

Write an essay comparing and contrasting your family's use of digital devices with that of the Campbell's. Have you experienced similar problems or is your family more adept at switching off during necessary periods?

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As digital technology develops at a rapid rate, many families in the modern society are experiencing problems similar to those of the Campbell's, regarding digital gadget usage. My family is not an exception, though there are some differences between the Campbells and my family. Solutions for the problems of using digital devices might be found from these differences.¹

Like the Campbells, the quantity of Internet usage of my family is very immense. Our home computer is turned on at least for 4~6 hours a day, usually with one or more Web sites on the screen. At most of the time, my mother is in front of the computer, searching for cheap items to buy, good books to read, and appropriate on-line lectures for my little sister, who is in high school. She also uses the computer to work with banking, finances, cooking, and a lot more. By doing all of these every day, she is on-line for much of the day time. Another prime user of the Web in my family is me. After I come home from school at eight at night, I directly go to my room, and surf the internet late into the night. Even my sister who is busy studying in high school uses the computer quite often. Considering all the members of my family, I believe that my family's usage of Internet is almost as much as that of the Campbell's.

Not only that, but also, the Internet using patterns of my mother and I are similar to those of Kord and Conner Campbell. Though less serious than Kord Campbell, my mother sometimes digresses from her original objective of using the computer. For example, yesterday morning, my mother turned on the computer and went online in order to search for the market that sells tomatoes in the cheapest price. But as she was looking for the right market, she explained to me later that day, she suddenly recalled posting a question on a Web site for high school education, and decided to see if there were any replies. Then, after she moved on to that site, she began replying to other parents' questions, and forgot about the tomatoes. It was not until noon as she was turning the computer off that she remembered about why she had turned it on in the first place. I am having more serious problems concentrating and focusing. Like Conner Campbell, I tend to use a Social Network Service (SNS) called 'Cyworld' or check my e-mail during my studying time. Just today, as I was trying to prepare for an exam with my laptop, I could not help but check if anyone had written a reply on what I had said in my personal cyworld homepage.

Despite these similarities, there are several significant differences between the use of digital devices of my family and that of the Campbells. First of all, unlike the Campbells, the members of my family do not obsessively search for new information or messages. Although we use the computer a lot, we do not strain for new e-mails arrived or popular news. My mother, who has an e-mail account at Naver.com, has over 500 unread mails. I also have 2317 mails in my Naver mail account that are not even looked at. Also, though exceptions occur from time to time, we do not let our minds trail off, or rather; do not care about news headlines posted on websites. My father, a doctor, rarely surfs the internet, and when he does, he only searches for academic articles that he wants to learn about, and checks the e-mail for any replies from the publishers whom he had sent his drafts of his articles on his recent

1 A better thesis: "Although both my family and that of the Campbells are heavy users of digital technology, my family has managed to prevent our devices from taking control of our lives, and we have done so by regulating our use of them."

findings to. My sister and I never read internet news articles.

The reasons for this difference in using digital devices (primarily the Internet) points to another important difference, which is how much we put our efforts in trying to stay unplugged when digital technology is not required. My mother and my sister are very good examples for these efforts. My sister, who had decided one day several years ago that she will be free of any digital gadgets when she needs to study hard, rarely turns on her cell phone. She will turn it on once in a while to inform my mother about when the school ends, but otherwise, she never has it on. She never sends text messages, nor does she check it. As a result, she can concentrate on a certain subject intensely when she is studying. My mother also tries hard to stay unplugged. She had removed the television from the house about seven years ago, and no one in the family had watched TV in the house since. This greatly contributed to focusing on other family members, books, studies, and objects that are around us. Also, even though my mother is to some extent what the article calls, the “supertasker”, she still tries hard to focus on what she is trying to achieve on the Web, and consciously turns the computer off when she is done. These efforts have made my mother a stronger “supertasker”, and she never made a mistake like burning a batch of cookies like Mrs. Campbell did.

Although my family is one of the families that are heavily associated to digital technology like the Campbells, we are different from the Campbells in that we are quite successful in controlling ourselves and switching off when needed. This difference is due to our efforts in trying to stay unplugged when necessary. It gives a hint on how our society should respond to rapidly developing digital technologies.