Summary Assignment

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**Source Summary Prewriting**

Include specific information as it pertains to your chosen source below.

**Theme:** Technology

**Topic:** Technology and Social Isolation

**Title:** Information and Communication Technology: Affects on U.S. College Students, this title suggests that there are indeed *effects* of ICT and leads you to believe it will research how this affects college students in the U.S. particularly. It doesn’t outright state (in the title alone) whether the effects of ICT are positive or negative, but one would most likely assume since the article is in regards to college students (and is listed as a reference under my chosen topic), it will probably explore how ICT negatively impacts college students.

**Intended audience:** My initial impression of the article would lead me to believe that the publication is intended for scholars, mostly. It is very research-based and includes a lot graphs, charts, numbers, and data analysis. I can only assume the average, non-scholar, reader would quickly be uninterested and lost in all of this, so I cannot imagine the intended audience is anything other than scholars (such as myself) that are looking for a point of reference for their research in regards to technology and how it influences social isolation.

**Writer background:** Both of the authors have an education background in some form of health studies, including masters and doctorate degrees in the field. I believe that this background was and is a fundamental and credible platform for their interest and desire in notifying the reader of the potential health impacts of something as widespread and as commonly used as information and communication technologies. Both authors are active members of campaigns in their communities that are concerned with prevention and education in regards to matters concerning health.

**Writer’s angle**: The topic addressed in this publication does present an arguable claim that ICT use among U.S. college students can in fact lead to unhealthy and stress-inducing cycles of behavior. I would say that the authors at least acknowledge that there is another helpful and beneficial side to information and communication technologies, but they are more focused on how ICT use affects social habits of its users.

**Part 1: The one-sentence summary**

As Massimini and Peterson (2009) suggest, information and communication technologies are becoming the preferred methods of communication for U.S. college students and these dependencies on ICT are shaping stressful and unhealthy social attitudes and behavior.

**Part 2: The one-paragraph summary**

As Massimini and Peterson (2009) suggest, U.S. college students prefer communication via information and communication technologies that are largely impersonal. The use of these ICTs among students often alters and gives them a false sense of the stresses they encounter in their college lives and can also attribute to even more use of ICT as an outlet in order to try and alleviate stress, which in turn creates a vicious and repetitive cycle. Aside from an altered sense of stress levels, this cycle hinders and deters their social skills and attitudes. It is also believed that the use of information and communication technologies and the stresses they can create can also contribute to loss of sleep and lateness to class, which of course affects the students’ chances at success in an educational capacity.

**Part 3: The multiple-paragraph summary**

According to Massimini and Peterson (2009), information and communication technologies use among U.S. college students elevates the perception of stress among these students. Their study finds that a majority of these students prefer methods of communication that are derived from the use of ICTs. Massimini and Peterson claim that the preference for these communication methods also suggests other patterns of behavior that are left to be questioned. One of the challenging aspects of this behavior is that in their research, Massimini and Peterson found that most of the students who were subjects of this study admitted that they believe the best way to combat and lower their stress levels is in fact face-to-face communication, however the students still prefer the control level they possess in ICTs.

Additionally, Massimini and Peterson note “the more perceived stress the participants reported (indicated by higher PSS10 scores), the more likely they were to lose sleep due to ICT use” (p. 7). Despite ICT offering convenience and comfort, the use of information and communication technologies is largely influencing and impacting the mental and behavioral health of U.S. college students. Students’ dependence and preference of ICTs causes users increased levels of stress, and these increased stresses lead them to seek support through use of even more ICT which in turn only creates a cycle that leads to further degradation of their mental health and social skills. Only future research can truly put into perspective how impactful and widespread this issue is, and becomes, due to the ever-changing nature of technology and how people choose to let it influence their lives.

**Part 4: Your reaction**

Thanks to the study conducted by Massimini and Peterson, they have brought to light the potentially harmful impacts of information and communication technologies on U.S. college students. Through use of real-world data analysis and research conducted on actual college students, they have shown that a majority of these undergraduate college students have a preference for non-personal communication forms through use of ICT, and furthermore they have found that these methods elevate their perceived level of stress, which of course negatively impacts their health. The facts presented are pretty irrefutable, I believe, and I also feel that the author’s backgrounds in Health Promotion (including one being a professor of Health Promotion) give them the credibility and knowledgebase needed to conduct and analyze a fair and valid study of this particular nature. They acknowledge the potential benefits and conveniences offered by ICT, but simply seek to warn of its negative effects, especially on college students. Being an undergraduate student myself currently and a child of these technologies, I can connect with the author’s attempts to help promote good health practices even in today’s rapidly changing, ICT-driven world.

References

Massimini, M. & Peterson, M. (2009). Information and Communication Technology: Affects on U.S. College Students. *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace, 3*(1), 1-12.