

## Technology and Isolation in the Information Period

### Abstract:

Technology and Isolation in the Information Period explores the social, political, and legal implications of the group and use of personal information in computer databases. In the Information Period, our lives are documented in digital case books maintained by hundreds (perhaps thousands) of businesses and government agencies. These case books are composed of bits of our personal information, which when assembled together begin to paint a portrait of our personalities.

Technology has changed our working practices and now allows us to be connected 24/7. We have the power to Skype clients around the world and email or Tweet work colleagues at weekends, but is there a danger that having connectivity so readily available hinders our efforts to gain a better work/life balance?

We often read articles about the correct way to manage technology and how to achieve a happy balance of relaxing away from work and being 'Always On' and 'Always available'. For instance, many people choose a job that allows them to detach from the workplace on evenings and weekends, yet technology makes it difficult for others to switch off. Now, we are huge believers in the ability to use the internet, email, Facebook, Twitter, texting and to pick up the phone and talk to people, but because of technology more people are becoming distracted and losing focus. They can't escape from the workplace and feel that the office follows them around via their Smartphone which demands attention 24/7.

It wasn't so long ago that when we took a holiday, we would plan ahead, make sure everything was order, inform clients of our absence and brief our teams so we could disappear off to distant shores and happily sit in the sun for a relaxing fortnight, avoiding drinking the local water, eating strange local delicacies and fending of mosquitoes.

But I digress ... Having technology at hand means that we still have an element of control at our workplace and the ability to deal with issues if they occur. The downside to this is managing that work/life balance again. On one hand the internet is a lifeline, but it can also become a ball and chain if we don't take the time to unplug from it.

Technology allows us to be in two places at once, but when employees struggle to find the right balance between their work and personal lives there is a chance that stress levels can increase leading to a potential loss of productivity and happiness in general. In a recent survey 70% of workers said that technology brings the stress of work into their personal lives.

Many Researchers have recommended drawing a line between work communications and home. This not only benefits your well being, but benefits your employer too, as you will be coming back to work refreshed and recharged.

**Keywords:** privacy, information, stress, Skype, facebook, twitter, email.

## **IMPACT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ON WORKS AND SOCIAL LIFE**

**Information Technology** has been a big part of our lives for quite a while now but only recently has it truly been felt in the developing world, however technology is a variety of different things not just the internet Technology, but can be found anywhere, for instance, living room, school, on the street and even in parks. Technology can be found absolutely anywhere and as it has its direct impact on our Works and social life.

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Information Technology** can be defined as the tools or mechanisms used to store, manipulate, distribute or create information. The type of information or data is not important to this definition. The technology is any mechanism capable of processing this data.

**Kathleen Guinee** opined that, “**information technology**, are the tools we use to perform calculations, to store and manipulate text, and to communicate. Some of these twentieth century tools include: the adding machine, slide rule, and calculator for performing calculations, the typewriter and word processor for processing text, and the telephone, radio, and television for communicating”.

### **NEW CONCEPTS IN IT and SOCIAL IMPACT**

**SOCIOTECHNICAL:** A **Sociotechnical** network is a network that brings together equipment, equipment vendors, technical specialists, upper-level managers, IT policies, internal funding, and external grant funding with the people who will use IT as a tool. IT is a sociotechnical network.

### **COLLECTIVE ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS**

One of the aims of the report is to analyze the influence of “**information technology**” on the collective activities and interests of a broad range of people and their social life. The phrase “collective activities and institutions” has a wide scope. This report divides these into three main areas:

**1. Work processes.**

**2. Social Life.**

**3. Information Technologies as Sociotechnical Networks**

This section of the report will examine how **information technology** influences how individuals in a society have had the way they function in their interactions with each other (social), and their interactions with institutions (work processes).

## **WORK PROCESSES**

### **How has the development of information technology influenced the interactions between institutions and individuals?**

Developments in **information technology** in the last thirty years have led from institutions with large single computers being able to only accommodate one user at a time, to a point now where powerful computing power is available to individuals rather than an organization. Thirty years ago computers were much larger than now, often filling large rooms. Later developments such as the personal computer, have brought computing power even closer to the individual in the organization. And as graphical user interfaces have evolved from the early experiments at Xerox

PARC to the Windows operating system, the individuals in an organization can even more easily harness computing power. This leads to an increase in the individual's ability to complete **tasks quickly and efficiently**.

## **SOCIAL LIFE**

### **How has the development of information technology influenced the interactions between individuals?**

Interactions between individuals have been enhanced by the development of **information technologies**. New channels of communication have been opened between people in the last thirty years. These developments have been assisted by the Internet.

As other developments occurred, such as the widespread availability of modems and personal computers became more widespread, the general population was integrated into what is known as the Internet Community.

Individuals then have the ability to interact with other individuals through such developments as e-mail, chat-rooms and the Usenet.

### **Information Technologies as Sociotechnical Networks**

IT in this new world, has created a helping hand tailored towards, helping, departmental managers better understand and control their functional areas in organizing their technical staffs in different arrangements and created different IT pricing schemes for systems developments, reprogramming, and operations. At a click of a button IT implementations are made and are an on-going social process.

## **SOME POSITIVE IMPACT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ON WORKS AND SOCIAL LIFE**

- The impact of **Information technology** has also led to fast flow of data and information within the work environment, as workers have access to information through the internet, on a company intranet or a mobile phone or some other type of electronic device. Organizational heads can release information to many workers through the use of email without having to call for a meeting, thus saving the cost of printing memos.
- **Easy Connectivity:** one of the major positive impacts of IT is the issue of easy connection in terms of communication networking. Formally in our society people has become so disconnected due to distance but the advent of IT, has made it so possible that, family and friends can now connect without the fear of geographical boundary e.g. GSM Phones, Internet etc.
- **Information Technology as a cultural phenomenon:** In a postfigurative culture, socialization occurs as knowledge and traditions are passed down from the older to the younger generation. In a configurative culture, people also learn from peers and organize a versatile formal education. In a prefigurative culture, the direction of socialization changes so that the younger generation may instruct the older generation on how to function in a new cultural situation. All these cultural forms are easily passed and aided by IT.
- **Developments in learning:** in our day to day living both young and old use IT to participate in and complete various learning tasks, whether formal or informal. It is interesting to consider the unprecedented range of opportunities for learning e.g. National Open University
- Social informatics research has produced some useful ideas and findings that are applicable to many kinds of information technologies and shed interesting light on some facets of Internet use.
- The concept of computerized information systems/information technology as “sociotechnical networks” is one such idea that helps us understand the character of new electronic information spaces, such as discussion lists, groupware, electronic conferencing systems, and e-journals which has left its great impact on the Social life of people in general.
- The concept of sociotechnical networks helps our world to overcome some key limitations of the past, all which are possible through the intervention of Information Technology in our social life.
- In the past, information dissemination has been a major challenge in society and in the workplaces but with the emergence of globalization, the transfer, transmission and exchange of information has become a **click of a button**, on phones, iPods, net books, and email via the internet.

## **NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ON WORKS AND SOCIAL LIFE**

**Without mincing words, as helpful as Information Technology is, yet it has its negative impact on Work and Social Life:**

- Research has shown over time that most of the people that use the internet are time wasters, and therefore, IT has become, one of the major sources of time wasting instruments especially among youths and aged.
- Information Technology happens to be one of the greatest Innovations that happened to our generation but came with its negative impact of reducing the number of manpower, which is termed downsizing as a result of machines taking the duties of human beings e.g. banking sectors and their money management systems etc.

## **CONCLUSION**

Globalization is powered by tremendous and rapid IT advances, and young people are often among the first to take advantage of new developments in this area. Youths are capable of using IT in diverse and novel ways, as a result of which traditional forms of socialization such as the family and school are increasingly being challenged and overtaken. Many of the perceptions, experiences and interactions that people have, daily, are virtually transmitted through various forms of information and entertainment technology (Interaction, communication and Culture which are all major yardsticks of Work and Social Life).

Therefore the impact (positive and negative) of IT on work and social life cannot be over emphasized, because it has cut-across all the facets of Human life.

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