

Free the harmful technology essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



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Information technologies as well as any digital device were invented with a thought of usefulness to human-being. All of them give people an easy access to communication and information. People are able to contact each other all over the world without the need to travel. Moreover, the innovations brought up by information technologies made it possible to learn a lot given the abundance of information available on the internet. Many years ago, people were in need to spend long hours in the library, reading one book after another in order to obtain necessary information. Books, radio and television were the main sources of information. Nowadays people have incomparable alternative to them which is internet. Online search engines lead to the depths of the desired data in seconds of time. Nevertheless, with its advantages technological progress has its negative effects, which directly affect the lives of people. Social media, blogs and e-mails deteriorate face-to-face communications and distort social values. Easily available information on the internet lowers people's concentration and reflection by involving " weapons of mass distraction". In addition, internet sources are main reasons for increased rate of plagiarism, which discourages creativity and thinking process. Alongside with its benefits, technology brings a deteriorating effect on people's communication skills, concentration on reading material and involvement in plagiarism.

Technological innovations were introduced to facilitate communication process. It is now possible to contact with people on an easily access basis and the miles are no longer a problem. However, if we take a closer look on how people are used to communicate then we see a declining trend in face-to-face communication. Social networks and e-mails serve as the main tools for intercourse. People carry digital devices with them everywhere; therefore they unconsciously believe they can get in touch with people at any possible moment. The obsession with internet chat and typing has increased to such extent that it has become an integral part of everyday life. Virtual communication gives sort of a chance to edit own personality. People create virtual images of themselves, and put a lot of efforts to be liked by many. The illusion of companionship gives people a confidence that their voices are heard:

I believe this feeling helps explain why it is so appealing to have a Facebook page or a Twitter feed — each provides so many automatic listeners (Turkle, Sherry. " The Flight From Conversation." The New York Times.).

“ Friend in need is a friend indeed” is no longer a relevant proverb. Friend is considered to be a person who constantly likes and re-tweets your posts. Time is spent more and more on online interaction through social media and blogs slowly neglecting any means of verbal communication. The truth is that people may have hundreds of friends on Facebook or thousands of followers on Twitter, but in reality the relationship is just a mere connection. There are no emotions and feelings. People are unaware that information technology has made communication “ dead”. Artificially created virtual world does not require communication skills; therefore people prefer online chat to live

communication. It is frightening, however, how people stopped differentiating between the two:

Human relationships are rich; they're messy and demanding. We have learned the habit of cleaning them up with technology. And the move from conversation to connection is part of this. But it's a process in which we shortchange ourselves. Worse, it seems that over time we stop caring, we forget that there is a difference (Turkle, Sherry. "The Flight From Conversation". The New York Times.).

This can lead to isolation from the society, and cause a range of mental disorders. The most important to note is that, this type of virtual communicating is now actively used by children. What generation will be brought up with this phenomenon present is left to wonder.

Internet offers a range of distractions that prevents people from focusing on reading materials. Videos, games, ads are brightly sparkling on every page, and unconsciously people find themselves on a completely different internet source, which may not be particularly in their interest. These distractions are the direct outcomes of marketing strategies and economic incentives. People do not follow a sequence; once they opened a journal article, they end up reading completely different material. It is largely true that internet sources lower people's concentration. Long articles and passages are skimmed and looked through rather than read deeply. The research conducted by University College London revealed that there is an increasing tendency of skimming activity of readers:

It is clear that users are not reading online in the traditional sense; indeed there are signs that new forms of "reading" are emerging as users "power

browse” horizontally through titles, contents pages and abstracts going for quick wins. It almost seems that they go online to avoid reading in the traditional sense (Carr, Nicholas. “ Is Google Making Us Stupid?”. The Atlantic.).

People have become so absorbed by abundance of information on the internet that it is no longer possible to stay focused on one piece of writing. High-tech innovation of internet reshaped thinking process in the way that people have become intellectually lazy. This intellectual laziness made people read only short news articles and look through titles and subtitles, which they reckon as merely enough. Even with the invention of printing press, many had started to doubt new invention, arguing that it can lead to intellectual laziness:

The Italian humanist Hieronimo Squarciafico worried that the easy availability of books would lead to intellectual laziness, making men “ less studious” and weakening their minds (Carr, Nicholas. “ Is Google Making Us Stupid?”. The Atlantic. Atlantic Media Company).

Web researcher Jacob Nielson also supports this argument with his research. He concluded that people chase bullet points, visuals and jump to keywords. All they are looking for is the information to pass, and there is no reflection and synthesizing that occurs during reading process. He calls this an F-pattern, fast reading. Indeed, fast reading activity has resulted from distractions available on the web sources. People have no patience in reading and try to find necessary information as faster as possible. Nielson further argues,

‘ Reading’ is not even the right word. The subjects usually read only the first

two words in headlines, and they ignored the introductory sections (Bauerlein, Mark. “ The Chronicle Review”. The Chronicle of Higher Education.).

New technology gives no possibility to concentrate on reading; it has changed people’s behavior in a way that it only can consume the information without reflecting on it. For that particular reason, the world may have deficiency of “ slow” readers in the upcoming future and face a challenge of redundancy of information that nobody reads.

Last phenomenon related to high technology is widespread plagiarism from online sources. Rates of reported plagiarism are on increase; it has become so common among students given the easily accessible information from the online sources. In addition, plagiarism is on arise for the reason of inefficient property rights system. As Gabriel Trip notes, perception lays is in the middle between awareness of property rights and seriousness of “ copy-pasted” work:

Perhaps more significant, the number who believed that copying from the Web constitutes “ serious cheating” is declining — to 29 percent on average in recent surveys from 34 percent earlier in the decade. (Gabriel, Trip. “ For Students in Internet Age, No Shame in Copy and Paste”. The New York Times.).

Cheating is easy and available; therefore no one thinks that he/she might get caught by original writer. Online sources with no author even further promote cheating activity, as most of the students believe there is no need to add that work to bibliography. Plagiarism is the direct result of lazy behavior of human-being that has lead to inactive thinking. Originality and

creativity is absent from the works and assignments that students submit. Some people think this is due to inefficient high school education system, which does not impart reading skills to students. For that reason, in college years students have no incentive to write by themselves. Donald J. Dudley, who has 32, 000 students on campus, comments this by following:

Writing is difficult, and doing it well takes time and practice. Students who intentionally copied — knowing it was wrong — were “unwilling to engage the writing process (Gabriel, Trip. “For Students in Internet Age, No Shame in Copy and Paste”. The New York Times.).

Others believe this happens for the reason of ineffective system of property rights, and copyright system many times does not cope with internet. Of course, there are plenty of reasons why people plagiarize. However, the core issue here is that internet has become the main accomplice by giving easy and available access to online sources for those who plagiarize.

Works Cited

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