

**“A STUDY ON THE ILL EFFECTS OF OVERUSE OF DIGITAL
SCREEN TECHNOLOGY AND THE RISE
OF DIGITAL DETOX HOLIDAYS AND VACATIONS”**

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Abstract: -In the last two decades scientists, psychologists, sociologist and medical experts have been warning us about the ill effects of excessive use of technology and becoming glued to the screen, this technology-based screens like smartphones, laptops, tablets and televisions, are very harmful to the humans if used excessively, the negative effects of this is already being seen in the society and so now the time has come to see the reduction in our reliance on technology.

To counter this problem of overuse of screen the concept of ‘digital detox holiday’ has emerged and gained momentum recently in last two years. A digital detox is essentially a period where you cut yourself off from technology where one doesn’t text, no emailing and non-use of any social media platforms. This is done to lower the stress levels, spend quality time, be with the ‘real world’ carry out various leisurely and physical activities and concentrate on, physical socialisation. This study explores the harmful effects of using screen technology and the beneficial, and health advantages of the digital detox holiday. For this study primary data was conducted on a focus group of 200 participant travellers those who were employed in different corporate company’s in and around Pune and Mumbai City.

Introduction: -

Ill Effects of overuse of digital Screens

In a recent study conducted worldwide it was found out that there is a great impact of technology on our mental and physical health because of the overuse of screen which has very badly impacted our social behaviour and concentration. Researchers have found that only an

hour of screen time a day caused an increase in unhappiness levels in adolescents, while there is a significant link between social media use and depression and another findings showed that there is a connection between constant phone-checking and high stress levels. According to the psychologist overuse of screen can cause insomnia, negative hormonal changes hindering of brains' electrical activity, sleep deprivation and above all a less rested mind, as per the research carried out in developed countries an adult spend an average of 8 hours 41 minutes a day on screens (more time than the actual sleep). Even the children's belonging to the developed nations spend an average of 6 hours a day on screens. The majority of them spend around 3 hrs on social media alone they also check their smartphone every 12 minutes. In the European country's adults now spend a total of 25 hours a week online up from 9 hours a week.

As per the recent development in the rise of smartphone users worldwide today is over three billion and is projected to grow by several hundred million in the next few years (3.8 billion by 2021). 34% of people have checked Facebook in the last ten minutes. Two in five adults (40%) first look at their phone within five minutes of waking up, rising to 65% of those aged around than 35. In an interesting survey carried out in UK states that around 66% who use smartphone are in constant fear of losing or being without their phones at any given time this has made them obsessive to checking of their phone and constantly worrying about losing it somewhere. It was in the year 2013 that the first inpatient facility for treating internet addiction was opened. As per the survey done in the west around 62% of adults say that they 'hate' the time they spend on their phone but are helpless due to screen addiction, they also are guilty and admit that they could not live without their mobile phones also it was found that women were more likely to exhibit susceptibility to smartphone addiction than men.

Digital detox holidays

A digital detox is essentially a period where you cut yourself off from technology where one doesn't text, no emailing and non-use of any social media platforms. This is done to lower the stress levels, spend quality time with yourself be with the 'real world', carry out various leisurely and physical activities and also concentrate on, physical socialisation.

Recent research also reveals that a short-term vacation in the absence of technology and digital screens has many beneficial effects on one's well-being, strain and stress level this happens when any individual disconnects himself from technology, social media and engages himself in the digital-free tourism, during this period he comes across the emotional journey and blissful experience which he could never had experience in his daily routine especially when one is glued to the screen this holiday or vacation whatever one may call involves of losing access to technologies that are mobile phones, navigation tools laptops, tablets, the Internet, social media. The concept of digital detox holidays also called as tech-free tourism has become a new trend to detach ourself from constant checking of emails, WhatsApp messages, tweets, face book and other group, today this rising trend of digital detox holidays has been made simpler than ever before, by introducing variety of beautiful locations for the tourists to inspire them to concentrate on oneself and nature rather than phones and laptops, but there are certain things that one has to think before organising a digital detox holiday such as deciding a destination and the activities that should be included so that the craving of Facebook or WhatsApp doesn't trigger.

Many tourist organizations have come up with first tech-free vacations where the locations for the holidays is located out of city with programmes such as outing, bay watching, seashore plays hills and mountain viewing, being with the nature observing the beauty of nature and these activities helps one to come out of their comfort zone and be away from the

digital world, with plenty of hotel-run activities to enjoy it also helps to detach oneself from old habits, such as Instagramming a photo of your favourite spot or waiting for your favourite TV show.

In order to make the vacations enjoyable and truly get the experience of digital detox one has to cut himself completely from the digital devices though this seems difficult initially but one has to get out of the temptation of carrying with them phone, tablet and laptop to make the maximum out of tech-free vacation if one is really serious about it.

Before choosing a detox destination, one must plan to have some of the following activities to be made available to them such as Reading, Cycling, Hiking, Yoga, Meditation, Relaxation, Fishing, Sailing, Arts and crafts, Wine tasting, Picnicking, Photography, astronomy tourism, wildlife viewing, dancing and competitions, night treks and cooking classes.

Role of travelling indigital detox

When it comes to the digital detox holidays the role of traveling plays a very crucial part in the life of the travellers as it is the best way to get out of their busy schedule, it also is a good remedy for reducing stress, anxiety and depression caused due to overuse of the technology, traveling also helps these busy executives in exploring them to the new places, culture, cuisine, rituals and styles of living in fact the whole idea of travelling, planning a trip, packing bags, brings enthusiasm, joy and happiness to them, it is considered to be highly productive in defocussing oneself from the addiction and compulsion of using digital screen. By travelling one explores new places, meet people from different walks of life, different cultures, rituals, gestures, lifestyle, and customs, thus they get a chance to communicate, connect and explore their lives during this period they also gather priceless collection of memories which can be cherished by them at any point of time, especially when they go through the negative emotions.

Literature Review: -

Digital technologies such as smartphones, tablets, and PDAs, have grown and developed at an extraordinary rate to become an essential part of everyday life (Buhalis & O'Connor, 2005).

A wide body of studies assumes that ICT connection has only positive traits for both the target audience as for the business (Dickinson, Hibbert, & Filimonau, 2016; Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2014). Yet, recent research has indicated that the current usage of digital technology has passed to an addiction and has negative impacts on the human behaviour and health (Ceyhan & Ceyhan, 2008; Donnelly, 2012; Karapetsas, et al., 2015; World Health Organization, 2014).

The adverse effects that can be determined include neurological complications, psychological disturbances, and social problems. With the expected growth in the use of digital technology, it is to be expected that a major part of the global population may be affected in the distant future by these negative effects (Cash, et al., 2012; Donnelly, 2012; Eurostat, 2017; Paris, et al., 2015).

Various health experts indicated a growing need for occupational wellness activities, stress management, work-life balance workshops and digital detox retreats (Delecta, 2011; Smith & Kelly, 2006; Smith & Puczkó, 2015; Southward, 2014). Likewise, according to Neuhofer (n.d.), the rapid growth of digital technology will cause people to strive for extremely connected or disconnected experiences

One niche market that lately has been detected by travel agencies and hotels is the so-called ‘digital detox’ holiday (Emek, 2014). ‘Digital detox’, also in the current academic scholarly literature referred to as ‘digital pushback’ and ‘digital disengagement’, does not yet have an internationally agreed definition (Kuntsman & Miyake, n.d.; Morrison & Gomez, 2014)

Research has indicated that especially the blue light of smartphone screens emits diodes that influence the circadian system, the body’s timekeeping system that regulates the needs of sleep (Donnelly, 2012; Lin, et al., 2014; Paris, et al., 2015; World Health Organization, (2014)

According to research of the American Optometric Association people who spend 2 or more hours per day in front of a digital screen in risk of Digital Eye Strain, eye and vision related problems (American Optometric Association, n.d.)

According to the research of Karapetsas et al. (2015) that examined digital addiction among Greek students, there is a high positive correlation between the addiction of digital devices and the feeling of loneliness.

Objective of the study: -

- 1) To understand the negative effects of excessive use of screen technology on human beings.
- 2) To find out the effects of digital detox holidays on reducing the ill effects of using digital screens

Conceptual Framework:

Several researches and studies throughout the world have shown that over use of technology and screen has negative effect on the human beings, A link has been found between the surge in screen-use and mental health issues, this is especially true with the young people, studies also confirm that addiction to smartphone may lead to high anxiety level and a tendency for addiction, depression and loneliness. However, passive use of social media leads to negative behaviour people who check their emails, texts, and social media on a constant basis experience more stress and are known as “constant checkers”. A report published by WHO states that those who use heavy social were are likely to experience social isolation. In 2017, Instagram was rated as the worst social media platform for its impact on the mental health of young people.

In the year 2018 condition, it has also been discovered that there is a strong link between heavy internet users, social media users and depression.

A study has shown that as mobile phone use increases, so does anxiety and low self-esteem. Psychiatrists have issued warnings over the link between depression and video game addiction, this is one reason for the potential damage caused to young brains.

New research by Nottingham Trent University finds out that continuous smartphone notifications and messages that we receive is also linked with our mood swing and worsened work productivity

Longer time spent on technology each day has been linked with the ability to weaken our deep-thinking and maintaining focus on the work, also the ability of critical thinking and analysis have declined due to our overuse of technology in the metro cities of our country. The artificial blue light emitting from our screens increases eye strain, irritated eyes, blurred vision, neck and back pain, and headaches. Though digital detox holidays have been seen as a solution to the problem of negative effects of overuse of technology screens, it is not so easy because It’s not easy to disconnect ourselves from social media or our devices for more than a couple hours. It’s definitely not an ideal situation, but digital-free tourism has impacted

travellers' holiday experiences. It deals with losing access to technologies such as mobile phones, laptops, tablets, the Internet, social media and navigation tools.

Digital Screen and the Pandemic: -

With the Pandemic effecting the whole world in 2020 A poll by You Gov found that almost half of respondent's screen-time has increased since the pandemic, also during lockdown people in the UK were spending around 40% of their time watching TV and online video. In all the developed country's it showed that during the period of lockdown there was an increase of 70-80% of screen-time usage amongst the people.

Scope for further research: -

As digital detox holidays and tech-free vacations have a very short-term effect, an extensive research should be carried out on getting a shortdigital techfree experience at homesince overuse of screens at home is a very big challenge faced by the world today.

Research Methodology: -

This study is based on primary data whichwas conducted on a focus group of 200 participants those who were employed in different corporate company's, in and around Pune and Mumbai City, they had booked their vacations through a reputed travel company situated in the same city and data was collected from those who were disconnected for more than 24 hours it was collected through informal interviews and observation.

Findings: -

The findings of this,study revealed that amongst 200 participant travellers around 80% said that in the beginning there was an initial anxiety, frustration and apprehension within the travellers, but after sometime their level of acceptance, enjoyment, and even liberation increased, they in fact started to enjoy the experience of getting defocused with the technology, 90% of the travellers realised that thisdigital-free tourism, is helping them experience the emotional journey so closely that they have never experienced in their entire life, 60% of the participants said that first time they have experienced so many minute things related to various sights, places and beaches,temples,Museums and other interesting places which were not available on any websites which became highlights of their vacations. It was noted that amongst the travellers couples, people travelling with theirfamily or groups were more confident to disconnect themselves with the technology than those who were travelling alone or were solo traveller. 56% of the travellers said that after reaching home they reconnected, themselves with the digital screens but were upset and not very happy to see the incoming messages and notifications which they received during theperiod they were disconnected.

During this detox vacations around 89% of the travellers enjoyed the engagement with nature, scenic beauty, local culture and food, beaches, physical surroundings and temples, they also commented that they would like to have another digital detox vacation in near future.

Practical Implications: -This study will help the organizations to understand the importance of digital detox holidays, which will help them to retain the productivity of the employees due to overuse of technology

Discussion: -

Vacations and free time, have the potential to relieve people from stress and enhance their positive mood during this vacation travellers enjoy their leisure time activities and enjoy socialization, fun, laughter, and travel.

The present study investigated the immediate effect of digital breaks on reducing the ill effects of overuse of digital screens the data of this study suggests that even a short detox vacation, has a positive effect on the stress, recovery, strain, and well-being of the traveller, tech-free holidays or vacations might be a great choice amongst the travellers.

Conclusion: -

Recent studies in tourism have demonstrated the importance of tourism in improving the health and wellness benefits of travel, many studies have revealed the positive effects of travel experiences on health and wellness also it was discovered that during the vacation we tend to move more, sleep more, and also our brain tends to get more rest. After an extended break, our body and mind also feel much better and restored.

Digital detoxing puts you back in control of your life and gives you the chance to truly leave work behind. Apart from lowering your stress levels, enhancing mental positivity and improving your social interactions; digital detox holidays have a positive effect on the well-being it is definitely going to be the trend of the future.

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