# The Positive And Negative Effects Of The Internet

Posted on May 12, 2020

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## The Internet as an Information Resource

The Internet has been branded and proven to be a crucial part of recent society mainly due to its over-reliance on providing information in a faster way. It provides remedies in the attempt to solve and give solutions to real-life needs and problems by making information easily available at anyone's disposal. Recent studies and researchers have reported several effects of the internet and technologies on human intelligence by basing their results and arguments on real-life examples. As noted in *The Internet in Everyday Life* by Barry et al. (2008), some of these effects negatively affect human intelligence capacity while others have positive effects on our lives and intelligence. In modern society, most people are suffering from digital amnesia, which means people cannot retain most of the information obtained from the internet.

The internet has brought about the mindset of "the internet knows everything," so people can access all the information they need on the internet. As described by Norman and Erbring (2000), the internet just allows us to source information on the internet rather than keeping the solution in mind. After studying and researching the internet's effects on human nature, the reports examined have provided information to back up my previous stance, in which I argued that the internet is making us dependent and, therefore, less intelligent (p. 15). The information provided by the internet should be making us smarter and more intelligent, but instead, it is making us more dependent and less intelligent and has a negative effect on human morals and behavior.

People are using the internet to find and acquire solutions and information, after which they do not retain all the relevant information of the answer given. After researching through the search engines, obtaining the relevant information, and solving the current question or situation, the internet gives the option not to memorize all that information obtained since, in case you ever need that information again, it will always be readily available on the internet. In this generation, people always store their important information in digital forms where they can retrieve it and access it at any time without the burden of remembering the exact details. For example, people use their phones to set meeting reminders or important dates rather than storing this information in their brains and remembering it themselves. This total dependence on the internet all the time has minimized our knowledge and information storage capacity in our brains because we know we can get back on the internet and look for that same information if we need it again, therefore making us less intelligent.

# Internet Dependence and Declining Social Interaction

The internet contains a wide range of addictive programs, which causes over-reliance on the internet by people. The internet provides different platforms that offer a variety of formats of addictive packages to society, such as phones, which have been proven to be highly addictive, especially to teenagers (Zobia Bargees et al., 2006, p. 300). This has affected interactions among people. In the past decade, when people used to sit and share stories and even laugh together, nowadays people stay glued to their mobile phones and do not have time to talk to each other. Instead, they are busy watching stuff on the internet, chatting, and calling their anonymous friends. Based on recent research reports, online gaming sites and social media networks have proven to be leading the way in addiction. Medical practitioners and psychiatrists have identified internet addiction as a disorder that needs professional skills, knowledge, and understanding of its treatment. For instance, one can develop a gambling addiction via online casino suites. These addictions cause people to overly depend on the internet to provide these programs and ease their addiction. Society has to be reasonable, which means people must decide how to use online platforms.

Internet access is available almost everywhere we are, and therefore, people lose human interactions. It serves us all with everything we need by creating an easily accessible platform such as Google and Wikipedia to gather our desired information and answers to almost all our life questions; this hinders people from questioning other people's ideas and opinions, hence barring social interactions amongst people. Therefore, this may create broad social differences amongst people because they do not discuss issues together and come up with solutions; this is because these solutions are readily available on the internet. In recent years, traditional stories are never told to youngsters by their grandparents because the younger people are busy with their mobile phones and have no time to listen to folk tales. For example, people at home as well as in public places find it fun using their phones instead of talking to each other and making new friends; they prefer making friends online via different social media platforms such as Skype. Nowadays, consultation is conducted via online platforms, which, in most cases, provide people with misleading and unreliable information that is not always true and might lead the users to poor decision-making.

# Cognitive Overload and Reduced Creativity

The internet serves the human fraternity with a wide range and massive load of information that the brain cannot process and memorize all of it. It is constantly providing a stream of rich, broad information from different global locations and websites, which offer different ideologies pertaining to the same aspect, making it difficult for the human brain to handle. Some of the information provided on websites and search engines is too detailed, and therefore, the brain does not process every single fact embodied in the context. Due to this, some important facts in the context might be left out, and therefore, it will have a negative impact on decision-making about future actions. The variability of

perception is that the brain does not capture everything we see, and hence, the information provided on the internet might be too detailed for us to make sense of it.

People do not take the time to evaluate and analyze the information provided on the internet on their own. Various websites provide information collected globally, so it is hard to differentiate true information from false information. The possibility of this solution being accurate or wrong is proportionate, and some information has a high percentage possibility of being wrong due to the unlimited uploading of information to the internet. For example, most article writers are never certain about the information they post on different media, and most users end up trusting and using information that has not been proven right, especially medical information, which is critical.

Lack of creativity is one of the many sour effects of internet access. The major feature of the internet is the unlimited and accessible information sources that have rendered human beings unable to think critically, innovate, and improvise new ideas and strategies. This feature benefits users in that they can get information with ease (Lee and Min, 2006, p. 420). However, when everything is available at the fingertip, it is difficult for people to be creative and innovative. For instance, students do not put much effort into their studies since they only need internet access to gather solutions and copy-paste the information for their tests, therefore making it hard for them to come up with creative and unique ideas of their own in the future. The ease of accessing internet services has made things easier, hence hindering learning and originality.

# Inappropriate Content and Behavioral Influence

The retrieval of all kinds of inappropriate materials from different links, servers, groups, and websites has been rendered to be influential to young people. Adding to that, these materials have been proven to deter established moral concepts and religious ideologies in society. Depending on the culture and religious beliefs, morality covers many aspects of life, such as the way people dress and how people behave in general. The internet has brought different ideas which differ from the established customs and ideas. It provides materials that can result in moral corruption, especially in teenagers, which can lead to wrong mental development. Hence, it is essential for adults to exercise control over what type of information is accessible to teens.

The internet provides direct access to television programs, which affect human behavior in such a way that people try to imitate the movie lifestyle and actions taken by the actors. This has direct negative effects on humans because their course of action, thoughts, and lifestyle are determined by the movie characters rather than by their own ways and thoughts. Most people develop their habits grounded in their favorite programs or movie characters. They tend to develop their routine based on how their favorite characters behave or act, and hence, most people do not take the time to learn their habits and live their own lives based on their actions and decisions. For example, most teens nowadays try to copy dress codes from their favorite movie stars whether it suits them or not; they tend to leave dress code decisions to their artists. Although people are used to developing their habits

centered on how the program entitles, they should use their brains to develop their own habits and thoughts based on their tastes and preferences.

## Benefits, Risks, and Responsible Internet Use

Although the internet has been proven to have negative outcomes regarding human behavior, actions, and overdependence, the pros are also a couple and awesome. It is considered a life-changing invention that has established itself in every aspect of life. The Internet has made our lives easier by making all sorts of information available with the help of gadgets such as phones and laptops. Human beings can now think critically and come up with new, developed, and enhanced ideas by the use of information served by the internet. People are now changing their livelihoods as compared to the past decades due to the advancement of technology and the introduction of more developed gadgets from which they are guaranteed direct access to internet services. The transfer of information has become faster and more accurate through the internet. Today, people do not have to wait for emails as these emails are now sent faster and easily via the Internet. The availability of new information to internet users is making more people intelligent by adding more knowledge to them.

Although access to the internet serves us and meets our information needs, over-relying on it to provide answers to almost everything is risky as it reduces our ability to think critically, evaluate and analyze our life problems to come up with solutions of our own to avoid future regrets. This also enables us to keep the information in our minds and use it more often because it is hard to forget our self-made ideas, decisions, and opinions. The increasingly negative effects of the internet pose a lot of questions about the use of the internet.

The decisive factor between the positive and negative effects of the internet is scaling the weight of fiction and reality. We know if the same information is needed at another time, it will be available in a few seconds. People do not take time to analyze a question and do in-depth research, but rather, they just search the question on Google and solutions present themselves for direct use. Information from the internet can be false or true, so people should choose wisely which information to base their decisions on. Staying away from the cons of the internet, it is beneficial to keep oneself away from internet dependence.

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