participants were given a set of general instructions. Respondents were informed about the general topics of the research. They were instructed to answer all questions to the best of their ability and to take as much time as necessary to do so. They were also told to leave the study whenever they want without telling any reason. Subject's permissions

were asked in order for using their self-descriptions for data analysis at the end of the experiment. They were told that answering all the questions would be useful for this study to end up with meaningful results and there were not any right or wrong answers.

In this study, participants rated their self-disclosure, trust, intimacy and satisfaction levels towards their closest face-to-face relationship partners and closest computer mediated relationship partners distinctively by answering those questions. As Personal Report of Communication Apprehension - 24 is a generalized measure of communication apprehension the respondents were wanted to fill in the scale according to their own general perception of level of fear and anxiety with their communication partners without separating the face to face and computer mediated communication contexts.

At the end of these procedures debriefing were done and the participants were thanked for participating into the research.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

The data obtained from this study was analyzed using SPSS 10. 2 (communication medium: face-to-face vs. computer mediated communication) X 2 (intimacy of relationship: trust vs. self-disclosure) repeated measures ANOVA was utilized. A significant main effect was found for communication medium $F(1,99) = 148.96, p < .001$. Subjects reported more intimate relationships for face-to-face communication ($M = 94.13, SD = 1.04$) compared to computer-mediated communication ($M = 79.33, SD = 1.21$). A significant main effect was also found for intimacy of relationship, $F(1,99) = 25.13, p < .001$. Subjects' reports of self-disclosure ($M = 90.66, SD = 1.01$) were found to be higher than their reports of trust ($M = 82.81, SD = 1.41$). An interaction was found for communication medium and intimacy of relationship, $F(1,99) = 97.39, p < .001$. According to Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) at .05 alpha level, for face to face communication there were no significant differences between trust ($M = 95.19, SD = 1.66$) and disclosure measures ($M = 93.08, SD = 1.08$). However, for computer-mediated communication, scores of

disclosure ($M = 88.23$, $SD = 1.13$) were found to be significantly higher than scores of trust ($M = 70.43$, $SD = 1.83$). Subjects' measures of trust were significantly lower for computer mediated communication ($M = 70.43$, $SD = 1.83$) than for face-to-face communication ($M = 95.19$, $SD = 1.66$). Similarly subjects' level of disclosure was significantly lower for computer-mediated communication ($M = 88.23$, $SD = 1.23$) than for face-to-face communication ($M = 93.08$, $SD = 1.08$) (see Table 3 and Figure 1).

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations of the Scales

Scale	Mean	Standard Deviation
CMC Self-Disclosure	88,23	11,25
FtF Self-Disclosure	93,08	10,87
CMC Trust	70,43	18,26
FtF Trust	95,19	16,56
CMC Social Intimacy	91,54	31,30
FtF Social Intimacy	131,64	19,28
CMC Relationship Satisfaction	22,52	5,72
FtF Relationship Satisfaction	29,45	4,86
Communication Apprehension	12,85	3,93

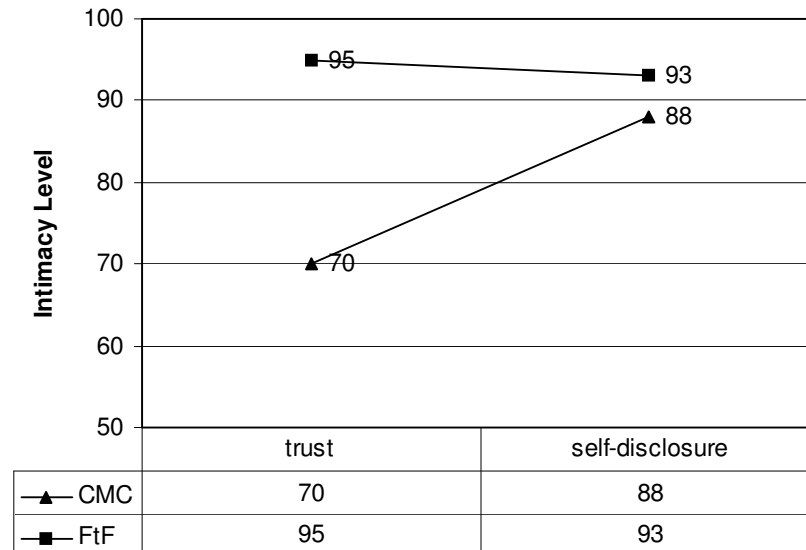


Figure 3. Graph of Trust and Self-Disclosure Within Two Mediums

Gender was also taken into account and analyzed for significant differences. To explore possible gender differences, comparisons between males and females were conducted for the groups with respect to one-way analysis of variance results. Results from the one-way ANOVA revealed no statistically significant difference between males and females for trust ($\underline{M} = 70.46$, $\underline{SD} = 1.90$; $\underline{M} = 70.41$, $\underline{SD} = 1.78$ respectively) ($F(1,98) = 0.000$, $p < .05$) and for self-disclosure ($\underline{M} = 86.35$, $\underline{SD} = 1.19$; $\underline{M} = 89.83$, $\underline{SD} = 1.05$ respectively) ($F(1,98) = 2.417$, $p < .05$) in computer mediated communication. Moreover, comparisons between males and females provided no evidence for sex differences on the measure of trust ($\underline{M} = 94.41$, $\underline{SD} = 1.55$; $\underline{M} = 95.85$, $\underline{SD} = 1.75$ respectively) ($F(1,98) = 0.186$, $p < .05$) in face-to-face communication, whereas, self-disclosure ($F(1,98) = 5.541$, $p > .05$) in face-to-face communication was found to be significantly different between males ($\underline{M} = 90.37$,

$SD = 1.02$) and females ($M = 95.39$, $SD = 1.10$) indicating that females self-disclose themselves more than males in face-to-face communication which is also in accordance with the literature (see Table 4).

Table 4. Means and Standard Deviations of Self-Disclosure and Trust In Terms of Gender

	Sex	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
CMC Self-Disclosure	Female	89,83	10,52	54
	Male	86,35	11,90	46
	Total	88,23	11,25	100
FtF Self-Disclosure	Female	95,39	10,95	54
	Male	90,37	10,24	46
	Total	93,08	10,87	100
CMC Trust	Female	70,41	17,80	54
	Male	70,46	18,99	46
	Total	70,43	18,26	100
FtF Trust	Female	95,85	17,51	54
	Male	94,41	15,52	46
	Total	95,19	16,56	100

Since a certain degree of trust could influence the level of self-disclosure, a Pearson correlation analysis was done between self-disclosure and trust both in computer mediated communication and face-to-face communication. Self-disclosure and trust were found to be positively correlated for both computer mediated and face-to-face communications. The correlation was found to be statistically significant for computer mediated communication ($r(98) = .30$, $p < .01$), whereas it is not for face-to-face communication ($r(98) = .10$, $p > .01$).

Between-communication-medium trust and self-disclosure correlations were also found statistically significant for an alpha level of .01, with correlation coefficients $r(98) = .68$ for self-disclosure and $r(98) = .31$ for trust.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

As new ways of communication emerges, a need arises to expand the ways of thinking, theories and methods accordingly. In the past, people used to criticize about telephone communication as becoming the most popular way of interaction which almost took the place of letters. However, today by the invention of Internet, traditional way of communication has updated to today's conditions. Cyberspace has made text relationships so much easier, economic, efficient and also preferred by most of the people. Internet and more generally computer have a considerable power on changing our lives. It is important to understand how this new way of interactive communication context affects our perception of social phenomena as it offers us the opportunity to explore and experience different cognitive styles and ways of being.

This new technology is bringing its users closer and providing them with a larger relationship network. Internet allows people to join groups of common interests and people do not face with problems that emerge from the constraints of geographical distance. Without intimacy, trust and commitment that are important

concepts for our real life relationships, people with common interests have the opportunity to engage in communication within online discussion groups and chat rooms.

Internet research is different from traditional methodologies. It holds many advantages and disadvantages. It affords a level of anonymity and in terms of privacy and confidentiality Internet research is much more preferred. Researchers do not have a physical contact with the participants and they do not obtain any physical appearance information that leads to identification of the participants. Social desirability effect is not a problem that Internet researchers face with. However, in Internet researches, reaching the most representative sample is both a problematic point and also easy as there is a chance to reach people who share the same interests if you have a contact with chat rooms and newsgroups. There may exist some problems regarding sampling of participants as you have only access to people who have the opportunity to use Internet and this may bias the results. However, in this study this was not a disadvantage as people who use Internet were examined. It also gives people the opportunity to fill in the questionnaire whenever they want so this is expected to affect the response rate positively.

The aim of this study was to detect the ways in which CMC differs from or resembles to FtF communication in terms of two fundamental issues in real life relationships; trust and self-disclosure. This study asked whether self-disclosure and trust in initial interactions are affected by the communication medium (CMC

vs. FtF), and to what extent the degree of trust is related to self-disclosure in CMC. Although this new style of relationship formation is spreading into our lives fast, this issue's novelty to make certain generalizations should be cautiously taken into consideration.

The first research question concerned trust in relationships and predicted that FtF communication partners would experience greater levels of trust than CMC partners. This prediction was based on mainly "uncertainty reduction" framework by supporting this framework with the principles of "cues filtered out theory" and "reduced social cues approach". The limited nature of Internet creates an ambiguous atmosphere as text-based messages do not express what the person who writes it wanted to say but how the person who reads it understand and interpret it. It leads to suspicion as a result of its limited nature. This suspicion may be caused by difficulties that communication partners face with due to message comprehension; their doubts about sharing the same conversational arena and same social rules that direct their interactions with whom they communicate with and the uncertainty of the intention of their communication partners' as people communicate with unreal, fake identities by means of CMC's anonymous nature and lack of identifiability. In addition, Dainton & Aylor's (2001) research provides a theoretical basis for the first hypothesis of this study by asserting that physical distance results in greater relational uncertainty and this leads to lower relational trust. This previous research comparing FtF communication and CMC found two communication contexts to differ about level of trust. Measures of trust were found

significantly lower for computer mediated communication than for face-to-face communication as expected.

Although lower levels of trust in CMC compared with FtF communication found in the present study is supportive for the hypothesis, results reveal that people still search for trust in their relationships no matter what the communication medium is. Obtained level of trust within Internet relations can be defined as moderate (M=70.43) almost same as the obtained score in the original study (M=72) (Rempel & Holmes, 1986). This can be explained by the “hyperpersonal perspective of CMC” (Walther, 1996; cited in Walther & Tidwell, 2002), which asserts that people try to compensate the limitations of CMC by hyperpersonalizing their interactions and also similarly by the SIDE model’s basic assumption of overattribution. So, one underlining factor of trust in CMC relationships can be the function of idealization and overattribution. The earliest expressions of confidence may be an idealized image that communicators create. As they have contact infrequently, they may behave in a more pleasant way when compared to having a contact on a regular basis. As assessed in Hancock & Dunham’s (2001) study, people also benefit from communicative limitations of the medium as they have the whole control on self-presentation which Walther (1996) defines as *selective self-presentation* and which can also explained as hiding the undesirable cues. So, this kind of environment may inhibit negative opinions and enhance trust.

The striking amount of trust in CMC can also be explained by people's traditional relationship considerations. Norms are important guides for behaviors but it is too early to talk about norms of CMC. So, people may have trouble in forming the norms or adapting the real life norms to this new medium and as a first step, they may have a tendency to directly transfer their real life cognitive structures or relational norms to computer context. One example for this can be, in text-based digital communication although the physical presence is absent, the first questions that people ask before they begin conversation are about "age, sex and location". By this way they try to compensate the limitations of computer and try to make this medium similar to what they get used to so that they can make sense of it.

Another explanation can be based on Internet's limited nature with regard to visual cues. Text communication with its specific feature disinhibits people, encouraging them to be more open and honest or encouraging them to act out inappropriately. People, who are aware of this while communicating online, may think that the person they are communicating with will also be honest and this diminishes the untrustworthy nature of CMC, similar with what Deutsch (1960) and Rotter (1980) declared for real life relationships. Another underlining reason for this can be related with "internal locus of control" which was found to be positively correlated with Rotter's Trust Scale (Holmes, J. G., 1991, p.61). In the Internet communication, as there exists "internal locus of control", this promotes a sense of security. People do not only control themselves but also control others. They feel safe, free of costs and risks as they have the opportunity to end their conversation

whenever they want. From this point of view, it can be speculated that the trust in CMC is not trust towards the communication partner but the trust to the mechanism itself. Judith A. Perolle (1991, p.355) also studied on trust concept within computer mediated communication and explained this issue from a different perspective. She claimed that “we sometimes think of ourselves as engaged in conversation with an anonymous network, and lose sight of the humans whose programs and messages we are using”. She concluded that “people focus more on the message and less on the person who sent it” (p.355) which can be a good explanation for the moderate levels of trust in CMC. All aspects of relationships are not equal in importance as well as the salience level of the same aspect changes due to different situations. Thus, trust may attach little considerable importance in computer settings whereas it is one of the most important prerequisites for relationship development in real life.

Furthermore, particular goals and motivations of the Internet users are determining factors on how they perceive their relationships. In CMC people’s expectancies may be low in terms of interpersonal trust. Thus, this may have an impact on their evaluations of relationship satisfaction and evaluations of trust levels within CMC. What Emmers & Canary (1996) calls “uncertainty acceptance” can also be a strategy for CMC relationships (cited in Dainton & Aylor, 2001). In other words, if one does not expect much, he/she may easily be satisfied by the modest levels of trust.

Lastly, this moderate level of trust can be speculated to match with “not sure” or “no idea” within the 7-point Likert type scale of Rempel & Holmes’ Trust Scale. Therefore, we can argue that people still have problems in making absolute decisions and clear definitions about their computer mediated relations. They are in a state of observing and experimenting since they have doubts about this strange context. On the other hand, as the data was collected by using a self-report scale, in order not to behave in a self-denying manner, they may report as if they have high trust towards their communication partners.

The second hypothesis of this study was based on self-disclosure concept within computer relationships and the underlying argument was “stranger on the train phenomenon”. Despite the number of researchers’ assertions (e.g. Joinson, 2001) and this study’s hypothesis, self-disclosure was not found higher for computer mediated communication.

The expected high levels of self-disclosure was grounded on the assumption that people self-disclose intimate information to a stranger more easily as there is no perceived risk and strangers on the net do not have contact with people’s social circles. In addition, the primary goal for people communicating online is socializing and developing relationships. So, they want to know one another and they want to reveal information about themselves. Because of this, they were expected to overcome all the limitations of the medium and they were expected to engage in more effective and deep exchange with their online counterparts.

However, results show that people still prefer and rely on the traditional communication styles. This may result from the operation of self-disclosure concept itself. It is a really difficult concept to measure and work on, as self-disclosure phenomenon itself carries the most problematic part in it. There are individual differences while assessing self-disclosure; on the other hand there may be difficulties in obtaining private and honest information through experiments. Obtaining the same results at all times is also difficult as self-disclosure appears to be mediated by so many concepts such as topic of the discussion, goal of the discloser, reciprocity of self-disclosure and so on. People's individual expectations and comparison levels should also be taken into consideration while interpreting the results. When outcomes do not match with their expectancies, people are more likely to dissatisfy. Also, findings of the study, in terms of low levels of self-disclosure, contradicted with what Walther (1994) claimed (cited in Jettmar & Rapp, 1996). Anticipated future interaction which he assumed to be lower in CMC, would expected to heighten self-disclosure levels but it did not.

The third and fourth research questions concerned the trust and self-disclosure interaction within CMC and predicted that no matter their trust levels towards their communication partners, their reported self-disclosure levels would be high in CMC. Results of this study provided support for this argument as subjects' reports of self-disclosure were not found to differ significantly from their reports of trust in FtF relationships, although this was not the case for computer mediated relationships. Individual's evaluations about their trust levels towards their

computer medium partners were found to be significantly lower than their evaluations about their self-disclosure levels.

However, correlational findings were not in parallel with our expectations. Subjects' trust scores were found to be significantly correlated with their self-disclosure scores within computer mediated communication but not in face-to-face communication. This confounding result can be explained by Wheelless' argument. Wheelless (1978) determined that while a positive relationship exists between high and low levels of trust and self-disclosure, when the level was moderate, a relationship between the two variables could not be determined which is valid for this study's findings.

In addition, analyzed data revealed significant main effect for communication medium. According to the results, subjects' reports reflect more intimate relationships for face-to-face communication than for computer mediated communication. Despite the advantages and opportunities that computer medium offers, people do not seem to benefit from this. This finding provides empirical confirmation to "cues filtered out theory" and "reduced social cues approach" which were based on social presence theory. As a result of the basic limitations of CMC and especially as a result of absence of physical contact; experience of intimacy is significantly reduced. Common sense cultural truth related with this is that, people need to feel, see, hear and touch. In accordance with the cues filtered out theory's claims, common sense truth equates nonverbal cues and touch with

intimacy, demonstrating the importance of physical proximity for intimate relationships to occur. With regard to these, this study confirms assumptions of cues filtered out theory and reduced social cues approach as well as social presence theory. However, if we were to explain this situation from social information processing theory's perspective, we would most likely to speculate that, less intimate picture that is obtained from computer mediated communication is due to time constraints. Rather than the nature of the medium, incomplete nature of relationships may lead to lower levels of intimacy of relationship. If people were given enough time and chance to equalize the message exchange, they would have reached the same level of intimacy with face-to-face partners.

From another point of view, a significant main effect was found for intimacy of relationships indicating that, subjects' overall self-disclosure scores were found to be significantly higher than their overall trust scores. This finding provides empirical confirmation that regardless of their feelings of trust towards their communication partners, people continue self-disclosing themselves. This indicates, trust may not be essential for disclosure however one must be cautious in interpreting this finding. When we look at the interaction between intimacy and communication medium, we may argue that the very low score of trust in CMC seems to be responsible for this finding. Thus, trust may be essential in FtF communication but not in CMC.

To explore possible gender differences, comparisons between males and females were conducted for the group with respect to one-way ANOVA results. Results also revealed no significant differences with regard to gender in terms of trust, between CMC and FtF. Results however indicate that although there exists no difference between men and women in terms of their measures of self-disclosure within computer mediated communication, there was a significant difference between their self-disclosure levels in face-to-face communication. In accord with the literature, women were found to be more expressive when compared to men. The reason for no significant difference in computer mediated communication can be that, perhaps women sufficiently express themselves in FtF communication so that they do not need to disclose much in CMC. In addition, it can be speculated that as women have an opportunity to engage in gender-free communication via Internet, the same levels of self-disclosure was found between men and women.

Another finding that should be discussed with regard to gender aspect is that, among 11 married respondents who communicate via computer, 9 of them were found to be women. Real life society forces women to behave in a specific and stereotyped manner which is determined by the societal norms. This pressure is much more extensive and strong for married women. When being a wife or being a mother also is linked to their gender identities, the situation becomes more difficult to cope with. Internet is argued to be a more equal community as it is away from existing hierarchies and societal values. This may be the reason why married women most often prefer computer medium for communication. Internet may be a

vehicle for some women to start and carry on conversations with people simply when they are staying at home. In addition, while communicating via Internet, they have the opportunity to self-disclose their secrets to their Internet partners, without fear of disapproval and sanction, which they can not to their real life partners. So, Internet is a place for them, where they feel relieved and comfortable and their self-disclosing acts through computer can be argued to function as a therapy session.

Women have more concern about social relating and expressiveness, different from men. Women prefer activities by which they can communicate with other people. So, women can be speculated to use Internet for the purposes of interpersonal communication, whereas men prefer using Internet for technology or playing computer games. From a different perspective, women are said to be more concerned about relationship issues. As an example, trust is defined to be a salient concept for women to engage in intimate communication. So, based on this assumption, women are expected to prefer online communication less when compared with men because of the absence of or low levels of trust in CMC. Considering these, it seems that the gender differences within computer context is open to question and further researches are needed to deal with this aspect.

In this study, there is no opposition to Altman & Taylor's (1973) "social penetration theory", Vangelisti's (1991) "staircase model of relationship stages" and incremental exchange theory (Huesmann & Levinger, 1972) but it is suggested

that a modification is necessary for these theories to fit in well with the dynamics of relationship development over Internet. It is the fundamental aspect of relationships to show a stepwise development no matter what the context is but when computer medium is considered, this development is expected to speed up for self-disclosure patterns, whereas to slow down for trust building process. The point that should be underlined here is that the anonymity changes the early stages to proceed faster and people go through these stages quickly. As Altman & Taylor (1973) suggested in their theory of social penetration, embarrassment, conflict or anxiety lead to physical and mental effort which decreases the positive aspects in a relationship as well as the level of rewards obtained from that relationships. They also claimed that within satisfying relationships, the penetration process is expected to be rapid. So, as people are expected to be less embarrassed and anxious while communicating via Internet, based on this expectation, within Internet relationships the penetration process can be speculated to proceed quicker.

4.1. Limitations and Implications for Future Study

Although trying to open a way to further understanding of this new issue and underlying principles of social interaction processes that operate differently in CMC, this study is not without its limitations and weaknesses. The ideas presented here are nothing more than a trial to define and introduce this new phenomenon. Much more thinking and research remain to be done in order for a complete understanding.

First of all, one disadvantage of experiments with repeated measure is that the two performances may lead to unwanted results as while responding, participants' reports may have an impact on each other or they may get bored and so on. However, in this study, answering all the items both for FtF relationship partner and computer mediated relationship partner gave the participants a chance to compare their two relationships which was the purpose of the study and what was requested.

Secondly, this study concentrated on the quantity of the concepts but not the quality. However, quality is accepted to determine the level of intimacy more than quantity does although at times they may affect each other. People's thought about what is important in their view of relationship is also an essential concept while considering closeness like spending long hours together, sharing intimate feelings, having high levels of commitment, trusting each other and so on.

Close online relationships naturally progress to FtF meetings. Relationships begin on the Internet and they progressed to outside of it. Individuals may choose to move their virtual relationships into real life or at least make plans to meet one another. Further researches should focus on how trust affects their decisions about transferring their computer mediated relationships into real life. The cultural differences in terms of switching online relationships to offline relationships should also be examined. New researches should consider this phenomenon from an oral, written and electronic cultures perspective as, for instance, oral

communication is defined as more friendly and pleasant in collectivist cultures but the situation is different in individualistic cultures.

Moreover, in order to reach a better understanding of low levels of self-disclosure within CMC compared to FtF communication, additional control variables should be used in the further study. For instance, if people reveal their real life identities to their Internet partners, inform them about where they live, work and so on, this may inhibit disclosure and become a barrier to form close relationships in CMC. Although a stranger poses no threat, strangers who have contact with their social circles can be much more dangerous than a FtF encounter. This eliminates the property of CMC that facilitates self-disclosure and leads to fear of intimacy and nondisclosure.

Further researches should also deal with the relationship between Internet relations and real life relations, such as whether people who are socially anxious and prefer Internet relating, form close and meaningful relationships there, learn how to lower their anxiety and are they able to become social in their FtF relations over time with the help of Internet. Rather than only experimenting how people form and develop relationships within computer medium, how will the Internet affect our daily interactions both in terms of quantity and quality should also be addressed.

In conclusion, cyberspace offers a totally different, new and unknown world for us. People develop their imaginative abilities while communicating via Internet. We

should accept that the nature of the world represented by computers is social and interactive when used for communication purposes. The Internet and CMC will not become a more popular way of developing relationships and cyberspace will not replace FtF communication. However, it can be used as a medium where people first meet each other. Within computer community, as De Kerckhove (1988) claimed, people escape from the passive position that television had placed them and they become active beings (cited in Riva & Galimberti, 1997). The important point is to what extent and how we use this medium as “Internet addiction” or any kind of addiction results in isolation and alienation. It is important for people to adapt this new technology into their lives in the way they can use it more effectively and profitably. People should be careful about not to let cyberspace to be a reflection and mirror of real life social pollution on the computer screens.

REFERENCES

- Altman, I. & Taylor, D. A. (1973). Social penetration: The development of interpersonal relationships. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Amaral, J. M. & Monteiro, M. B. (2002). To be without being seen. Computer-mediated communication and social identity management. Small Group Research, 33, (5), 575-589.
- Amichai-Hamburger, Y. & Ben-Artzi, E. (2003). Loneliness and internet use. Computers in Human Behavior, 19, 71-80.
- Aron, A., Aron, E. N. & Smollan, D. (1992). Inclusion of other in the self scale and the structure of interpersonal closeness. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 63, (4), 596-612.
- Bargh, J. A., McKenna, K. Y. A. & Fitzsimons, G. M. (2002). Can you see the real me? Activation and expression of the “true self” on the internet. Journal of Social Issues, 58, (1), 33-48.
- Boudourides, M. A. (1995). Social and psychological effects in computer-mediated communication. Contributed Paper at the 2nd Workshop / Conference “Neties’95”. TEI of Piraeus, Greece. Available: <http://www.duth.gr/mboudour/>
- Chaikin, A. L. & Derlega, V, J. (1974). Self-disclosure. Canada: General Learning Press.
- Clark, L. S. (1998). Dating on the net: Teens and the rise of “pure” relationships. Steven G. Jones (Eds.), Cybersociety 2.0 , Revisiting computer-mediated communication and community, (pp. 159-183), Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Cobb, J. J. (1999). A spiritual experience of cyberspace. Technology in Society, 21, 393-407.
- Coleman, L. H., Paternite, C. E. & Sherman, R. C. (1999). A reexamination of deindividuation in synchronous computer-mediated communication. Computers in Human Behavior, 15, 51-65.

- Cornwell, B. & Lundgren, D. C. (2001). Love on the internet: Involvement and misrepresentation in romantic relationships in cyberspace vs. realspace. Computers in Human Behavior, 17, 197-211.
- Dainton, M. & Aylor, B. (2001). A relational uncertainty analysis of jealousy, trust, and maintenance in long-distance versus geographically close relationships. Communication Quarterly, 49, (2), 172-188.
- Danet, B. (1998). Text as mask: Gender, play, and performance on the internet. Steven G. Jones (Eds.), Cybersociety 2.0 , Revisiting Computer-Mediated Communication and Community, (pp. 129-157), Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Deering, C. G. (1999). To speak or not to speak. American Journal of Nursing, 99, 34-38.
- Derlega, V. J. & Chaikin, A. L. (1975). Sharing intimacy. What we reveal to others and why? New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs.
- Derlega, V. J., Metts, S., Petronio, S. & Margulis, S. T. (1993). Self-disclosure. Newbury Park: Sage Publications Inc.
- Deutsch, M. (1960). Critique and notes. Trust, trustworthiness, and the f scale. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 61, (1), 138-140.
- Fisher, D. V. (1984). A conceptual analysis of self-disclosure. Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 14, (3), 277-296.
- Gurtman, M. B. (1992). Trust, distrust and interpersonal problems: A circumplex analysis. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 62, (6), 989-1002.
- Hancock, J. T. & Dunham, P. J. (2001). Impression formation in computer-mediated communication revisited. An analysis of the breadth and intensity of impressions. Communication Research, 28, (3), pp.325-347.
- Hendrick, S. S. (1988). A generic measure of relationship satisfaction. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 50, 93-98.
- Holmes, J. G. (1991). Trust and the appraisal process in close relationships. Advances in Personal Relationships, 2, (pp. 57-104). Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Holmes, J. G. & Rempel, J. K. (1989). Trust in close relationships. In C. Hendrick (Ed.), Review of Personality and Social Psychology: Close Relationships, 10, (pp. 187-220). Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications.

- Jettmar, E. M. & Rapp, M. W. (1996). Computer-mediated communication: A relational perspective. Paper presented at the annual convention of the western states communication association. Pasadena, CA.
- Joinson, A. N. (2001). Self-disclosure in computer-mediated communication: The role of self-awareness and visual anonymity. European Journal of Social Psychology, *31*, 177-192.
- Jourard, S. (1971). Self-disclosure. An experimental analysis of the transparent self. Canada: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Kiesler, S., Siegel, J. & McGuire, T. W. (1984). Social psychological aspects of computer-mediated communication. American Psychologist, *39*, (10), 1123-1134.
- Kraut, R., Kiesler, S., Boneva, B., Cummings, J., Helgeson, V. & Crawford, A. (2002). Internet paradox revisited. Journal of Social Issues, *58*, (1), 49-74.
- Kraut, R., Patterson, M., Lundmark, V., Kiesler, S., Mukopadhyay, T. & Scherlis, W. (1998). Internet paradox. A social technology that reduces social involvement and psychological well-being? American Psychologist, *53*, (9), 1017-1031.
- McKenna, K. Y. A., Bargh, J. A. (1998). Coming out in the age of the internet: Identity “demarginalization” through virtual group participation. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *73*, (3), 681-694.
- McKenna, K. Y. A., Green, A. S. & Gleason, E. J. (2002). Relationship formation on the internet: What’s the big attraction? Journal of Social Issues, *58*, (1), 9-31.
- Miller, R. S. & Lefcourt, H. M. (1982). The assessment of social intimacy. Journal of Personality Assessment, *46*, 514-518.
- Mitchell, C. E. (1990). Development of restoration of trust in interpersonal relationships during adolescence and beyond. Adolescence, *25*, (100), 847-854.
- Nakanishi, M. (1986). Perceptions of self-disclosure in initial interaction. Human Communication Research, *13*, (2), 167-190.
- Oguchi, T. (1991). Goal-based analysis of willingness of self-disclosure. Japanese Psychological Research, *33*, (4), 180-187.
- Parks, M. R. & Floyd, K. (1996a). Making friends in cyberspace. Journal of Communication, *46*, (1), 80-97.
- Parks, M. R. & Floyd, K. (1996b). Meanings for closeness and intimacy in friendship. Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, *13*, (1), 85-107.

- Parks, M. R. & Roberts, L. D. (1998). 'Making moosic': The development of personal relationships online and a comparison to their offline counterparts. Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 15, (4), 517-537.
- Pearce, P. L. (1991). Travel stories: an analysis of self-disclosure in terms of story structure, valence, and audience characteristics. Australian Psychologist, 26, (3), 172-175.
- Perolle, J. A. (1991). Conversations and trust in computer interfaces. Computerization and Contraversy, 350-363, Academic Press, Inc.
- Postmes, T., Spears, R., Sakhel, K. & Groot, D. (2001). Social influence in computer-mediated communication: The effects of anonymity on group behavior. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27, (10), 1243-1254.
- Rempel, J. K. & Holmes, J. G. (1986). How do I trust thee? Psychology Today, 28-34.
- Rempel, J. K., Holmes, J. G., & Zanna, M. P. (1985). Trust in close relationships. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 49, (1), 95-112.
- Rempel, J. K., Ross, M. & Holmes, J. G. (2001). Trust and communicated attributions in close relationships. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 81, (1), 57-64.
- Rintel, E. S. & Pittam, J. (1997). Strangers in a strange land. Interaction management on internet relay chat. Human Communication Research, 23, (4), 507-534.
- Riva, G. & Galimberti, C. (1997). The psychology of cyberspace: A socio-cognitive framework to computer-mediated communication. New Ideas in Psychology, 15, (2), 141-158.
- Robinson, J. P., Philip, R. S. & Wrightsman, L. S. (1991). Measures of personality and social psychological attitudes. London: Academic Press Inc., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.
- Rotter, J. B. (1967). A new scale for the measurement of interpersonal trust. Journal of Personality, 35, 651-665.
- Rotter, J. B. (1980). Interpersonal trust, trustworthiness, and gullibility. American Psychologist, 35, 1-7.
- Shaffer, D. R. & Ogden, J. K. (1986). On sex differences in self-disclosure during the acquaintance process: The role of anticipated future interaction. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51, (1), 92-101.

- Stamp, G. H. (1999). A qualitatively constructed interpersonal communication model. A grounded theory analysis. Human Communication Research, 25, (4), 531-547.
- Steel, J. L. (1991). Interpersonal correlates of trust and self-disclosure. Psychological Reports, 68, 1319-1320.
- Teichman, Y. (1987). Affiliation and self-disclosure in a specific ego threat situation. Personality and Individual Differences, 6, 807-812.
- Tidwell, L. C. & Walther, J. B. (2002). Computer-mediated communication effects on disclosure, impressions, and interpersonal evaluations. Getting to know one another a bit at a time. Human Communication Research, 28, (3), 317-348.
- Tolstedt, B. E. & Stokes, J. P. (1984). Self-disclosure, intimacy, and the depenetration process. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 46, (1), 84-90.
- Tyler, T. R. (2002). Is the internet changing social life? It seems the more things change, the more they stay the same. Journal of Social Issues, 58, (1), 195-205.
- Walther, J. B., Anderson, J. F. & Park, D. W. (1994). Interpersonal effects in computer-mediated interaction. A meta-analysis of social and antisocial communication. Communication Research, 21, (4), 460-487.
- Walther, J. B., Slovacek, C. L. & Tidwell, L. C. (2001). Is a picture worth a thousand words? Photographic images in long-term and short-term computer-mediated communication. Communication Research, 28, (1), 105-134.
- Wheless, L. R. (1978). A follow-up study of the relationship among trust, disclosure, and interpersonal solidarity. Human Communication Research, 4, (2), 143-157.
- Wheless, L. R. & Grotz, J. (1976). Conceptualization and measurement of reported self-disclosure. Human Communication Research, 2, (4), 338-346.
- Wheless, L. R., & Grotz, J. (1977). The measurement of trust and its relationship to self-disclosure. Human Communication Research, 3, (3), 250-257.
- Wheless, L. R., Nesser, K. & McCroskey, J. C. (1986). The relationship of self-disclosure and disclosiveness to high and low communication apprehension. Communication Research Reports, 3, 129-134.
- Wieselquist, J., Rusbult, C. E., Foster, C. A., & Agnew, C. R. (1999). Commitment, pro-relationship behavior, and trust in close relationships. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 77, 942-966.

Weisgerber, C. (2000). Meeting strangers in cyberspace and real life: A comparison of initial face-to-face and computer-mediated interaction. Paper presented to the Human Communication and Technology Commission of the National Communication Association, Seattle, Washington.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Katılacağınız bu araştırma Sosyal Psikoloji Yüksek Lisans tezinde veri olarak kullanılacaktır ve sizin kendinizle ilgili bazı duygu ve düşüncelerinizi anlamaya yönelik olarak hazırlanmıştır. Yanıtlarınızın doğru veya yanlış olma durumu söz konusu değildir. Sizden duygu ve düşüncelerinizi içten ve açık bir biçimde belirtmeniz istenmektedir. Yanıtlarınız tamamen gizli tutulacaktır, isminizi yazmanız gerekmemektedir. Sizden dileğimiz, her ölçeğin başındaki yönergeyi dikkatlice okumanız ve sizi en iyi anlattığını düşündüğünüz, en uygun gelen seçeneği işaretlemenizdir. Yanıtlanmamış soru bırakmamaya özen göstermeniz daha anlamlı sonuçlar elde etmemizi sağlayacaktır; ancak araştırmaya katılım konusundaki düşünceniz değişirse gerekçe bildirmeden geri çekilebilirsiniz. Katılımınız ve katkılarınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

- 1) Cinsiyetiniz: K ____ E ____
- 2) Yaşınız:
- 3) Mesleğiniz:
- 4) Eğitim durumunuz:
 - a. İlkokul
 - b. Ortaokul
 - c. Lise
 - d. Üniversite
 - e. Üniversite üstü
- 5) Yaşamınızın çoğunu geçirdiğiniz yer:
 - a. Köy
 - b. Kasaba
 - c. Şehir
 - d. Metropol (İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir)
- 6) Aşağıdakilerden en uygununu işaretleyin:
 - a. Evliyim
 - b. Nişanlıyım
 - c. Sözlüyüm
 - d. Bekarım
 - e. Eşimi kaybettim
 - f. Boşandım
- 7) İnternetteki sohbet ortamında sürekli olarak aynı insanlarla mı konuşuyorsunuz?
 - a. Evet
 - b. Hayır
- 8) Eğer İnternette tanımadığınız insanlarla sohbet ediyorsanız, İnternette kurduğunuz ilişkilerinizi gerçek yaşama geçiriyor musunuz?
 - a. Evet
 - b. Hayır
 - c. Başka _____

APPENDIX B

WHEELS AND GROTZ' REVISED SELF-DISCLOSURE SCALE

(RSDS) (1976)

Aşağıdaki maddeleri İnternette kurduğunuz ilişkiler içinde en yakın olduğunuzu düşündüğünüz kişiyle ve gerçek yaşamda kurduğunuz ilişkiler içinde en yakın olduğunuzu düşündüğünüz kişiyle olan iletişiminizi en iyi yansıtacak şekilde ve aşağıdaki yönergeyi baz alarak yanıtlayınız. Yanıtlarınızı her ifadenin karşısındaki kutucuklara yazınız.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	İnternet Ortamında İletişim	Yüzyüze İletişim
Kesinlikle katılmıyorum Kararsızım Kesinlikle katılıyorum								
1) Eğer istersem, her zaman gerçekten kim olduğumu doğru yansıtacak şekilde kendimi anlatabilirim.								
2) Özel duygularımı açıkladığımda, her zaman ne yaptığımı ve ne söylediğimin farkındayım.								
3) Kendimle ilgili duygularımı eğer açıklıyorsam, bunu, bilinçli olarak yapmak istemişimdir.								
4) Çoğu kez, kendimle ilgili konuşmam.								

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	İnternet Ortamında İletişim	Yüzyüze İletişim
Kesinlikle katılmıyorum			Kararsızım			Kesinlikle katılıyorum		
5) Duygularıyla ilgili ifadelerim çoğunlukla kısadır.								
6) Kendimle ilgili konuşuyorsam, konuşmalarım kısa sürer.								
7) Yalnızca seyrek olarak kişisel inançlarımı ve düşüncelerimi açıklarım.								
8) Çoğu kez, kendimle ilgili olumlu şeyleri anlatırım (açıkça yansıtırım).								
9) Genellikle, kendimle ilgili anlatımlarım olumludan çok olumsuzdur.								
10) İstediğim zaman kendimi açıklayamam çünkü kendimi yeteri kadar tanımam.								
11) Çoğu kez, kendi hislerim, duygularım ve deneyimlerime ilişkin anlatımlarımın beni doğru yansıttığından emin olamam.								
12) Her zaman, kendimi anlatırken dürüst değilimdir.								
13) Kendi hislerimi, duygularımı, davranışlarımı veya deneyimlerimi açıklarken her zaman kendimi tamamen içten hissetmem.								
14) Konuşmalarımda, gerçekten kim olduğumu açıkça ve tam olarak samimi bir şekilde açıklarım.								
15) Bir kere başladığımda, kendimden söz etmem (kendimi açığa vurmam) çok uzun süre devam eder.								
16) Genellikle kendimle ilgili bilgileri istemeden açıklarım (açığa vururum).								
17) Mesajlarım çoğunlukla neden hoşlandığımı gösterir.								
18) Kişisel inançlarım ve düşüncelerimle ilgili açıklamalarım, her zaman doğrudan sohbet konusuyla bağlantılıdır.								

APPENDIX C

REMPEL & HOLMES' TRUST SCALE (1986)

Aşağıdaki ifadelerin her birini okuyunuz ve gerek İnternette en yakın bulduğunuz kişiyle olan ilişkinizde, gerek günlük yaşamda en yakın bulduğunuz kişiyle olan ilişkinizde doğru olup olmadığına karar veriniz. Ne kadar hemfikir olduğunuzu veya ne kadar katılmadığınızı aşağıdaki ölçekten uygun sayıya karar verip ifadelerin yanındaki kutucuklara yazarak belirtiniz.

- 1 = Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
- 2 = Katılmıyorum
- 3 = Pek katılmıyorum
- 4 = Kararsızım
- 5 = Biraz katılıyorum
- 6 = Katılıyorum
- 7 = Kesinlikle katılıyorum

	İnternet Ortamında İlişki	Yüzyüze İlişki
1) Onun nasıl davranacağını bilirim. Onun davranışlarına yönelik tahminlerimde yanılmam.		
2) Onun tamamen güvenilir birisi olduğunu keşfettim, özellikle de önemli konular sözkonusu olduğunda.		
3) Onun davranışları oldukça çeşitlilik gösterir. Beni bir dahaki sefere ne ile şaşırtacağı konusunda her zaman emin olamıyorum.		
4) Her ne kadar zaman değişse ve gelecek belirsiz olsa da, onun her zaman, ne olursa olsun bana güç vermeye hazır ve istekli olduğuna karşı güvenim var.		

- 1 = Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
 2 = Katılmıyorum
 3 = Pek katılmıyorum
 4 = Kararsızım
 5 = Biraz katılıyorum
 6 = Katılıyorum
 7 = Kesinlikle katılıyorum

	İnternet Ortamında İlişki	Yüzyüze İlişki
5) Geçmiş deneyime dayanarak, ona, bana verdiği sözleri tutması konusunda tam bir güvenim yoktur.		
6) Bazen, onun benimle her zaman ilgilenmeyi sürdüreceği konusunda tam olarak emin olmam zor oluyor; gelecek birçok belirsizliği barındırıyor ve zaman içinde ilişkimizde birçok şey değişebilir.		
7) O çok dürüst bir insandır ve o inanılması güç şeyler söylese de, insanlar duyduklarının gerçek olduğuna güvenmelidirler.		
8) O önceden çok tahmin edilemez. İnsanlar, onun bir günden diğerine nasıl davranacağı konusunda çok emin olamazlar.		
9) O güvenilir biri olduğunu kanıtlamıştır. Kiminle evlendiği önemli değil, o hiçbir zaman sadakatsiz olmaz, yakalanma şansı hiç olmadığı durumlarda bile.		
10) Hiçbir zaman umulmadık anlaşmazlıkların ve önemli gerilimlerin ilişkimize zarar vereceğinden endişe duymadım. Çünkü biliyorum ki biz her türlü fırtınayı atlatabiliriz.		
11) Onun sergilediği davranış örüntülerine ve onun belirli şekilde davranacağına çok alışkınım.		
12) Eğer onunla daha önce belirli bir konuyla hiç karşılaşmadıysak böyle konularda benim duygularımı dikkate almamasından kaygı duyarım.		
13) Alışıldık durumlarda bile, onun ikinci kere aynı şekilde davranacağından emin olamam.		
14) Bilinmedik yeni durumlarla karşılaştığımda kendimi tamamen güvende hissedirim; çünkü bilirim ki o beni hiçbir zaman hayal kırıklığına uğratmaz.		
15) O, diğerleri tarafından her zaman güvenilir sayılan birisi değildir. Onun güvenilmez olduğu bazı zamanlar düşünebiliyorum.		
16) Bazen kendimi, ilişkimize yaptığım duygusal yatırımlardan dolayı rahatsız hissediyorum çünkü ileriye dönük kuşklarımı tamamıyla bir yana bırakmak zor geliyor.		
17) O, geçmişte hep güvenilir olmadı ve bazı zamanlar onun beni incitebileceği aktivitelere katılmasına izin vermekte tereddüt edebiliyorum.		
18) O, tutarlı tavır sergiler.		

APPENDIX D

MILLER SOCIAL INTIMACY SCALE (1982)

Aşağıdaki maddeleri yanıtlarken, lütfen İnternetteki ve günlük yaşamdaki en yakın arkadaşlık ilişkinizi düşününüz. Soruların yanındaki kutucuklara, belirlediğiniz ilişkiyi en iyi açıklayan / tanımlayan dereceyi yazınız. Yanıtlama işlemi lütfen aşağıdaki ölçek dahilinde yapınız.

										İnternet Ortamında İlişki	Yüzyüze İlişki
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Çok nadir											
Bazen											
Hemen hemen her zaman											
1) Boş zamanınızı ne kadar sıklıkta o kişiyle yalnız geçirmeyi tercih ediyorsunuz?											
2) Ne kadar sıklıkta, çok özel bilgilerinizi kendinize saklıyorsunuz ve o kişiyle paylaşmıyorsunuz?											
3) Ne kadar sıklıkta o kişiye sevgi gösteriyorsunuz?											
4) Ne kadar sıklıkta çok özel bilgileri o kişiye sır olarak veriyorsunuz?											
5) Ne kadar sıklıkta o kişinin duygularını anlayabiliyorsunuz?											
6) Ne kadar sıklıkta kendinizi o kişiye yakın hissediyorsunuz?											

Lütfen bu bölümdeki kalan maddeleri aşağıdaki formatı kullanarak yanıtlayınız.

										İnternet Ortamında İlişki	Yüzyüze İlişki	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Çok değil			Biraz				Pek çok					
7) O kişiyle başbaşa zaman geçirmeyi ne kadar istersiniz?												
8) O kişi kendini mutsuz hissettiğinde, ona ne kadar cesaret verdiğinizi ve destek olduğunuzu hissediyorsunuz?												
9) Genel olarak, o kişiye ne kadar yakın olduğunuzu hissediyorsunuz?												
10) O kişinin çok özel sırlarını dinlemek sizin için ne kadar önemli?												
11) O kişiyle ilişkiniz ne kadar doyurucu?												
12) Kendinizi o kişiye karşı ne kadar sevgi dolu hissediyorsunuz?												
13) Sizin için o kişinin sizin duygularınızı anlaması ne kadar önemli?												
14) O kişiyle ilişkinizdeki tipik bir anlaşmazlık ilişkinize ne kadar zarar verir?												
15) Siz mutsuz olduğunuzda, o kişinin size cesaret vermesi ve destek olması sizin için ne kadar önemli?												
16) O kişinin size sevgi göstermesi sizin için ne kadar önemli?												
17) Yaşamınızda o kişiyle olan ilişkiniz ne kadar önemli?												

APPENDIX E

RELATIONSHIP ASSESSMENT SCALE (HENDRICK, 1988)

Aşağıdaki soruları İnternetteki ve gerçek yaşamınızdaki en yakın ilişkinizi düşünerek yanıtlayınız. Soruların yanındaki kutucukları aşağıdaki ölçeği göz önüne alarak doldurunuz.

1	2	3	4	5	İnternet Ortamında İlişki	Yüzyüze İlişki
Hiç				Çok		
1) O kişi sizin gereksinimlerinizi ne kadar iyi karşılıyor?						
2) Genellikle ilişkinizden ne kadar doyum sağlıyorsunuz?						
3) İlişkiniz, çoğuyla karşılaştığımızda, ne kadar iyi?						
4) Ne kadar sıklıkta bu ilişkiye girmemiş olmayı diliyorsunuz?						
5) İlişkiniz sizin asıl beklentilerinizi ne derecede karşılamakta?						
6) O kişiyi ne kadar seviyorsunuz?						
7) İlişkinizde ne kadar problem var?						

APPENDIX F

PERSONAL REPORT OF COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION (PRCA-24)

(McCROSKEY, 1982)

DYADIC INTERACTION SUBSCALE

İfadeleri aşağıdaki 5 aşamalı ölçek dahilinde değerlendirip, sizi en iyi tanımlayan sayıyı ifadelerin yanındaki boş kutucuklara yazarak belirtiniz.

- 1 = Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
- 2 = Katılmıyorum
- 3 = Kararsızım
- 4 = Katılıyorum
- 5 = Kesinlikle katılıyorum

1) Yeni tanıştığım birisiyle sohbet ederken kendimi gergin hissederim.	
2) Sohbet ederken fikirlerimi açıkça söylemek konusunda hiçbir korkum yoktur.	
3) Genellikle sohbet ederken oldukça gergin ve sinirli olurum.	
4) Genellikle sohbet ederken oldukça sakin ve rahat olurum.	
5) Yeni tanıştığım birisiyle sohbet ederken kendimi oldukça rahat hissederim.	
6) Sohbetlerde fikrimi söylemeye çekinirim.	