

Example of culture and technology essay

[Technology](#), [Internet](#)



_____Course _____Subject

CULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY

The term “ culture” is very broad based as it represents a whole gamut of thought process that influences the behaviour of a person, whether acting individually or as a part of the group. Kroeber & Kluckhohn (1952) state that “ Culture” consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i. e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditional elements of future action.’ Hofstede (1994) states that culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another

The biggest contribution of technology over the course of several centuries is enabling human being to overcome the difficulties set by distance and time. Right from the time of invention of wheel several thousand years ago up until now wherein distance of several thousand kilometres is covered within a couple of hours, with the advent of aeroplanes; technology has been the greatest enabling factor vis-à-vis aiding human being in conquering time and distance. A natural corollary to this has been ever increasing human interaction from different corners of the world. The increased human interaction has greatly impacted the diverse culture at many levels both positively and negatively.

Dr. Edward A Shaken rightly points out that art and technology are very

deeply co-related. Dr. Edward A Shaken further argues that the developing art and technology shall always be an integral part of the art. It is however observed that Western historians fail to give due importance to the influence of technology over art (Dr. Edward A Shanken P 2). Jack Burnham, in his essay “ Art and Technology: The Panacea that Failed” (1980), argued that the union of art and technology had nothing to offer to the unfolding of western art history since the Renaissance.

There are certain fundamental theories concerning society and technology, namely (a) the “ Social Construction of Technology” as propounded by Hans K. Klein (2002) is based on the presumption that human action is not determined by technology. On the contrary, technology is determined by human action; (b) the “ Actor-Network theory”, propounded by Latour: (1992) and Callon (1999) which primarily states that the heterogeneous network of humans and non-humans are equal interrelated actor; (c) the “ Structural theory”, which examines the conduct of people viz-a-viz technology in their practices ; (d) “ System Theory” as elucidated by Thomas P Huges (1992) which suggests that there is a strong connection between the artefact being built and the social, economic, political and cultural factors surrounding it.

Networked technology has immensely influenced various cultural forms, including, but not limited to music, literature, journalism etc.

Let us examine the influence of network technology on world of literature and publishing. One of the characteristic features of network or digital technology is the ability to reach and connect millions of people in a jiffy.

This high degree of inter-connectedness has greatly impacted the literary forms prevalent in various parts of the world. The biggest boon of digital technology to contemporary writers is creation of a platform that enables them to distribute and disseminate their literary work to millions of readers. This obviously was not feasible historically. The traditional publishing house is highly capital intensive. There are numerous cost incidences to publishing. For instance, hard copy printing entails publishing cost, forecasting cost, warehousing cost, cost to maintain distribution and supply chain etc. It has become feasible to cut down on the foregoing cost on account of advent of the online publication. With the gradual improvement of technology in the printing and publishing sector, it became feasible to achieve economy of scale in the world of publishing consequentially enabling the literary works to be spread far and wide. Thanks to the digital technology, talented writers achieve acclaim globally.

The digitized world has been evolving at a very fast pace. David Poole (2010) points out the statistics for e-book sale figure as published by the Association of American Publishers. To this end, The Association of American Publishers' domestic sales report for 2010 clearly indicated that the sale of e-book rose to 165% from the previous year. Further, E-book sales have risen sharply to 623% since 2008. E-book sales represented 8.3% of combined trade sales in 2010, up from 3.2% in 2009. The literary world has found a new medium of expression in the form of e-books, kindle, and online publishing website. This has greatly limited the influence of traditional publishing houses. On account of e-book publication, the commercial proposition for the traditional publishing house has been greatly impacted. It has been observed that some

publishing houses do not have in-house editors these days.

This is because they are unable to pay the editorial staff. These publishing houses instead prefer hiring editors on freelance basis so as to cut the cost.

The digitized world has led to a commercialization of the literary world.

Online platform compels a writer to do his or her own publishing. On account of the foregoing fact, the digital writer focuses more on the commercial value of his literature rather than focus on the literary value of the content.

The impact of network technology on print and literary world has greatly influenced the business throughout the course of the 20th and 21st century.

The literary works regarding capitalism and socialism created two schools of thoughts that changed the global landscape of business. The 21st century

corporate houses use network technology to promote themselves. This

website of such corporate houses contains extensive write ups about their products/processes which are certainly used as a tool to enhance the

corporate image and spread head information about them. The capital

markets across the globe use network technology by publishing information about the script. Various business forms have layers of complexities on

account of network technology usage in publishing and spreading business information. Professional networking sites like linked-in contains features

that enable various professionals to publish articles. There are millions of articles on linked-in which tremendously influence upcoming professionals across the world.

There are new issues in the field of intellectual property rights protection on account of advent of e-books. It has been rightly argued by David Poole (2010) that the electronic rights are equally complex as other publishing

rights that the traditional publisher has to deal with. David Poole (2010) further points out that the way it works now is that the original publisher retains the ownership and the electronic products are distributed on a non exclusive basis. For instance, a company may place its digital literary work on-line with Google, Amazon, NetLibrary, Ebrary, etc. Further, it can permit the online sale of its e-book through eBooks. com, eReader. com, etc. However, it is apprehended that if one of this online publishing platform becomes too powerful, there is a very great possibility that such online company shall dictate terms in the same way as Apple iTunes did in the music field

It has also been observed that the world of literary review critics is more dominant online rather than in the print media version. Critical review of a book is first published online

It has been observed that over the course of 21st century, various political leaders have used digital/network technology as a weapon to spread their ideology through the mode of print and internet media. The positive repercussion of this is that it has led to the creation of a very high degree of awareness amongst people from various countries about their civil and political rights. The adverse effect is that the misuse of network technology for the purpose of spreading propaganda through fanatical literature and publications has led to civil wars. Digital technology changed the political landscape across the continents through the medium of publication of various political thought processes and ideas.

Various newspapers and periodicals now have their own websites as well. For example, the Guardian, the Washington Post, the Washington Times etc are

available, both in hard copy and online versions. On account of the availability of various newspapers and periodicals in e-format, one is not required to wait for a good 24 hours to get acquainted with the latest news. Various news articles and write ups about current affairs, social events and breaking news are available almost instantly on account of the e-paper format. The e-paper format has hastened the pace of news dissemination across the globe. On account of e-paper being published through the internet, it becomes feasible for a person residing at one corner of the world to instant know what is transpiring at the other corner of the world. The twin combination of internet and e-newspaper has made this world into a small village where information gets relayed in a jiffy. This has both, positive and negative influence at the same time. The positive aspect of this is that human being is gradually becoming a global citizen as the differences creating by national borders are gradually blurring. The negative aspect is that constant barrage of negative news impacts human psychology adversely. The incessant information regarding political upheaval, war, natural calamity, economic down turns, stock market crashes succeeds in grabbing eyeball; however, it creates high level of insecurity and restlessness in the human community.

Various religious institutions have effectively used network technology to spread their sphere of influence. In this regard, each such religious group has dedicated websites and the religious scriptures of each of such religious fold are explained in intricate details on such websites. Various religious books like the Bible, the Holy Quran, and the Geeta are present in the e-book format. The different sub-sect of religious groups belonging to each of these

religion also make use of network technology to spread their thought process by publishing various literary and spiritual articles on their website. Various terrorist groups have misused network technology for the purpose of disseminating fanatical literature with the intent of brainwashing vulnerable youths consequentially inducing them into the world of terrorism. These groups use the media of instant communication such as twitter, and facebook to convey messages with ulterior motives.

On account of digital technology, there has been a constant barrage of literary works, namely, short stories, novels, write-ups, whether it be political, religious, social or economics; articles, thesis, poems, biographies, auto-biographies, newspapers, both, in print and online media. This, at times, leads to information overload and leaves an individual completely confused and directionless. Thus, it can be reasonably inferred that the modern modes of communication have interwoven the world so closely that it leaves no room for the development of independent thought process. This is because people are left with limited time and energy to think independently on account of maximum amount of time being occupied by social networking sites.

The world of aesthetics has certainly been impacted by the advancement in technology. There is an increased use of technology in every sphere of art. Jennifer Grover Prokopy, points out in an online article on "Changing Aesthetics" that various designers are intentionally trying to create an environment which is tech free in terms of Aesthetics. Jennifer further points out the fact in the article that certain sections of the population are wary of cold and non-human influence. Further, there are others who want to be completely free of

any kind of technological influences. Mark Culter, a Los Angeles based home designer is of the view that one place where technology will remain strong but would not influence itself to a greater degree is home design styling. The push and shove between the traditional sense of aesthetics and the network technology can be readily seen in the modern architectures. To this end, network technology is used to design complicated structures which retain delicate external facades, which may have Victorian or Georgian or Goethe influence.

It can thus be seen that network technology has fundamentally altered the cultural nuances at various level. In any event, culture and technology are quite closely interlinked. There are certain attribute of technology which impacts various facets of culture, be it the behavioural pattern/literature/art/craft and architecture in a way which would have been beyond the comprehension of human mind in the last century. Network technology takes the world of culture at level which is so high that human race, at times; find it difficult to keep pace with. While it is apprehended that network technology may influence culture negatively, there are other school of thoughts that think otherwise on the basis of reasons that are equally justified. The world of network technology has greatly impacted the literary world.

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