Your Name

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Title: Impact of Technology

Modern technologies such as mobile and internet claim that they are making humans smarter, better connected with the outside world and more informed about the future. With the passage of time, human independence on these technologies including the mobiles, laptops, and tablets is increasing. One of the major issues with technology is that it has some unintended consequences and these consequences cause harm and dangers in many ways which are unknown to mankind. As the field of information technology rapidly develops, the impact its usage has on the human mind has led to many concerns. Owing to the popularity and massive use of the internet, newer generations seek quick information from external internet sources rather than dedicating themselves to detailed readings. The internet is undermining our capacity for contemplation and concentration and is eroding human minds and its cognitive abilities of reading, thinking and writing suggested by Nicholas Carr.

Carr (2008) suggests that the overuse of technology and the internet is affecting the way our thought processes work. The immense amount of artificial information available at our disposal affects our cognitive abilities to contemplate and reflect. This occurs by impacting our ability to focus as we rely more and more on the internet to not only seek new information but to help us recall basic aspects of knowledge. Writers and literary experts themselves, according to Carr, are having difficulty in maintaining concentration, had their focus reduced and reported different changes in their reading habits since the age of Google. People are frequently using google to retrieve information which gives a false sense of knowledge to the user, when we click links that we find are closest to the search string and quickly skim through them looking only for sentences and a few bold words, then thinking that we have gained the knowledge we needed on the topic.

As we are regularly bombarded with information in the form of ads, emails, attention-grabbing headlines and news, it affects our ability to perform a deep reading of denser texts and impact our concentration (Carr, 428). Moreover, this affects our reading preferences itself collectively, which can be observed from the fact that most traditional and internet media has had to adapt to the expectations of their readers and audience. Newspapers have started to dedicate pages to abstracts of articles on subsequent pages and introduced capsule summaries, infographics, and snippets while media programs have started to use pop-up ads catering to our reduced attention spans. These shortcuts provide a quick overview of the news, while the actual reading itself has become less efficient (Carr, 432). This is owing to the fact that the very nature of our brain may have changed as a result of our Internet searching habits. This is substantiated by Benjamin Storm, Sean Stone, and Aaron Benjamin (2017) who experimented with a group of people given difficult questions that were to be answered from memory and subsequently being provided with easier questions and allowed to use Google search. They found out that people preferred to use google for answering the easier questions even when the conditions were made more inconvenient, indicating that by solely increasing reliance on the internet to retrieve information changes our inclinations and habits with regards to obtaining knowledge.

Another argument Carr uses to prove his assertion is that our cultural and social behavior itself is impacted by technology just the way, for example, the industrial revolution changes our time management habits. Since we already realize that information would be available on our devices, we become less likely to learn new things altogether. This is supported by evidence from a study in which half of the participants were asked to remember facts while the other half were not. One half was told that their work would be immediately erased while the other was told that their work would be saved. The study found that those who were asked to remember the information scored the same as those that did not, while those who were told that their work would be erased scored better than those who believed their work was saved. This is because the brain finds little need to store information in the minds when it realizes that it would already be saved and archived somewhere. Carr’s theory is substantiated by the fact that youth who are raised in technology-rich environments are relatively weaker in numeracy, literacy, and problem solving compared to those who are not, and that the overall numeracy and literacy skills are declining in the same population sets.

The modern technologies weaken the resilience; a resilient community keeps and possess necessary knowledge that assists them in meeting the basic needs. This knowledge is healthy enough to enable them to meet the challenges and take care of their family members including the senior and disabled family members. Modern families and people are lacking rudimentary knowledge, despite they consider themselves as clever. They are lacking the authentic knowledge and wisdom of the basic artificial and biological life that supports humans. Modern humans take much pride in the inventions of others, they feel smart by dint of other’s inventions such as mobile and internet. It makes one blind to the core deception of technology. A species that is utterly at the mercy of modern inventions cannot be resilient, by any stretch of meaning. Accessibility of the internet all the time does not allow people to have knowledge of where the water comes from.

Another impact of the high prevalence of mobile and internet is on human memory. With more reliance on technology, dependence on human memory is declining. A study on two groups of people, one which was more reliant on Google and the other on memory was conducted which revealed that humans do not bother to recall things on their own and they are more likely to Google everything that comes their way. As information is more and easily available by use of these devices, humans become more dependent on it in common life (Barral, n.p). In addition, the technology and the media that is used in learning also impacts the ways things are learned and stored in brains. Socrates complained about the development of writing because he was scared that if people will start relying on the written content, they will culminate using their memory and will become eventually forgetful.

Facebook and Google are considered as big power nowadays. There was a time when Tony Blair became prime minister and it was not possible to search him on Google or any other search engine. According to Cadwalladr, Google and Facebook are bombarded with fake news and fake stories which dominated certain sections of the press as well after the elections in America (Cadwalladr, 492). The information searched on these websites and search engines reveals the results which impact the human perspective of things. These bigger companies are known for causing disruptions. Searching information on Google has become a new problem as the results it shows are very disrupting such as some instances shared by authors include results like "Women are evil" and "Muslims are bad" etc. this shows that Google's algorithm can go wrong so many times (Cadwalladr, 493).

Another factor associated with the use of technologies like Google and the Internet is that one does not question the algorithms of Facebook and Google. Humans are surrounded a lot by it, and it seems like if it is the air they breathe and the water they drink. Every person is surrounded by this technology but there is no one who could question the facts that how Google algorithms work. Why 90% of Google search shows that Jews are Evil, as experimented by Cadwalladr. Even if one makes a choice to question, there is no way of knowing it. This is the question of the day why these algorithms are not visible. All of the things on Google and these search engines are programmed and this programming can be changed by Google. The common man is unaware of what is the meaning of suggestions made by Google in response to a query. The Internet has become one of the things made by man yet not understood by him. The content that is created every day on the internet is not bound by any laws. At this point, man is unaware of how powerful groups are making use of this technology for their own purpose and their questioning abilities have been clogged by the limelight of these technologies.

In this modern age of information, facts and researches published have taken the place of expertise. It has also abandoned people from relying heavily on the people of expertise, knowledge, and experience (Nichols, 107). Whether it is an ailment or pain in the chest, a doctor examination and diagnosis process are completely replaced by the glowing skin of a laptop or mobile. The Internet has offered a short-cut to the people for erudition yet it fails to separate the meaningful knowledge from the random information. Since the internet is becoming a data hub for information, bad information also stays online like any other printed material and stuff. Once bad information is out, it goes viral within second and there is no way to undo that. The ignorant general public makes use of all the information online without questioning it considering it is coming from experts and this cognitive ability.

The sad and fearful aspect of the internet is that social media sites are becoming the primary source of information and news (Nichols, 132). When people rely exclusively on these mediums for the sources of information, they are mired by internet politically and intellectually in their own biases. Facebook and the Internet have the power to show the user what they want to see and eliminate other information which does not negate our ideas and prior information. In this way, it is putting ourselves in the trap where people who focus on logic and fundamental knowledge are considered as elitists, who are ignorant of the modern age of information technology.

To conclude, the benefits of Google and advancement in internet technology are well known. Without quick access to information and computing devices, scientists would still be spending considerable time on calculations with little time left to contemplate deeply and creatively over aspects of discovery, however, Carr’s argument that the internet has reduced people’s capacity for contemplation and concentration also holds true in light of growing evidence that Google makes people lazier, engage in less critical thinking, and do less reading. The connections we used for communications are now used to build our connection with our devices. They have certainly made our lives easier but at a cost. And it is, therefore, a personal responsibility that we should not be enslaved by technology. Healthier and better personal choices can enable us to considerably overcome the problem.

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