



Semester B Assessment 1 for CMP2006 HCI, Computers & Society

There are two assessments (coursework submissions) in Semester B for CMP2006. Each is worth 25% of the total unit mark. This document describes the first of these two assessments – hereafter referred to as Assessment B.1.

Summary

The objective of this assessment is to analyse and discuss the data gathered from a questionnaire issued to the class to investigate your own use of computer-mediated communication (CMC). The questionnaire will be administered during the lecture in Week 4 and a summary of some of the data from the questionnaire will be presented back to the class during the lecture in Week 5. You are then required to write a short essay about the results of the questionnaire and their meaning. In addition you will be required to examine how well the questionnaire reflects your own use of CMC as well as discussing, with suitable reference to other work, how the results would differ if the questionnaire had been applied to different demographics of society.

The Learning Outcome covered by this assessment is:

[LO3] judge the impact of technology on contemporary situations from multiple perspectives

The Questionnaire and the Data

The questionnaire will gather information about your preferences for using a particular type of CMC when communicating with another person in several different scenarios. Although you will each individually take part in the data collection exercise we will gather the questionnaire back in at the end of this – therefore, for reference, an electronic copy of the (blank) questionnaire will be provided on Blackboard. You will be asked to put your name on the cover sheet of the questionnaire that you fill out – this is simply to make sure you fill the questionnaire out in an appropriate manner – all cover sheets will be removed from the completed questionnaires and the data will then be completely anonymised.

One week after we administer the questionnaire we will provide you with descriptive graphical summaries of some aspects of the data. The data itself contains many variables and its complete analysis lies outside of the scope of this assessment. Therefore we have chosen three interesting subsets of results that we would like you base your discussion upon. These are:-

- the overall preference of CMC device when contacting a friend, acquaintance or stranger
- a comparison between preferences for CMC device when you are either the caller (instigator) or recipient of the communication
- the effect of both the environment ambient “noise level” and the relationship with the person you are communicating with

This data will (obviously) **only** become available one week after completion of the questionnaire. Once the data is available a new, revised, copy of **this** briefing document will be made available on Blackboard with three Appendices: Appendix 1 will contain a graph showing the overall preference of CMC device, Appendix 2 will have two graphs so as to allow side-by-side comparison of the ‘caller versus recipient’ condition whilst Appendix 3 will illustrate the effect of both the environment ambient “noise level” and the relationship between the communicating people.

Your submission

You must submit an essay containing the following (numbered) sections:-

- 1) A short overview of the background behind the questionnaire and a brief discussion of the reasons why obtaining an understanding of how individuals and society utilise CMC is of critical important to the computer science community (250 words).
- 2) A discussion of the nature and implications of the numerical results shown in Appendix 1, illustrating the overall preference of CMC device that the class exhibited when contacting a friend, acquaintance or stranger (250 words).

- 3) A discussion of the nature and implications of the numerical results shown in Appendix 2, comparing preferences for CMC callers (instigators) or recipients of the communication. Pay attention here to how the class have considered the social situation at hand (500 words).
- 4) A discussion of the implications of the numerical results shown in Appendix 3, illustrating the effect of both the environment ambient "noise level" and the relationship between the communicating people (500 words).
- 5) A discussion of how well you feel the results, generally, reflect your own use of CMC – in particular you should clearly highlight any differences in your own preferences and briefly explain why these might be present. Additionally, use examples of other scenarios in which you might use CMC to reinforce your agreement/disagreement with the results (250 words).
- 6) An analysis, placing emphasis on one of **any one** of the three sets of data given in Appendices 1-3, of how you would expect the results of the questionnaire to differ if it had been administered to a group of (a) older people in the age range 55-65 years, and (b) younger people in the age range 10-15 years? Use references to published (peer-reviewed) literature to back up your discussion (no more than 1000 words).
- 7) A list of references in an appropriate format.

Suggested (approximate) word counts for each section are given in parentheses.

Some hints

The data that we collect, and the results in the Appendices, will contain all manner of interesting findings and subtleties – we do not expect you to exhaustively discuss every aspect of the data that is presented! Please adhere to the word count that is suggested – if you feel that there are multiple aspects of each dataset that you could discuss (and indeed there should be!) then please summarise the main implications and pick one or two aspects to examine in detail. We expect only a discussion of the data that is presented; no, in-depth, further numerical, nor statistical, analysis of the data is required on your part.

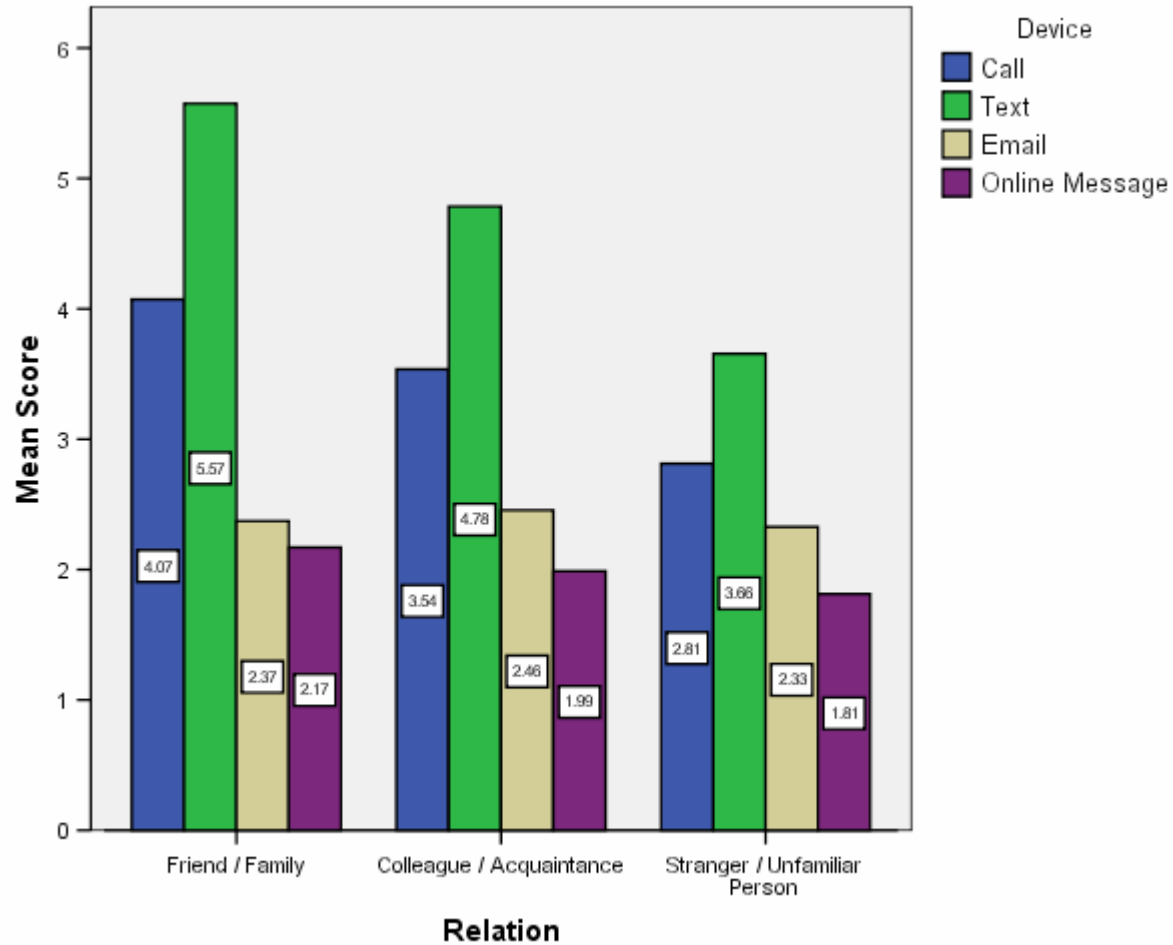
We expect you to reference (correctly) a number of recent relevant published works (research papers, for instance) in your essay which support any statements that you might make. Use of web references is discouraged though, of course, you should use the web (e.g. Google Scholar, Citeseer) to locate relevant papers in the first instance. Note that you should view this essay also as an opportunity to test some of your literature reviewing style before your dissertation next year. We are happy to give detailed individual feedback on your writing and citation styles.

Hand-in Details and Marking

You must hand-in a hard copy of your essay (totalling around 2500-3000 words maximum) to the faculty office by the delivery date given on Blackboard. Your essay should not be bound in any way other than by using a corner staple. Individual extensions to the hand-in deadline will not be given or even discussed by the unit leader. Your assignment will be marked using the associated Criterion Reference Grid (CRG) supplied in a separate document.

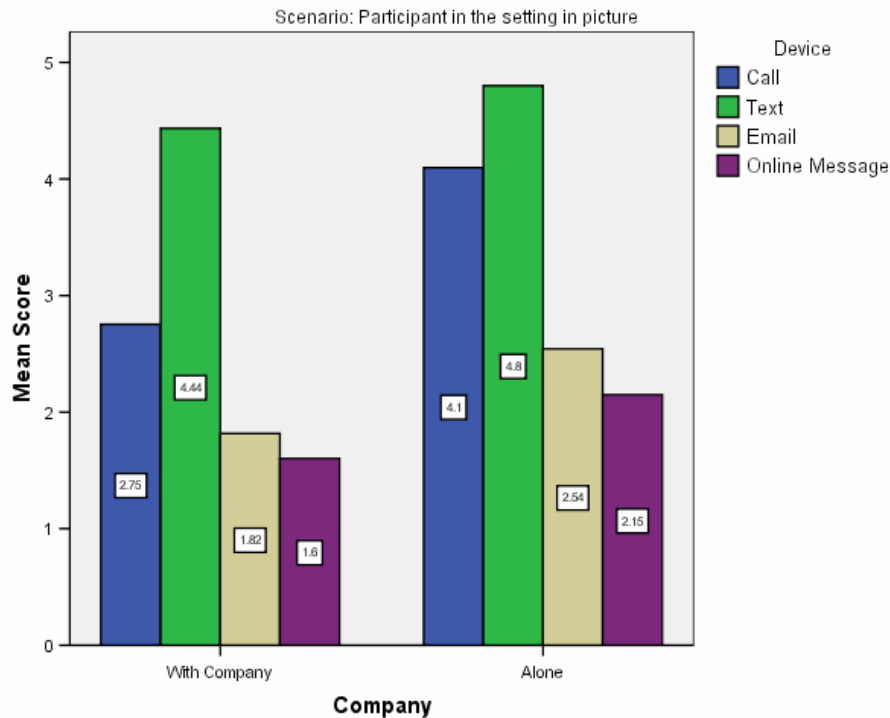
APPENDIX 1

The overall preference of CMC device when contacting a friend, acquaintance or stranger

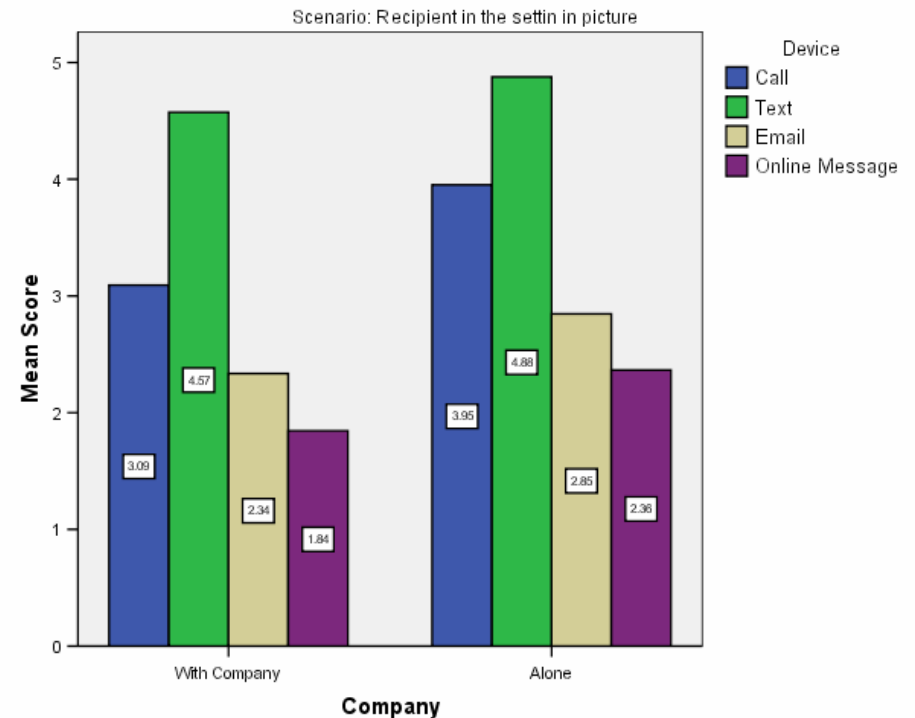


APPENDIX 2

A comparison between preferences for CMC device when you are either (i) the caller in the known scenario or (ii) you believe the recipient is in the known scenario – taking into account the company involved



(i)



(ii)

APPENDIX 3

The effect of both the environment ambient “noise level” and the relationship with the person you are communicating with -- when you are either (i) the caller in the known scenario or (ii) you believe the recipient is in the known scenario

