**NAME:** NKOSANA SOKHELA

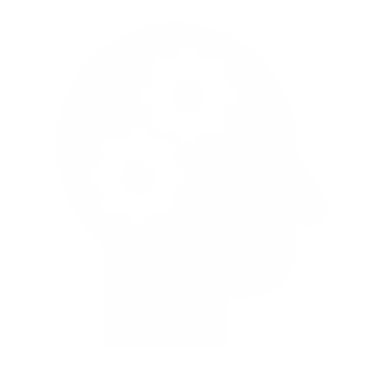
**GRADE:** 12

**SCHOOL:** CURRO ACADEMY

**INSTANT MESSAGING**

**IN OUR**

**PERSONAL LIVES**



It has been assumed that in our new age people’s addiction to their phones hinder their progress in things that are important. In this investigation, we delve into this topic. The focus of this investigation is to find out if instant messaging, particularly, does have any significant impact on us and if it does what its effect on us is. Is Instant Messaging just a convenient tool that we use or something that distracts us from the much better things we could be focusing on in our daily lives?.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

[TABLE OF FIGURES 3](#_Toc142041873)

[INTRODUCTION 4](#_Toc142041874)

[TASK DEFINITION 5](#_Toc142041875)

[What is the current situation? 5](#_Toc142041876)

[What will be the focus and purpose (desired outcome) of my investigation? 5](#_Toc142041877)

[How will I go about the investigation considering all the PAT requirements? 5](#_Toc142041878)

[Who is the target audience? 5](#_Toc142041879)

[FOCUS QUESTION 6](#_Toc142041880)

[DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS 7](#_Toc142041881)

[BIBLIOGRAPHY 8](#_Toc142041882)

[WEBSITE SOURCE 1 8](#_Toc142041883)

[WEBSITE SOURCE 2 8](#_Toc142041884)

[OTHER SOURCES (BOOK) 8](#_Toc142041885)

[OTHER SOURCES (YOUTUBE VIDEO) 9](#_Toc142041886)

[OTHER SOURCES (NEWS ARTICLE) 9](#_Toc142041887)

[APPENDICES 10](#_Toc142041888)

[Appendix A: 10](#_Toc142041889)

[QUALITY OF INFORMATION FOUND 12](#_Toc142041890)

[QUALITY OF INFO FOUND (WEBSITE 1) 12](#_Toc142041891)

[QUALITY OF INFO FOUND (WEBSITE 2) 12](#_Toc142041892)

[QUALITY OF INFO FOUND (BOOK) 12](#_Toc142041893)

[QUALITY OF INFO FOUND (VIDEO) 13](#_Toc142041894)

[QUALITY OF INFO FOUND (ARTICLE) 13](#_Toc142041895)

[FOLDER STRUCTURE 14](#_Toc142041896)

[FINDINGS 15](#_Toc142041897)

[GRAPHS 15](#_Toc142041898)

[QUERY 17](#_Toc142041901)

[CONCLUSION 18](#_Toc142041902)



# TABLE OF FIGURES

[Table 1: Website Source 2 8](#_Toc142036590)

[Table 2: Website Source 2 8](#_Toc142036591)

[Table 3: Book Source 8](#_Toc142036592)

[Table 4: Video Source 9](#_Toc142036593)

[Table 5: News Article Source 9](#_Toc142036594)

[Table 6: Sources Table 11](#_Toc142036595)

[Table 7: Quality Of Info (WEBSITE 1) 12](#_Toc142036596)

[Table 8: Quality Of Info (WEBSITE 2) 12](#_Toc142036597)

[Table 9: Quality Of Info (BOOK) 12](#_Toc142036598)

[Table 10: Quality Of Info (BOOK) 13](#_Toc142036599)

[Table 11: Quality Of Info (ARTICLE) 13](#_Toc142036600)

[Figure 1: Mental Health Graph 15](#_Toc142039903)

[Figure 2: Productivity Graph 15](#_Toc142039904)

[Figure 3: Accessibility Graph 16](#_Toc142039905)

[Figure 4: Query on work-life balance across age groups 16](#_Toc142039906)

# INTRODUCTION

Instant messaging is a tool, and like any other, it can have devastating effects on mental health, work-life balance, relationships, and self-development when wielded without caution. In this investigation, the effects of Instant Messaging on our overall well-being will be discussed as we dive into the different ways in which we interact and utilize Instant Messaging and how the ways we do interact with it can help or harm us. I aimed to find and report on all the pros and cons of instant messaging in our daily lives.

# Park scene with solid fillTASK DEFINITION

## What is the current situation?

Instant Messaging is form-based communication in which two (or possibly more people) have a conversation in what can be described as a “private chatroom”. The rise of Instant Messaging can be attributed to its convenience and simplicity in providing the service it was intended for. Instant Messaging is a technology that is deeply integrated into our daily lives. We use Instant Messaging for everything, from checking up on distant family to submitting assignments. Instant Message is an effortless, easy-to-use system that allows us to communicate both from near and afar at a cost-effective rate.

## What will be the focus and purpose (desired outcome) of my investigation?

In my investigation, I intend to research the overall impact of Instant Messaging on our personal lives. I will be investigating the influence of Instant Messaging on our mental health, work-life balance, interaction with friends and family, and the social pressures of the 21st century. I will then conclude whether the impact is positive or negative based on the results of my investigation and analyse if the benefits of Instant Messaging outweigh its unseen costs.

## How will I go about the investigation considering all the PAT requirements?

For this investigation, I will use the resources (news articles and videos) provided to find answers about the general use of Instant Messaging and its advantages and disadvantages that are beyond common knowledge. I will then find my own resources (which may include newspaper articles, videos, old interviews, and reports) related to the focus question I posed. I will attempt to interview users of Instant Messaging to see how they perceive the technology.

## Who is the target audience?

The target audience of my investigation is people whose lives involve the constant daily use of Instant Messaging technology. This audience comprises everyone who is part of the modern world. The results of my investigation can largely be applied to the youth of today and all people who are part of the modern and tertiary workforce.

# Laptop with solid fillFOCUS QUESTION

Is the general impact and influence of instant messaging on our personal lives positive or negative?

# Folder Search with solid fillQUESTIONS

1. What is the resultant impact of Instant Messaging on our mental health?
2. Does Instant Messaging cause over-availability?
3. Who (which demographic) does Instant Messaging affect the most?
4. How does Instant Messaging affect work-life balance?
5. Does Instant Messaging increase or decrease productivity in our personal life?
6. Does Instant Messaging cause the expectation to work after hours?
7. How does Instant Messaging impact our relationship with family in the long run?
8. How does Instant Messaging affect long-distance relationships?
9. What recommendations should be given to someone struggling with mental health issues regarding the use of Instant Messaging?
10. Would it be better for us if we used instant messaging less?

# FOLDER STRUCTURE

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| NO. | Questions | LEVEL | CATEGORY | TYPE OF SOURCE | BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFO | QUALITY OF INFO FOUND | SUMMARY OF INFO FOUND |
| 1. | What is the resultant impact of Instant Messaging on our mental health? | 1 | Mental Health | Internet/ Website | [The effect of instant messaging services on society’s mental health](#_WEBSITE_SOURCE) | [Quality of info found (website 1)](#_QUALITY_OF_INFO) | The impact is negative as it causes dependence on our technological devices and reduced dopamine when not interacting with them. |
| 2. | Who (which demographic) does Instant Messaging affect the most? | 1 | Sociability | Video | [Blue Bubbles vs Green Bubbles: Explained!](#_Blue_Bubbles_vs) | [Quality of info found (video)](#_QUALITY_OF_INFO_2) | Generally, it is the youth that is impacted by instant messaging. Growing up with technology causes somewhat of a dependence on it. |
| 3. | Does Instant Messaging increase or decrease productivity in our personal life? | 1 | Work-life | Internet/ Website | [Why instant messaging apps are so addictive?](#_Why_instant_messaging) | [Quality of info found (website 2)](#_QUALITY_OF_INFO_4) | It is dependent on the individual for some it increases for others it does not. |
| 4. | Does Instant Messaging cause the expectation to work after hours? | 1 | Work-life | Book | [Instant Messaging Reference](#_Instant_Messaging_Reference) | [Quality of info found (book)](#_QUALITY_OF_INFO_3) | Yes, some employers misuse IM to reach out to their employees after hours creating the expectation to continue with work. |
| 5. | Does Instant Messaging cause over-availability? | 2 | Sociability | Internet/ Website | [Why instant messaging apps are so addictive?](#_Why_instant_messaging) | [Quality of info found (website 2)](#_QUALITY_OF_INFO_4) | It is dependent on the individual for some it increases for others it does not. |
| 6. | How does Instant Messaging affect work-life balance? | 2 | Work-life | Internet/ Website | [Why instant messaging apps are so addictive?](#_Why_instant_messaging) | [Quality of info found (website 2)](#_QUALITY_OF_INFO_4) | It removes separation from work life and home life |
| 7. | How does Instant Messaging affect long-distance relationships? | 2 | Sociability | Video | [Blue Bubbles vs Green Bubbles: Explained!](#_Blue_Bubbles_vs) | [Quality of info found (video)](#_QUALITY_OF_INFO_2) | It has an overall positive impact on long-distance relationships. Connecting people far away and offering immediate communication can often lead to a more sustainable relationship. |
| 9. | What recommendations should be given to someone struggling with mental health issues regarding the use of Instant Messaging? | 4 | Mental Health | Internet/ Website | [The effect of instant messaging services on society’s mental health](#_WEBSITE_SOURCE) | [Quality of info found (website 1)](#_QUALITY_OF_INFO) | To reduce dependence and look for help concerning the issue. We are mostly responsible for the effect instant messaging has on us and it is up to us to use it effectively and avoid addiction. |
| 10. | Would it be better for us if we used instant messaging less? | 4 | Sociability | Video | [Blue Bubbles vs Green Bubbles: Explained!](#_Blue_Bubbles_vs) | [Quality of info found (video)](#_QUALITY_OF_INFO_2) | In some cases, yes. Instant Messaging being used less would result in more people connecting face-to-face more often but would lead to a decline in economic activity. |

Table 6: Sources Table

# QUALITY OF INFORMATION FOUND

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| QUALITY OF INFO FOUND (WEBSITE 1) | |
| AUTHORITY | Ipkin Anthony Wong currently works at the School of Tourism Management, at Sun Yat-Sen University. He does research in Quantitative Social Research, Qualitative Social Research, and Social Theory. |
| CURRENCY | The website was published on the 20th Of April 2012 |
| ACCURACY | The information has correspondence with website 2, titled, “Why instant messaging apps are so addictive?”. |
| OBJECTIVITY | The author has no biases related to the subject |
| COVERAGE | The coverage on the matter is limited |

Table 7: Quality Of Info (WEBSITE 1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| QUALITY OF INFO FOUND (WEBSITE 2) | |
| AUTHORITY | Andrew Chen is an investor in games, AR and VR, and consumer-tech startups He also wrote a book on starting and growing new startups via network effects. |
| CURRENCY | The website was last updated on the 2nd Of November 2021 |
| ACCURACY | The information correspondence with website 1, titled, “The effect of instant messaging services on society’s mental health”. |
| OBJECTIVITY | The author is against the constant use of and dependence on IM and is biased against it |
| COVERAGE | The coverage on the matter is extensive |

Table 8: Quality Of Info (WEBSITE 2)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| QUALITY OF INFO FOUND (BOOK) | |
| AUTHORITY | Rachel teaches, develops, and supports web applications, and serves as the library of Washington State University’s copyright expert. |
| CURRENCY | The book was published in January 2008. |
| ACCURACY | The information has no correspondence with other sources. |
| OBJECTIVITY | The book promotes the use of IM and is biased toward it. |
| COVERAGE | The coverage of information was limited |

Table 9: Quality Of Info (BOOK)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| QUALITY OF INFO FOUND (VIDEO) | |
| AUTHORITY | Marquees Brownlee is a well-known YouTuber popular for video reviews of tech products. |
| CURRENCY | The video was published on the 25th Of January 2022 |
| ACCURACY | The information corresponds with info from the news article “The effect of instant messaging services on society’s mental health” |
| OBJECTIVITY | The author has no biases related to the subject |
| COVERAGE | The coverage of the material is extensive |

Table 10: Quality Of Info (BOOK)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| QUALITY OF INFO FOUND (ARTICLE) | |
| AUTHORITY | Brian X. Chen reviews products and writes Tech Fix, a column about the social implications of the tech we use and used to be an employee at Apple Inc. |
| CURRENCY | The newspaper article was published on the 14th Of September 2022 |
| ACCURACY | The information corresponds with info from the video “Blue Bubbles vs. Green Bubbles” |
| OBJECTIVITY | The author has no biases related to the subject |
| COVERAGE | The coverage of information was adequate |

Table 11: Quality Of Info (ARTICLE)

# DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS

## BACKGROUND

Instant messaging is a technology that took the world by storm. Its growing use correlated with the booming popularity in the smartphone market. It alongside other technologies has marked the colossal progressed we have made and how swiftly we have made it. The use of this technology has revolutionised the ways in which we communicated all around the globe, giving us both speed and ease of use. However, with all its convenience it has been claimed that it has brought more problems than it has solved. In the

## MENTAL HEALTH

Human mental health is incredibly complex and everything we interact with has an ability to affect it in significant ways. Instant messaging has been full ingrained into our society and daily lives, this therefore means that it is expected to have some sort of impact on us. However, based on the investigation conducted, as seen in it has been found that instant messaging has minimal if any impact on our mental well-being.

## WORK-LIFE

The effect Instant Messaging has on our work-life balance in not in any way favourable. This is most probably due to being too accessible to their work groups as seen in the analysis of the previous graph and query. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is difficult and the existence of Instant Messaging makes it harder.

## SOCIALIBILTY

Sociability is an aspect that has been positively impacted by the use of IM. Instant Messaging has seen great success in helping those that want to strengthen their connections and relationships to their loved ones. It has also assisted those looking to begin new relationships and find new connections as it is easier to maintain constant communication in Instant Messaging services.

# FINDINGS

## GRAPHS

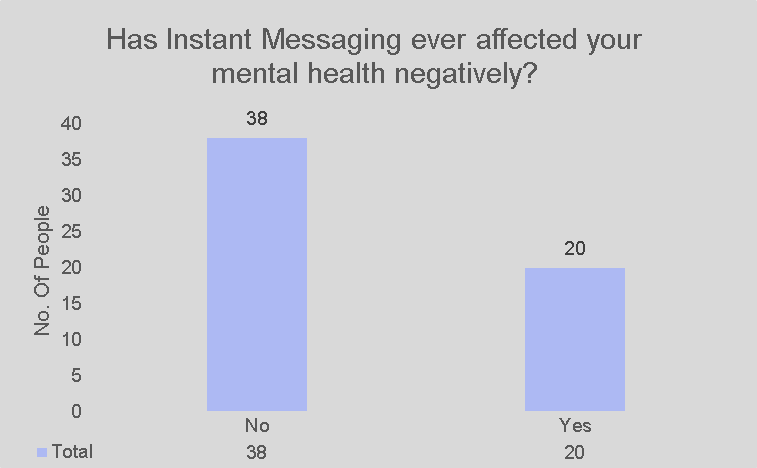


Figure 1: Mental Health Graph

In my analysis of this [graph](../../PHASE%202/Excel/INSTANT%20MESSAGING%20QUESTIONNAIRE.xlsx), I have found that over 65% of people have never had their mental health been affected negatively by instant messaging. This shows that only a minor percentage of people have been poorly affected using Instant messaging. This may be due to other external factors such as emotional stress, phone addiction, etc

A pie chart with text

Description automatically generated

Figure 2: Productivity Graph

In this particular [graph](../../PHASE%202/Excel/INSTANT%20MESSAGING%20QUESTIONNAIRE.xlsx), we can note that the number of students who are less productive due to instant messaging is equal to the number of those whose productivity is unaffected by it. This indicates that the effects of instant messaging in our lives is not necessarily dependent on the instant messaging service itself but rather the use of the said instant messaging service.

A pie chart with text

Description automatically generated

Figure 3: Accessibility Graph

Another area of concern was that people may feel to accessible to everyone in their lives including their friends, family and other social or work groups. This was indeed confirmed by the results illustrated in this [graph](../../PHASE%202/Excel/INSTANT%20MESSAGING%20QUESTIONNAIRE.xlsx). This is expected however as the other party being accessible is one of the main features of Instant Messaging.

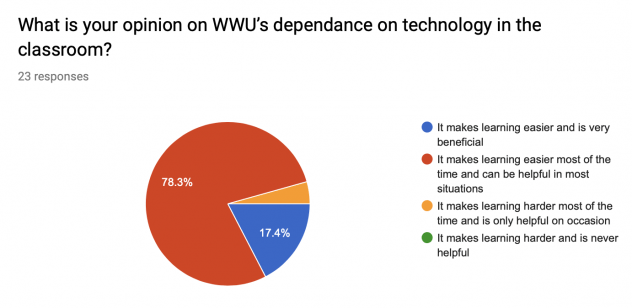


Figure 4: Graph on our dependence on tech

The [graph](https://wp.wwu.edu/soph/statistics/) above indicates to us that while some find instant messaging distracting a majority of them do agree that it alongside other technologies make learning easier and is useful in most situation while none say it makes learning harder. This means that find it more helpful when it used directly for learning purposes, rather than.

## QUERY

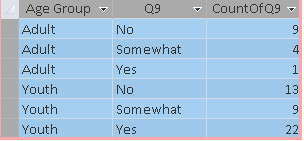


Figure 5: Query on work-life balance across age groups

In this [query](../../PHASE%202/Access/INSTANT%20MESSAGING%20DATABASE.xlsx.accdb) (query 2), it is evident that people’s work-life balance is impacted by the use of instant messaging in their lives. This is most probably due to being too accessible to their work groups as seen in the analysis of the previous graph.

# CONCLUSION

As I conducted this investigation, it became clear that the overall impact instant messaging has on us is positive. In the cases that it did cause negative effects, it usually signalled a bigger problem at large, purely being a symptom of the problem rather than the cause of the problem. In our time, technology is frequently painted in a negative light. The perception that instant messaging or any other technology for that matter causes most of our problems is not uncommon, it is however false, to a trained eye it is like any advancement, it brings with it a different set of problems as it solves a plethora of others. It has made our lives much easier, from allowing to connect with our loved ones from almost any habitable place on earth to helping us study better by allowing us to engage with educators and has only improved the ways in which we receive, communicate and broadcast news and information.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

Table 1: Website Source 2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| WEBSITE SOURCE 1 | |
| AUTHOR(S)/ORGANISATION/PUBLISHER | Mark S. Rosenbaum; Anthony Wong |
| NAME OF WEBSITE & WEB PAGE | The effect of instant messaging services on society’s mental health |
| DATE CREATED/UPDATED | 20 April 2012 |
| DATE ACCESSED | 20 February 2023 |
| URL | [The effect of instant messaging services on society's mental health | Emerald Insight](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/08876041211215284/full/html) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| WEBSITE SOURCE 2 | |
| AUTHOR(S)/ORGANISATION/PUBLISHER | Andrew Chen |
| NAME OF WEBSITE & WEB PAGE | Why instant messaging apps are so addictive? |
| DATE CREATED/UPDATED | 2 November 2021 |
| DATE ACCESSED | 10 March 2023 |
| URL | [Why Instant Messaging Apps Are So Addictive?](https://andrewchen.com/why-messaging-apps-are-so-addictive-guest-post/) |

Table 2: Website Source 2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| OTHER SOURCES (BOOK) | |
| Author | Rachel Bridgewater, Meryl Cole |
| Title Of Source | Instant Messaging Reference |
| Date Issued | 31 January 2008 |
| Publisher | Chandos Publishing 2008 |

Table 3: Book Source

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| OTHER SOURCES (YOUTUBE VIDEO) | |
| Author | Marques Brownlee |
| Title Of Source | Blue Bubbles vs Green Bubbles: Explained! |
| Date Issued | 25 Jan 2022 |
| Publisher | YouTube |

Table 4: Video Source

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| OTHER SOURCES (NEWS ARTICLE) | |
| Author | Brian X. Chen |
| Title Of Source | Text Messaging Is Cool. But Where Are Its Boundaries? |
| Date Issued | 14 September 2022 |
| Publisher | New York Times |

Table 5: News Article Source

# Bibliography (Automated)

Bridgewater, R. (2008). *Instant Messaging Reference.* Chandos Publishing.

Brownlee, M. (2022, January 25). Blue Bubbles Vs. Green Bubbles. America.

Chen, A. (2021, November 2). *Why Instant Messaging Apps Are So Addictive*. Retrieved from @AndrewChen: https://andrewchen.com/why-messaging-apps-are-so-addictive-guest-post/

Chen, B. X. (2022). Text Messaging Is Cool But Where Are Its Boundaries. *New York Times*.

Rosenbaum, M. S., & Wong, A. (2012, February 20). *The effects of Instant Messaging services on society's mental health*. Retrieved from Emerald Insight: https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/08876041211215284/full/html

# WORKS CITED

(Chen B. X., 2022)

(Bridgewater, 2008)

(Brownlee, 2022)

(Chen A. , 2021)

(Rosenbaum & Wong, 2012)