Technology And People From The Perspective Of “The Distracted Mind”

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Introduction

Technology has become a significant part of our busy schedules and has reached the roots of our daily lives because of its easy access and portability. Today’s technology is simple and can be used by anyone at any time because of its simplicity and easiness. Particularly, the internet has revolutionized and reformed the information search, shopping, entertainments, and media. Technology has affected people’s nature and identity as today MRI scans, microscopes, and other technological tools have become a part of precise diagnosis and investigation. On the one hand, it has made our life as easy as pie, but on the other hand, it has created difficulties in the mere existence of today’s individual according to one’s own will. Everything is planned, everything is shared, and we are just waiting and watching and doing nothing.

Technology has no doubt simplified our lives by minimizing the many tiresome tasks to be performed, like online shopping, online banking, skyping, and paying utility bills. Previously, a person used to spend plenty of time performing these activities manually, but now, there is one click that resolves everything in no time. Furthermore, the health and the medical industry have been positively affected by the advent of technology. Transplant surgeries, cancer treatments, and stem cell research have all been made possible just because of the technological resources that are available to us today. Time Magazine has focused in an article on how the technology (new cardiac scanner) has played its role in saving the lives of a person as it detected obstructions in his artery even after passing a stress test (Gorman & Park, 2005).

Internet Technology

However, every positive aspect also has a negative side to this technology, which has to do with the negative face that affects humans with each passing day. The downside is that the use of gadgets and the internet has made humans just machines. It is no doubt unfortunate that this technology that has brought people living far away together has also led humans to have fewer interactions with people sitting beside us. Technology has compelled us to surrender our lives to this unhealthy routine whereby our lives, our choices, and our habits are dictated by gadgets and technology.

Internet technology and human brains share a lot in common as they are both exceptional systems with a “little world” design, implying that there is both profuse grouping of links between neighboring nodes and enough long-extend easy routes to encourage correspondence between far nodes. Both the internet technology and the mind have a wiring chart overwhelmed by a moderately couple of very associated centers, and both can be subdivided into various practically concentrated families of hubs. It might appear to be noteworthy, given the undeniable contrasts between the web and the cerebrum from various perspectives, that they should share such vast numbers of abnormal state configuration highlights. For what reason should this be? One probability is that the mind and the internet technology have developed to fulfill similar general wellness criteria. But this technology has broadened our paths, instead of taking care of our significant others personally we are all sending texts of getting well soon or just calling them on their main events.

Social and Cognitive Effects

Some people prefer to stay at home and are reluctant to go outside just to connect with their computers rather than connecting with the real beings in their lives. Our children and youngsters are getting addicted to social media and online video games, and it has minimized their physical activities by making them less active. Another downside of this technology and social media is that it creates conflicts between couples and best friends, compelling them to get separated. This lack of one-to-one interaction and over-dependence on social media is leading people to be less productive and more reclusive. Society has become dysfunctional and non-cohesive due to the excessive involvement of people in these gadgets.

In *The Distracted Mind*, Adam Gazzaley—a neuroscientist, and Larry Rosen— a psychologist, have mentioned that people nowadays admit that they are obsessed with their gadgets and feel pride in their ability to multitask. People proudly say that they can send work emails, read text, check video clips, hear an audio song, and talk to their children all at the same time. Everybody can do many things simultaneously without having any issues, and they are doing it 24/7. However, the issue is that people have errors in their emails in understanding the actual meaning of the text and what has been said by the child. The authors of this book have explained that the brain is not designed for multitasking and has limited capacity to pay attention. People do not multitask. Instead, they switch quickly between different tasks. These technology-related interruptions and distractions are “interference” that strike with one’s goal-setting abilities (Gazzaley & Rosen, 2016).

Information and Network Effects

A study was conducted by Rahwan and colleagues (2011) on a group of university students to test how being connected to some large networks (such as the Internet) affects the transmission of precise information, along with underlying cognitive strategies required to produce accurate information. The findings of the study showed that although being connected to some large network

can assist people in resolving their issues by helping the transmission of accurate information, the dark side is these networks lack propagating the cognitive strategies that are required to get accurate information.

Rosen, one of the two authors of *The Distracted Mind,* has found that *"Young people's technology use is really about quelling anxiety…they don't want to miss out or to be the last person to hear some news (or like or comment about a post online)."* The major issue with using Facebook during class or texting while studying is that *"they draw on the same mental resources—using language, parsing meaning—demanded by schoolwork"* (Gazzaley & Rosen, 2016).

Effects on Privacy and Inner Life

Technology is not only affecting our brains, but it is also intervening in our inner lives. Beckor (2016) who is the dean of Columbia University, has mentioned in the Times Magazine that technology has affected our private life as whatever we do on the internet is knowable, identifiable, and marketable; even what we are reading –that is highly personal – is also under surveillance. Anybody can have access to us at any time and anywhere in the globe through our gadgets, and this intrusion is omnivorous and omnipresent.

Conclusion

The technology has the ability to "knock down the walls that world governments and world media have created and controlled and will, at last, allow the average person to make truly educated decisions on how things could be and should be, not on what opinion the media is allowed to give" the negative impacts exceed the positive. Technology has started ruling our lives, and we have surrendered.

The Industrial Revolution may have achieved much mental destruction, and natural abolition". Martin Heidegger (1977), a German philosopher has warned the world "against the likelihood that man might be defeated by this technology," consequently the impacts of technology can be more inconvenient and have considerably more harming outcomes to humankind as we probably are aware of it since it is unbalancing the harmony of society by making a world where technology will dictate our lifestyle.

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