Impact of Technology on Environment

D. Sankar Polaiah

1. Department of Economics, Sir C.R. Reddy Autonomous College, Eluru- 534 007, A.P., India.
Corresponding Author: D. Sankar Polaiah

Abstract*: Global warming is becoming an increasingly important issue both on the agenda of politics and public life. It is linked to developments in science and technology. The increases in industries coupled with technological progress have continued to affect and violate the environment in a number of ways. For instance the introduction of computers into both the home and universe has a considerable impact on the environment. Technology is blamed for much of the pollution that contributes to global warming. Environmental pollution occurs as a result of technology mismanagement and a lack of control measures. Emission of large quantity of gases such as CO_2 in the air by large industries causes air pollution which in turn has degraded environment immensely. Disposal of waste into the rivers and water systems by industries is an environmental hazard through pollution. Further, technology contributes to depletion of resources. The development and usage of technology is contributing to increase industrial activity that requires raw material from natural resources such as coal, timber and wild animals. Farming activities such as burning of ashes, deforestation and usage of chemicals to enhance fertility is an environmental exploitative.*

Keywords*: Global warming, science, computers, industries, violate, technology mismanagement, pollution, depletion of resources, deforestation, fertility.*

I.   Introduction

Technology is a major part of everyone's life. Everyday we encounter technology at home, school and at work. We use this technology to better our lives. But do we really? With the advancing of technology also comes the issue of polluting the world we live in. In today's world, humans are in a very relaxed cycle: they eat, they watch television, they sleep. What most people do not realize are the health risks they are taking every day when they do their daily tasks. Humans are becoming more and more reliant on machines to do simple activities, such as changing the channel or traveling. I agree that technology does make activities uncomplicated, and genuinely makes life easier, but how can a person stay physically fit and healthy when he/she does nothing himself/herself? In Ishmael by Daniel Quinn, many environmental issues are discussed. Among the issues, Quinn talks about technology and how humans believe it to be a turning point in society, but will eventually lead to the downfall of humans.

People are at great risk to their health with the advancements in technology. Not only have individual's fabricated new ways of entertainment, but have built factories, which pollute the air they breathe and water they drink. In Ishmael, Quinn tells of man trying to fly; when man fails, he does not just simply give up and wait to fly, but creates a new way, that is not fool-proof. Humans will do anything to make life easier, but for no reason than to make life easier. But is this really making life relaxing? People still have to go to work, still have to breathe in polluted air, and other such effects, all of which may be hazardous to their health. Humans keep creating objects that are harmful to the environment, and they call this "technology." Well, this may be "technology," but obviously citizens do not see that it is taking control of their lives. Most technology is for luxury and entertainment, while a select few fabrications are necessities, (airplanes, food machines, etc.). People really need to stop relying on artificial intelligence for simple tasks.

While technology can be a powerful force to improve our standard of living, it comes at a cost. New technological goods are often burdensome to the environment. This damage may come from acquiring the resources to produce new technology, or from toxic byproducts of technological production. It can consist of environmentally harmful waste produced by the technology itself, or the castoff remains of obsolete technology. This very first technology and its impact on natural environment brought greenhouse gas emissions which accumulated through more than a million years of widespread use of fire.

Some benefits of Technology

The introduction of computer systems into both the home and work environments has eradicated the need to have reams of paper files; in the long-run these simple changes will have a considerable impact on the environment and help to preserve forests. Recycling technology will also help to eliminate waste. While technology is blamed for much of the pollution that contributes to global warming, it may also provide the

solution to the problem. Research into new methods of generating power and electricity is abundant; experts hope to find cleaner, renewable sources of energy to replace the finite supply of fossil fuels and reduce global warming and climate change. New methods such as wind turbines, solar power and hydro-electric power are under scrutiny and are constantly subject to trails to improve the efficiency of existing systems.

Every day, new research is being conducted to improve the systems involved in the modern world. New systems of removing waste and improving the efficiency of the distribution of electricity, for example, may benefit many people in the future by cutting emissions and improving efficiency. Projects such as those involving cars that run on cleaner fuels may also significantly change the way we live in the future; energy efficient products such as light bulbs will also contribute to making the environment cleaner.

One of the principal reasons behind the significant gap between the developing world and the developed world is a lack of technology. The developed world is heavily reliant on technology which makes life much easier and production much more efficient. Technology is lacking in developing countries and this contributes to widespread poverty and a lack of basic amenities such as clean, running water and food supplies. New technology which will boost food production, improve infrastructure, improve healthcare and provide sanitation facilities could dramatically change the quality of life in the developing world.

Bad effects of Technology on Environment

Environmental pollution occurs as a result of technology mismanagement and lack of control measures. Technological improvement in recent years has seen production of more machines, weapons and automobiles. Increased consumption of improved facilities triggers demand which in turn influences supply of required quality of products that are major effectors of industrialization using improved technology. Importance of technology in such cases is attributed to satisfaction of human wants. Though adverse pollution of environment due to increased production in the manufacturing and processing industries, weapons testing and high usage of automobiles such as cars. Air pollution, water and noise pollution are the key components of an environment that has been continually polluted as a result of technology. Emission of large quantity of gases such as CO_2 in the air by large industries causes air pollution which in turn has degraded environment immensely. Again, disposal of waste into the rivers and water systems by industries and other institutions is an environmental hazard through water pollution. Similarly, a lot of noise pollution from weapons testing and usage, industries in their routine production processes and automobiles is causative of environmental dilapidation.

Environmental degradation is a growing concern as continued industrialization is being witnessed mostly in developed countries. There are three major negative impacts of technology on environment discussed in this essay. First, environmental pollution resulting from waste output is a resultant factor of technology. Contribution to global warming is the second effect of the growing technology. Lastly, depletion of natural resources and ecological imbalances experienced today result from technology.

Environmental pollution occurs as a result of technology mismanagement and lack of control measures. Technological improvement in recent years has seen production of more machines, weapons and automobiles. Increased consumption of improved facilities triggers demand which in turn influences supply of required quality of products that are major effectors of industrialization using improved technology. Importance of technology in such cases is attributed to satisfaction of human wants. Though adverse pollution of environment due to increased production in the manufacturing and processing industries, weapons testing and high usage of automobiles such as cars. Air pollution, water and noise pollution are the key components of an environment that has been continually polluted as a result of technology. Emission of large quantity of gases such as CO_2 in the air by large industries causes air pollution which in turn has degraded environment immensely. Again, disposal of waste into the rivers and water systems by industries and other institutions is an environmental hazard through water pollution. Similarly, a lot of noise pollution from weapons testing and usage, industries in their routine production processes and automobiles is causative of environmental dilapidation.

Furthermore, technology contributes towards depletion of resources. Development and usage of technology is contributing to increase industrial activity that requires raw material from natural resources such as coal, timber and wild animals. As well, extensive agricultural activities as experienced in Bangladesh is beneficial in terms of productivity but depletion of natural resources such as forest cover, water and soil fertility and its organisms composition is a likely event. Farming activities such as burning of bushes, deforestation and usage of chemicals to enhance soil fertility is an environmental exploitive. As well extensive mining of gold, diamond and other minerals is an activity that is contributing towards depletion of resources at an alarming rate. Overexploitation of fossil fuel and other resources ceases to be beneficial and becomes an environmental threat.

In addition, ecological systems imbalances and disruptions result from technological advancements in the modern world. Collapse of ecological life and extinction of organisms from their natural habitats is a direct probable result of technology. Wildlife extinction from their natural habitat to create more space for farming

activities and home for increasing population is an evidence of how technology causes ecological imbalances. Availability of improved technology causes people to device convenient ways of satisfying their basic needs and increased productivity requirement. Human embark of activities such as deforestation, extensive farming activities, environmental pollution which lead to changes in the natural lifecycles that maintain ecosystem. Though ecosystems can rebound from these negative effects, continued of environmental degradation through destructive human activities affected by technology will eventually lead to collapse.

Lastly, current issues on global warming are negative effects of technology and environmental factors. Unchecked technology advancement and utilization specifically in areas causing air and water pollution leads to atmospheric gases imbalances. Emission of harmful gases such as CO_2 in large amounts forms greenhouse effects that are the major components of global warming. Green house gases result from activities such poor farming methods, transport systems, manufacturing processes and renewable power generation activities especially using coal. Fossil fuel extraction through burning and clearing of farming lands through burning concentrates harmful gases hence affecting climate.

II. Conclusion

In conclusion, higher percentage of environmental problems is a direct result of technology mismanagement by innovators and users. A small portion of environmental issues relate to economic, social and natural changes results from human activities. Environmental pollution, ecological systems disturbances, depletion of natural resources and climatic changes resulting from global warming are technologically influenced. Technology is significant in development and increased productivity to satisfy human need, but uncontrolled technology impacts environment negatively.

References

[1]   Ausubel, J. & Sladovich, A. (1999).Technological advancement. Washington D.C, US: National Academic publishers.
[2]   Livescience. Retrieved June 27, 2009.10 top emerging environmental technologies.http://www.reference.md/files/D052/mD052 918.html
[3]   Taesler, R. (1990/91) Climate and Building Energy Management. Energy and Buildings, Vol. 15-16, pp 599 – 60
[4]   Huesemann, Michael H., and Joyce A. Huesemann (2011). Technofix: Why Technology Won't Save Us or the Environment, New Society Publishers, Gabriola Island, British Columbia, Canada, ISBN 0865717044,
[5]   Wikipedia; *https://en.wikipedia.org/.../Science,_technology,_society_and_environment_education.*