Avances tecnológicos modernos y sus implicaciones en el pensamiento social

Modern technological advances and their implications in social thinking

Dulvis Dariel Mejía García y Balduino Rainiero Acosta Pérez
Universidad de Murcia, España

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RESUMEN

Los avances tecnológicos modernos son una necesidad inherente al funcionamiento óptimo de la sociedad del siglo XXI, obligando a las personas a constantes cambios, acorde con las nuevas herramientas de trabajo y socialización. El presente estudio tiene como objetivo describir las implicaciones de la tecnología moderna en el pensamiento social. Este estudio, sustentado en la observación natural, documentado partiendo de la experiencia y fundamentado en investigaciones anteriores, intenta explicar cómo evoluciona la forma de pensar conforme avanza la tecnología, aumentando la productividad, flexibilizando la socialización y desencadenando temas de estudio constantes por las diferentes disciplinas científicas modernas. Se concluye sobre los efectos nocivos del avance acelerado de la tecnología sobre la salud física y mental, resaltando las consecuencias e impacto negativo en el desarrollo psicosocial y llamando la atención de las ciencias sociales, a fin de resaltar la importancia de desarrollar técnicas y procedimientos de abordaje que permitan responder de manera óptima y acorde a la nueva era de la información.

Palabras clave: avances tecnológicos, era de la información, Generación Z, Millennials, pensamiento social.

ABSTRACT

Modern technological advances are a necessity inherent to the optimal functioning of 21st century society, forcing people to constant changes, in accordance with the new tools of work and socialization. This paper aims to describe the implications of modern technology in social think- ing. The present work, based on natural observation, documented on the basis of experience and based on previous research, aims to explain how thought patterns evolve as technology advances, increasing productivity, hence making socialization more flexible, and triggering constant topics of research by various modern scientific disciplines. It concludes by mentioning the harmful effects

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of the accelerated advance of technology over physical and mental health, highlighting the consequences and negative impact on psychosocial development and focusing on social sciences, in order to highlight the importance of developing approach techniques and procedures which enable an optimal response according to the new era of information.

Keywords: Generation Z, knowledges times, Millennials, social thinking, technological advances.

Methodology

This document can be considered as an article of reflection, with a methodological approach that combines literature review and natural observation of the elements on which it reflects. All based on the exploratory qualitative methodology, which seeks to identify elements of the accelerated process of technological evolution and its implications on social thought.

In terms of methodological procedure, this article is written based on the observation and experience gained from working with Millennials and the so-called "Generation Z" students, especially university students. Considering the records of events, sometimes not easily explained, repeated behavior patterns, concern on the part of teachers and university authorities about the current reality of the use of technology and the efforts made by the educational system. It is carried out with the objective of describing the influence of modern technological advances on social thinking. It is an action-research modality, with a qualitative approach, in which the phenomenon in question is described using as support the review of the available research, contextualizing and analyzing the different elements on face-to-face observation in the practice of psychosocial intervention.

From Greece to Millennials and Gen-Z

Social thinking has been considered as a concept that is linked to the socio-political, socio-economic, and historical processes of peoples; it has been defined as the common way in which people think, usually influenced by great thinkers.

In the history of mankind, some global guidelines can be pointed out, which continue to influence the way people are and behave. Among these we can point out the influence of the Bible, the Koran, Greek philosophy, Buddhism, the papacy, universities, among other currents that have become global influences (*Seidmann, Azzollini, Di Iorio*, 2013).

Likewise, in the history of mankind there are people who have managed to influence the thinking of the peoples in a generalized way, among which we can mention, starting from the first recorded writings of *Thales of Miletus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, Alcmeon of Crotona, Hippocrates, Pythagoras, Protagoras, Moses, the Apostle Paul, Bonnot de Condillac, Peter Abelard, St. Augustine, Offrai de La Metrie, John Locke, Galileo, Descartes, Sigmund Freud, Karl Marx, Albert Einstein, Charles Darwin, Mahatma Gandhi*, and *Machiavelli*, among many other thinkers. They have enlightened through the manifestation of their ideas, and have built social thought, even with the rise in contemporaneity and others, even in post-modernity. Cases that can be observed when consulting the history of psychology (*Giner, 1982; Brennan, 1999; Leahey, 2007 & Sáiz*, *2011*).

Until late last century, when the Millennials began to enter the world of reasoning, and even in the first decade of this century, the way in which information was distributed greatly limited the updating of knowledge, causing enormous delay between highly applicable models of thought and their integration in real-time contexts. This has even prevented many great thinkers from achieving public visibility, because of stagnation.

This has changed a lot in the present era, called by many the "Information Era". This is an era in which doing, communicating, and relating are carried out practically simultaneously, unlike in the not-too-distant past.

Information is being created and at the same time distributed, even as an element that functions as the basis for the creation of relationships and new links. This implies a population of young activists and the displacement of the public manifestation, the logic of visibility, the logic of production and the form and type of relationships (Flores, 2016).

In the times of Millennials and Gen-Z the world is global is social, and therefore both mental processes and thinking evolve very fast, as fast as it is influenced, hence when talking about mental health, the United Nations (2019) highlights the importance of social justice and focuses its criticism to traditional interventions based on biological and pharmacological models, not because they are unnecessary, but rather because of the political and psychosocial complexity that is taking place in modern times.

Internet & Connectivity

Advances in technology, the advent of networked communication and the development of applications that simplify procedures, increase the capacity for analysis, diminish human error, and integrate and apply algorithms to problem-solving using computers. Social thinking is in a constant crisis, in which truth is not well constructed to be refuted and, in an environment, where the greatest influence does not necessarily come from great thinkers. Thus, building a complex social thought, often unpredictable, with great challenges and at the same time with an enormous number of opportunities for all social strata. It is this complexity that drives this type of article, which makes social psychology focus closely on the implications that technology has on current social thought and in some way try to guide the reader to use with awareness the information that is being produced in recent times. Today, the generation of knowledge itself has enormous support in technological matters and technological tools have become the right arm of the researcher (*Gallo, García & García, 2004*).

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning the use of the Internet, perhaps the technological tool that makes all of the above possible, since it is this platform that makes the greatest contribution to the multiplication of information in networks and the one that is most suitable for any common person, from any part of the world, to have an impact on the thinking of certain groups of people. It is this tool that makes it possible to distribute millions of copies of books in fractions of a second, to transmit images of any kind at the same time and to enable connectivity between people and social groups, regardless of race, political ideology, religion, nationality, cultural roots and without any barrier other than that which the person him/herself sets up.

All of the above has greatly modified the conception of social thought, allowing it to be in a process of instability, which makes an imperative call for flexibility in the processes, otherwise, the mistake is made of constructing very ephemeral thought, with very few possibilities of renewing itself and adjusting to new trends. This point is perhaps one of the greatest contemporary social problems; social groups are mostly led by people from another technological era, in which they were taught to solve problems based on predetermined, inflexible models and with methods very different from those used today.

This has encouraged the integration of young human resources as support and more in managerial positions, representing conflict due to the dethroning of the most experienced people and a disempowerment for those who have the mastery of modern technology, which allows to give an answer to the majority even when the experience is not decades old. This represents a conflict due to the dethroning of more experienced people and a disallowance for those who have mastered modern technology, which enables a response to the majority, even when the experience is not of dozens
of years. This generates labor conflict and, on occasion, even process stagnation.
If we analyze the previous paragraphs, in the 21st century, social thinking continues to be related to power and knowledge. The influence of

philosophical, religious, political, etc. schools of thought is still present. However, knowledge has evolved enormously. It is not necessary to be a great thinker, nor a great religious person, nor a great politician, it is only necessary to know how to reach the masses with interesting information and actions. It is necessary to drive impact, to move, to produce emotions, to experience information and to update it every day. Social thinking is constructed in an extraordinary, complex, flexible way, with a high tendency to replication and visibility.

> The visibility and flexibility of thought are moving towards a global culture, in which people are loosening their roots and becoming involved in other cultural modalities and characteristics. As technology advances, transculturation accelerates, and cultures become globalized as generalized social thought.

Neuroscience & Connectivity

Today we know about brain neuroplasticity and mirror neurons. However, how much is the brain stimulated by technology? If the mere fact of observing an activity produces neuronal stimulations similar to those felt when performing the activity in real life, then what are the implications of the audiovisual resources that are permanently distributed through technological applications? It is evident that many, so that modern technology represents a high influence in the construction of brains; which makes those who frequent the use of applications and social networks that show sporting, violent, cultural episodes, etc., exercise their brain and constantly produce new connections influenced in a simulated manner (Lacovoni, 2009; Villa, 2014; Moya, 2018).

But this goes further, as one of the functions of the human mind is to create coherence between our thoughts and the reality we experience. By. living positive experiences with the use of technology in our daily lives, we change our way of thinking, and this can be transmitted to other generations through DNA.

According to Bruce Lipton (2006), gene activity can be changed on a daily behavioral basis. If the mind is projected onto the body chemistry, and the nervous system interprets the environment and then controls the blood chemistry, then the fate of cells can be modified by altering thoughts. This publication shows that by changing perception, the mind can alter the activity of genes and by incorporating variations in mental processes, this can produce more than thirty thousand variations of the products of each gene. If we calculate the number of times a day that text messages, emails, apps, and voice memos are sent; it would be necessary to list a large amount of information, all of which drive changes in the body. This way of seeing and using the world produces a pattern of changes, which affect the functioning of genetics and with this, hopefully, future generations.

In these times, technology has become a structural part of the human being. We can take as an example what the author Brutto López (2000) says about changes in couples, that when they move in together, the norm is that they first think about buying a television or a microwave before thinking about the dynamics of their relationship or the lifestyle they want. This implies that, from being a biopsychosocial entity, it could be considered a bio-psycho-socio-technological being, thus generating the need to reintroduce the natural concept proposed by the Greeks. It is necessary to coin this concept, given the influence that technology exerts on the way of thinking and thus on behavior, not only individual, but also sociocultural.

Education & Technology Advancement

In this day and age, the teacher and the educational system are forced to compete with technological applications, especially the outdated teachers, digital immigrants, who refuse to accept the technological reality of the times, putting themselves at a disadvantage versus their students, who have in their hands access to any information, without much effort at a cost already paid at the time of contracting the Internet and with virtual tutors, many of them first-class specialists. Sometimes these are the same researchers who produce the knowledge.

Perhaps it is daring to speak of the human being as a bio-psycho-socio-technological being, however, on one occasion, in the middle of a

conference given to a group of teenagers (all part of Generation Z), it crossed our minds to ask about the relevance of cell phones as technological devices today.

In a brainstorming session, everyone seemed to agree that cell phones are telephone, spotlight, calendar, clock, alarm, radio, television, newspaper, bible, letter-carrier, agenda, bank, camera, video game, memory, entertainment, among many other applications of necessary use in daily life. This makes it a crucial element for those who experience its use, even to the point of creating dependencies. So, it is no longer necessary to memorize telephones, learn the multiplication table, make efforts to write, take notes, miss the absent person, and even the interest in active listening can be selective and at the same time usable, since making recordings allows to keep the presentation permanently.

A topic of great interest in everyday life is the so-called "technology addiction". A concept that has been coined and often generates much concern, especially by educators and conservative sectors of society. It seems to be true that there is a certain dependence, especially on social networks and cyber games; however, there is a tendency to generalize, arguing the harmful effects of technological advances, which is worth explaining and differentiating.

Every term, at the University, we observe the ability of Generation Z students to detach themselves from their cell phones during classes. A course rule is established disapproving the use of games and social networks in the classroom. More than 90% of the students manage to disconnect during the entire term. On one occasion, as a way of measuring the strength of the device, we put our cell phones on a table and asked who was motivated to do the same? Everyone proceeded to set down their devices and during the entire class, only one out of twenty-six reached levels of anxiety above bearable, coming forward to retrieve their equipment. Another proceeded to do the math on the large sum of money invested in the classroom. In the end, one left and forgot to pick up their device, a situation immediately resolved by posting a photo in the WhatsApp group. A friend who was still with her read it and proceeded to inform the student.

Other times, as a way of assessing the motivational value of the cellphone, we implemented five minutes for its use. This idea has been highly valued by this generation, as it has made them feel that they are being rewarded for allowing them to access their own device and follow up on what is happening through their networks. All this led us to include the five minutes of consultation within the program, researching unknown concepts and sharing them with others, using the internet available on everyone's cell phone and the one provided by the University.

Undoubtedly, the use of technology in the development of social thinking is present considering possible risks that can negatively influence the acquiring of knowledge and relationships. Among them we can highlight pseudoinformation, overload of information, and technological dependence.

Pseudoinformation. The power of access to a certain amount of information does not mean being better informed. It is necessary, therefore, for the individual to be able to separate the information that is important from that which is not important to him, as well as to differentiate information for manipulative purposes.

2. Information overload. One of the greatest achievements of the Internet is that it offers the possibility of acquiring a lot of information within a short period of time. As a result, there is not much time to reflect and internalize the information, which can lead to information overload that translates into cognitive saturation. Most individuals are not aware of this process, so they do not have an adequate synchronization between the information received and the mental processes.

3.
Technological dependence. One great weakness is when the need is consciously established to use technological equipment for the execution of essential daily activities, such as communicating, feeding, resting, among others. Therefore, when technology is absent, the same happens with some cognitive functions and most of the activities are negatively affected.

The social impact of technological advancement

Up to this point, it could be stated that the technological advances of the present century have only a positive impact on the functioning of society. For example, Pérez, Paredes & León (2017) highlight the importance of technological advances for the improvement of health in Cuba; however, if a thorough review is made on the research that deals with adverse points, it would be mandatory to highlight the harmful effect that these advances have on society, affecting health, both physical and mental; the functioning of social groups, education, criminal behavior, and even, on the environment. This implies a change in social thinking that sometimes threatens the welfare created over thousands of years and the confrontation with a future that island the confrontation with a confusing future, of which not much is known, but of which there are great expectations. Sometimes, without considering the collateral effects that go hand in hand with the mega-development that is promoted and showcased through the digitalization of things.

As a way of highlighting the negative effects, some points are presented below:

1. Physical health (eyesight, spine, hands, back, etc.) affected, according to science, by the exaggerated use of electronic devices.

Compromised mental health (anxiety, dependence, depression, memory, perception, attention, nomophobia, etc.). This issue is perhaps the most worrying for many, not only because science has demonstrated its unfavorable consequences, but rather, because it threatens people's happiness. These are collateral elements, i.e., given the great contributions that defend technification, it seems impossible to find arguments to defend its non-use. Even though, if controlled use can be defended, the beneficial effects end up hooking and motivating abuse, which results in dependence and also affects physical health.

Malfunctioning of social groups (amorality, cancellation of physical presence, defective coexistence, separation from the family, couple issues, group pressure, poverty, social exclusion, etc.) as demonstrated by research and present in a significant part of the world's population. Of all these, perhaps the greatest implication is that of amorality since it is easily transmitted through the networks. In fact, it becomes a trend extremely quickly, so that whoever wants to be famous only must record something socially unacceptable and upload it to the networks. People share it very easily and reproduce it over and over. It is like having gratification over the unpermitted through the visualization of the images and this might not be bearable in time. The joke can be normalized and incur in behavior by modeling, forcing the media to be more aggressive and more eye-catching to capture the audience's attention.

At the end of the road, this will become part of social thinking and will cease to be frowned upon and undervalued.

1. Education (attention, misinformation, liberalism, lack of control of knowledge, information saturation, etc.).

2. Criminal behavior and insecurity (digital violence, cyberbullying, online mafia structure, identity theft, cheating, hacking, etc.).

Environment -global warming and its consequences-.

All this poses a challenge on the part of science and social structures, which are called upon to be present, to ready for change and the adjustments that this process brings with it. Among these sciences and social groups are: politics, psychology, medicine, sociology, economics, family, communities, education system, religion, among many other related sciences and social groups.

Conclusions

It can be stressed that contemporary social thought does not seem to follow a single paradigm, since multiculturalism, speed of information, form of social relations, access to knowledge, speed of production and the inclusion of the majority in the thinking world have evolved the way in which perception, emotions, memories and thus thought and personality are built. This results in a diversification in problem-solving and a level of freedom to do so, taking power and absolute control of knowledge out of the hands of a few

and making it available to the world through networks. This allows for greater integration, although in some fields of knowledge it makes tasks more complex, for example, in the world of politics, where certain competencies are required to direct the destiny of peoples. On the one hand, it increases the likelihood that people will be elected on the basis of popularity achieved in these networks and not because they have a mastery of what needs to be done and, on the other hand, given the knowledge that citizens have, the care required from those in power is highly controversial, since management positions are very rigorously observed, obliged to adopt difficult decisions and are bound to satisfy the will of the majority, something that is closely followed up.

A second point to be concluded has to do with the use given to the environment. A situation that seems to be seriously affecting the implementation of a new era, which implies that the generations that are inhabiting the world today, in its different stages -coinciding an important group of so-called digital immigrants and another group known as "Millennials"- have a huge challenge ahead, since the integration of the first group has not been easy and the comfort of the second has been criticized by traditional thinking. Added to this is the so-called "Generation Z", those born after 1995, who have a significant influence on the solution to the problem of the present century. They are the ones who mostly force the market to have their products and services online, as they prefer to do their errands through the Internet. They are passionate about travel and natural resources, and currently represent more than 25% of the world's population. They are the audience that any marketer wants to have.

It is inevitable to conclude about the adverse effects, in which a negative influence of elements that affect health is evident, both physical and mental, causing diseases that will have to be included in the assessment and approach manuals, which also has an implication in the development of sciences, which are obliged to accelerate their research processes to have favorable answers in the interventions of prevention and treatment of pathologies resulting from the use of technology. Research with very favorable results, but with very short-lived applications, since the use of technological applications tends to expire very easily and even to easily correct the same negative implications that science shows.

Social thinking does not seem to last over time. The acceleration and flexibility of the 21st century is defined by its openness to change, by the constant search for improvement in production, by reaching optimal levels of comfort and happiness and avoiding suffering, which goes against multiple principles of later models of thinking.

A key example is the way in which the family had performed for thousands of years, where the patriarchal model predominated, and to see how this model is collapsing into others whose consequences over time are unknown, but which at present represent an extraordinary gratification and reduction of stress for those who have adopted it. If we try to predict some adverse consequences in this sense, it would be worth pointing out the disappearance of the traditional family model, which -culturally- is a significant loss; the reduction of the birth rate, lower levels of dependencies among family members, which would imply less bonding and a reduction in the support network in adverse situations and the loss of religious values; faith and the adoption of cultural issues from generation to generation.

A simple way to end this paper is to try to answer the question "Where is the world headed? A simple answer can be given by stating that it will go wherever technology takes it. In a more complex way, and with a more finished level of awareness, it could be answered by stating that the world is in a stage of knowledge generation, where social thought is becoming global, regardless of culture, race, color, religion, etc. If history and traditional cultures are to be preserved, educational processes must be accelerated along these lines, so that those who develop technological

applications and undertake social and technological networks have a clear and well-defined need to ensure that they endure over time. Otherwise, the here and now, absolute happiness or nothing, chaos, or timely response, all or none, me or nobody, ungovernability or dictatorship, democracy or death, will predominate or death. In short, power versus power.

Hence the importance of updating the educational system, changing course, and focusing more on teaching how to be than on teaching how to do, especially in the early stages of life.

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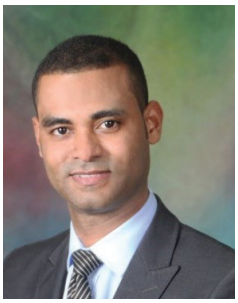

Dulvis Dariel Mejía García

Licenciado en Psicología, Mención Psicología Clínica de La Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, Máster en Psicología de la Intervención Social y Doctorado en Psicología por la Universidad de Murcia, España. Autor de los libros: Medición de la conducta antisocial por cuestionarios (MCAC) y Credibilidad del testimonio infantil, y artículos científicos relacionados a estos temas. Labora en diferentes universidades, con funciones de dirección, coordinación, apoyo académico, docencia e investigación, tanto en grado como en postgrado.

Balduino Rainiero Acosta Pérez

Licenciado en Psicología Laboral, con Maestría en Capacitación Corporativa, y Maestría en Política y Gestión Educativa. Es docente universitario de la UNPHU. Psicólogo del Ministerio de Educación de la República Dominicana (MINERD) y facilitador del Instituto Nacional de Formación Técnico Profesional (Infotep).