The Foundations of Technology Addiction

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The Foundations of Technology Addiction

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Technology is considered to be a joy and convenience to global masses of all ages, but there is a point where the use of too much technology becomes destructive. In this age, technology is a major topic discussed amongst those who are inspired by its rapid growth, and those who are concerned by it. Devices used in everyday life have already provided significant impact on society and the shape of the future. Billions of people possess a network of connections through the screens of computers and smartphones, having both recreational and practical use. However, there seems to be a rising epidemic of addiction that is especially evident in today’s youth. Nonetheless, statistics show that the situation involves more than just teens. The main reason for addiction in anything comes down to the mentality of the individual because there are various resources within a device that people cling onto, parallel to outside situations in life. Social media and the internet’s endless content can lure one onto the path of excessive use, young and old alike.

Technology’s value and application is not immune to any age group, as new modifications are designed to intrigue a greater range of consumers. Different generations will find something of value in the changing appliances. The fundamental problem that the public should reflect upon is that technology addiction is affecting all current generations, and not simply the youth alone.

Since the eighties, people today are living in a time period where technology is growing rapidly each year. Within this short period of time, there are already concerns for the livelihood of others in this digital age. The internet is one of the most powerful and impactful resources, containing millions of routes to delve into. Many would agree that there are temptations at every corner of the world-wide web. This is even more evident nowadays as the internet has spread to other appliances besides computers, such as phones and TVs. The investigations and analyses share similar objectives of wanting to figure out what exactly makes a person addicted to their devices. There are many contributing factors, such as social media, games, and other reliable features. Upcoming inventions come from the ideas of innovators catering to the public. Easy accessibility is the main focus for companies when it comes to any fine detail of a smartphone, watch, computer, or any other hand-held machine.

Companies use statistics from the market to gain intel to provide their next best product. They look at what people want or desire and see if they can somehow make their desires fulfilled. Although a lot of influence depends on the individual, companies like Apple know what they are doing when they develop their new
models. Companies find ways that can significantly help people, like with messaging, wallet, and other quick services that could otherwise be a usual inconvenience. The goal is to create more efficiency. In addition, much of the games, apps, and social media platforms are created to be alluring and entertaining. The teams that design social media apps and computer games understand precisely what is required to motivate an individual to continue an activity and know how these elements can be built into their products. Many apps include world news and connections with the number of followers an individual has. One may feel dependent on these platforms because it feels important to them, almost as if it were an obligation.

Many oppositions come from older generations when debating the topic of technology and smartphone addiction. For many, this rapid growth has not always been in their lives, so it is more of a difficult idea to grasp. Many argue that the core of addiction comes down to the younger age groups of today’s society, because teens and children are now immersed in a society that is broadly reliant on the digital world. Seeing as how impressionable the youth can be, technology having a significant presence in their lives can be a blessing and a curse. On the other hand, most schools and businesses today may need more efficient gadgets in order to progress. Although technology’s presence can be for the better of society, there are still many glaring issues within. Technology’s expansion is essential for societal growth and education. It can still connect others in various ways by sharing opinions and ideas through various platforms. Yet we must not lose sight of how evolving luxuries are hindering current and future generations. Dependence and vulnerability coincide with the abundance of efficient resources the world currently possesses.

Mental health can come into play and people can become easily dependent on technology with such powerful devices. Adam Alter, an associate professor of marketing and psychology at New York University, believes that “adults react to modern technology in much the same way as toddlers respond to lift buttons: we are compulsive clickers and button-pressers, delighted at our power to make lights shine and buzzers ring with the tips of our fingers” (McBain, 3). Alter further added that “forty-six percent of respondents in another survey in 2015 said they couldn’t live without their phone; in a third study, 59 per cent said they were dependent on social media, even though this reliance makes them unhappy” (McBain, 5). People can become addicted to a substance or behaviour when they start relying on an emotional aid from probable feelings of depression, loneliness, or worthlessness. Scientists have researched that “People with low dopamine activity may also be more prone to addiction” (Psychology Today, 2). Fanatics of all kinds are chasing dopamine highs to seek short-term emotional relief, while causing themselves long-term harm.
Should the age of technology cease to exist because of those who are unable to find balance? Many are unaware of how widespread the addiction to their phones and other devices can be. It is a valid argument that a lot of the epidemic is seen from adolescents because older generations have lived without such convenient accessories. The media has demonstrated the terrifying entanglements that have come from social media use. Cyber bullying and harassment have taken over the lives of children who are not ready for such serious interactions. They may experience peer pressure and fall victim to the harsh judgements of others. For any kind of solution, society needs to pay attention to these problems and not disregard them for the sake of more positive aspects. Despite the opposing argument, social media addiction does in fact apply to everyone, and the addiction does not stop with just apps. The compulsivity and urgency to tend to important emails and documents have put control over the lives of adults as well. Web searching, online shopping, internet dating and gaming are temptations that everyone is familiar with, and it can be said that it is almost rare for a person to not overindulge with at least one of these modern vices.

Researchers Jason Chein and Henry Wilmer from Temple University conducted research on impulsivity with smartphones. "These findings are consistent with the common perception that frequent smartphone use goes hand in hand with impatience and impulsivity,” says Jason Chein (Springer, 6). The age range is widespread throughout the world no matter what age. Fast growing technology has the capabilities of intriguing and possessing any person. Looking into some additional statistics, at least 88.5% of Americans alone use the internet, and 75% of U.S. citizens use smart devices (Mental Health America, 1-2). With percentages this high, this would mean most of the country’s population relies on technology day by day. This overall average does not only include children and young adults.

Although the younger demographic of today’s society is a large contributing factor for technology addiction, the level of addiction should be viewed on a much wider scale. According to Mental Health America, any adult suffering from anxiety, depression, alcoholism and substance abuse are more likely to struggle with internet addiction. Additionally, other various types of mental illnesses including dissociative behaviors, ADHD and sleep disorders can factor into addiction. As these mental illnesses do not fit into one specific age group, demographics for technology addictions should not be exclusive to adolescents either. Mental health should always be looked into more seriously, and not be solely dismissed as an adolescent issue. People are widely reliant on resources that are quick and easy more so than one would think.

New pieces of technology are being developed to further draw in a user more and more every day. People are always looking for some type of relief or
satisfaction in their lives, as it is human nature. While some can restrain from excessive use, it is more of a challenge for others. It is easy to become dependent on a resource that makes one feel in control, and smartphones can do just that. There are so many things to access through the internet and social media that make people still feel connected and involved with the world somehow, and that is how one can feel in control. In one person’s mind, they see seclusion from excessive use. Through the eyes of an addict, they feel as though they are just as social as they would be if they were in the actual presence of others. The overabundance of ideas, opinions, and propaganda can have a negative effect on the mind of any person with a fragile enough mindset and morality. It is necessary to view the issue of mental health and the perpetrators encouraging the negative technicalities that go into their products.
Works Cited


