

## The dot com generation: communication technology Vs human relationships

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### Abstract

This article tries to deal with the problem of the lack of interpersonal human relationships due to the advent of new and new Social Networking Sites (SNS) day by day. SNS is a current phenomenon like Facebook, Twitter, etc. that consists of both web-based communications with Internet users through websites & interaction with others via cellular smart phones. Human beings consider face-to-face interaction as the most effective / preferred means of communication but, nowadays daily social networking is preferred more by the younger generation. With advancement in technology our lifestyle has improved. Technology has made its impact on our life on the ways of communication, starting from the basic modes of communication to the latest digital mobile equipments and computers. Communication has not changed, but, the way in which we use to communicate with others have changed. As new technology emerges, there are new methods of communication and will help to create a technologically advanced society.

**Keywords:** dot com generation, communication technology, relationships

### 1. Introduction

Man is a social animal – There is a need to understand, comprehend, to share one another's feelings and thus maintain sanity. In olden times, people used to give vent to their feelings and communicate on the walls of the caves. Man has been striving hard for the betterment of the pre-existing systems. Man is accustomed to change and the moment this ceases, his existence is in danger. Thus, this lead man to develop efficient means of communication which is the essence of his being and it is an unwritten rule that for the betterment of mankind communication must improve. Beginning with signalling, talking (I talk, you listen, feel, understand), electricity, radio waves and satellites to receive and send messages – Telecommunication. These devices have made the world a better place to live in, reducing tasks which took hours to be completed in minutes and seconds. Mankind has reached the zenith of civilization reducing the world to a global village. Technology means "science of craft". It is derived from Greek word 'techne' meaning "art, skill, cunning of hand"; and 'logia' which is the collection of techniques, skills, methods and processes used in the production of goods or services or in the accomplishment of objectives, such as scientific investigation. Technology can be the knowledge of techniques, processes, etc. or it can be embedded in machines, computers, devices and factories, which can be operated by individuals without detailed knowledge of the workings of such things. The human species' use of technology began with the conversion of natural resources into simple tools. The prehistoric discovery of how to control fire and the later Neolithic Revolution increased the available sources of food and the invention of the wheel helped humans to travel in and control their environment. Developments in historic times, including the printing press, the telephone, and the Internet, have lessened physical barriers to communication and allowed humans to interact freely on a

global scale. The steady progress of military technology has brought weapons of ever-increasing destructive power, from clubs to nuclear weapons.

### 2. History of communication and Its development

Animals also communicate but it is only humans who have such a well-developed spoken communication system. Communication has existed since the beginning of civilization on Earth. Telecommunication began with the use of smoke signals and drums in Africa, the America and parts of Asia. It continued in the form of storytelling and passing on information. However, it was not until the 1830s that electrical telecommunication systems started to appear. Just as humans have evolved, even communication has evolved. These methods have progressed depending on the inventions made during that period of time. With the advent of complex technologies being available nowadays it is used to communicate with family, relatives, friends and colleagues.

#### 2.1 Drawing

Cave paintings are the crudest and earliest form of communication using fruit juices, minerals or animal blood. To convey experiences, knowledge, ideas or even rituals the walls of the cave (home) was used.

#### 2.2 Writing

Man changed his living style from hunting to farming around 9000 years ago and felt the need to keep records of his trade. It began with pictorial representations which converted into sounds and alphabets.

Surfaces like wood, ceramics, stone, tree barks and leaves, metal, silk and bamboo were tried and used as a means for writing. About 5000 years ago, the Egyptians discovered the 'papyrus' plant which created the first sheets of paper.

### 2.3 Printing

The process of writing was tedious as well as time consuming. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, block printing with individual wooden blocks became popular, though it was expensive and inefficient. In 1454 Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing machine which made books readable, affordable and accessible.

### 2.4 Telegraph

Though the invention of the printing press made communication easier, it was time consuming. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the French scientists invented the telegraphing system. This was improved by Samuel Morse which transformed speech to electric signals to words and made communication faster.

### 2.5 Telephone

Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1876. In the beginning it was quite unpopular, but with passage of time the transfer of sound over wires was appreciated.

### 2.6 Radio

In the early 1900 (during the First World War), the short wave communication became the hottest means of communication. By 1914 it became recreational broadcasting and by 1920 it became commercial. In 1933 Edwin Armstrong invented the FM radio.

### 2.7 Photography and Films

Poor results were obtained in the early 1800 in the development of photography. But with the discovery of reverse colours – the positive and negative photographic technique, which was used by professionals only. But with advances in digitalization, it is easily used by all. It was an indirect means of communication.

With the discovery of motion picture cameras in 1890, short one minute films were made. With the first rotating cameras in 1898, films started being made. By 1900 action films had continuity with special effects. One reel films became feature films with the introduction of artificial lighting and further camera improvements by the First World War. The film *Sortie de l'usine Lumière de Lyon* (1895) by French Louis Lumière is considered the "first true motion picture ". Animation was used in 1899 which was made by a British pioneer Arthur Melborne-Cooper. By late 1927, sound was added to films and they became the 'Talkie movies'. Now, with modern technological improvements, the films are also digitally advanced. The maximum number of films is made by India, United States, China and Japan.

### 2.8 Television

By 1931, Jenkins sold Radiovisor Model 100 in a complete kit as a mechanical television which was electrical transmission of moving images called telephonoscope. In 1926, a British inventor known as John Logie Baird, was the first person to have succeeded in transmitting moving pictures through the mechanical rotating disk system started by Nipkow. It was first displayed in 1939, at New York at the World Trade Fair and manufactured by the DuMont Company. Pennsylvanian mountains gave rise to cable TV that was known CATV in year 1940. Earliest colour TV was commercially televised by FCC in 1953. First ever TV remote control - Lazy Bones was

introduced in 1950 by Zenith Corporation and it made entry in American homes in 1956.

Television has now become one of most important sources for entertainment for a lot of us. Television has transformed completely from the black and white era to the latest 3D TV. The latest LED TVs are equipped with USB ports and one can easily watch movies or view other videos by connecting the device through TV.

### 2.9 Cell Phones

In 1973, Martin Cooper, a Motorola researcher and executive, made the first handheld portable mobile handset. Four years later, it was given for public use. Now with the remarkable advancement, cell phones have converted from the clumsy heavy models into the present day compact electronic gizmos. It is a magic tool with internet access via mobile broadband with wireless communication and satellites suitable to every user's pocket providing a solution for communication to one and all.

### 2.10 Internet

Internet came into existence as ARPANET for military purposes in 1967. The history of the Internet began with the development of electronic computers in the 1950s. Initial concepts of packet networking originated in several computer science laboratories in the United States, United Kingdom, and France. Commercial Internet Service Providers (ISPs) began to emerge in the very late 1980s. The Internet's takeover of the global communication landscape was almost instant in historical terms: it only communicated 1% of the information flowing through two-way telecommunications networks in the year 1993, already 51% by 2000, and more than 97% of the telecommunicated information by 2007. Today the Internet continues to grow, driven by ever greater amounts of online information, commerce, entertainment, and social networking.

### 2.11 Social Media

People came up with various ways of communicating through post, pigeons, telegraph, light signals and telephone, but, getting responses meant waiting for months or even a year. The first recognizable social media site, Six Degrees, was created in 1997. It enabled users to upload a profile and make friends with other users. In 1999, the first blogging sites became popular, creating a social media sensation that's still popular today. Social networking is a form of social media, used for interactive, educational, informational or entertaining purposes. Social media comes in many forms like blogs, forums, podcasts, photo sharing, social bookmarking, widgets, video, etc and helps to maintain social relationships.

### 2.12 Digital Technology

Until recently, it was believed that the development of technology was restricted only to human beings, but 21st century scientific studies indicate that other primates and certain dolphin communities have developed simple tools and passed their knowledge to other generations. Any electronic device that is used to perform repetitive calculations at very high speeds is used for communication technology. This data could be in the form of text, pictures, voice, number, photographs and other types of information that is used by humans in their day-to-day operation. It thus helps to process any information to the user. The Father of Modern Computers

is Charles Babbage. The computer can do any kind of work but, only when it is taught to do things. It is the best technology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and is useful for educational institutions, students, businesses as well as offices. It has vast memory power outperforming all other gadgets and devices including large numerical calculations, mathematical problems, designing fashion, movies and much more. This has helped to drastically change the concept of education, laying the foundation for a new world for the coming generations. Digital communication became economical and widespread after the invention of the personal computer. The latest trend helping business communication is Cloud Computing, a web-based system of communication. Another trend in business communication for scanning printed matter is Book Reader. It can help to read and even listen to it. Thus digital revolution is from mechanical to analogue electronics to digital electronics, beginning with Babbage's analytical engine and telegraph to the most recent personal computers, tablet computers and digital smart phones.

### 2.13 Communication Technology

The 1<sup>st</sup> thing which comes to our mind on hearing the word 'Communication technology' are telephone, fax, email, chat, mobiles, I-phones, etc. – there is no one too far to keep in contact; In modern society technology is ever-present, with over three billion people having access to the Internet. With approximately 8 out of 10 Internet users owning a smart phone, information and data are increasing by leaps and bounds. This rapid growth, especially in developing countries, has led technology to become a keystone of everyday life, in which life without some facet of technology renders most of clerical, work and routine tasks dysfunctional. Talk to someone in far-off Timbuktu, learn a new language and also interact / discuss with several people at the same time with video or teleconferencing. Thus with advances in travel and technology, one can have Breakfast meeting in New York, Lunch meeting in Paris and a Dinner meeting in Tokyo exposing oneself to different business cultures the world over.

Human relationship involves human contacts built-up over a period of time and involves various factors as communication and interaction with other people is of utmost importance. Understanding is what human relationships are based on else, long distance relations prove baseless unless they are well nurtured.

A few years ago, people had superstitions about the world and the people living in it; but only with curiosity and betterment of communication was their folly realised. Today the new generation instead of visiting people personally prefer to make a phone call or / and send a sms or what's app and think it is enough. How such kind of communication build human relationships can is something to ponder, as this attitude has arisen due to the modern communication technology rather than socialize and meet people. Social meetings help to respect each other's feelings and emotions. But, this emotional factor which is the basis of any human relationships cannot be met with the present day communication technology. It has also seen a rise in alarming trends like virtual romances and affairs aping the progressive lifestyle of the West, leading to the breakup of human relationships. In today's fast moving world, a smart phone is a must for everyone to remain in touch with the world. The smart phones have multi-task functions to make life easy for all. All of us have become so dependent on these

gadgets that most of us cannot be parted from them even for a moment and hence, it is carried with us on our person wherever we go. It is true internet has made life simpler but these gadgets can turn life dull and lifeless as people's eyes are glued to the computer or mobile all the time..... It is very addictive unless the right priorities are set up for the use of these gadgets. Harmful effects on the mind and psyche of the child forced by choice or circumstances watching incidents of sex and violence leading to inappropriate influences leading to gun-totting teens, delinquent rapists or even young terrorists who consider such display as smart and glamorous – example of misplaced priorities which is not even remotely associated to improving human relationships. The NET has influenced the lifestyle of the younger generation where foodstuff, cars, music and many more things (stuff) can be bought online. Besides shopping, it has become a mode of making new friends, playing games and participating in contests using a modem / Wifi connection and a webcam. The multimodal fibres of cables and satellites which perform communication all over using the world wide web network (www.com) has become an a very essential tool. But, its continuous use has exposed humans to procrastination, vulgarity and a nomadic attitude to life. They feel that building a relationship is far easier than maintaining it and enhancing it most difficult. It is a potent tool in passing adequate and precise information but can in no way be affiliated to enhancing human relationships.

Progress has dazzled humanity – it has fed minds but starved souls. Cyber predators have infiltrated cyber space and have increased threats at times infiltrating into live causing wastage of time, hard earned money and developing unhealthy habits. Businesses in the present world without technology is like 'winking in the dark' but if used properly can bring countries closer enhancing relationships.

Communication technology should be to herald a breakthrough in the way we work and think, but, in several situations has become a behemoth for banality, bestiality and brain washing innocent minds and hearts. Communication technology has distanced us not only from those around us but also at times from ourselves, keeping us captive and confined to a miniscule misconceptual domain of the web. It's time for humans to break free of these web shackles, look around ourselves, respect one another and give off ourselves as we want to receive from others i.e. cherishing a relationship – The Human Relationship. We are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the age of technology and progress. Thus, communication is an important mode of interaction, but, the human interaction and the personal touch was and will be the best means of communication. Communication is not only the spoken word but how it is said and to what effect as well as be responsible whenever faced with a dilemma between ethics and technology. Thus, the family, state, country, world and universe will all be connected by the common thread of communication beginning from a mother to her child.

### 3. Conclusion

Technology has many effects. It has helped develop more advanced economies (including today's global economy) and has allowed the rise of a leisure class. Many technological processes produce unwanted by-products, known as pollution, and deplete natural resources, to the detriment of Earth's environment. Various implementations of technology influence the values of a society and new technology often

raises new ethical questions. Examples include the rise of the notion of efficiency in terms of human productivity, a term which was originally applied only to machines, and the challenge of traditional norms.

Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore in his poem 'Hero' says "A thousand useless things happen day after day, and why couldn't such a thing come true by chance? It would be like a story in a book". Time and tide waits for no man, but, men using the century old methods of communication will find themselves left behind from the magical world of communication technology and its uses. For over 2000 years, the oral word has been continuously replaced by writing, printing or technological one and in the process of decline. Findings suggest a negative effect of technology on the quality and quantity of face-to-face conversations. Despite awareness by individuals, they continue to use mobile devices in presence of others. Thus, the oral word communication has become an endangered form of communication which must be kept alive for human well-being.

The essence of any relationship is known only in the absence of one, let us humans not lose this essence or squabble over trivialities but work together and converse face-to-face in maintaining and cherishing social relationships for which we have endeavoured and moulded individuals in terms of growing technology in this global Gen-X.

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