



“At home, I have to be careful what I say”: Navigating family and peer relationships through mobile communication in urban Bangladesh

Nahida Sultana , Monira Begum & Md. Ohidur Zaman

To cite this article: Nahida Sultana , Monira Begum & Md. Ohidur Zaman (03 Oct 2026):
“At home, I have to be careful what I say”: Navigating family and peer relationships
through mobile communication in urban Bangladesh, Journal of Children and Media, DOI:
[10.1080/17482798.2026.2742852](https://doi.org/10.1080/17482798.2026.2742852)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17482798.2026.2742852>



Published online: 03 Oct 2026.



Submit your article to this journal 



View related articles 



View Crossmark data 

RESEARCH ARTICLE



“At home, I have to be careful what I say”: Navigating family and peer relationships through mobile communication in urban Bangladesh

Nahida Sultana^a, Monira Begum^b and Md. Ohidur Zaman^a

^aDepartment of Sociology, University of Barishal, Barishal, Bangladesh; ^bDepartment of Communication, University of South Florida, Florida, USA

ABSTRACT

Mobile communication is embedded in adolescents' family and peer relationships, yet how these intersecting relationships shape disclosure, trust, monitoring, and reputational concerns remains insufficiently understood in urban Bangladesh. This qualitative study draws on in-depth interviews with 18 adolescents aged 16–18 in Barishal City Corporation and uses reflexive thematic analysis. Three interrelated themes emerged: caring families and the limits of emotional openness; peer intimacy and managed connectivity across home and friendship; and gendered trust, visibility, and reputational risk. Participants described family care alongside selective withholding, while mobile communication supported peer connection and emotional expression within ongoing family life. Expected responses, audience boundaries, possible exposure, and gendered judgment shaped communication decisions. Female adolescents more explicitly connected visibility with moral labeling, while boys also described monitoring and unwanted exposure. The study shows how familiar mobile communication practices acquire situated meanings within intersecting family and peer relationships shaped by trust, visibility, responsiveness, and reputation.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 10 February 2026
Accepted 21 September 2026

KEYWORDS

Mobile communication; adolescents; family relationships; peer relationships; gendered expectations

IMPACT SUMMARY

Prior State of Knowledge: Research shows adolescents use mobile communication to maintain friendships, develop social connections, and exchange personal information. Family and peer relationships influence these practices. Yet, little research explores monitoring, trust, gendered judgment, and reputational concerns among urban Bangladeshi adolescents.

Novel Contributions: Within this context, family care coexisted with restricted emotional openness. Mobile communication facilitated peer intimacy within the family setting, while trust depended on careful management of confidentiality and visibility. Female adolescents were more likely to associate unintended exposure with gendered moral judgment.

Practical Implications: Primarily for practitioners, these findings support developing family communication and digital literacy programs focusing on active listening, confidentiality, awareness,

consent before sharing messages, and gendered reputational risks, while recognizing peer support as an important relational resource.

Mobile communication has become an integral part of adolescents' daily social interactions, allowing relationships to continue beyond face-to-face encounters and supporting the maintenance of social networks and friendships (Oksman & Turtiainen, 2004; Valkenburg & Peter, 2007). Online communication affords adolescents greater control over self-presentation and self-disclosure, which can strengthen relationship formation, friendship quality, and the exchange of intimate or developmentally sensitive topics (Valkenburg & Peter, 2011). Adolescents' existing family and peer relationships also shape these practices. Bhallamudi (2022) notes that parental mediation and family norms affect young people's access to digital media. Factors such as gender, socioeconomic status, and ideals of femininity influence how families decide on adolescent girls' mobile phone access. Research also identifies tensions between parents' and adolescents' perspectives on digital-media use, boundaries, and autonomy (Page Jeffery, 2024).

Research in Bangladesh shows that adolescents' communication is embedded in relational and gendered contexts. A nationally representative sample of unmarried adolescents found significant gender differences in egalitarian gender-role attitudes; strong parental connectedness was associated with more egalitarian attitudes among girls, while community peer attitudes were associated with gender-role attitudes among both girls and boys (Streatfield et al., 2023). Health interactions among adolescents also vary by context sensitivity. A study most adolescents view their mothers as the primary source of health information, but compared to boys, mother-daughter health discussions mainly revolve around menstruation and puberty, with little emphasis on sexual health, pregnancy, STIs, or contraception (Zakaria et al., 2019). Another study found that adolescents preferred online audiences by separating parents from certain social-media circles, restricting family access to posts, and varying disclosure between family and trusted peers (Rony & Ahmed, 2025). Digital access remains uneven; in the AdSEARCH cohort, approximately one-quarter owned a mobile phone and 47% accessed the internet through personal or family devices (A. Alam et al., 2025). In a health-specific digital context, Hasan et al. (2025) found that a peer-led mobile intervention supported discussion and peer communication, although shared devices, guardian permission, connectivity, and financial limitations constrained participation.

Together, these studies situate mobile communication within a developmental period in which peer relationships and identity exploration become increasingly important (Arnett, 2000; Steinberg, 2008). At the same time, adolescents' access to and use of mobile phones remain shaped by gender, family authority, class, respectability norms, and cultural expectations (Bhallamudi, 2022; Doron, 2012; Sarwatay et al., 2021). When family communication is limited around emotional, relational, or sensitive topics, peers can become important sources of support and information (Ainul et al., 2016; Stanton-Salazar & Spina, 2005). In Bangladesh, family involvement can coexist with boundaries around sensitive communication, even where family relationships remain important sources of care and support (Zakaria et al., 2019). Yet understanding remains limited regarding how adolescents in urban Bangladesh navigate mobile communication across

family and peer relationships, particularly how emotional openness, trust, monitoring, gendered judgment, and reputational concerns shape what they communicate and with whom. The primary gap this study addresses pertains to the relational dynamics of mobile communication practices. Specifically, it focuses on how these practices acquire meaning within the context of adolescents' concurrent family and peer relationships.

Drawing on in-depth interviews with 18 adolescents aged 16–18 in Barishal City Corporation, this study examines how adolescents negotiate mobile communication across concurrent family and peer relationships. It focuses on how adolescents' expectations about others' responses shape disclosure, how mobile communication keeps peer relationships active within family life, and how trust, monitoring, visibility, gendered judgment, and reputational concerns influence communication choices. By examining these processes together, the study seeks to explain how familiar mobile communication practices acquire situated relational meanings within the urban Bangladeshi context. Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), Ecological Systems Theory (EST), and Social Learning Theory (SLT) provide complementary perspectives for interpreting communicative motivations, overlapping relational contexts, and learned expectations about possible consequences.

Adolescence, family communication, and gendered expectations in Bangladesh

Steinberg and Morris (2001) highlight parent-adolescent relationships, self-development, and peer relationships as key areas of adolescent development. Peer relationships can offer valuable emotional and social support. For example, Stanton-Salazar and Spina (2005) found that some friendships among low-income Mexican-origin adolescents provided support during difficult times, though this support varied among different peers. Family and peer relationships are important during adolescence and develop within the social context of family structure in Bangladesh. Evidence from GAGE Bangladesh indicates that adolescents rely on their parents, siblings, and extended family for support. While friendships are usually formed at school, girls may have fewer opportunities for socializing with peers outside of that setting (GAGE Consortium [GAGE], 2022). In northern Bangladeshi communities, Naved et al. (2022) found that girls are expected to restrict mobility and limit interactions with male peers; those perceived as violating these norms may face pressure for early marriage to protect reputation. A scoping review from urban Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan found similar expectations of premarital sexual abstinence, limited communication about sexuality between young people and adults, and gender norms that constrain young women's sexual and reproductive decision-making (P. Alam et al., 2024). This scholarship provides a clearer context where family support and involvement coexist with gender communication boundaries, while peer interactions are influenced by both gender and social circumstances.

Within this relational context, digital platforms offer additional channels for sensitive communication, though practical and social constraints persist. In a health-specific digital context, Hasan et al. (2025) studied Mukhorito, a peer-led Android app designed to complement Bangladesh's school-based adolescent health program with structured, age-specific sexual and reproductive health education and peer interaction. In their study, participants said the app created a safe space for discussing taboo sexual and

reproductive health topics and facilitating peer-to-peer communication. However, barriers included limited smartphone access, unreliable internet, shared family devices, and the need for guardian permission (Hasan et al., 2025). Mobile communication thus provides a framework for examining how adolescents maintain and negotiate peer relationships across cultures.

Mobile peer communication in diverse cultural contexts

Research on mobile communication has long examined how mobile phones become embedded in everyday coordination, accessibility, peer interaction, and young people's negotiation of autonomy (Ling, 2004). Haddon (2013) further situates children's and young people's mobile-media practices within parental regulation, peer-group practices, and cross-cultural variation. Oksman and Turtiainen (2004) similarly described Finnish teenagers' mobile use as connected to friendship, personal space, and self-presentation. Moreover, recent scholarship increasingly views adolescents' online and offline relationships as interconnected. Al-Jbouri et al. (2024) found that Canadian adolescents have significant overlap between their in-person and online friendships, highlighting technology's role in strengthening these connections. Longitudinal research with Dutch adolescents also shows that friendship dynamics affect their use of social media (Angelini et al., 2026). Therefore, it is evident that previous research is not in specific devices or platforms, but in understanding how mediated communication is integral to adolescents' social relationships.

Garrett et al. (2023) use the Transformation Framework to differentiate texting, video chatting, social media, and phone calls by features like synchrony and publicness, arguing that each mode offers unique opportunities for emotional conversation, support, and self-disclosure. Similarly, Steinsbekk et al. (2024) explore social media from different angles, noting that while online activity can displace offline engagement, it may also enhance interactions with existing friends. Their study shows that increased social media use is linked to more time spent with offline friends, supporting the idea that these forms of communication can complement each other. Angelini et al. (2026) found that social media can strengthen friendships, but the benefits depend on the quality of those friendships and the online activities involved. Overall, these studies indicate that mobile communication's effects vary based on how it integrates with peer relationships.

Existing studies also indicate that key relational functions of digital communication are similar across various cultures. In a study of adolescents from 11 countries, Ziegel et al. (2025) found that while online communication helps maintain social networks, participants expressed concerns about comparison, harassment, gender stereotypes, and excessive use. This suggests that connection and support are not unique to Western cultures. However, differences in gender norms and local understandings highlight the need to consider social contexts when examining these digital practices. Furthermore, the contextual distinction is especially significant when comparing Western and Asian research. Purboningsih et al. (2025) note that parental-mediation frameworks from the Global North only partially correspond to practices in other regions. Their Indonesian study finds that, while parents everywhere face comparable challenges with adolescents' social-media use, cultural and relational factors shape how mediation happens. In India, Tandon and Deshmukh (2026) also frame adolescents' internet use within family supervision,

noting that parental monitoring can protect but may also be seen as control limiting autonomy. These outcomes echo earlier South Asian research showing that family gate-keeping, gender, class, and expectations of respectability shape mobile access and use (Bhallamudi, 2022; Doron, 2012).

Taken together, current research suggests that cross-cultural differences in adolescents' mobile communication relate more to social conditions than to usage itself. While mobile communication fosters friendship and connection, family dynamics and social contexts shape its meanings, particularly in urban Bangladesh, where factors like family involvement, monitoring, and gender expectations influence adolescents' perceptions of mobile interaction.

Negotiating family and peer relationships in communication

Adolescents' navigation of family, peers, and other social contexts with distinct expectations and norms may influence their disclosure. Research demonstrates that disclosure is shaped by both the subject matter and perceptions of parental authority and privacy (Smetana et al., 2009). Smetana et al. (2009) found that disclosure and nondisclosure patterns differed across prudential, personal, peer, and multifaceted issues. Parental disapproval most strongly influenced prudential behaviors, while people more often withheld personal matters as private. Similarly, Chan et al. (2015) found greater willingness to disclose basic information about peer activities than details of close relationships, with disclosure influenced by beliefs about parental entitlement to information.

This relational selectivity challenges the notion of a straightforward preference for either family or peers. Lynam and Tenn (1989) found that adolescents often viewed peers as trusted confidants but withheld information from parents to avoid conflict, protect parental emotions, or assert independence. Selective disclosure may therefore reflect sensitivity, privacy concerns, and perceptions of parental entitlement, rather than a withdrawal from family relationships (Chan et al., 2015; Smetana et al., 2009). Flamant et al. (2024) demonstrated that mothers' reactions varied based on adolescents' negotiation strategies, the specific issue, and mothers' authoritarian attitudes. Consequently, disclosure involves careful judgments about what information to share and how recipients may respond. Mobile communication expands these negotiations by enabling adolescents to seek support while managing their audience and potential exposure. Razi et al. (2020) found that adolescents can access support while simultaneously assessing risks in online interactions. Gemara et al. (2025) reported that adolescents who experienced unwanted online sexual solicitation were more likely to disclose to friends than to parents when they distrusted parental reactions.

Mobile communication also facilitates exchanges across distance, fostering a sense of connected presence (Licoppe, 2004). However, this connection may generate expectations of constant availability. Winstone et al. (2023) found that private social-media communication and group chats promoted connection and belonging but also created pressure to remain responsive. In Bangladesh, digital peer interactions are similarly influenced by trust and social risk. Rana and Zahid (2026) found that adolescents were attracted to gaming due to community, peer interaction, and trust, but also reported experiences of bullying and gendered harassment. Additionally, messages may circulate beyond their intended recipients,

complicating issues of confidentiality and trust (Winstone et al., 2023). However, research remains limited on how disclosure, monitoring, responsiveness, and expectations interact within adolescents' mobile communication in urban Bangladesh. Addressing this gap requires attention to adolescents' motivations, overlying relational contexts, and the expectations that inform communication choices. Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) helps examine what adolescents seek through mobile communication. Ecological Systems Theory (EST) situates these practices within family and peer relationships. Social Learning Theory (SLT) helps interpret learned expectations regarding trust, monitoring, judgment, and potential consequences. Collectively, these theoretical perspectives frame key questions about family-peer communication, mobile negotiation across contexts, and the roles of gendered expectations, monitoring, trust, and reputation.

Theoretical orientation

To examine the relational problem identified in the literature, this study uses UGT, EST, and SLT as complementary sensitizing perspectives rather than as three independent theories. Together, they highlight what adolescents seek through mobile communication, how that communication is embedded within family and peer relationships, and how expectations about trust, privacy, monitoring, and consequences shape disclosure.

UGT focuses on the needs and gratifications users seek through particular media (Katz et al., 1973; Rubin, 2002). UGT helps explain why adolescents may turn to mobile peer communication for connection, emotional support, self-expression, or discussion of topics that feel harder to raise elsewhere (Dunne et al., 2010; Valkenburg & Peter, 2011). EST situates adolescent development within interconnected environments, including family, peers, school, and broader social settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). SLT highlights expectations learned through observation, interaction, reinforcement, and anticipated consequences (Bandura, 1977; Bandura & Walters, 1963). It helps explain how adolescents come to judge whom they can trust, which conversations should remain private, and what might happen if communication reaches unintended audiences. Together, the three perspectives organize the study around communicative motivations, intersecting relational settings, and learned expectations, and help interpret the culturally situated relational problem identified in the literature. The study therefore addresses the following questions:

- RQ1:** How do adolescents in urban Bangladesh describe communication within family and peer relationships?
- RQ2:** How do adolescents in urban Bangladesh use mobile communication to negotiate their simultaneous involvement in family and peer relationships?
- RQ3:** How do adolescents in urban Bangladesh describe the role of gendered expectations, family monitoring, trust, and reputational concerns in online self-expression and sensitive disclosure?

Method

This study used a qualitative approach to investigate adolescent mobile communication within family and peer relationships. In-depth interviews elicited participants' perspectives on family communication, friendships, mobile connectivity, and sensitive disclosure. The analysis was primarily inductive, with themes developed from participants' responses. UGT, EST, and SLT served as complementary sensitizing perspectives to understand communicative motivations, relational contexts, and how expectations shaped health communication.

Study site

The study was conducted in Barishal City Corporation, located in southern Bangladesh. The researchers chose Barishal as the urban setting to examine adolescents' mobile communication in everyday schooling, family interactions, and peer relationships. The study does not claim that Barishal represents Bangladesh as a whole; instead, it provides a social context for interpreting participants' experiences.

Participants and recruitment

The sample consisted of 18 adolescents aged 16 to 18 who were enrolled in higher secondary education or college and reported regular mobile internet use. This group included nine boys and nine girls. In Bangladesh, the Higher Secondary Certificate encompasses grades XI and XII, aligning with the age range represented in the study (Nuffic, n.d.). To be eligible for the study, participants needed regular access to a smartphone and the internet, either through mobile data or Wi-Fi, as well as frequent use of mobile functions such as messaging, social media, browsing, video viewing or sharing, and seeking private information. The emphasis was on regular mobile communication rather than device ownership alone.

Data collection occurred between July and September 2025. Researchers recruited participants from educational institutions that distributed study information. Institutional representatives served solely as access points and did not participate in participant selection. Participation was voluntary, and recruitment aimed to achieve a gender balance, as the study explored how gendered expectations might influence participants' perspectives on family monitoring, trust, privacy, and reputation.

Data collection

The primary author conducted semi-structured interviews in Bengali at private locations convenient for participants. Interviews lasted approximately 45–60 minutes. The interview guide explored three interconnected areas aligned with the study purpose: participants' communication within family and peer relationships; how mobile communication allowed peer relationships to remain active across home, study, and other everyday settings; and how trust, privacy, gender expectations, family monitoring, and possible social consequences shaped online expression and sensitive disclosure.

Questions were open-ended and designed to elicit experiences rather than judgments about whether mobile phone use was beneficial or harmful. Examples included: “Can you walk me through a typical day of using your phone – what do you use it for and with whom?”; “How do conversations with your friends online differ from conversations at home?”; and “Are there topics you would discuss with close friends online but not with your family or in a group chat – and why?” Follow-up questions invited participants to elaborate on particular relationships, situations, or communication decisions. Interviews on sensitive topics followed participants’ willingness to disclose in ways that felt comfortable for them.

All interviews were audio-recorded following participant assent and parental consent. The primary author, a native Bengali speaker, transcribed the recordings verbatim in Bengali. The first two authors then translated the transcripts into English. The authors discussed and reconciled translation differences to preserve participants’ intended meanings as closely as possible.

Data analysis

Interview transcripts were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke’s (Braun & Clarke, 2006) six-phase approach: familiarization, initial coding, theme development, theme review, theme definition and naming, and writing the analysis. The analysis began with repeated readings of the transcripts. Initial codes were developed from participants’ accounts and remained close to experiences involving family communication, peer relationships, mobile connectivity, emotional expression, trust, audience, gender, monitoring, and anticipated consequences of disclosure. All researchers then examined the codes and developed them into broader themes. The researchers discussed developing interpretations and differences in reading to deepen reflexivity and refine the themes.

The researchers carefully reviewed themes to ensure they reflected recurring meanings while retaining differences across participants’ accounts. UGT, EST, and SLT were brought more explicitly into the later interpretive stages as sensitizing perspectives. UGT helped interpret the forms of connection, listening, and expression adolescents sought; EST informed interpretation of intersecting family and peer relationships; and SLT helped illuminate expectations surrounding trust, confidentiality, monitoring, and anticipated consequences.

Ethical considerations and researcher positionality

Ethical approval (FSS-SOC 25–02/2025) was obtained from the Research and Extension Cell, University of Barishal, Bangladesh, where data were collected. Because participants were minors, this study obtained informed assent from adolescents along with parental consent. Participants were informed that participation was voluntary, that they could decline to answer questions or withdraw from the study, and that pseudonyms would be used throughout the manuscript.

The primary author’s cultural familiarity facilitated rapport during interviews, while the research team’s understanding of participants’ language and relational references improved interpretation. Reflexive memos were therefore maintained throughout data

collection and analysis to identify assumptions and consider alternative interpretations. Trustworthiness was further supported through an audit trail linking transcripts, codes, developing themes, and interpretive decisions; the contextual presentation of participants' accounts; and the sharing of thematic summaries with some participants to assess whether the developing interpretations reasonably reflected their experiences.

Findings

Reflexive thematic analysis identified three interrelated themes: (1) caring families and the limits of emotional openness; (2) peer intimacy and managed connectivity across home and friendship; and (3) gendered trust, visibility, and reputational risk. Participants did not portray family and peer relationships as mutually exclusive social spheres. Families provided care and guidance, whereas friendships provided listening, emotional openness, and sensitive disclosure. Mobile communication kept peer relationships active alongside family life, while disclosure depended on topic, recipient, trust, and anticipated consequences.

Theme 1: Caring families and the limits of emotional openness

Participants seldom described their families as uncaring or emotionally absent. Rather, they differentiated between receiving care and feeling able to express themselves fully. Parents frequently conveyed concern through advice, academic expectations, protection, and correction. However, several participants wanted to be heard without conversations being immediately redirected toward prescriptive guidance. Friendships became significant not because of a lack of familial attachment, but because they offered a distinct communicative response. Sakib (boy) articulated this distinction directly:

At home, when I try to talk about stress or feeling confused, my parents usually just tell me to focus more or be serious. They care about my schoolwork, but it makes it tough to open up about how I really feel. With my friends, though, I can say what's on my mind without worrying about being corrected. That's why I prefer talking to them.

Sakib did not question his parents' concern, instead attributing their response to a focus on his education. The challenge emerged because their reaction differed from the support he sought through disclosure. The advice to "focus more" redirected the conversation toward academic expectations. In contrast, Sakib described friends as allowing him to express his feelings without immediate correction. His account indicates that emotional openness depended partly on the response he expected from a particular relationship. In Sakib's account, parental care did not necessarily provide the form of emotional acknowledgment he sought. Sabbir (boy) described a different reason for limiting disclosure at home:

I always need to think about what I will share because I know they have their own struggles. I don't want to add to their burdens. It's important to me to be mindful of their feelings while still finding ways to connect. But with my friends, it's different. They feel like family, like brothers. I can share anything with them, and there's no pressure; I can just be myself.

Sabbir did not frame his restraint as mistrust, or emotional distance. He considered his parents' circumstances before disclosure, suggesting that withholding information could be an act of relational care rather than withdrawal. His intention to "still find ways to connect" indicates that selective silence coexisted with familial attachment. Referring to friends as "like brothers" further complicates the distinction between family and peers: both relationships involved closeness, but with parents he weighed the potential burden of his concerns, whereas with friends he experienced less pressure to manage the listener's response. Tania (girl) situated communicative limits in expectations that were understood rather than explicitly stated:

At home, it's tough to share my thoughts and feelings with my family due to unspoken expectations. But with my college friends, everything changes. I feel free to talk about anything – gossip, silly stories, or daily frustrations, or any sensitive and sexual topics – without fear of judgment. My best friend understands me and listens to my complaints without dismissing them. That emotional support means a lot; it allows me to truly be myself and find comfort in their presence.

Tania did not identify a specific family rule prohibiting certain conversations. Her reference to "unspoken expectations" suggests an internalized understanding of which topics could be introduced without discomfort and which might elicit judgment or dismissal. Friendship broadened the discussable topics, and her focus on being understood indicates that openness depended on both expected responses and topic selection. The form of communication also shaped what participants felt able to express. Fareen (girl) explained that even with a trusted friend, texting made different and better disclosures easier than face-to-face conversation:

When I'm feeling down or just confused about stuff, I usually prefer texting a close friend instead of talking to them in person. There's something about typing that makes it way easier for me to share what I'm going through. It's like I can express my thoughts more clearly without the awkwardness of being face-to-face. Writing it all out helps me get my feelings straight, and it feels less intense than a live conversation.

Fareen emphasized that openness in communication was influenced by both the nature of the relationship and the communication mode used. Texting allowed her to take the time to organize her complex emotions, which reduced the intensity often associated with face-to-face interactions. As a result, Fareen described texting as helping her organize and express difficult feelings with less intensity.

Collectively, these accounts show that family and peer relationships offered different communication possibilities for participants. Family relationships were often described in terms of care and responsibility, while some participants limited personal disclosures because they anticipated correction, judgment, or burdening parents. Friendships could provide a different form of response, including listening and greater openness around difficult emotions. The key difference lies in the varying expectations of acceptable topics and anticipated responses to what is shared.

Theme 2: Peer intimacy and managed connectivity across home and friendship

Participants described peer relationships as continuing across different locations, activities, and times of day. Through messages, social media, and private conversations, they remained aware of and connected with friends while at home, studying, or spending time

with family. This ongoing communication supported peer connection but also created expectations for responsiveness, leading to competing demands for attention. Rafiq, a boy, explained how expectations of responsiveness entered moments he intended to dedicate to schoolwork:

Most of the time when I log in to my phone, I tell myself it's for study purposes, maybe to check a note or search for something for class. But once I see messages from friends, I feel it's not right to ignore them because they'll later ask why I didn't reply. So, I answer first, and then studying and chatting continue side by side.

Rafiq's responses reveal more than just a tendency to be distracted. He understood that being unresponsive might be noticed and could require explanations, making it crucial to stay engaged in order to maintain friendships even while studying. His phrase "side by side" emphasizes that academic work and peer communication happen concurrently. Mobile accessibility allowed for connection, while also creating an expectation to remain responsive. Shila (a girl) described a quieter way of staying with her peers:

Even though I don't post or message much, I usually spend 2 or 3 hours scrolling through my feed. It feels like a habit I can't ignore. On the one hand, it keeps me updated on and connected to my friends' lives, which I enjoy. On the other hand, I sometimes feel guilty about the time I waste.

For Shila, feeling connected did not rely solely on direct interaction. By observing her friends' activities, she could stay informed about their lives without messaging them directly. This allowed her to maintain a sense of connection with her peers, going beyond just conversations to a continuous observation of their lives. However, this practice still required significant time and attention, and it often left her feeling guilty. As a result, connection proved both socially rewarding and personally demanding. The simultaneous presence of family and peers was particularly evident in Rubel's (boy) account:

When I'm with my family, I'm physically there, sharing laughs and stories, but my mind sometimes drifts to my chat groups. It doesn't mean I don't care; it's just that I'm torn between enjoying the moment and staying connected to my friends. I want to be present, but you know ... you'll agree with me that the addictions of the digital world are hard to ignore.

Rubel rejected the idea that divided attention indicated a lack of care for his family. He felt "torn", which reflected the simultaneous demands of two important relationships. His challenge reflected different expectations of presence within the same setting: physical participation with family alongside continued attention to peer communication. As a result, phone use at home represented overlapping relational demands instead of simply displacing family engagement. Additionally, Rasel (boy) further illustrated how timing shaped peer communication:

At night, when everything is quiet, all school stress, friendship concerns, and my identity crisis stress me. That is when I really rely on my friends. Late-night talks become our safe space where I share my feelings/sufferings, and they respond with their experiences and advice. Those conversations help lighten my burden, reminding me I am not alone and making things feel easier.

For Rasel, nighttime offered a quieter opportunity for peer communication while he remained at home. As household activities slowed down, interactions with peers became more thoughtful and emotionally centered. These quieter moments allowed for conversations that were often hard to maintain during the busyness of the day. Friends

responded by recounting their own experiences, providing support not just through advice but also through shared understanding and empathy.

Together, these accounts show that mobile communication supported peer connection across study, family time, browsing, and personal reflection while also creating expectations of responsiveness and, for some participants, feelings of guilt. Participants managed these relationships through attention and different forms of participation.

Theme 3: Gendered trust, visibility, and reputational risk

Participants shared that their willingness to express sensitive information depended on their assessment of trust and the audience. They considered whom they could rely on, who might access their messages, and the consequences of unintended exposure. While both boys and girls described these concerns, girls more often connected visibility to gendered moral judgments. Therefore, online communication involves choices about whether to share information, with whom, and how much exposure it might receive. Nusrat (girl) responded:

When I post something emotional, it is not for attention; I cannot express those feelings openly at home. Sharing online lets me communicate indirectly, and I hope those who understand me can relate to what I am feeling. It is my way of connecting without having to explain everything directly.

Nusrat's online posts did not represent unrestricted disclosure. Instead, her indirect expression communicated an emotional state without fully explaining its circumstances, relying on others to recognize or relate to what she was feeling. This way balanced silence and full disclosure, allowing her to connect with others while maintaining control over how much she revealed about herself. Reshma emphasized a similar yet more intentional approach to selecting what to share:

Okay, so online or on the phone, I am, like, definitely not sharing my entire life, but I do share some things – like events and thoughts that I would not normally say in person. It just feels way chillier to post on social media, and my friends always leave comments that help me relax. I can show sides of myself that I usually keep hidden and express thoughts that might get all mixed up at home. It is just easier, you know?

Reshma rejected the idea of sharing her "entire life", using mobile communication to express specific thoughts while selectively maintaining boundaries. Friends' comments provided her with recognition and reassurance, highlighting that online openness is more about selectivity than comprehensiveness.

Trust became more evident when participants reflected on personal or sensitive communication. Limon (boy) explained:

Before I even think about sharing something personal, I have to ask myself if this person can actually be trusted. Moreover, honestly, if there is even the slightest hint of doubt in my mind, it just frustrates me, but I end up keeping my mouth shut. It is not worth the risk of opening up to someone who might not understand or be supportive.

Limon described trust as an essential assessment that must occur before disclosing information. Even a small amount of uncertainty could prevent him from speaking. His frustration suggests that silence was not a preferred choice; instead, it stemmed from the need to weigh his desire to communicate against uncertainty about how his message would be received. Trust involved more than just

confidentiality; it also included the expectation of understanding and a supportive response from the listener. Withholding therefore allowed him to avoid a response he perceived as potentially unsupportive, even though he expressed frustration about remaining silent. Arif, a boy in the group, identified trust as being rooted within the peer group:

In our friend group, we often joke about adult/sexual topics with a knowing smile, but there is a solid understanding that those conversations stay private. If someone shares them outside, it feels like a betrayal – like a sudden chill in the room. Reputation matters here, and that trust is what keeps our friendships strong We want to share openly, laughing together without worrying about being judged or having our words thrown back at us. It is all about that safe space where we can be ourselves.

Arif described an implicit boundary that encouraged sensitive conversations, relying on the expectation that discussions would remain within the group. This exclusivity fostered trust, as sharing information outside the group was seen as a betrayal and posed reputational risks. Thus, confidentiality served as both an expectation and a safeguard against outside judgment. For some female participants, the potential impacts of circulation had gender-specific consequences. Mithila (girl) explained:

Before I share something personal, I often imagine the worst-case scenario – what if it gets forwarded or viral? As a girl, I worry that discussing topics like sensitive and sexual communication will lead people to label me as “bad”. There’s always judgment around anything I write, which makes me second-guess myself. This fear of criticism often silences me, even when I have something important to say.

Mithila’s concerns went beyond just privacy issues. Forwarding her message or having it go viral could change both its audience and its interpretation, making the disclosure subject to character judgment. Being labeled as “bad” connected the perceived consequences to a gendered moral evaluation. In fact, the risk of her message being forwarded was enough to influence her communication; even the thought of sharing it made her hesitate. Thus, anticipated visibility shaped her decision about whether to disclose. Sumona (girl) framed this perceived imbalance comparatively:

While I believe that online space offers freedom to express feelings, but freedom! It feels limited for girls, especially in our culture. There is always someone ready to criticize me, and it is frustrating to see how boys do not seem to face the same scrutiny. They can share what they want without fear, while at home, I have to be careful what I say. It feels incredibly unfair.

Sumona connected online expression and communication at home through a shared expectation of caution. Her observation that boys could communicate “without fear” reflected her perception of unequal scrutiny rather than an absence of restrictions for them. Ultimately, while online spaces offered more opportunities for expression, anticipated gender-based criticism still limited them. Male participants also noted the impact of monitoring and potential consequences, complicating a simple division between constrained girls and unconstrained boys. Jakir (boy) explained:

We know there are some restrictions around certain issues, right? Even online, we are constantly aware of what we can and cannot share. If I post anything, I know a relative will complain to my parents. It is so frustrating! Honestly, I feel like it is much safer to share something sensitive about health with close friends over the phone rather than putting it all out there online. I mean, who wants that kind of drama? It is just easier to keep it between us.

Jakir anticipated that online posting could be seen by relatives and reported to his parents, linking digital visibility to parental authority. Rather than stopping communication altogether, he decided to narrow his audience and share sensitive information directly with trusted friends. This strategy allowed him to maintain communication while reducing unwanted involvement from his family.

Collectively, the findings indicate both shared and gender-differentiated concerns. Boys and girls described selective expression, trust assessment, confidentiality expectations, and audience narrowing, while girls more explicitly connected these concerns to the possibility of gendered moral labeling.

Discussion

Previous research on mobile communication has established that adolescents use mediated communication for coordination, friendship maintenance, self-expression, and support across diverse cultural contexts (Al-Jbouri et al., 2024; Garrett et al., 2023; Ling, 2004; Ziegel et al., 2025). However, it remains unclear how these established practices function when family involvement, peer expectations, monitoring, trust, and gendered reputational concerns intersect in urban Bangladesh. The findings indicate that the primary contribution is not identifying unique forms of mobile use but showing how established practices acquire specific meanings within overlapping relationships.

The findings show that family care coexisting with limited emotional openness adds nuance to research on adolescent disclosure. Existing studies demonstrate that disclosure varies by context, expectations, and beliefs about parental authority or entitlement to information (Chan et al., 2015; Smetana et al., 2009), while research in Bangladesh documents context-specific limits in family communication (Zakaria et al., 2019). In this study, some adolescents withheld concerns because they expected correction or judgment, or because they wanted to avoid burdening their parents. This suggests that selective silence can function as relational management rather than solely as privacy protection or withdrawal from family. Mobile peer communication became significant because it sometimes offered a different expected response: listening, acknowledgment, and easier discussion of difficult emotions.

Importantly, the findings clarify how mobile communication integrates into everyday relational life. Ling (2004) emphasizes mobile communication's role in coordination and social accessibility, while Haddon (2013) situates young people's mobile-media practices within peer relationships, parental regulation, and culturally variable social contexts. In this study, peer interaction persisted during study, family time, and late-night reflection. As a result, participants managed simultaneous expectations of family presence and peer responsiveness, rather than transitioning cleanly between distinct social spheres. This extends research on connectedness and displacement by demonstrating that mobile use at home can represent intersecting relational presence rather than a straightforward withdrawal from family interaction (Garrett et al., 2023; Steinsbekk et al., 2024; Winstone et al., 2023).

Moreover, the findings build upon South Asian research documenting gendered patterns in mobile access, mobility, relationships, respectability, and reputation (Bhallamudi, 2022; Naved et al., 2022). Among participants with regular mobile access, these concerns also influenced content management. Adolescents weighed the

possibility of going viral, family discovery, judgment, and confidentiality breaches before deciding whether, where, and with whom to communicate. Girls more explicitly associated unintended visibility with moral labeling, while boys also reported experiences of monitoring and unwanted exposure. Consequently, trust involved both confidence in the recipient and expectations regarding whether information would remain within the intended audience.

Overall, this study contributes to mobile communication scholarship by demonstrating that similar practices of connection, disclosure, and audience management can fulfill familiar relational functions across cultures yet produce distinct consequences within specific social settings. For these participants, mobile communication helped them maintain peer intimacy and family attachment while managing visibility, responsiveness, and reputational risk across intersecting relationships.

Theoretical and practical implications

This study's theoretical contribution is applying UGT, EST, and SLT as an important framework for understanding the same communicative practices. The findings show that motivations, relational settings, and expected consequences are interconnected when adolescents decide whether and how to communicate.

UGT explains why participants used mobile communication for connection, emotional acknowledgment, self-expression, and sustained peer presence (Katz et al., 1973; Rubin, 2002). The findings further indicate that relational factors conditioned these gratifications. Adolescents did not select a medium solely based on needs; they also considered the likely response of specific communication partners and the affordances of particular modes. For example, Fareen's preference for texting suggests that emotional expression depended on both the form of communication and the nature of the relationship. EST provides insight into why family and peer relationships should not be treated as separate communicative environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Mobile communication enabled peer relationships to remain active during family time, study, and private reflection. As a result, the household functioned as a setting for both family participation and peer availability. This demonstrates how mobile communication creates practical overlap between relational contexts, complementing scholarship that conceptualizes mobile media as embedded in everyday social life (Haddon, 2013; Ling, 2004). SLT further clarifies how anticipated consequences influence communication. Participants considered whether friends would maintain confidentiality, whether relatives might report online activity to parents, and whether sensitive communication could invite gendered judgment. These expectations shaped selective disclosure, silence, audience narrowing, and indirect expression, even when the immediate decision involved only whether to send, post, or withhold a message.

Together, these three perspectives show why mobile communication can mean different things in different relationships. For example, a text message might be a request for support, while silence can protect a relationship. Additionally, audience narrowing can help maintain communication while reducing exposure to others. This emphasizes a relational perspective on adolescent mobile communication, where media motivations are understood alongside interrelated social contexts and learned expectations about potential consequences.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that initiatives targeting adolescents in the digital space should focus not only on device usage but also on the quality of communication. Some participants reported limiting family disclosures for fear of correction or judgment, indicating a need for family-oriented programs. These programs could encourage parents to listen to and acknowledge their children's concerns before offering advice, while still providing appropriate guidance. Digital literacy programs should build upon existing adolescent practices, such as assessing trust levels, narrowing audiences, selectively disclosing information, and understanding the implications of forwarding messages. Schools and youth organizations could address confidentiality, consent before sharing messages or screenshots, expanding audiences, and the limits of online privacy. Furthermore, these programs should address gender-specific reputational risks without assuming that monitoring or exposure affects only girls. Peer support should be acknowledged as a valuable relational resource, while ensuring students have confidential access to appropriate teachers, counselors, or health educators for concerns beyond what peers can manage.

Limitations and future research

A few limitations constrain the interpretation of these findings. The study involved participants from higher secondary or college education in Barishal City Corporation; thus, it does not represent adolescents across Bangladesh, particularly rural adolescents, out-of-school youth, younger adolescents, or those with limited digital access. Moreover, the study did not examine household socioeconomic circumstances, individual versus shared device access, parental digital literacy, or parents' interpretations of monitoring. Future research could employ longitudinal interviews or digital diaries to examine how disclosure, audience management, and responsiveness change over time and across situations. Comparative research across urban and rural settings, age groups, socioeconomic circumstances, and levels of digital access could clarify which relational patterns recur across contexts and which are more locally specific.

Conclusion

This study contributes to adolescent mobile communication scholarship by showing how familiar practices of connectivity, disclosure, and privacy management take on context-specific meanings within family and peer relationships in urban Bangladesh. Empirically, the findings indicate that selective silence can coexist with family attachment, peer connectivity can persist within rather than replace family participation, and trust can encompass expectations about whether information will remain within intended boundaries. Gender influenced the anticipated consequences of visibility, particularly through girls' concerns about moral labeling, while boys also reported monitoring and unwanted exposure. Theoretically, the study highlights the importance of examining communicative motivations, relational contexts, and expectations collectively rather than as separate influences. The broader contribution is not that mobile media create different relational needs in Bangladesh, but that widely shared mobile practices are negotiated through locally meaningful expectations regarding family involvement, peer responsiveness, visibility, and reputation.

Acknowledgments

CRedit: **Nahida Sultana**: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Methodology, Project administration, Writing – original draft, review & editing; **Monira Begum (corresponding author)**: Methodology, Data analysis, Writing – original draft, review & editing; **Md. Ohidur Zaman**: Writing – review & editing.

Author contributions

CRedit: **Nahida Sultana**: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Methodology, Project administration, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing; **Monira Begum**: Formal analysis, Methodology, Resources, Software, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing; **Md. Ohidur Zaman**: Resources, Software, Validation, Visualization, Writing – review & editing.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Data availability statement

Data are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Notes on contributors

Nahida Sultana is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Barishal, Bangladesh. Her research focuses on gender, empowerment, health, and climate governance. She examines women's decision-making autonomy, adolescent girls' menstrual health, and the relationship between community resilience and water governance in the context of climate change, emphasizing agency, participation, and adaptive capacity.

Monira Begum is a Doctoral Student at the University of South Florida. Her research examines health and organizational communication, specifically exploring how working women in the marginalized Global South maintain health while exercising agency in organizational environments through the lens of the culture-centered approach (CCA) and the Transnational Feminism approach. Driven by a passion for amplifying marginalized voices, she remains committed to creating inclusive environments where diverse experiences are valued, and solutions emerge.

Md. Ohidur Zaman is an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Barishal, Bangladesh. He earned his PhD from the University of Lucknow, India, under an ICCR doctoral fellowship. His research focuses on climate change, community resilience, water resource management, public health, and mass communication. He has published several research articles and currently leads a World Bank–UGC-funded project on coastal community resilience in Bangladesh.

References

- Ainul, S., Bajracharya, A., & Reichenbach, L. (2016). *Adolescents in Bangladesh: Programmatic approaches to sexual and reproductive health education and services*. Population Council, The Evidence Project.
- Alam, A., Shiblee, S. I., Rana, M. S., Sheikh, S. P., Rahman, F. N., Sathi, S. S., Alam, M. M., Sharmin, I., Arifeen, S. E., Rahman, A. E., Ahmed, A., & Nahar, Q. (2025). Baseline sociodemographic and sexual

- and reproductive health characteristics of the AdSEARCH adolescent cohort study participants in rural Bangladesh: A cohort profile. *BMJ Open*, 15(9), e102156. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2025-102156>
- Alam, P., Lin, L., Thakkar, N., Thaker, A., & Marston, C. (2024). Socio-sexual norms and young people's sexual health in urban Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan: A qualitative scoping review. *PLOS Global Public Health*, 4(2), e0002179. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0002179>
- Al-Jbouri, E., Volk, A. A., Spadafora, N., & Andrews, N. C. Z. (2024). Friends, followers, peers, and posts: Adolescents' in-person and online friendship networks and social media use influences on friendship closeness via the importance of technology for social connection. *Frontiers in Developmental Psychology*, 2, 1419756. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fdpys.2024.1419756>
- Angelini, F., Koning, I. M., Gini, G., Marino, C., & van den Eijnden, R. J. J. M. (2026). Adolescent social media use profiles: A longitudinal study of friendship quality and socio-motivational factors. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 177, 108880. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2025.108880>
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *The American Psychologist*, 55(5), 469–480. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.5.469>
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A., & Walters, R. H. (1963). *Social learning and personality development*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Bhallamudi, I. (2022). Daughters, devices and doorkeeping: How gender and class shape adolescent mobile phone access in Mumbai, India. *Information communication & Society*, 25(6), 851–867. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2022.2056499>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
- Chan, H.-Y., Brown, B. B., & Von Bank, H. (2015). Adolescent disclosure of information about peers: The mediating role of perceptions of parents' right to know. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, 44(5), 1048–1065. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-015-0261-9>
- Doron, A. (2012). Mobile persons: Cell phones, gender and the self in North India. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 13(5), 414–433. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2012.726253>
- Dunne, Á., Lawlor, M.-A., & Rowley, J. (2010). Young people's use of online social networking sites: A uses and gratifications perspective. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 4(1), 46–58. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17505931011033551>
- Flamant, N., Haerens, L., Vansteenkiste, M., Van Petegem, S., & Soenens, B. (2024). Are all negotiations equally favorable? The role of adolescents' negotiation style, social domain, and mothers' authoritarian beliefs and family history. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, 53(2), 485–505. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-023-01880-w>
- GAGE Consortium. (2022). *Adolescent lives in Bangladesh: What are we learning from longitudinal evidence? Lessons from longitudinal research with adolescents*. Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence. <https://gage.odi.org/adolescent-lives-in-bangladesh-what-are-we-learning-from-longitudinal-evidence-2/>
- Garrett, S. L., Burnell, K., Armstrong-Carter, E. L., Prinstein, M. J., & Telzer, E. H. (2023). Linking video chatting, phone calling, text messaging, and social media with peers to adolescent connectedness. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 33(4), 1222–1234. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12871>
- Gemara, N., Mishna, F., & Katz, C. (2025). 'If my parents find out, I will not see my phone anymore': Who do children choose to disclose online sexual solicitation to? *Child & Family Social Work*, 30(1), 4–14. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.13069>
- Haddon, L. (2013). Mobile media and children. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 1(1), 89–95. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2050157912459504>
- Hasan, K., Mahmood, H. R., Ether, S. T., Hayder, T., Zannat, S., Sayeed, A., Hasan, A. M. R., Rahman, A. E., Chiu, C., Ahmed, A., & Sajib, M. R. U. Z. (2025). From taboo to touchscreen: A qualitative study of digital sexual and reproductive health intervention for Bangladeshi adolescents. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 27, e78514. <https://doi.org/10.2196/78514>

- Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1973). Uses and gratifications research. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 37(4), 509–523. <https://doi.org/10.1086/268109>
- Licoppe, C. (2004). 'Connected' presence: The emergence of a new repertoire for managing social relationships in a changing communication technoscape. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 22(1), 135–156. <https://doi.org/10.1068/d323t>
- Ling, R. (2004). *The mobile connection: The cell phone's impact on society*. Morgan Kaufmann.
- Lynam, M. J., & Tenn, L. (1989). Communication: A tool for the negotiation of independence in families with adolescents. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 14(8), 653–660. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.1989.tb01608.x>
- Naved, R. T., Kalra, S., Talukder, A., Lattera, A., Nunna, T. T., Parvin, K., & Al Mamun, M. (2022). An exploration of social norms that restrict girls' sexuality and facilitate child marriage in Bangladesh to inform policies and programs. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 70(3 Suppl.), S17–S21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.12.002>
- Nuffic. (n.d.). Primary and secondary education in Bangladesh. <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/education-systems/bangladesh/primary-and-secondary-education>
- Oksman, V., & Turtiainen, J. (2004). Mobile communication as a social stage: Meanings of mobile communication in everyday life among teenagers in Finland. *New Media and Society*, 6(3), 319–339. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444804042518>
- Page Jeffery, C. (2024). 'Trust us! We know what we are doing!' Parent-adolescent digital conflict in Australian families. *Journal of Children and Media*, 18(4), 472–488. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17482798.2024.2358947>
- Purboningsih, E. R., Massar, K., Hinduan, Z. R., Agustiani, H., Ruiter, R. A. C., & Verduyn, P. (2025). Parental mediation strategies for social media use: A thematic analysis of perspectives among Indonesian parents and adolescents. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 44(12), 2838–2859. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2024.2413454>
- Rana, S., & Zahid, A. (2026). "We are like brothers": Free fire, masculinity, and neoliberalism in semi-urban Bangladesh. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 31(1), 2683711. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2026.2683711>
- Razi, A., Badillo-Urquiola, K., & Wisniewski, P. J. (2020). Let's talk about sext: How adolescents seek support and advice about their online sexual experiences [Article 416]. Proceedings of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Association for Computing Machinery. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3313831.3376400>
- Rony, R. J., & Ahmed, N. (2025). Teens online behavior and support interventions in Bangladesh. *ACM Journal on Computing and Sustainable Societies*, 3(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3704813>
- Rubin, A. M. (2002). The uses-and-gratifications perspective of media effects. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (2nd ed., pp. 525–548). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Sarwatay, D., Raman, U., & Ramasubramanian, S. (2021). Media literacy, social connectedness, and digital citizenship in India: Mapping stakeholders on how parents and young people navigate a social world. *Frontiers in Human Dynamics*, 3, Article 601239. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fhumd.2021.601239>
- Smetana, J. G., Villalobos, M., Tasopoulos-Chan, M., Gettman, D. C., & Campione-Barr, N. (2009). Early and middle adolescents' disclosure to parents about activities in different domains. *Journal of Adolescence*, 32(3), 693–713. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2008.06.010>
- Stanton-Salazar, R. D., & Spina, S. U. (2005). Adolescent peer networks as a context for social and emotional support. *Youth & Society*, 36(4), 379–417. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X04267814>
- Steinberg, L. (2008). A social neuroscience perspective on adolescent risk-taking. *Developmental Review*, 28(1), 78–106. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2007.08.002>
- Steinberg, L., & Morris, A. S. (2001). Adolescent development. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52(1), 83–110. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.83>
- Steinsbekk, S., Bjørklund, O., Valkenburg, P., Nesi, J., & Wichstrøm, L. (2024). The new social landscape: Relationships among social media use, social skills, and offline friendships from age 10–18 years. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 156, 108235. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2024.108235>

- Streatfield, A. J., Rahman, M. M., Khan, S., Haider, M. M., Rahman, M., Nahar, Q., & Jamil, K. (2023). What shapes attitudes on gender roles among adolescents in Bangladesh. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 11, 1121858. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1121858>
- Tandon, A., & Deshmukh, K. S. (2026). Exploring family supervision effects on adolescents' internet usage and anxiety. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 66(3), 338–352. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08874417.2024.2375381>
- Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2007). Preadolescents' and adolescents' online communication and their closeness to friends. *Developmental Psychology*, 43(2), 267–277. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.43.2.267>
- Valkenburg, P. M., & Peter, J. (2011). Online communication among adolescents: An integrated model of its attraction, opportunities, and risks. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 48(2), 121–127. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2010.08.020>
- Winstone, L., Mars, B., Haworth, C. M. A., & Kidger, J. (2023). Types of social media use and digital stress in early adolescence. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 43(3), 294–319. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02724316221105560>
- Zakaria, M., Xu, J., Karim, F., & Cheng, F. (2019). Reproductive health communication between mother and adolescent daughter in Bangladesh: A cross-sectional study. *Reproductive Health*, 16(1), 114. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-019-0778-6>
- Ziegel, L., Sjöland, C. F., Zuo, X., Fine, S. L., & Ekström, A. M. (2025). Adolescent mental health and digital communication: Perspectives from 11 countries. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 77(3), 405–412. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2024.02.037>