Impact of Information Technology on Lifestyle: A Literature Review and Classification

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a review of 81 research articles published between 1996 and 2013 on the impact of information technology on lifestyle. Our findings indicate that the number of investigations into the impact of IT on various areas of everyday life, increased considerably during this period, given that 63 percent of the articles were published between 2010 and 2013. From these articles, eight dimensions emerged which were classified by IT and lifestyle experts. Moreover, theme analysis was applied to all contents extracted from the various articles, leading to an eight-sided lifestyle model. The domains are: health, learning, social, work and environment, energy, art, spiritual life, and miscellaneous. A comprehensive list of papers with classifications is presented.

KEYWORDS

Information Technology, Life Dimensions, Lifestyle, Online Life, Virtual Lifestyle

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that Information Technology (IT) has tremendously changed everyday life. New technologies such as computers, Internet, wireless devices, social networks, have become part of most people’s lives regardless of age or gender. Consequently, these technologies have changed our lifestyle. Lifestyle refers to the method and style of our lives including our clothing, habits, friendships, values and so on (Ye et al., 2011). However, it is not limited to this definition. Some studies have taken lifestyle to refer to one’s physical and mental health status, as well as adults’ quality of life (Wang et al., 2012). According to Leung (1998), lifestyles are identified and classified in order to enhance the development of social identity through people’s activities, interests and opinions. Lifestyle can be identified by a wide range of activities, interests, and opinions (Ye et al., 2011). However, there is a lack of comprehensive research in this area. In fact, while several researchers have investigated the impact of IT on one dimension of lifestyle, but no comprehensive research has been undertaken to determine the impact of Information Technology (IT) on many dimensions of lifestyle from a holistic perspective.

Accordingly, one of the goals of this study is to establish the various lifestyle dimensions. Another goal is to determine how IT impacts on lifestyle. Although the impact of IT on learning, health, energy,
conditions of work, social life and so on, has been a topic of research for a long time, no researcher has undertaken the task of determining the impact of information technology on people’s lifestyles and on all areas of their lives. This review paper explores the literature relating to the impact of IT on lifestyle and to analyze and classify these studies according to various lifestyle dimensions. The dimensions of lifestyle that will be investigated here are: health, learning, social behavior, spiritual life, energy, art, work and environment.

The paper is organized as follows: first, the roadmap of research is described; second, the criteria used for classifying the literature relating to the impact of IT on lifestyle are presented; third, the results and analysis of the classification are reported; and finally, conclusions are drawn and future research directions are suggested.

**RESEARCH ROADMAP**

Considering the nature of the research, it would be difficult to classify it according to specific criteria. The concept of lifestyle comprises many areas as evident in the fact that lifestyle articles appear in a range of journals in domains such as health, behavioral science, education, energy, and information technology, to name a few. Hence, various online databases including Science Direct, Emerald Insight, Springer, and EBSCOhost, were searched to obtain a bibliography related to the impact of IT on lifestyle. The Scopus search engine was also used to ensure the coverage of the articles in other databases. The following selection criteria were applied:

- The keywords “technology + life”, “information + life”, “internet + life”, “web + life” and “online + life”, were used to search the titles of the papers;
- Because the subject matter is very diverse, these keywords were used to search the abstracts of several papers as well;
- Conference papers, master and doctoral dissertations, textbooks, and unpublished working papers were excluded because academics and practitioners generally use journals to acquire information and disseminate new findings; therefore, journals contain the highest level of research (Nord and Nord, 1995). In this paper, only five conference papers were selected because they were considered the most important.

This search resulted in 81 relevant articles published between 1996 and the latter half of 2013.

**CLASSIFICATION OF IT IMPACTS ON LIFESTYLE**

Following the review of the articles, the literature was classified according to eight dimensions: health, learning, social, art, work and environment, energy, spiritual life, and miscellaneous. These dimensions were extracted based on the topics of the reviewed articles; moreover, IT and lifestyle experts were used to confirm the dimensions. Figure 1 shows the process of the eight-sided lifestyle framework. Firstly, all the papers were studied thoroughly and their specific topics were obtained by using theme analysis. Then the contents were grouped and categorized. For this task, researchers used IT and lifestyle experts in focus groups to identify the key topics. Table 1

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**Figure 1. Process of the eight-sided lifestyle framework**

- Articles Review
- Sub-areas Extraction
- Sub-areas Categorization
- Selection of Main Topics
Gaze-Aided Human-Computer and Human-Human Dialogue
www.igi-global.com/chapter/gaze-aided-human-computer-human/21431?camid=4v1a