

Digital Wellbeing: Balancing Technology And Wellness

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Abstract

With Jio's affordable internet plans has transformed digital space for Indians. Currently India has one of the lowest data prices and 2nd most data consumption country after China. It has led to both positives and negatives. Covid-19 pandemic has forced users, employees, students to move from physical workspace to digital workspace. Social media platforms has been benefitted alot but has raised concern for digital addiction. There has been negative impacts of overusing social media apps, screen time has drastically increased. There has been impact on sleep pattern that has impacted both academic as well as workspace efficiency and productivity. To promote work-life balance and promoting productive healthy lifestyles digital well being, digital detoxification has been technological solution to it. Apps such as 'Forest,' 'Detox', 'OffTime', and 'Moment' enable individuals to focus and reduce distractions with visual stimulus and rewards. Apple and Google have their digital well-being tools such as 'Screentime' and Digital Wellbeing' respectively. It will monitor daily usage and set limits on distracting apps and ensures concentration and efficiency. Digital addiction may lead to psychological disorders, disrupting daily activities and addictive behaviour.

Keywords: digital detox, DSCT, digital addiction, screen time, digital wellbeing, FOMO

Introduction

Digital space refers to what is displayed on the screen of different digital devices such as mobile, laptop, tablet and computers. The rapid advancement of digital technology has profoundly impacted our daily lives, influencing our overall sense of well-being. While technology offers numerous benefits, such as enhanced connectivity, access to information, and personalized health tracking, the growing concerns over its potential negative effects on psychological and social well-being have become increasingly prominent. (Peters, 2022) As technology becomes more integrated into our lives, it is crucial to explore strategies that can help individuals and communities navigate this complex landscape and maintain a healthy balance between technology use and overall well-being. Social media sites such as facebook, instagram, netflix, youtube, whatsapp etc has been addictive due to their algorithm. From online grocery to online market to message to socializing to study to dating to gaming to business meeting to investor conference to seminar, most of the things which has been physical sphere has transformed into digital platform post pandemic. Now, digital devices and technology has transformed our lives. It keeps us in touch with the external world which has generated into an unconscious, effortless reach-out for

gadgets even when it isn't mandatory. It has been part and parcel of our private and public lives and has eased our life. It is required to use it in restrained manner that does not hamper our daily lifecycle, health, efficiency and productivity. These apps have become part of our lives, doing things, managing different tasks at a time, controlling and generating useful and positive engagements. There are various issues of digital addiction such as FOMO or fear of missing out, is the anxiety we experience when we feel there's something exciting happening elsewhere and we're not a part of it and is triggered by posts on social media. Social media gives us instant access to the surrounding and what others are doing but it also makes it too easy for us to compare our lives and feeling insecure. Social media activity isn't their actual life. It's more of a highlight reel of exciting things they've posted to contribute to their online identity. Excessive or inappropriate use of these different digital device may lead to adverse effects like insufficient sleep, lack of energy, poor academic achievement, altered psychological well-being, withdrawal, functional impairment, compulsive behavior, physiological stress, mind wandering, attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder-related behavior, nonadaptive/negative thinking styles, decreased life satisfaction.

Exploring the Impact of Digital Technologies on Well-Being

Digital technologies have the potential to both enhance and hinder an individual's well-being. On the one hand, technologies can provide valuable tools for self-monitoring, social connection, and accessing information that can support physical, mental, and emotional well-being. However, the overuse or misuse of digital technologies can also contribute to negative outcomes, such as increased feelings of isolation, addiction, and stress. (Redmiles, 2021) The ways in which we interact with and use technology can have a significant impact on our overall sense of well-being, highlighting the need for a more nuanced understanding of the complex relationship between technology and wellness. Researchers have found that the design and implementation of digital technologies can play a crucial role in shaping their impact on well-being. Digital well-being combats increased screen time by using restraints and promotes wellness by enabling productive and healthy lifestyles. DSCT (Digital Self-Controlling Tools) use assistive technology applications to enhance awareness, empower users and enhance their productivity, combating stress and digital addiction through digital well-being apps. An average person to tap and swipe their phones so frequently that has caused to spend approximately three to five hours per day. It has resulted into abandonment of work and engagement in unnecessary screen time, decline in their academic performance and energy due to lack of sleep which has fuelled to stress and an overall decrease in mood and well-being. We are so much in a control of the technology that we have been enslaved by these different apps. These apps create healthy digital habits for you and your family with screen time, different app timers, bedtime schedules. It also classifies your data on how you use your phone and how frequently you check it. It shows different ways to disconnect such as focus mode, bedtime mode etc. It incorporates and adapt to habits to fulfill essential goals. Through settings you can spend only the time you want for particular app. Its various disconnect mode create better night sleep for you. Its focus mode minimizes the distractions and focus on what you are doing. You can also set digital rules with parental control for children to manage apps and set screen timers. Various apps have reward system for better individual digital well-being and you have to pay when you fail as per your schedule. There is various warning signals generated to break your addiction. It screens different symptoms and accordingly sends message. It also show your weekly improvement chart and statics to show your progress towards digital addiction. It also suggests you better utilisation of your free time and promoting hobbies and give various tasks to do physically rather on digital platform to enjoy the real beauty of environment, people around you, book

reading, gardening etc. It also generate digital detox challenge to take a break from your phone and focus on other activities that have been missed due to digital addiction. There are various options of daily task scheduling to manage your work, study and life. There are reminders to detox, to minimize distractions to focus for better mental wellness. There is detailed report which tells your strength, weakness, opportunity and threat analysis with daily, weekly, monthly and yearly report. There are options with which you can post challenge to your friend to focus together. The focus of apps such as FOREST is not only to reduce screen time but also to engage in a more productive habit, physical environment which may give you the real happiness unlike different social media apps where you compare yourselves with others. It shows the negative impact of technology and provide a way to enhance well-being, productivity and health. Self-control as the focus of attaining digital well-being is seen to be efficient mean to achieve healthy lifestyles.

Literature Review

Recent studies have explored the potential of "respectful technologies" that not only protect user privacy but also align with user expectations and the context of their use (Redmiles, 2021). By considering the broader implications of technology on well-being, designers and policymakers can work to create digital tools that enhance, rather than detract from, the overall well-being of individuals and communities. For example, a study by Redmiles et al. found that the ability to check on the well-being of others during natural disasters can bolster the strength of physical-world communities and enhance personal feelings of safety, highlighting the potential for technology to foster social connectedness and well-being in times of crisis (Redmiles, 2021). Moreover, Wellbeing Supportive Design guidelines provide a framework for technology designers to consider the impact of their products on psychological well-being. These guidelines emphasize the importance of mitigating risks and optimizing for positive experiences, underscoring the need for a holistic approach to technology development that prioritizes user well-being (Peters, 2022).

Digital Wellbeing Applications

There are various tools such as SPACE Break Phone Addiction, GDW, NUGU, FamiLync, MyTime and Lock n'LoL focused on providing users with a better sense of actual time spent on digital devices through interactive statistics and dashboards. digital wellbeing applications are part of assistive ecosystem which uses data to empower users, raise awareness, and boost efficiency. A study by Liao (2019) examined self-regulation in attention control after a two-week digital detox intervention period showed low depression individuals showed an increase in their self-regulation skills, and in mental well-being. The dependability problems that surfaced as a result of the limitations imposed by Android and iOS. Positive attitudes regarding the application and the desire to spend less time on the smartphone may both rise as a result. We analyze the reviews using behavioral change theories and models, which illuminates the need to understand users' perspectives toward the design requirements and identifies opportunities and challenges. We report on various drivers for users' adoption derived from their feedback, which aid in understanding the users' experience and attitude toward this kind of technology. Reminders, usage trackers, notifications, progress trackers, and visual representations are examples of usage awareness functions that have been found to favorably impact the adoption of wellness applications. These features must allow users to control the behaviors of the applications and provide results in the form of visualized statistics backed by a simplified user interface design in order to improve the user experience. Along with encouraging users to attempt new things and lessening the severity of error penalties, it also entails designing the interface

components to be explorable. Unreliability, performance, and transparency are the main causes of a wide range of problems that are additional factors in user rejection. Other issues include perceived inconsistencies, disparities between expected and actual use, data ownership concerns, and inaccurate tracking.

How to Tackle

It is important to find risk factors that can challenge the physical and mental wellbeing in digital spaces. Red flag signs of presence and emergence of such risk factors shall be discussed. Protective factors from these domains that promote digital wellness will be discussed. The next step ensure physical wellbeing in digital space. Adverse physical health consequences associated with digital spaces and techniques to prevent and manage these adverse physical consequences are being informed. The next step ensures adverse mental health consequences that can be encountered in digital spaces. Then with various tools these strategies and techniques are implemented to ensure mental well-being in digital spaces.

Conclusion

The movie 'Perfect Days' by Wim Wenders showcased a toilet cleaner oldman happy without any digital applications. But with the rise of artificial intelligence, internet of things, machine learning even simpler things are being commanded through digital devices. Even child does not eat their food without the digital devices in their hands and that raises big concern with it. The challenge to curb is never a simple task when artificial intelligence has entered each and every corner of our life from health, education to event management to tourism and in every ways we see the flood of such tools. There is no doubt that these apps and they have eased our functioning, the way we control different things, process, predict and in different decision making. But we have to understand that artificial intelligence with creativity to read data and customize solution and data analytics will enslave us and it is important that we are dependent on big technology giant. Our life, emotions and everything has influenced and guided by the technology and in such circumstances these different Digital Wellbeing applications serves a purpose to dismantle ourselves from technology and to enjoy our surrounding, friend and family relations. There is no doubt that technology can make your process efficient and your whole life easier if used accordingly but the real happiness is missing. Moreover, the bad sleep cycle, work-life balance, poor performance and less efficiency has been the major reasons behind digital addiction. With reel culture, social media apps and their algorithm has raised more hatred among humans. Though it has been used by billions of users, it has changed the course of history where we have to define the limit of their influence on ourselves. Our mental and psychological well-being, boredom, mood, anxiety, stress, life satisfaction, sleep has been affected drastically due to these digital apps. REAL vs REEL, comparing with others, Fear of Missing Out, Loneliness, lack of social connectedness, lack of social support has become new normal. Unlike the physical illness these mental-illness are affecting millions which cannot share how much distracted due to this. They do not find meaning in their life as their life is surrounded by digital space and the physical surrounding connectedness and social support has been missing. The suicidal tendencies have also been increased by these digital-spaces. Their confidence level has been reduced by this digital space where they compare and loose their confidence to level of depression. As, the integration of digital technologies into our daily lives continues to increase, it is essential that we develop a more comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between technology and well-being. By adopting a multidisciplinary approach that combines insights from psychology, design, and technology, we can work to create digital tools and

environments that support and enhance the overall well-being of individuals and communities.

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