The Ill Effects of Technology: How Technology Cultivates Social Isolation

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1. Introduction
   1. Topic
      1. Research question: How has technology impacted and changed the social capacity of its users?
      2. Working thesis: Technology has made its users more socially isolated due to their dependence on it and has cultivated a loss of social interaction skills that negatively impacts the health of the persons and the society as whole.
      3. Angle: Technology has quickly become the predominant and preferred method of communication in all civilized countries. It preoccupies its users and distracts them from “real life” that happens around them every day. It draws them into their own reality and changes the way users choose to form relationships and conduct their daily lives. Technology has become a burden that is negatively impacting the health and social makeup of both its users and the societies they live in.
   2. Context
      1. Technologies have become so deeply integrated into our daily lives to the point that they have become intrusive, overbearing, and distracting. Their use changes and impacts our social development, preferences and interactions for the worse.
      2. Although I do not possess a scholarly degree in the matter, being a child of the Internet I feel that I am a perfect study case of the isolation that technologies can create amongst their users. Along with my own experiences, the ideas of Vroon (2009) combined with the research conducted by Massimini and Peterson (2009), who are all scholarly students and educators on this topic, will lend aid to my feelings about technology and social isolation.
   3. Audience
      1. My primary audience will be the population of the countries in which technologies are deeply integrated into the social aspects of daily life. Namely the United States, where even young children and teenagers conduct a majority of their social developments and interactions through use of technologies.
      2. My secondary audience is my professor and fellow classmates. Seeing as we are all part of an online, technology-dependent college course, they should have some insight as to just how encompassing and overarching technology has become.
      3. My audience may be skeptical and challenged to see the error in their ways that has led to them preferring to rely on and abuse the conveniences of technology, forgoing the need to feel like face-to-face interactions are important for social development and one’s own well-being.

II. Evidence

1. Research collected so far:

I have found research that supports the notion that technology distracts its users and causes them become more socially isolated. The research indicated increased stress levels which led to impacted and declining performance in regard to one’s daily responsibilities. Furthermore, research has shown that many users of technologies are aware of their declining social skills and presence, but often still prefer the convenience that technology offers and use technologies as a method of sorts to entirely eliminate the need for traditional, healthier, face-to-face interactions.

1. Research to be collected:

More research is needed to demonstrate how widespread this issue has become. I will look for additional statistics and facts that add support to show how overwhelming and abundant technology has become in much of today’s world. I will also research and present some information of the opposing viewpoint that addresses the potential benefits and conveniences that technologies can offer. More information is needed to show that while technology can potentially be of great importance and benefit, the nature of people and how they choose to use these technologies is what ultimately creates the ill effects, not necessarily and entirely the technologies themselves.

1. Conclusion

I propose that self-realization of technology intrusion and dependence can make users more selective about how to balance and manage their lives. Self-awareness is the first step to any type of change, and if people care to preserve and maintain a high level of social skillsets and interactions they would do well to make a proactive effort to change their newly formed, modern-day habits. This would lead to a much healthier and more meaningful life, as well as a much stronger and more tight-knit society.

Overall I would like approval and guidance on the cohesiveness of my arguments, ideas, and proposal. I want to feel like I am making valid claims with sufficient evidence, but I also want to be a beacon for change moving forward. I hope I am not challenging my ideas in a negative way (not being firm enough) and back-peddling. I also do not want to come off as entirely one-sided. If I can meet these goals, I would feel that I am ready to move forward with a pretty solid structure and outline.

1. References (must be correctly formatted according to the APA Publication Manual).

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.

Vroon, D. (2009). The Distracted Generation Victims of Technology. *American Record Guide*, *72*(3), 53-54.