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Culture and Technology: Social Implications

Our culture has developed and spiraled in dynamic dimensions throughout history. As human beings, we aspire to be better, as a result curiosity and explorations lead us into new discoveries. Culture is defined as the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations (Merriam-Webster, 2017). One specific area that has developed quickly in the light of our culture would be that of technology. Technology is a capability given by the practical application of knowledge that is applied to objects or tasks (Merriam-Webster, 2017). People have been able to integrate technology into their everyday life as a result. The same development within the field of technology also helps contribute to the new dynamics of our culture. However, the most impacted area within culture due to technology would be social culture. Technology has caused the social culture structure to change. People interact and react in new ways; some cases are positive and others negative. These responses play back into the ever-changing realm of our culture.

People are social in different ways and have been since creation. Many technologies have aided human interaction and conversation. Some examples include the telephone, computer, and cell phones. Technology affects the social traits and behaviors that our culture develops and adapts over time. The automobile is a technology that affected social culture (Gilkey, 2015). It created the ability for people to move and always have access to transportation. Therefore, the suburbs and communities outside of large cities where many people worked were established (Gilkey, 2015). They also began the social culture of taking vacations due to the now lower cost and ease of travel (Gilkey, 2015). New behaviors were developed due to the automobile.

Behaviors include personality traits as well as physical tendencies. They usually shape themselves around the generation that is most dominant or present in the culture. The technology of the Internet for example, has had different impacts and implications on the younger generation than then older generations. This then generates new behaviors and social tendencies within both groups. The older generations have a harder time using and learning the many communication functions that the internet has to offer, functions like email and Facebook. This then makes them dislike and not approve of the technology, simply because they lack understanding. This is not true in every case but it still impacts the social aspects of the culture. It creates a disconnect between the generations. The younger generations on the other hand are taught, and understand how these communication functions work. Therefore, they very much enjoy using them. The older generation develops a distaste for the technology they do not understand. Their actions and behaviors are then changed, because they do not want anything to do with technology. While the younger generations develop addiction-like behaviors and tendencies. They constantly want to be using the communication technology because it is easy to understand and is quick.

People’s communication skills and behaviors have also been impacted due to the development of social technologies. The technology that allows communication leads individuals to believe that they are more intelligent than they truly are (Nichols,2017). The drive to be accepted is in social culture so people act smarter than they (Nichols, 2017). This causes people to desire to be correct all the time so that other people will accept and agree with them, changing the path of conversation. People converse to see who is correct and who is incorrect rather than simply for the enjoyment of getting to know about the other individuals. A sense of fear is provoked considering the possibility to be wrong and unaccepted in conversations. Therefore, people tend to hide behind the technologies that make them seem smart. For example, instead of talking to people in a line or as we are walking on a sidewalk, people will stare at their cell phones or tablet. Thus, technology is compromising communication skills in the presence of social culture.

Social culture has been impacted and continues to be impacted in positive ways through technology. The areas of communication, education, and relationships have seen improvements and benefits. Communication platforms have been invented and help to connect people overcoming the barriers of distance and language. People over the entire planet can converse, spread ideas, and produce new information due to technology. Education can be included in the topic because technology that is being implemented in schools helps to connect students to these things (Macmillan,2013). They can work together to get and share ideas and thoughts. For example, the technology that has been put into distance learning classes in the high school education system (Macmillan, 2013). The internet especially contributes and has positively influenced social culture in education. Students have new opportunities to learn and perform research that could later contribute to new technologies to even better the education system itself. Students also can form relationships with teachers and their peers thanks to the technology that is instituted into the education programs. Other relationships can flourish thanks to technology. Long distance no longer places the same constraints and restrictions as it once did without the internet, cell phones, and platforms such as Skype; Allowing many aspects of the social culture to thrive thanks to technology.

*Social Culture Influencing Technology:* Culture is capable of reshaping aspects within society, social culture aspects included. Therefore, social cultural aspects can influence technology. For example, social culture influenced the invention of the cell phone. The cultural value of communication brought about the technology of the cell phone (Cell Phones, n.d.). Individuals could be connected and talk to one another with great ease. This generated a feeling of safety in the social cultural context in light of cell phones. However, as social culture developed and began to get involved with instant messages or text messages, cell phones were modified. Cell phones were then made with the capability to type word messages back and forth between users. The design yet again changed when social culture discovered the ability to send emojis or symbols. Smart phones were the product of this discovery and the act of typing became a mixture of symbols and text.

Within social culture people expect results quickly and do not desire to work or provide effort for their gratification. Due to this desire of social culture, virtual marketplaces have been created (Gilkey, 2015). Technology has adapted to the demands of the culture and platforms such as Amazon have appeared. Another example of technology adapting to culture within the realm of instant gratification is on-demand entertainment. People can view whatever program they want within seconds of selecting. However, this instant gratification carries over to the physical side of social culture. As technology conforms to the demands of social culture people become impatient and irritable when technology does not work as it is intended. This places an immense amount of stress on technology manufacturers and companies to maintain the quality and provide customer service to keep customers content. The loop begins again as the social culture influences and changes the territory of technology to meet its demands. The characteristics of social culture and culture, impacts the advances of technology in all tenses.

*Balance and Control:* Discernment plays an enormous role in keeping our social tendencies from getting out of control and negatively affecting our social culture. Technology can spawn negative factors in social culture and social culture can do the same within technology. A balance between the use and abuse of technology needs to be established to make positive contributions, either using technology or impacting technology (Hart, 2013). Each individual maintains this establishment of discernment. They build standards for themselves so that they do not abuse the technology or the properties of social culture in everyday life. Some people do this by taking breaks from social media, allowing silence to be their atmosphere for sleep or rest, and turning off electronic devices while inside their homes. Generating and discerning these factors of technology and social culture help to keep contributions positive to society.

*Conclusion:* It is easy to say and see that technology has affected our culture in numerous fashions. One aspect of our culture that is impacted is the social concepts of culture. The technologies that bring new forms of communication often generate new implications on social culture. Culture also restructures itself and is very flexible. Therefore, it can also impact the technology people use. Overall, both facets have positive and negative outcomes. However, the cycle and balance between both are important to how society currently functions. If people combat the negative contributions and fight to build and discover the positive, social culture will thrive and flourish. Technology helps to drive social culture and social culture helps to drive technology forward.

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