Mechanical Clocks

[Name of the Writer]

[Name of the Institution]

The mechanical clock can be declared as one of the technologies, which revolutionized timekeeping. However, its invention did not occur as a sudden event. It was an outcome of a chain of innovations, which lead to an accurate device. Technological advancements were at a halt from roughly 500 to 1500 A.D, in Europe. The earliest method of timekeeping was a sundial. Ancient civilizations such as Romans and Greeks and ancient Iraq used it. They remained a typical way of telling time in the early 19th century. About 1400 BC, the Egyptians invented the water clock which comprised of water containers one higher than other. H the lower container was marked with rings, which indicated the hours of time that has passed. Sundials and water clocks were unreliable in Europe due to its climate. The mechanical clocks were developed in the Middle Ages. It was around the 13th century when the first clock was developed in Italy (“A History of Clocks,” n.d.). The early clocks were normally in churches due to their heavy weight. Early clocks were not very precise, but in 1657, Christiaan Huygens announced the pendulum. After that, clocks became more precise.

Many factors played their part in the development of mechanical clocks, one of that is the economic factor. Since in the Middle Ages, sundials and water clocks were used. The activities such as market openings were done with the sunrise and typically ended in the noon. The labor day was very long and the concept of wage by hour did not exist. When the first mechanical clock was introduced and spread in Europe for the public, different attitudes on punctuality began. These clocks were built on churches and not divided the day into two units of twelve. The public could easily access the clock and listening to the chime enabled a person to count. These clocks made an impact on the economic development of Western European countries.

The invention of the mechanical clock had a great impact on various activities. During the Renaissance, it allowed to observe the prayer times, and life became more convenient. In fact, they lead to the invention of accurate timekeeping devices. The mechanical clock became the reason for the growth in the Western World who started to focus on getting knowledge and introducing new technologies (Boerner & Severgnini, 2016).

Mechanical clocks transformed people’s perception of time. The clock shows the numerical measurement of time which is opposed to the qualitative measurement. When people reflect on how technology has transformed human life, they usually think of a car, computer, or television. However, according to philosopher Lewis Mumford, the invention of mechanical clocks has changed everything in human life, and it has become the key machine of the modern industrial age. Its influence increased with the Christian Monasteries where clocks were used to maintain the regularity of order. The clocks allowed the organization of human activities, which was never witnessed in the history of time. There were no longer obstacles to timekeeping. With the advent of mechanical clocks, timekeeping passed on to time-serving and time-rationing and time-accounting. Human life was impacted by not only synchronizing it but also by distancing it from original patterns of life. The organic functions like sleeping eating are now sanctioned by clocks.

The mechanical clock helped in the development of the modern clock which has helped fuel the industrial revolution in the United States. It impacted the places where people were adopters of new technology. The diffusion rate of mechanical clock supports the view that how general purpose technologies play a significant role in the development and economic growth of Western European countries (Boerner & Severgnini, 2016).

References

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