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Information-Communication Technology (ICT) in our Lives: the Interplay of ICT and Romantic Relationships

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Relationships among different aspects of romantic relationship quality, the usage of information and communication technologies (ICT), characteristics of a relationship, demographics, and personality were examined on a sample of 407 students in the Republic of Slovenia. The findings suggest that the most important factor in determining the quality of a romantic relationship is companionship (joint activities of a romantic couple). Romantic couples who generally spent more time in joint activities also spent more time using ICT in maintaining their romantic relationship. The usage of ICT in a romantic relationship itself does not influence the quality of that relationship. The general usage of ICT, however, deteriorates the quality of the romantic relationship. Once we take into account the impact of companionship, personality variables do not provide any unique contributions to romantic relationship quality.

Keywords: Information-communication technology, romantic relationships, interpersonal relationships, personality

1 Introduction

According to Demir (2007), establishing close romantic relationships is an important developmental task during the transition to adulthood. Theory and research suggest that involvement in and the quality of romantic relationship is an essential correlate of well-being and an important source of happiness (*ibid.*).

As well-being and happiness spill-over to organizational life, romantic relationships undoubtedly constitute an important factor of organizational behavior. Yet there is another set of factors that are changing our private and work lives dramatically, namely the Internet, as well as information and communication technologies (ICT) in general. ICT change the way people interact and establish relationships. In the 1990s, the Internet became a major vehicle for social encounters (Lawson & Leck, 2006). Studies have revealed that interpersonal communication and socializing with others are among the most popular uses of the Internet, even though the internet supports a rich array of other services from information retrieval to electronic commerce and entertainment (see Baym, Zhang, & Lin, 2004; Boneva, Kraut, & Frohlich, 2001). Ben-Ze'ev (2004) claims that there are various kinds of computer-mediated relationships that differ in some significant aspects: one-to-one or group communication formats, interrelating with real people or fantasy personas, interrelating with anonymous or identified people, and communicating in synchronous or asynchronous formats. According to the author, online romantic relationships combine features of close and remote relationships.

In this article, we are not concerned with purely on-line romantic relationships. Rather, we want to investigate the intersection of real, face-to-face romantic relationships and the use of ICT. We want to explore to what extent people use ICT in establishing, maintaining, and ending their face-to-face romantic relationships. Also, we want to compare the relationship between ICT and the quality of romantic relationship with the relationship between ICT and other factors, such as personality, age, gender, companionship (joint activities) and self-disclosure.

1.1 Companionship (Joint Activities)

Companionship and romantic relationship quality. Talking about companionship, Demir (2007) points out that romantic partners do not always engage in self-disclosure or provide support to each other but rather spend considerable amount of time together in different activities. Relying on findings that companionship was more important than social support, especially during non-stressful times, in predicting well-being, the author argues that doing things together with romantic partners is an essential component of the relationship that has implications for the happiness of emerging adults (*ibid.*).

Baxter (1986) found out that both males and females indicated the importance of spending substantial time in one another's presence as a feature of the opposite-sex romantic relationship. Thus, the following hypothesis is offered:

Hypothesis 1. Companionship (the amount of joint activities in a romantic relationship) is positively related to romantic relationship quality.

Companionship and the usage of ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship. Companionship is understood in terms of the amount of joint activities in a romantic relationship. Some authors (Katz & Rice, 2002; Kavanaugh & Patterson, 2002; both cited in Baym, Zhang, Kunkel, Ledbetter, & Lin, 2007) concluded that rather than replacing, revolutionizing or reversing the impacts of other interpersonal communication modes, communication technologies may be appropriated to supplement these means of meeting the goals of personal relationships. ICT is a medium for joint activities during the times when romantic couples are not physically together, so – in line with the above conclusion – we propose that it supplements other means of meeting the goals of a romantic relationship:

Hypothesis 2. Companionship (the amount of joint activities in a romantic relationship) is positively related to the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship. More specifically, romantic couples who spend more time in joint activities in general, also spend more time using ICT in maintaining their romantic relationship.

1.2 The Usage of ICT in General and the Usage of ICT in a Romantic Relationship

People differ in the extent that they use ICT in their lives in general. We expect this extent to influence the usage of ICT in more specific domains. Here we are interested in the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship. As we noted before, studies have revealed that interpersonal communication and socializing with others are among the most popular uses of the Internet (Baym, Zhang, & Lin, 2004; Boneva, Kraut, & Frohlich, 2001). Interpersonal communication and socializing set the stage for establishing romantic relationships. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 3. The usage of ICT in general is positively related to the usage of ICT in establishing, maintaining, and ending a romantic relationship. More specifically, people who spend more time using ICT in general are more likely to use ICT in establishing, maintaining, and ending their romantic relationships.

1.3 Attitudes Regarding the Usage of ICT in Interpersonal Relationships and the Usage of ICT in a Romantic Relationship

Within a broader domain of using ICT, Heinssen, Glass, and Knight (1987; cited in Ward & Tracey, 2004) report that attitudes towards computer use have been correlated with computer anxiety, which is associated with lower computer use. We are not aware of any specific research on attitudes regarding the usage of ICT in interpersonal relationships and their relation to the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship. However, in line with the literature on attitudes (Snyder, 1982; Fazio, 1990), and following the reasoning that attitudes, under the right circumstances, may influence the behavior, we propose that attitudes regarding the usage of ICT in interpersonal relationships influence the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship:

Hypothesis 4. Attitudes regarding the usage of ICT in interpersonal relationships are positively related to the usage of ICT in establishing, maintaining, and ending a romantic relationship. More specifically, people who have more positive attitudes regarding the usage of ICT in interpersonal relationships are more likely to use ICT in establishing, maintaining, and ending their romantic relationships.

1.4 The Usage of ICT in a Romantic Relationship and Romantic Relationship Quality

A study by Parks and Roberts (1998) revealed that although off-line relationships were generally more developed overall, the differences were substantively small on several dimensions. Most important, off-line and on-line relationships did not differ in terms of the levels of breadth and depth they achieved. Baym, Zhang, Kunkel, Ledbetter, and Lin (2007) investigated the association between the extent to which a medium is used to conduct a relationship and the quality of that relationship. The authors found that the proportion of face-to-face, telephone and internet communication in a relationship did not predict relational quality, concluding that mediation neither improved nor detracted from relational satisfaction and closeness. Ward and Tracey (2004) concluded that online relationships do not appear to be a panacea for greater relationship satisfaction, support, or engagement in relationships. In line with these findings and conclusions, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 5. The usage of ICT in establishing and maintaining a romantic relationship is not related to romantic relationship quality.

1.5 Individual Differences and Romantic Relationship Quality

Various individual differences have been linked to romantic relationship quality. It has also been argued that personality influences the quality of romantic relationship (Demir, 2007).

Shyness and romantic relationship quality. Jones and Carpenter (1986; cited in Ward & Tracey, 2004) found the scores on shyness to correlate negatively with friendship satisfaction. In line with this finding, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 6. Shyness is negatively related to ro-mantic relationship quality.

Self-disclosure and romantic relationship quality. Giddens (1990; cited in Lawson & Leck, 2006) saw relationships as "ties based upon trust, where trust is not pre-given but worked upon, and where the work involved means a mutual process of self-disclosure" (p. 121). Summarizing the findings in the literature, Gibbs, Ellison, & Heino (2006) conclude that self-disclosure is a key component in the development of personal relationships as it fosters closeness, and plays a key role in developing romantic relationships and intimacy. We, therefore, hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 7. Self-disclosure is positively related to romantic relationship quality.

The Big Five and romantic relationship quality. Summarizing the findings of the previous studies, Barelds and Barelds-Dijkstra (2007) report that personality characteristics influence the way partners perceive each other, interact with each other and determine how relationship-related events are appraised and explained. More specifically, there is a negative relationship between neuroticism and relationship quality, and a positive relationship between extraversion and autonomy (but not agreeableness and conscientiousness) on the one hand and relationship quality on the other hand. Demir (2007) found that the respondents' extraversion and agreeableness were positively related to romantic relationship quality; that neuroticism was negatively related; and that openness to experience did not show any relationship with romantic relationship quality. Previous studies did not reach consistent conclusions regarding the relationship between conscientiousness and relationship quality (White et al., 2004; cited in Demir, 2007). In line with these findings, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 8. Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and intellect/imagination are positively related to romantic relationship quality, whereas neuroticism is negatively related.

2 Methods

2.1 Sample

The sample for this study was drawn from the student population at the University of Maribor in Slovenia. It was a combination of a convenience sample of students in two undergraduate and one graduate classes (n = 130) using a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, and an on-line sample of students from a mailing list (n = 432) using an Internet survey. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. The students in the first group were approached in class and asked for their participation. A 5-page questionnaire was administered in the classroom. The completed questionnaires were collected immediately. The students in the second group were approached by an e-mail sent out to all the members on a student mailing list. A link to an on-line survey was included in the mail. Subsequent analyses revealed no statistically significant differences in the observed variables between the two groups. A total of 562 subjects participated in the study. Missing data and uncompleted on-line surveys reduced the analysis sample size to 407, of which 133 (32.7 percent) were male and 274 (67.3 percent) were female. Ages ranged from 18 through 42, with the average of 22.9 years. The large majority (76 percent) was in the range between 20 and 24 years. 260 (63.9 percent) were in a romantic relationship at the time of their participation in the survey, 133 (32.7 percent) had a romantic relationship previously, while 14 (3.4 percent) had never been romantically involved yet. An average duration of a romantic relationship described in the survey was 2 years and 8 months.

2.2 Measures

Romantic relationship quality. To assess the romantic relationship quality, we used the Perceived Relationship Quality Components (PRQC) Inventory (Fletcher, Simpson, & Thomas, 2000a). In addition to the items on the PRQC Inventory, we also used the three romance items, proposed by the authors elsewhere (Fletcher, Simpson, & Thomas, 2000b). The items had seven response options, from 1, "strongly disagree," to 7, "strongly agree." According to the authors, the inventory measured the following seven components: relationship satisfaction, commitment, intimacy, trust, passion, love, and romance (the added items). We performed a factor analysis with varimax rotation. Three factors emerged from this analysis:

a) Love, commitment, and closeness (α = .94).
b) Passion and romance (α = .85).
c) Trust and satisfaction (α = .89).

The three factor solution is shown in Table 1.

Companionship. We measured companionship using eleven items describing joint activities of romantic couples. Participants were instructed to indicate the frequency of engaging in these joint activities on a six-point scale, from 1, "never," to 6, "every day." Sample items included "having meals together (at home or in a restaurant)," "doing sports or recreational activities together," "socializing with friends together," and "sleeping together." Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .78.

Usage of ICT in general. We measured the usage of ICT in general by asking the respondents to indicate the frequency of using sixteen different ICT media in their work and day-to-day lives on a seven-point scale, from 1, "never," to 7, "three or more times per day." Sample ICT media included "mobile phone – voice," "Short Message Service (SMS)," "e-mail," "Skype," "Facebook," and "Second Life." The internal consistency coefficient α of the scores was .62.

Usage of ICT in establishing a romantic relationship. We asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they used sixteen different ICT media in establishing their romantic relationships on a five-point scale, from 1, "not at all," to 5, "to a very large extent." The sixteen listed ICT media were the same as for the usage of ICT in general. The alpha coefficient was .65.

Table 1: Results of Factor Analysis of Perceived Relationship Quality Items[a]

Items	Love, commitment, closeness	Passion, romance	Trust, satisfaction
How close is your relationship?	0.51		
How commited are you to your relationship?	0.81		
How much do you adore your partner?	0.73		
How connected are you with your partner?	0.58		
How devoted are you to your relationship?	0.84		
To what extent do you and your partner go out of your way to make each other feel special?	0.56		
How much do you love your partner?	0.77		
How dedicated are you to your relationship?	0.86		
How much do you cherish your partner?	0.67		
How sexualy intense is your relationship?		0.80	
How happy are you with your relationship?		0.55	
How lustful is your relationship?		0.75	
To what extent do you and your partner surprise each other with small gifts, notes, cards, flowers, and special treats?		0.43	
How romantic is your relationship?		0.54	
How intimate is your relationships?		0.63	
How passionate is your relationship?		0.80	
How much can you trust your partner?			0.81
How content are you with your relationship?			0.60
How dependable is your partner?			0.85
How satisfied are you with your relationship?			0.58
How much can you count on your partner?			0.78

[a] n = 407

Usage of ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship. We asked respondents to indicate the frequency of using sixteen different ICT media in maintaining their romantic relationships on a seven-point scale, from 1, "never," to 7, "three or more times per day." The sixteen listed ICT media were the same as for the usage of ICT in general. The internal consistency coefficient α was .60.

Usage of ICT in ending a romantic relationship. We asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they used (or would use, if they were still in a relationship) sixteen different ICT media in ending their romantic relationships on a five-point scale, from 1, "not at all," to 5, "to a very large extent." The sixteen listed ICT media were the same as for the usage of ICT in general. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .85.

Table 2: Results of Factor Analysis of Attitudes Regarding the Usage of ICT in Interpersonal Relationships Items[a]

Items	Seriousness of ICT relationships	Ease of using ICT in interpersonal relationships	Dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships
I like to meet in person those that I meet through ICT.	0.81		
I take very seriously the relationships that I make through ICT.	0.85		
I consider relationships I make through ICT to be genuine.	0.82		
When meeting people through ICT I like to present myself favourably.	0.62		
It is easier for me to make contacts through ICT than in person.		0.63	
I prefer to delived bad news through ICT than in person.		0.90	
I prefer to receive bad news through ICT than in person.		0.87	
In making contacts through ICT I tend to use false identity.			0.99

[a] n = 407

Attitudes regarding the usage of ICT in interpersonal relationships. We used eight items describing the possible attitudes toward the usage of ICT in interpersonal relationships. Respondents were instructed to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each of the items. The items had five response options, from 1, "strongly disagree," to 5, "strongly agree." We performed a factor analysis with varimax rotation. Three factors emerged from this analysis:

a) Ease of using ICT in interpersonal relationships (α = .80).
b) Seriousness of ICT relationships (α = .75).
c) Dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships (single item).

The three factor solution is shown in Table 2.

Self-Disclosure. We measured self-disclosure using the 18-item Self-Disclosure Scale (Wheeless & Grotz, 1976). The items had five response options, from 1, "strongly disagree," to 5, "strongly agree." According to the authors, the scale measured the following five components: intent to disclose, amount of disclosure, the positive-negative nature of disclosure, the honesty-accuracy of disclosure, and general depth – control of disclosure. We performed a factor analysis with varimax rotation. Three factors emerged from this analysis:

a) Amount and honesty – accuracy of disclosure (α = .72).
b) Intent to disclose (α = .41).
c) General depth – control of disclosure (α = .19).

The three factor solution is shown in Table 3.

Due to the unacceptably low internal consistency coefficients for "intent to disclose" and "general depth – control of disclosure," these two factors were dropped from all the subsequent analyses and we only retained the "amount and honesty – accuracy" dimension of self-disclosure.

Shyness. We measured shyness using a Cheek's (1983; cited in Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991) revision of the Cheek & Buss' Shyness Scale. The items had five response options, from 1, "very uncharacteristic or untrue, strongly disagree," to 5, "very characteristic or true, strongly agree." Sample items included "I feel tense when I'm with people I don't know well," I feel inhibited in social situations," I have no doubts about my social competence" (reverse-scored), and "I am socially somewhat awkward." Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .85.

The Big Five factors of personality. We assessed the Big Five factors of personality using the Mini-IPIP (Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006), a 20-item short form of the 50-item International Personality Item Pool—Five-Factor Model measure (Goldberg, 1999). Participants rated their agreement with the statements by selecting one of the five options, from 1, "strongly disagree," to 5, "strongly agree." There were four

Table 3: Results of Factor Analysis of Self-disclosure Items[a]

Items	Amount, accuracy, honesty	Intended disclosure	Control / general depth
I cannot reveal myself when I want to because I do not know myself thoroughly enough.	0.47		
Only infrequently do I express my personal beliefs and opinions.	0.61		
I do not always feel completely sincere when I reveal my own feelings, emotions, behaviors, or experiences.	0.47		
I am often not confident that my eypression of my own feelings, emotions, and experiences are true reflections of myself.	0.39		
My conversation lasts the least time when I am discussing myself.	0.72		
I am not always honest in my self disclosures.	0.54		
On the whole, my disclosures about myself are more negative then positive.	0.53		
I do not often talk about myself.	0.75		
My statements of my feelings are ususally brief.		0.33	
When I wish my self-disclosures are always accurate reflections of who I really am.		0.63	
My disclosures of personal beliefs and opinions are always directly related to the conversation.		0.46	
When I reveal my feelings about myself, I consciously intended to do so.		0.67	
When I express my personal feelings, I am always aware of what I am doing and saying.		0.65	
I usually disclose positive things about myself.			0.53
Once I get started, my self-disclosures last a long time.			0.65
My messages reveal mostly what i like.			0.59
I typically reveal information about myself without intending to.			0.51
I intimately disclose who I really am, openly and fully in my conversation.			0.49

[a] n = 407

items per Big Five trait: Extraversion (α = .80), Agreeableness (α = .67), Conscientiousness (α = .77), Neuroticism (α = .57), and Intellect/Imagination (or Openness) (α = .63).

In addition, we collected data on respondents' gender, age, and duration of the relationship.

2.1 Analyses

We first calculated Pearson correlation coefficients to test the hypothesized relationships among the studied variables. We then performed a series of stepwise regression analyses to determine the variables predicting romantic relationship quality and the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship. Finally, we used hierarchical multiple regression to determine whether the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship added to the amount of explained variance in romantic relationship quality, after the impact of other variables had been accounted for. Duration of relationship was entered first; then the demographic variables (age and gender) were entered in the second block, self-disclosure in the third block and the personality variables (the Big Five factors and shyness) in the fourth block. Lastly, the usage of ICT variables (ICT in establishing and maintaining a romantic relationship) were entered and assessed for their unique contributions to the quality of a romantic relationship.

3 Results

Descriptive statistics for the usage of different ICT media in general and in a romantic relationship are shown in Table 4. The four most frequently used media are marked in bold for each usage type. As can be seen from the table, in all cases the same four ICT media were most frequently used, although the order changed slightly: mobile phone – voice calls, Short Message Service (SMS), e-mail, and instant messaging. After these four, the means for other media dropped substantively.

Correlations and descriptive statistics for all variables are reported in Table 5.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1, which predicts a positive relationship between companionship and romantic relationship quality, received strong support. Companionship (the amount of joint activities in a romantic relationship) was positively correlated with love, commitment, and closeness (r = .39, p < .0001), passion and romance (r = .41, p < .0001) and trust and satisfaction (r = .38, p < .0001) (see Table 5).

Furthermore, in stepwise regression analysis for dependent variable 'love, commitment, and closeness' (see Table 9), companionship turned out to be the most important predictor (R^2 = .16, F = 52.64, p < .0001). That was also the case for stepwise regression analysis for dependent variable 'passion and romance' (R^2 = .17, F = 58.44, p < .0001) (see Table 10) and for stepwise regression analysis for dependent variable 'trust and satisfaction' (R^2 = .15, F = 48.98, p < .0001) (see Table 11).

Hypothesis 2

Companionship was also positively correlated with the usage of ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship (r = .19, p = .0002), providing support for Hypothesis 2 (see Table 5).

Table 4: The Usage of ICT Media[a]

	The usage in establishing a romantic relationship (scale 1-5)		The usage in maintaining a romantic relationship (scale 1-7)		The usage in ending a romantic relationship (scale 1-5)		The usage in general (scale 1-7)	
ICT Media:	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Mobile phone - voice calls	**3.99**	1.17	**5.94**	1.27	**2.72**	1.39	**6.56**	0.98
Mobile phone - video calls	1.18	0.63	1.25	0.87	1.14	0.51	1.31	0.96
Short Message Service (SMS)	**4.08**	1.11	**5.54**	1.4	**2.45**	1.37	**5.90**	1.25
Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS)	1.78	1.02	1.96	1.29	1.29	0.75	2.05	1.33
E-mail	**2.29**	1.31	**3.08**	1.75	**1.84**	1.17	**5.77**	1.26
Internet Relay Chat (IRC)	1.33	0.92	1.24	0.90	1.07	0.39	1.17	0.80
Instant messaging (MSN, Gtalk, AIM, ICQ, etc.)	**2.64**	1.63	**3.23**	2.24	**1.84**	1.26	**4.70**	2.2
Skype	1.35	0.98	1.42	1.23	1.23	0.73	1.78	1.61
Forums (writing on forums)	1.08	0.43	1.12	0.66	1.05	0.34	2.24	1.77
Online chat rooms	1.05	0.37	1.04	0.35	1.04	0.28	1.16	0.69
Blogging	1.05	0.34	1.06	0.46	1.03	0.28	1.33	0.93
Online social portals (meetme.hotornot.com, etc.)	1.09	0.45	1.04	0.30	1.05	0.30	1.16	0.62
Online personals (date.com, etc.)	1.03	0.23	1.02	0.20	1.04	0.29	1.05	0.33
Facebook	1.11	0.52	1.13	0.59	1.07	0.38	1.50	1.28
MsnSpace, MySpace, Hi5, etc.	1.24	0.74	1.24	0.85	1.12	0.51	1.65	1.38
Second Life	1.00	0.08	1.02	0.27	1.03	0.30	1.04	0.31

[a] n = 407

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations[a]

Variable	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Romantic relationship (RR) quality																						
1. Love	5.80	.94																				
2. Passion	5.21	.85	.70**																			
3. Trust	5.74	.97	.72**	.61**																		
Companionship																						
4. Joint activities	3.45	.69	.39**	.41**	.38**																	
Usage of ICT																						
5. In general	2.52	.46	-.07	.03	-.05	.11*																
6. In establishing RR	1.71	.34	.03	.12*	-.00	.16**	.41**															
7. In maintaining RR	2.01	.37	.03	.12*	.03	.19**	.53**	.72**														
8. In ending RR	1.38	.38	.01	.07	.30**	.09	.24**	.30**	.27**													
Attitudes regarding the usage of ICT																						
9. Ease	2.12	.94	-.09	-.04	-.09	-.02	.13*	.20**	.15**	.26**												
10. Seriousness	2.62	.84	-.24**	-.01	.00	-.03	.15**	.12*	.11*	.11*	.34**											
11. Dishonesty	1.50	.85	-.24**	-.11*	-.14**	-.05	.01	.00	.04	-.00	.07	.01										
Self-Disclosure																						
12. Self-disclosure	3.86	.57	.26**	.15**	.18**	.17**	.05	.04	.02	-.02	-.23**	-.09	-.22**									
Shyness																						
13. Shyness	2.40	.59	-.16**	-.18**	-.12*	-.12*	-.13**	-.08	-.09	-.01	.24**	.04	.09	-.44**								
The Big Five																						
14. Extraversion	3.41	.80	.14**	.20**	.07	.17**	.18**	.16**	.11	.03	-.16**	.02	-.07	.38**	-.75**							
15. Agreeableness	3.90	.62	.17**	.09	.07	.13*	.03	.05	.07	.07	-.11*	-.03	.05	.28**	-.23**	.26**						
16. Conscientiousness	3.58	.84	.15**	.11*	.08	.11*	-.7	.13*	.05	.04	.02	.06	-.09	.11*	-.07	.01	.08					
17. Neuroticism	2.80	.69	-.08	-.06	-.11*	.01	-.00	.01	.00	.08	.22**	-.04	.03	-.19**	.36**	.23**	-.06	.00				
18. Intellect/Imagin.	3.65	.69	-.01	-.01	.03	.00	.03	-.00	.06	-.03	-.01	.11*	.03	.13*	-.22**	.26**	.23**	-.09	-.09			
Demographics																						
19. Age	22.87	3.33	-.09	-.02	.02	.02	-.04	-.19**	-.17**	-.00	-.10*	.03	.02	.06	-.08	.01	-.04	.03	-.07	.03			
20. Gender	1.67	.47	.18**	.06	.07	.04	.04	-.02	-.05	.03	-.06	-.18**	-.11*	.21**	-.08	.15**	.24**	.12*	.15**	-.07	-.16**	
Duration of RR																						
21. Duration	31.63	27.98	-.*12	-.03	.13*	.22**	-.14**	-.20**	-.14*	-.05	-.15**	-.01	.02	.14**	-.10	.06	.17**	.18**	-.05	.03	.41**	-.11*

[a] n = 407
* p < .05
** p < .01

Table 6: Results of Regression Analysis[a] (Dependent variable 'The usage of ICT in establishing a romantic relationship')

Step	Variable entered	ΔR^2	R^2	F	p
1	The usage of ICT in general	.1975	.1975	79.51	< .0001
2	Age (-)	.0246	.2222	10.19	.001
3	Ease of using ICT in interpersonal relationships	.0184	.2405	7.76	.005
4	Conscientiousness	.0174	.2579	7.48	.006
5	Extraversion	.0067	.2646	2.90	.089

[a] n = 407

In stepwise regression analysis for dependent variable 'the usage of ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship' (see Table 7), companionship was a significant predictor of the dependent variable (ΔR^2 = .012, F = 5.49, p = .019).

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3, which predicts a positive relationship between the usage of ICT in general and the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship, received strong support. The usage of ICT in general was positively correlated with the usage of ICT in establishing (r = .41, p < .0001), maintaining (r = .53, p < .0001), and ending (r = .24, p < .0001) a romantic relationship (see Table 5).

Also, in stepwise regression analyses, the usage of ICT in general was the most important predictor for dependent variables 'the usage of ICT in establishing a romantic relationship' (R^2 = .20, F = 79.51, p < .0001) (see Table 6), 'the usage of ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship' (R^2 = .33, F = 144.96, p < .0001) (see Table 7), and 'the usage of ICT in ending a romantic relationship' (R^2 = .05, F = 15.14, p < .0001) (see Table 8).

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4, which predicts a positive relationship between the favorableness of attitudes regarding the usage of ICT in interpersonal relationships and the usage of ICT in establishing, maintaining, and ending a romantic relationship, only received partial support. The hypothesized relationship was supported for 'ease of using ICT in interpersonal relationships' and 'seriousness of ICT relationships,' but not for 'dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships.' Ease of using ICT in interpersonal relationships was positively correlated with the usage of ICT in establishing (r = .20, p < .0001), maintaining (r = .15, p = .004), and ending (r = .26, p < .0001) a romantic relationship. Seriousness of ICT relationships was positively correlated with the usage of ICT in establishing (r = .12, p = .02), maintaining (r = .11, p = .03), and ending (r = .11, p = .03) a romantic relationship. Dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships was not significantly correlated with any aspect of using ICT in a romantic relationship (see Table 5).

Stepwise regression analyses provided a slightly different picture. For dependent variable 'the usage of ICT in establishing a romantic relationship' (see Table 6), the only attitude variable remaining in the model was 'ease of using ICT in interpersonal relationships' (ΔR^2 = .02, F = 7.76, p = .005). For dependent variable 'the usage of ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship' (see Table 7), the only attitude variable remaining in the model was 'seriousness of ICT relationships' (ΔR^2 = .005, F = 2.52, p = .113). For dependent variable 'the usage of ICT in ending a romantic relationship' (see Table 8), the two attitude variables remaining in the model were 'ease of using ICT in interpersonal relationships' (ΔR^2 = .04, F = 12.47, p < .001) and 'dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships' (ΔR^2 = .007, F = 2.35, p = .126), with the latter having a negative impact.

Hypothesis 5

The hypothesized lack of relationship between the usage of ICT in establishing and maintaining a romantic relationship and romantic relationship quality was supported for the 'love, commitment, and closeness' and 'trust and satisfaction' variables, but not for the 'passion and romance' variable. The 'passion and romance' variable was positively correlated with the usage of ICT in establishing (r = .12, p = .02) and maintaining (r = .12, p = .02) a romantic relationship (see Table 5).

On the other hand, stepwise regression analyses provided unanimous support for Hypothesis 5. None of the 'usage of ICT in a romantic relationship' variables remained in the regression models for dependent variables 'love, commitment,

Table 7: Results of Regression Analysis[a] (Dependent variable 'The usage of ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship')

Step	Variable entered	ΔR^2	R^2	F	p
1	The usage of ICT in general	.3310	.3310	144.96	< .0001
2	Age (-)	.0106	.3415	6.68	.031
3	Companionship	.0122	.3537	5.49	.019
4	Conscientiousness	.0076	.3613	3.44	.064
5	Duration of the relationship (-)	.0101	.3714	4.63	.032
6	Seriousness of ICT relationships	.0054	.3768	2.52	.113

[a] n = 407

Table 8: Results of Regression Analysis[a] (Dependent variable 'The usage of ICT in ending a romantic relationship')

Step	Variable entered	Δ R^2	R^2	F	p
1	The usage of ICT in general	.0493	.0493	15.14	< .0001
2	Ease of using ICT in interpersonal relationships	.0391	.0884	12.47	.000
3	Companionship	.0170	.1054	5.51	.019
4	Gender	.0121	.1175	3.97	.047
5	Dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships (-)	.0072	.1246	2.35	.126

[a] n = 407

and closeness,' 'passion and romance,' and 'trust and satisfaction' (see Tables 9 – 11).

Finally, hierarchical regression analyses for dependent variables 'love, commitment, and closeness,' 'passion and romance,' and 'trust and satisfaction' showed that the usage of ICT in establishing and maintaining a romantic relationship had no unique contributions to any aspect of the quality of a romantic relationship (see Table 12). Therefore, Hypothesis 5 received general support.

Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 predicts a negative relationship between shyness and romantic relationship quality. Correlation analysis provided support for this hypothesis. Shyness was negatively correlated with 'love, commitment, and closeness' (r = -.16, p = .002), 'passion and romance' (r = -.18, p < .001), and 'trust and satisfaction' (r = -.12, p = .02) (see Table 5).

However, in stepwise regression analyses for dependent variables 'love, commitment, and closeness,' 'passion and romance,' and 'trust and satisfaction' (see Tables 9 – 11), shyness did not remain in any of the regression models.

Hypothesis 7

Self-disclosure was positively correlated with 'love, commitment, and closeness' (r = .26, p < .0001), 'passion and romance' (r = .16, p = .003), and 'trust and satisfaction' (r = .18, p < .001) (see Table 5), which provides support for Hypothesis 7.

However, in stepwise regression analyses (see Tables 9 – 11), self-disclosure remained in the model only for dependent variable 'love, commitment, and closeness' (ΔR^2 = .02, F = 5.32, p = .02). The same appeared in hierarchical regression analyses, where self-disclosure only showed a unique contribution for dependent variable 'love, commitment, and closeness' (ΔR^2 = .014, F = 5.04, p = .03), after the contributions of companionship, duration of relationship, and demographics were accounted for (see Table 12).

Hypothesis 8

Hypothesis 8, which predicts that extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and intellect/imagination are positively related to romantic relationship quality, whereas neuroticism is

Table 9: Results of Regression Analysis[a] (Dependent variable 'Love, commitment, and closeness')

Step	Variable entered	Δ R^2	R^2	F	p
1	Companionship	.1617	.1617	52.64	< .0001
2	Dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships (-)	.0264	.1881	8.85	.003
3	Age (-)	.0252	.2133	8.68	.003
4	Amount, accuracy, honesty of self-disclosure	.0152	.2285	5.32	.021
5	The usage of ICT in general (-)	.0138	.2422	4.88	.028
6	Conscientiousness	.0081	.2503	2.89	.090

[a] n = 407

Table 10: Results of Regression Analysis[a] (Dependent variable 'Passion and romance')

Step	Variable entered	Δ R^2	R^2	F	p
1	Companionship	.1747	.1747	58.44	< .0001
2	Duration of the relationship (-)	.0207	.1954	7.08	.008
3	Extraversion	.0214	.2169	7.49	.006
4	Dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships (-)	.0082	.2250	2.88	.091
5	The usage of ICT in general (-)	.0074	.2324	2.62	.106
6	Conscientiousness	.0059	.2384	2.11	.147

[a] n = 407

negatively related, only received partial support. Table 5 shows the following:

Extraversion was significantly and positively correlated with 'love, commitment, and closeness' (r = .14, p = .009) and 'passion and romance' (r = .20, p < .0001), but not with 'trust and satisfaction.'

Agreeableness was significantly and positively correlated only with 'love, commitment, and closeness' (r = .17, p < .001), but not with 'passion and romance' and 'trust and satisfaction.'

Conscientiousness was significantly and positively correlated with 'love, commitment, and closeness' (r = .15, p = .004) and 'passion and romance' (r = .11, p = .03), but not with 'trust and satisfaction.'

Intellect/imagination was not significantly correlated with any aspect of romantic relationship quality.

Neuroticism was significantly and negatively correlated only with 'trust and satisfaction' (r = -.11, p = .03), but not with 'love, commitment, and closeness' and 'passion and romance.'

In stepwise regression analysis for dependent variable 'love, commitment, and closeness' (see Table 9), the only Big Five factor remaining in the model was conscientiousness (ΔR^2 = .008, F = 2.89, p = .09). For dependent variable 'passion and romance' (see Table 10), the two Big Five factors remaining in the model were extraversion (ΔR^2 = .02, F = 7.49, p = .006) and conscientiousness (ΔR^2 = .006, F = 2.11, p = .147). In stepwise regression analysis for dependent variable 'trust and satisfaction' (see Table 11), the only Big Five factor remaining in the model and having a negative impact was neuroticism (ΔR^2 = .009, F = 2.98, p = .09).

Finally, hierarchical regression analyses for dependent variables 'love, commitment, and closeness,' 'passion and romance,' and 'trust and satisfaction' showed that personality (Big Five and shyness) had no unique contributions to any aspect of the quality of a romantic relationship (see Table 12).

The Usage of ICT in a Romantic Relationship

The usage of ICT in establishing a romantic relationship. Stepwise regression analysis (see Table 6) showed that we were able to explain 26.5 percent of variance in dependent variable 'the usage of ICT in establishing a romantic relationship' with five variables remaining in the model: the usage of ICT in general, age, ease of using ICT in interpersonal relationships, conscientiousness, and extraversion. The influence of age was negative.

The usage of ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship. Stepwise regression analysis (see Table 7) showed that we were able to explain 37.7 percent of variance in dependent variable 'the usage of ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship' with six variables remaining in the model: the usage of ICT in general, age, companionship, conscientiousness, duration of the relationship, and seriousness of ICT relationships. The influence of age and duration of the relationship was negative.

The usage of ICT in ending a romantic relationship. Stepwise regression analysis (see Table 8) showed that we were able to explain 12.5 percent of variance in dependent variable 'the usage of ICT in ending a romantic relationship' with five variables remaining in the model: the usage of ICT in general, ease of using ICT in interpersonal relationships, companionship, gender, and dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships, with the latter having a negative influence.

Romantic Relationship Quality

Love, commitment, and closeness. Stepwise regression analysis (see Table 9) showed that we were able to explain 25 percent of variance in dependent variable 'love, commitment, and closeness' with five variables remaining in the model: companionship, dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships, age, self-disclosure, the usage of ICT in general, and conscientiousness. The influence of dishonesty, age, and the usage of ICT in general was negative.

The results of hierarchical regression (see Table 12) showed the importance of companionship, demographics (gender and age), and self-disclosure for 'love, commitment, and closeness.' After we accounted for the influence of these variables, other variables (duration of the relationship, personality, and the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship) showed no contribution to love, commitment, and closeness.

Passion and romance. Stepwise regression analysis (see Table 10) showed that we were able to explain 23.8 percent of variance in dependent variable 'passion and romance' with six variables remaining in the model: companionship, duration of the relationship, extraversion, dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships, the usage of ICT in general, and conscientiousness. The influence of duration of the relationship, dishonesty and the usage of ICT in general was negative.

The results of hierarchical regression (see Table 12) showed the importance of companionship and duration of the relationship for 'passion and romance.' After we accounted for the influence of these variables, other variables (demographics, self-disclosure, personality, and the usage of ICT in a

Table 11: Results of Regression Analysis[a] (Dependent variable 'Trust and satisfaction')

Step	Variable entered	ΔR^2	R^2	F	p
1	Companionship	.1498	.1498	48.98	< .0001
2	The usage of ICT in general (-)	.0097	.1595	3.20	.074
3	Neuroticism (-)	.0090	.1685	2.98	.085
4	Dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships (-)	.0071	.1755	2.35	.126

[a] n = 407

Table 12: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis[a]

Dependent variables:	'Love, commitment, and closeness'						'Passion and romance'						'Trust and satisfaction'					
Variable	**Step 1**	**Step 2**	**Step 3**	**Step 4**	**Step 5**	**Step 6**	**Step 1**	**Step 2**	**Step 3**	**Step 4**	**Step 5**	**Step 6**	**Step 1**	**Step 2**	**Step 3**	**Step 4**	**Step 5**	**Step 6**
Companionship																		
Companionship	7.41***	7.10***	7.35***	7.04***	7.02**	7.17***	7.68***	8.09***	8.06***	7.87***	7.67***	7.41***	7.02***	6.71***	6.73***	6.51***	6.83***	6.89***
Duration																		
Duration of the relationship		.73	1.67	1.54*	1.10	.80		-2.45**	-2.05**	-2.11**	-2.34**	-2.19**		.78	1.15	1.07	.77	.54
Demographics																		
Gender			1.94*	1.46*	1.49*	1.40			.32	.13	.15	.17			-.09	-.34	.47	.40
Age			-2.70**	-2.81*	-2.86**	-3.03**			-.33	-.36	-.43	-.36			-1.05	-1.11	-1.36	-1.50*
Self-disclosure																		
Amount, accuracy, honesty				2.25*	1.40	1.36				.91	.08	.09				1.26	1.12	1.08
Personality																		
Extraversion					-1.30	-1.18					1.45*	1.40					-1.78*	-1.67*
Agreeableness					.67	.73					-1.01	-1.02					-1.30	-1.26
Conscientiousness					1.49*	1.67*					1.32	1.22					.80	.95
Neuroticism					-.30	-.21					-.17	-.20					-1.01	-.93
Intellect/Imagin.					.59	.54					.80	.82					1.47*	1.42
Shyness					-1.22	-.26					-.25	-.24					-1.07	-1.09
Usage of ICT in romantic relationship (RR)																		
Establishing a RR						-.89						.40						-.76
Maintaining a RR						-.25						-.06						-.08
Total R^2	.16***	.16***	.21***	.22***	.23***	.24***	.17***	.19***	.19***	.19***	.22***	.22***	.15***	.15***	.15***	.16***	.18***	.18***
? R^2 Block		.001	.04***	.01**	.01	.006		.01**	.0009	.002	.02	.0007		.001	.003	.004	.024	.004

[a] n = 407
* p < .15
** p < .05
*** p < .001

romantic relationship) showed no contribution to passion and romance.

Trust and satisfaction. Stepwise regression analysis (see Table 11) showed that we were able to explain 17.6 percent of variance in dependent variable 'trust and satisfaction' with four variables remaining in the model: companionship, the usage of ICT in general, neuroticism, and dishonesty in using ICT in interpersonal relationships. The influence of the usage of ICT in general, neuroticism, and dishonesty was negative.

The results of hierarchical regression (see Table 12) showed the importance of companionship for 'trust and satisfaction.' After we accounted for the influence of this variable, other variables (duration of the relationship, demographics, self-disclosure, personality, and the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship) showed no contribution to trust and satisfaction.

4 Discussion

A major goal of this study was examination of the relationships among romantic relationship quality, the usage of ICT (in romantic relationships and in general), characteristics of a relationship (companionship and duration), demographics, and individual differences (self-disclosure, shyness, the Big Five factors), in order to determine the relative importance that ICT is playing in our real-life romantic relationships. Although researchers have devoted considerable attention both to real-life and virtual (on-line) romantic relationships, these were mainly studied separately and possibly compared and contrasted. Very few studies have examined the impact of ICT on real-life romantic relationships.

Our first conclusion was that the usage of ICT media among the student population in our sample was more or less limited to using mobile phones (voice calls), SMS, e-mail, and instant messaging. Other ICT media, more popular among high school students (such as Facebook, Second life, blogging, etc.) have obviously not reached the student population in Slovenia yet.

By far the most influential variable in determining romantic relationship quality was companionship, which was defined as the amount of joint activities of a romantic couple. In all analyses, companionship was importantly related to all aspects of romantic relationship quality. This supports Baxter's (1986) finding about the importance of spending substantial time in one another's presence as a feature of the opposite-sex romantic relationship.

Also, companionship was positively related to the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship. Romantic couples who spent more time in joint activities in general, also spent more time using ICT in maintaining their romantic relationship. This is an important finding, as it supports the conclusions of other authors (Katz & Rice, 2002; Kavanaugh & Patterson, 2002; both cited in Baym, Zhang, Kunkel, Ledbetter, & Lin, 2007) that communication technologies supplement rather than replace, revolutionize or reverse the impacts of other interpersonal communication modes. Spending more time using ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship did not divert romantic couples from spending time together.

The results showed that people who more frequently use ICT in their work and day-to-day lives in general, are more likely to use ICT in establishing, maintaining, and ending their romantic relationships, as well.

Individuals have different attitudes regarding the use of ICT in interpersonal relationships. Some are more at ease using ICT than face-to-face communication in their interpersonal relationships. Some take their on-line relationships more serious than others. Some tend to fake their identity when communicating on-line. Our results showed that these attitudes have at least some impact upon the usage of ICT in romantic relationships, all of which was in a predicted direction. People, who have more favorable attitudes regarding the usage of ICT in interpersonal relationships, tend to use ICT in their romantic relationships more frequently.

One of the most important findings of our research was that the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship did not influence the quality of that relationship. Therefore, using ICT neither improved nor deteriorated the romantic relationship quality. This is in line with the findings of Baym, Zhang, Kunkel, Ledbetter, and Lin (2007) that the proportion of face-to-face, telephone and internet communication in a relationship did not predict relational quality, meaning that mediation neither improved nor detracted from relational satisfaction and closeness.

The only exceptions were the results of a correlation analysis, which showed that when the ICT was used in establishing and maintaining romantic relationships, those relationships were more passionate and romantic. However, further regression analyses did not replicate these findings.

The results of correlation analyses showed a predicted negative relationship of shyness with all aspects of romantic relationship quality, a finding in line with Jones and Carpenter (1986; cited in Ward & Tracey, 2004), who found the scores on shyness to correlate negatively with friendship satisfaction. However, the subsequent regression analyses also did not replicate these findings.

Self-disclosure turned out to be significantly related mainly to the 'love, commitment, and closeness' aspect of romantic relationship quality. After we accounted for the influence of other variables, self-disclosure did not significantly influence the 'passion and romance' and 'trust and satisfaction' aspects of romantic relationship quality. This finding supports Gibbs, Ellison, & Heino's (2006) conclusions that self-disclosure is a key component in the development of personal relationships as it fosters closeness, and plays a key role in developing romantic relationships and intimacy.

Although the Big Five factors showed some relation to various aspects of romantic relationship quality (all in a predicted direction), their influence was not very strong. The only significant Big Five factor in the stepwise regression model for 'love, commitment, and closeness' was conscientiousness; the only two significant Big Five factor for 'passion and romance' were extraversion and conscientiousness; and the only (negatively) significant Big Five factor for 'trust and satisfaction' was neuroticism. While these findings lend some support to previous studies (Barelds & Barelds-Dijkstra, 2007; Demir, 2007), in hierarchical regression analyses, however, the Big Five factors did not show any significant contribution to any aspect of romantic relationship quality.

So, what predicted the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship? The results showed that younger people, who more

frequently use ICT in general, who feel more at ease in using ICT in interpersonal relationships, and are more conscientious and extraverted, more frequently use ICT in *establishing* their romantic relationships. Next, younger people, who more frequently use ICT in general, who spent more time in joint activities with their partner, who are more conscientious, who are in their relationship for a shorter time, and who are more serious about their ICT relationships, more frequently use ICT in *maintaining* their romantic relationships. Finally, females, who more frequently use ICT in general, who feel more at ease in using ICT in interpersonal relationships, who spent more time in joint activities with their partner, and who are less dishonest in using ICT in interpersonal relationships, are more likely to use ICT in *ending* their romantic relationships. Therefore, the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship is under a blend of influence of personality, attitudes, companionship, and the usage of ICT in general.

Finally, what predicted the different aspects of romantic relationship quality? The results showed that younger people, who spent more time in joint activities with their partner, who are less dishonest in using ICT in interpersonal relationships, who self-disclose more, who less frequently use ICT in general, and who are more conscientious, report higher levels of *love, commitment and closeness* in their romantic relationship. Next, the results showed that people, who spent more time in joint activities with their partner, who are in their relationship for a shorter time, who are more extraverted, who are less dishonest in using ICT in interpersonal relationships, who less frequently use ICT in general, and who are more conscientious, report higher levels of *passion and romance* in their romantic relationships. The results also showed that people, who spent more time in joint activities with their partner, who less frequently use ICT in general, who have lower levels of neuroticism, and who are less dishonest in using ICT in interpersonal relationships, report higher levels of *trust and satisfaction* in their romantic relationships.

It is interesting to note the negative relationship between 'the usage of ICT in general' and romantic relationship quality. People who more frequently use ICT in their work and day-to-day lives, report lower levels of love, commitment, closeness, passion, romance, trust, and satisfaction in their romantic relationships. A possible explanation is that the more frequent 'use of ICT in general' detracts people from their relationship with their romantic partner.

The results of hierarchical regression analyses clearly showed that the quality of a romantic relationship largely depends upon companionship, defined as frequency of joint activities of a romantic couple. The only other variables with significant contributions were gender, age, and self-disclosure for 'love, commitment, and closeness,' and duration of relationship for 'passion and romance.' After we accounted for the influence of these variables, personality and the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship did not provide unique contributions to the quality of romantic relationships.

So, based on our results, what could be said about romantic relationship quality and its relations to companionship, duration of relationship, demographics, self-disclosure, personality, and the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship? Smaller details and weak relationships aside, the following big picture emerged. What really matters is spending time and doing things together. The longer the relationship, the least passionate and romantic it gets. Younger people, females, and those who self-disclose more, tend to perceive more love, commitment, and closeness in their romantic relationships. Personality and the usage of ICT in a romantic relationship do not matter much or not at all.

This study should be evaluated in light of its limitations. First, it was conducted on a student population, in which many have not been greatly exposed to some of the more recent ICT media. The results would most likely be somewhat different if the study were conducted on a sample of high schools students. Also, because of the relatively narrow age span of our sample (76 percent of participants were within the range between 20 and 24 years) all finding regarding the influence of age should be taken with caution. Further research should examine romantic relationship quality and the usage of ICT on a sample of a broader age span.

5 Conclusion

We examined the relationships among different aspects of romantic relationship quality, the usage of ICT (in romantic relationships and in general), characteristics of a relationship (companionship and duration), demographics, and individual differences (self-disclosure, shyness, the Big Five factors). Our findings suggest that spending more time using ICT in maintaining a romantic relationship does not divert romantic couples from spending time together. The usage of ICT in a romantic relationship does not influence the quality of that relationship. On the other hand, the usage of ICT outside the romantic relationship negatively impacts romantic relationship quality. Self-disclosure leads to greater love, commitment, and closeness in a romantic relationship. The most important factor in determining the quality of a romantic relationship is companionship (joint activities of a romantic couple). Once we take into account the impact of companionship, personality variables no longer make any difference.

Although the present study did not specifically investigate the usage of ICT in the workplace, its findings should also be of interest to managers. First, one can expect the employees' romantic relationship quality to impact their moods at work. Second, high-quality romantic relationships might help people to cope with work-related problems. Third, the usage of ICT at work cannot be separated from the usage of ICT in romantic relationships. ICT enables people to stay in touch with their romantic partners even as they work. And finally, romantic relationships get established even between people that work together. Managers should, therefore, be aware of the factors influencing both the quality of romantic relationship and the usage of ICT in romantic relationships.

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Informacijsko-komunikacijska tehnologija (IKT) v našem življenju: povezanost IKT in romantičnih odnosov

Prispevek predstavi ugotovitve raziskave o povezanosti med različnimi vidiki kakovosti romantičnih odnosov, uporabo IKT, značilnostmi odnosa, demografskimi spremenljivkami in osebnostnimi dejavniki, ki je bila opravljena na vzorcu 407 slovenskih študentov. Rezultati kažejo, da je s kvaliteto romantičnega odnosa najtesneje povezano prav druženje (skupne aktivnosti romantičnega para). Pari, ki v splošnem porabijo več časa za skupne aktivnosti, namenijo več časa tudi uporabi IKT za ohranjanje svojih romantičnih odnosov. Sama uporaba IKT v romantičnem odnosu ni povezana s kakovostjo tega odnosa. Uporaba IKT na splošno (torej izven romantičnega odnosa) pa je negativno povezana s kakovostjo obravnavanega odnosa. Po tem, ko upoštevamo učinek druženja, osebnostni dejavniki ne prispevajo statistično pomembnega deleža k pojasnjeni varianci v kakovosti romantičnega odnosa.

Ključne besede: Informacijsko-komunikacijska tehnologija, romantični odnosi, medosebni odnosi, osebnost