

Irresponsible use of IT can derail academics

By [Dr Md. Mahmudul Hasan](#) - August 7, 2021 @ 12:10am



Academics should use technology to increase their knowledge and not for frivolous pursuits. -NSTP file pic

My late father had an education up to postgraduate level and was a teacher. The institutional education that my late mother received did not reach that level.

But, she was ahead of him in using a mobile phone, which, after she had passed away, my father inherited. They used it to speak with their children who are in various locations in Bangladesh and beyond.

My parents never used computers/laptops and smartphones for educational purposes, and their non-familiarity with information technologies did not contradict their recognition as people of letters.

Both were bookworms, read print materials and wrote using pen and paper. In that sense, modern information technology played little role in their educational practices.





Advertisement

MORE NEWS

- [You need more than good grades to be a good teacher](#)
- ['Always there': the AI chatbot comforting China's lonely millions](#)
- [#TECH: Cloud system initiative to help university students](#)
- [Blockchain can ensure retail excellence](#)

However, the definition of an educated person has now radically changed. It includes not only familiarity with words but also with word processors. Academic activities largely depend on various degrees of awareness of information sources and information technology.

It is now almost impossible for a person to enter the realm of education or to carry out their academic work without technical skills. Having been running online classes for a few semesters, we academics now know more fully that our dependence on media technology is not going away any time soon.

I first used email in 1997 as a student of the University of Dhaka. Gradually, I started exploring the Internet in a variety of ways — especially as an educational/informational resource.

I began experiencing a shift from reading print to electronic texts, and from holding books in my hands or on my lap to using the devices on which electronic texts are read.

Not long ago, shelves full of books were a common scene in the house and office of university academics and other educated people. A significant amount of time was invested in dusting and wiping them clean. That culture is also changing.

Now we store books and other reading materials in palmtop, laptop and desktop computers. In addition to storing and distributing information, we also use these implements for communicating virtually as well as for writing and editing academic documents with remarkable ease.

Our career is dependent on these modern technologies, and our educational and intellectual infrastructures have gone digital to meet novel consumer demands and to reach large-scale audiences.

We have now at our disposal tools for the efficient production and transmission of information and knowledge. These exciting new tools are having a major impact on our personal and professional lives as well as on our educational practices — both at individual and institutional levels.

But, on a personal level, is technology helping academics thrive or holding them back? Is it a boon or a bane for them?

In terms of scholarship and intellectual contributions, the feet of many academics have been on the accelerator since they were first exposed to media technology.

However, this may not be the case with many other academics who take pleasure in using computers and smartphones mainly for socialisation and leisure.

If technology causes them to switch to the reverse gear in terms of academic productivity, perhaps, that is a reflection of the purposes for which they use various IT devices. In other words, irresponsible usage of the Internet and IT devices will yield more bane than boon for them.

To put it bluntly, while exposure to digital technologies has created opportunities for academics, it is also fraught with pitfalls and dangers. The vast possibilities of technology-supported interaction often confuse and distract many unwary academics from their primary roles of teaching, research and knowledge production.

They get carried away with the Internet deluge without much control. When they are online, they feel time flies as they spend hours daily on the Internet for non-academic reasons.

Often lost in WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter discussions, they stray from the pursuit of research and scholarship. Conversely, the slimy and sleazy ones use the vast resources of the Internet to cut and paste materials (words and/or ideas) and insert them in their own writings without acknowledging the sources.

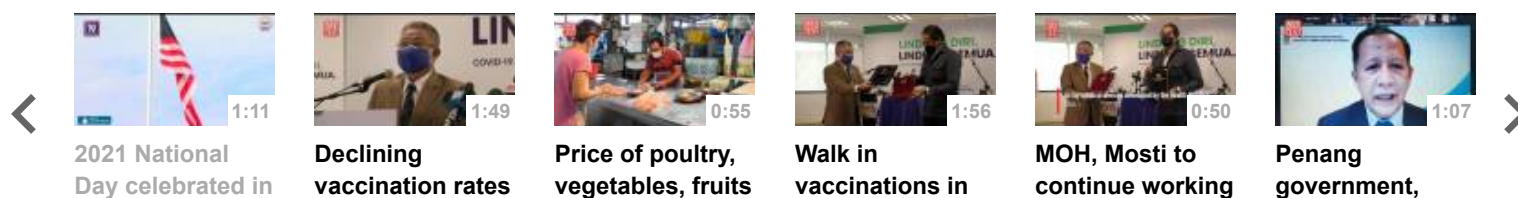
Thus, responsible usage of IT devices and honesty and integrity are very important when using them for academic purposes. In today's world of infosphere and technosphere, attaining high scholarly achievements is not necessarily dependent on the locations of academics.

What is most needed now is sincerity and responsible usage of digital technologies.

mmhasan@iium.edu.my.

The writer is with IIUM's Department of English Language and Literature

RELATED VIDEOS



RELATED ARTICLES

LETTERS Jul 15, 2021 @ 12:15am
Tips on parental control for Internet use

LETTERS Jul 1, 2021 @ 12:10am
How to ensure effectiveness of virtual learning

LETTERS Aug 29, 2021 @ 7:12pm
We should tackle academic snobbery.

BOTS 5 hours ago
#TECH: Garmin Solidarity Run flag off

Recommended by |

Driver in Federal Highway crash positive for drugs | New Straits Times
New Straits Times

Every Kuala Lumpur Citizen Can Get Rewards With This App
Sponsored | [uniqgift-voucher.com](#)

Hong Kong police seize M&M's as national security threat
Sponsored | Nikkei Asia

How COVID-19 Has Transformed the Energy Industry for the Better
Sponsored | Energy Watch

[Read more](#)

MoH staff loses battle with Covid-19 | New Straits Times
New Straits Times

Former Miss Universe Malaysia refuses to wear 'face diaper' unless necessary | New Straits Times
New Straits Times

MOST POPULAR

LATEST

MOST READ

- 19m ○ Another three localities in Pahang, Sabah placed under EMCO
- 22m ○ Hold discussions with teachers who refuse vaccine, says Rayer
- 25m ○ 2022 Budget wish list: MBAM hopes construction industry can kick-start mega projects soon
- 29m ○ RM1 million allocated for slope stabilisation and works in Sungai Kemensah
- 36m ○ 362 human trafficking victims rescued this year
- 40m ○ Two men feared drowned while out fishing in Kota Tinggi
- 43m ○ PSD wants vaccinations to be made mandatory for civil service

VACCINE

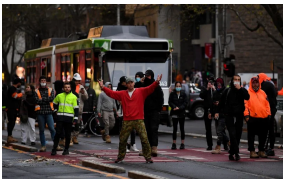


NATION 3 hours ago
Scheduled walk-in vaccinations for adolescents at 156 PPVs to start on Thursday

NATION 4 hours ago



Malaysia achieves 80 percent adult vaccination target



WORLD 9 hours ago
Melbourne shuts construction sites after violent anti-vax protest



NATION 9 hours ago
Parents must accompany children at PPVs, says Dr Zaini



NATION Sep 20, 2021 @ 10:54pm
Covid-19: 85 per cent of Sandakan BID cases had no vaccination



NATION Sep 20, 2021 @ 2:27pm
563 teachers in Johor still refuse vaccination

ACROSS NEW STRAITS TIMES



NATION 2 hours ago
Over half a million M40 households are now B40, says PM



NATION 2 hours ago
Police to conduct thorough investigation in Sajat case



NATION 3 hours ago
Bung Moktar: Reopen Malaysia's borders, allow tourists without quarantine imposition



CRIME & COURTS 4 hours ago
Car manufacturing company official arrested for corruption



NATION 5 hours ago
Petrol stations, convenience shops, eateries may be allowed to open till midnight soon

STORIES FROM SAYS



3 hours ago
#LeaveSajatAlone: 7 Things To Know About The Entrepreneur Being Hunted By The M'sian Govt



4 hours ago
We're Obsessed With These Stunning Malaysian-Made Homeware, Phone Cases & More



10 hours ago
Woman Gets Mushroom Kit As Birthday Present, Grows It, Then Fries And Eats It

3 hours ago



[VIDEO] "Ingatkan Mat Salleh Mana" - Bos Pos Malaysia Jadi Posme Ini Curi Tumpuan



2 hours ago
Anak Kahwin Dengan Orang Gelagat Mak Bebel Suruh Ke Rumah Buat Ramai Terhibur



GET MOBILE APP

NEWS
[Crime & Courts](#)
[Exclusive](#)
[Govt / Public Policy](#)
[Nation](#)
[Politics](#)

BUSINESS
[Business Times](#)
[Property](#)
[Cars Bikes Trucks](#)

LIFE & TIMES
[Sunday Vibes](#)
[Bots](#)
[Heal](#)
[Flair](#)
[Jom!](#)
[Groove](#)

SPORTS
[Football](#)
[Badminton](#)
[Tennis](#)
[Cycling](#)
[Golf](#)
[MMA](#)
[MotorSport](#)
[Cricket](#)
[Others](#)

WORLD
[World](#)
[Region](#)

OPINION
[Columnists](#)
[Letters](#)
[Leader](#)

GALLERY
[Photos](#)
[Infographics](#)

NSTTV
EDUCATION
VOUCHER