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Kamila ADAMOWICZ[*]
Mateusz JURCZYK[**]

Digital hygiene – selected methods and tools for managing time in the virtual space by students and working professionals

Higiena cyfrowa – wybrane sposoby i narzędzia do zarządzania czasem w przestrzeni wirtualnej przez uczniów i osoby aktywne zawodowo

Abstract

Aim. The objective of the article is to present selected aspects of digital hygiene as well as methods and tools that can help with time management in a virtual space, especially among students and the professionally active.

[*] **e-mail: kadamowicz@wseh.pl**
University of Economics and Humanities, Generała Władysława Sikorskiego 4-4c, 43-300, Bielsko-Biała
Wyższa Szkoła Ekonomiczno-Humanistyczna, Generała Władysława Sikorskiego 4-4c, 43-300, Bielsko-Biała
ORCID: 0009-0002-9502-877X

[**] **e-mail: mjurczyk@wseh.pl**
University of Economics and Humanities, Generała Władysława Sikorskiego 4-4c, 43-300, Bielsko-Biała
Wyższa Szkoła Ekonomiczno-Humanistyczna, Generała Władysława Sikorskiego 4-4c, 43-300, Bielsko-Biała
ORCID: 0009-0008-3027-8405

Methods. For the sake purpose of the article the authors have conducted a throughout analysis of the literature addressing the concept of digital hygiene and time management in a virtual space.

Results. As a result of the research, it can be concluded that several users are unaware of the risks associated with technology and are also incapable of efficient time management. The article demonstrates tools and methods which can be applied to improve one's digital hygiene and enhance one's skills as far as managing the time in a virtual space, such as blocking distractions, priority setting and time management, as well as breaks and physical activity.

Keywords: digital hygiene, behavioural addictions, workaholism, upbringing, professional burnout, phone addiction, Internet addiction, time management.

Abstrakt

Cel. Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie wybranych aspektów higieny cyfrowej oraz sposobów i narzędzi, które mogą pomóc w zarządzaniu czasem w przestrzeni wirtualnej, szczególnie uczniom i osobom aktywnym zawodowo.

Metody. W artykule została przeprowadzona analiza literatury dotyczącej zagadnień związanych z higieną cyfrową oraz zarządzaniem czasem w przestrzeni wirtualnej.

Wnioski. W wyniku przeprowadzonej analizy można stwierdzić, że wiele osób nie jest świadomych zagrożeń związanych z korzystaniem z technologii oraz nie umie efektywnie zarządzać czasem w przestrzeni wirtualnej. Artykuł przedstawia wybrane narzędzia oraz sposoby, które mogą pomóc w poprawie higieny cyfrowej oraz zarządzaniu czasem w przestrzeni wirtualnej, takie jak: blokowanie rozpraszaczy, wyznaczanie priorytetów i planowanie czasu, a także przerwy i ćwiczenia fizyczne.

Słowa kluczowe: higiena cyfrowa, uzależnienia behawioralne, pracoholizm, wychowanie, wypalenie zawodowe, fonoholizm, netoholizm, zarządzanie czasem.

Introduction

Nowadays, the term "digital hygiene" is becoming more and more common. It is a topic that – in a world dominated by new technologies – we cannot ignore. It should be of particular interest to parents of school-age children and adolescents and to those in contact with screens in the workplace. Another reason for extending and promoting digital hygiene awareness is the growing world population, which, according to the United Nations, exceeds eight billion on November 15, 2022. It can be assumed that the corollary is the continued growth of internet users.

In 2020, society has been "forced" to resolve many issues via new technologies. This has particularly affected students and the working population. These two groups have had to continue their learning/working from home via a laptop or computer. The boon of today's digital media and advancing technological developments allowed them to continue learning and earning. Before the pandemic period, we were not aware of the activities that the use of new technologies could facilitate.

Digital hygiene is a purposeful, planned and creative approach to using the resources and benefits provided by the world of the internet and new technologies. Its overarching aim is to reduce the adverse impact of technology on the lives of adults, children, and young people. These adverse effects can affect both physical and mental health. It is therefore very important to seek knowledge about the above-mentioned issues yourself. Resources are abundant on this topic. These are freely available both in the form of e-books and traditional (paper) books, which can be found in public libraries, bookshops or on e-commerce platforms. Magdalena Bigaj believes that both parents and students need to be aware of appropriate and healthy use of electronics (Bigaj, 2023). It is important to remember that technological inventions are emerging. If current trends continue, the development of modern communication technologies will continue in the coming years. Inventors are not concerned about the lack of adequate awareness and rationality of the use of new technologies among young people. The level of digital hygiene largely depends on self-control and the ability to maintain internal self-discipline. Nevertheless, the individual's level of social interaction also has a considerable role in this context. We are talking about setting aside time to meet with others, having someone to lean on, who will listen and support in a more difficult moment. This is a particularly important aspect for an individual entering social life.

Methods of preventing risks from the abuse of mobile devices

Inappropriate relationships with parents, legal guardians, and the wider immediate environment, combined with insufficient ability to manage oneself, one's time, and resources, can cause an escape to a smartphone or computer screen. Students choose new technologies instead of socialising. Relationships that already existed in the family were often inappropriate, and the consequence of escaping into the virtual world is the deepening of these dysfunctions. It is worth noting that it is not the digital media that breaks people's bonds, but poor relationships or the lack of them that lead young people to spend time in an online space unknown to adults.

The prevention of this phenomenon is referred to by Piotr Kwiatkowski (2016) as "family resilience". A situation where the child has a sense of security feels valued, and where the child knows that he/she can talk to parents about any topic and will not

face rejection results in a significantly reduced likelihood of abusing new technologies. In functional families, the risk of behavioural addictions is much lower. Frequent use of the mobile phone can lead to the creation of a habit that destroys inner peace. Avoiding the use of digital technology in repetitive situations, for example, immediately after waking up, can help to create this habit. Observing one's behaviour and introducing self-control will help to nullify the replication of the behaviour. It is important to remember that a habit can develop into an addiction.

Behavioural addictions, which include addiction to new technologies, are also called in specialist nomenclature "nałóg"* (Pągowska, 2020). The word comes from the English word "addiction". Addiction is identified with the undertaking of certain activities at the expense of other activities and actions, despite their unfavourable consequences, which include weakening of bonds with household members, loss of money or deterioration of the quality of duties in the workplace. Smartphone addiction most often leads to the aforementioned deterioration of relationships and can also cause a reduction in the quality and depth of sleep. This means that the addicted person will most often give up either sleep or spending time with their family (Pągowska, 2020). Jolanta Jarczyńska believes that the abuse of online services should be defined as the "loss of control over time spent in virtual space", which may result in the neglect of physical activities, social activities, learning, and personal hygiene (Jarczyńska, 2015). Ubiquitous screens also increase levels of fear, stress, and anxiety. Pupils' minds are not yet as well educated to filter and recognise false or manipulated content posted online. They may not even be aware of their existence. In addition, a completely uneducated brain is more susceptible to addictions. When a student "poisons" his or her brain with new technologies from an early age, "feeding" it in the wrong way – the process of personality development in the young person is disrupted. The development of addiction can be facilitated by:

– emotional immaturity,
– depressive personality,
– experience of aggression, anxiety, stress in the family home,
– genetically transmitted predisposition (Pągowska, 2020).

The human brain has evolved to absorb new information in such a way as to work through and process it all. Josiah Dykstra and Celeste Lyn Paul (2018) argue that constant stimulation of the nervous system leads to feelings of lethargy, fatigue or headaches. Such overload is colloquially referred to as overstimulation or overflow of stimuli and arises as a result of the brain's insufficient capacity to analyse incoming

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* In Polish, "nałóg" is a synonym for the word "uzależnienie", i.e., addiction. Translating the term into English, each time, it gets the counterpart "addiction".

stimulants (Bawden, Robinson, 2020). Waldemar Furmanek describes this issue as information overload, which negatively affects the communities built by people through improper selection and inability to dispose of excess harmful data (Furmanek, 2013). The author also mentions a series of risks from using new technologies in the wrong way, among them dangers:

- medical – poor posture, too much time in a sitting position;
- technical – loss of data, computer viruses;
- psychological – feeling compelled to be online, isolation;
- social – widely available false information, lack of access to digital tools for the less financially well-off (so-called digital exclusion);
- related to the development of modernity - ethical dilemmas of Internet users, inability to filter fake news from reliable news;
- related to information, namely its excess, omission and discrepancy. As a result, there is a destructive phenomenon of information noise and stress (Furmanek, 2014).

There are a variety of interesting solutions that will enable informed parents to properly monitor their children's online behaviour and for them to maintain better digital hygiene. These include apps to be installed on a smartphone. Here are some examples:

- *Time in front of the screen* (app available for iOS devices). This is an app pre--built into Apple tablets and phones. It provides reports on how long we spend in front of the device and which apps we use. It allows you to set limits to manage content and applications. It allows you to establish "device-free time". In this function, it is only possible to make calls and access applications selected by the parent. Interestingly, the child can ask the parent by clicking on "ask for more time" to extend access to a particular app. Such a notification is immediately forwarded to the parent's account, who can accept or reject it. It is also possible to block contact with selected telephone numbers, thus eliminating contact with the wrong people. Of course, this does not apply to emergency numbers, which remain accessible at all times. It is also possible to block access to adult content, the purchase of games or songs and the downloading of social media applications.
- *Qustodio* (for both Android and iOS, as well as Windows and the Kindle e-book reader) is a paid app that allows you to monitor your activity, including: controlling your time in front of the device, giving you access to your web browser search history, and insight into the content you have viewed on YouTube. It allows you to better manage family time and ensure proper sleep hygiene, thanks to the function of setting appropriate times for accessing the Internet. Its big advantage is the option to remove internet access with a single click.

Apart from this, it is possible to see with whom your child has exchanged text messages and voice calls. Another important point is the ability to keep track of the content of both outgoing and incoming messages on the supervised device. In addition, it enables the location of the child's location in the present tense and provides the times of arrival at and departure from specific locations, in the case of being away from home.
– *Bark* provides excellent surveillance of social media access, already protecting more than 6.7 million children. The app allows parents to control their child's location, filter access to specific websites and their content and manage time in front of the screen. The app will independently alert the parent of an unwanted event on the child's device.

Besides smartphone apps, which are more often used by parents of younger children, there are also applicable behaviours that aim to prevent the development of addiction. Following Dr Maciej Dębski's "Dbam o Mój Z@sięg" [Caring for My Cover@ge] Foundation, ten basic rules of digital hygiene can be distinguished. Regardless of the age of the user, these should be present in his or her life:
– Relaxing and resting – in the form of years ago, without the devices of new technologies.
– Caring for relationships with relatives – the Internet is not a good place for building relationships, because it weans people from the ability to receive and perceive real emotions. It is important to remember that it is the deteriorated relationships between co-habitors that are the source of the escape into electronic devices, which only exacerbates the problem through isolation and avoidance of contact.
– Provide an adequate amount of sleep - providing the child with an alarm clock will be most appropriate, prevent him or her from using the phone preferably two hours before bedtime (Hansen, 2019).
– Conscious digital detoxes – for example, weekends when the family has the opportunity to focus on themselves. To support the child and set a good example, it seems expedient to show the child by your example the desire to limit time in front of the screen. It will be ineffective to prohibit phone use while you are not restricting use. The parent should set a good example.
– Seeking hobbies – activities that absorb completely are effective in reducing the risk of falling into phonoholism;
– Analogue solutions – seem to be effective in encouraging the child to try games that aid concentration, logical thinking, and memory. Crosswords, sudoku, logic games, pictures, and puzzles - there are many suggestions available for different ages and interest levels. They can be obtained in a variety of ways, for example

by purchasing them in a newsagent's shop. When solving them, there will be an opportunity to interact and deepen the valuable parent-child relationship.

– Avoiding multitasking – children should be taught to focus on one activity, making it easier for them to work through this skill in the future. This avoids distracting the child, after which it takes several minutes for the child to reach a comparable level of concentration to that experienced before the distraction.

– Switching off notifications on the smartphone - including the sound; also placing the phone with the screen facing down can help.

– Putting the phone away – especially when studying or doing homework, persuades the child to remove the smartphone from sight.

– Controlling time in front of the screen - the apps cited earlier are helpful for this, and with older children and teenagers, a conversation aimed at making them feel that as parents we trust them enough and take them seriously may be best. It is worth remembering that people with high self-esteem, already built on a foundation of healthy relationships from the family home, are less likely to become addicted to digital technologies (Porzak, 2013).

The role of parents in shaping their child's attitudes towards dealing with digital technology

A small group of people realise that the offline world has a significant impact on what happens online (Ptaszek, Stunża, Pyżalski, Dębski, & Bigaj, 2020). The role of the parent is to make their child aware that escaping into the virtual world is not the only option when feeling bored or stressed or in a break from school. It is important to introduce your offspring to alternatives that will help them de-stress. Many dangers are lurking in virtual space. As a parent, it is worth teaching both yourself and your child how to use mobile devices appropriately. This can be done in a responsible, creative and non-stereotypical way. If a parent starts to address the topic of digital hygiene and encourages household members to use their devices more efficiently, family relationships will not deteriorate and, if there is any dysfunction, they will certainly start to improve. Researchers have been saying for years that playing without excessive interference, but with parental supervision, can become the foundation for enjoyable and self-directed learning, motor development and creativity (Brzezińska, Bątkowski, Kaczmarska, Włodarczyk, & Zamęcka, 2011). A child who takes risks will know better how to behave in adult life. Sometimes he or she has to make a mistake to avoid doing an activity a second time. Finding common tasks that interest both parties will build a space for spending time together and getting to know each other again. New technologies are not only dangers and imperfections, but it is worth bearing in mind

their harmful effects and the possibilities of bridging harmful contact with technology, the implementation of which may prove helpful in building stronger bonds or facilitating the child's cognitive abilities. These can be mentioned such as:

–   Setting a specific time for studying and its appropriate length. A solution used in school establishments – a box or basket into which the phone is placed to prevent use of its facilities – can be helpful. If the child is younger, building such a house will be a great opportunity to get creative with the parent. During breaks from school, you can offer the child to play together or prepare a favourite nutritious meal (Kurowicka-Roman, 2021).

–   Mute notifications on the child's phone – every sound and vibration transmits a signal to the child's brain that something new has happened, which triggers the desire to tap into the smartphone. Do not remove apps on the phone without first consulting your child. Learning will become more effective if the distraction caused by glancing at the smartphone disappears. This will also prevent information overload (Furmanek 2013).

–   Equipping the child with a traditional wristwatch – the child will avoid the urge to reach for a smartphone to check the time.

–   Involving the parent in the activities the student does online, showing interest and listening to the child why they have chosen that particular e.g., game – this will reinforce the child's sense of security and ensure that the urge to hide with the activity does not occur (Piecuch, 2017).

–   Challenging each other like „Who will be the first to learn 5 German vocabulary words?" – this will stimulate the child's desire to compete and provide new – invaluable – knowledge.

–   Equipping a child with a traditional paper encyclopaedia or atlas of the world – a wonderful way to travel. Combined with the benefits of the Internet and the richness of the pictures available there, this is a wonderful opportunity to explore the remotest corners of the world.

–   The support and active involvement of the parent in the child's hobby.

Time management

The dynamic development of new technologies allows contact with anyone, anytime. We need to be aware that mobile devices are with us the whole day. According to Jan Yager (2020), in the context of this challenge, a new task has fallen to humans – they have to become aware of how to manage their time during the day and find the optimal system for performing tasks. The person is supposed to be in control of the technology around him or her, not the other way around. The implementation of effective time man-

agement activities and skills will effectively increase productivity and support a sense of stability in life. Managing one's own time first makes us self-reflect and observe our actions while performing our duties (both school and work). Adults should find it easier to properly self-organise and implement time management practices. Students' brains are still in the developmental stage, so in their case, it is the parent who should guide and support the young person in planning the day properly.

Setting one or more goals for the day is one of the skills most often mentioned in theoretical sources. J. Yager, in his publication, posits that only by managing ourselves can we learn to manage time (Yager, 2020). On the other hand, Kamil Zieliński (2022) explicitly states that time management is impossible, as we do not influence the length of the earth's day. Every single human, without exception, has an equal amount of time at their disposal. He emphasises that what we can have a real impact on is the useful administration of our duties and our person (Zieliński, 2022). Much earlier, a very similarly constructed thesis was put forward by Stephen Richards Covey, who stated that time flows at an independent pace and that a person can only submit to it and skilfully administer his or her actions (Covey, 2001). Anna Pluta (2013) also accessibly gives an idea of the essence of time management. She argues that the foundation of time management is the proper planning of responsibilities and their materialisation according to priorities previously established for the person. Following such recommendations allows a person to oversee his or her activities more effectively (Pluta, 2013). Meanwhile, Brian Tracy (2015), in his publication "Time Management", points out the value that proper task planning brings to the well-being of the human psyche. By being aware of the possibility of achieving all the goals established for the day, it will be easier to achieve a sense of inner harmony - which is crucial for health and a sense of agency. This will make it possible to raise personal standards and "bars". B. Tracy (2015) in his statements consistently supports the thesis that four nouns are essential in achieving success, namely desire, determination, determination, and discipline. First, we need to want something, desire it, and then put the actions into practice again until these become natural. Often, despite a lack of desire to carry out an activity, when a person has a goal, he or she will resolutely forge ahead, despite dislike and dislike of the task. Małgorzata Siekańska (2004) connects professional success with satisfying interpersonal relationships. She assumes that harmonious relationships prevail in a mentally healthy person. These can - in the context of the Tracy cited - support the actions of the task-focused person. Zuzanna Niśkiewicz (2016) refers to this phenomenon as psychological well-being, which she defines as a positive evaluation of one's life due to the fulfilment of professional and private aspects. According to Michal Pietruszewski (2014), professional success is related to the following sociodemographic characteristics: age, gender or family type. In a book entitled *Habits worth millions*, B. Tracy (2017) highlights the importance of having a morning routine that is adapted

to us. It is necessary to adapt the activities carried out in the morning in such a way as to positively orient oneself to the mode of action from the rest phase. Dirk Zeller emphasises that a planned and thoughtful few minutes for oneself in the morning can positively influence the rest of the day (Zeller, 2023). Not only B. Tracy believes that sleep is the best way to perfect health. Anna Kapala (2016) posits that mental health and sleep are strongly connected. By being sleepy, a person can reach his or her maximum capacity and performance. Lisa Genova (2022) approaches the phenomenon of sleep in an unconventional and subversive way. She captures it as a reflection of the "save" button on a computer's memory. In this way, she wants to emphasise the effect of sleep on improving concentration and sharpening the senses. The appropriate dose of rest is different for every person. A proper portion of the rest and respite phase will strengthen our brain's defence against amnesia (Genova 2022).

There is no universal, one-size-fits-all concept for administering our time. It allows us to vivisect our personality, and who we are and to find ways to work more efficiently according to our skills and aptitudes. At a later stage, it will allow us to make changes and subsequent improvements. Time management theorists outline the basic seven principles of an effective action plan:

1. Setting the main objective – making it concrete;
2. Setting the agenda and following its sequence;
3. Prioritise actions – these will allow adherence to the agenda when distractors appear;
4. Appropriate pace of work - it is important to remember that even a small progress brings you closer to your goal. Setting the pace of work too high can result in a loss of motivation, the appearance of disappointment in both oneself and those dependent on us;
5. Controlling our activities will make us successful even without the desire to please those around us;
6. Having a mentor – it is useful to have a guide in life, a person who inspires us in times of doubt. For example, this person we will aspire to become someone's mentor in the future;
7. Rewarding yourself for success – the best reward for completing a task is, of course, a sense of achievement and empowerment, however, the satisfaction of an employer or customer will also be effective in raising morale (Yager, 2020).

Digital hygiene in the working lives of people

Above, the aspect of the impact of modern technology on children and young people's lives and their digital abuse was discussed, as well as the role that carers should have in

this matter. The problem of constant online accessibility, virtual overstimulation, and a lack of ability to separate work and private life also affects adults to a large extent. The reason for this may be, meanwhile, the modern working environment, based on digital solutions, and, on the other, addiction to virtual reality in the broadest sense. The second aspect, which is worth emphasising, may be the result of the distorted use of online solutions at earlier stages of development. Research shows that people who spend a lot of time using the internet and the phone often experience negative effects such as sleep disorders, reduced quality of life and social relationships, and even depression and anxiety. According to research, internet and phone addiction are associated with various factors such as lack of coping skills, low self-esteem, and loneliness, as well as some personality traits such as impulsivity and a tendency to dependency (Huang, Leung, 2009).

It is not only important to care for mental well-being, but also for physical wellness. In times of widespread obesity (reportedly an ailment that affects more than 85 million Americans (Tracy 2017)), it is worth taking care of your health and well-being by looking after a slim figure. It is not about restrictive diets, killer workouts or drastically limiting food groups. B. Tracy (2017) popularises the simplest rule in this world: eat less and move more. A gentle caloric deficit, already after a short period of application, will make us feel less sluggish, and an adequate amount of fluid intake will – paradoxically – get rid of excess water from the body and the feeling of puffiness. Anders Hansen (2019), in his book *Log off your brain*, cites a statement from the field of biology that evening use of blue light sources activates the production of the stress hormone – cortisol and the hunger hormone – ghrelin. Thus, we are so easily tempted to grab something to eat. More frequent night-time snacking usually results in extra centimetres around the waist. In addition, the brain does not focus on resting but rather controls digestive processes, so we do not rest as we should (Hansen 2019).

In the literature related to personal development in a broad sense, entrepreneurial people are portrayed as being able to maintain a high level of self-control over their behaviour. Such a statement should not come as a surprise, as a person who manages others needs to know how to supervise him or herself. What kind of example would that person be to his or her subordinates if they knew how difficult he or she is with self-control? Recalled treatments, can make it easier to remain in good health for many years. In addition, it is worth remembering that in adult life we do not only take care of ourselves but also our children.

One of the tools used to measure Internet and phone addiction is the "Internet and Phone Addiction Scale" (IAT). The results of studies conducted using this scale have shown that adults suffer from Internet and phone addiction to varying degrees. It has been noted that people struggling with this problem often spend a lot of time using so-

cial networks, playing online games, or browsing news on the Internet (Gamian-Wilk, Łuszczyńska-Pękala, 2014).

It is important to pay attention to this problem and take steps to reduce the risk of Internet and phone addiction. Some strategies include establishing rules for using mobile devices, such as limiting the time of use, reducing use before bedtime, and finding other ways to spend time, such as physical exercise or chatting with friends.

Effects of permanent digital accessibility in the context of work activity

Today, continuous digital accessibility at work has become standard. Using mobile phones, tablets, laptops or desktops, employees can access the Internet and communicate anytime, anywhere. However, it is worth noting that continuous digital accessibility can result in all sorts of consequences, both positive and negative.

One of the positive effects of continuous digital accessibility at work is the improved effectiveness of tasks performed. With quick access to digital tools, employees can communicate more quickly and easily with other employees and customers. In addition, remote working has become more popular, allowing employees to work from anywhere, which increases flexibility and facilitates work-life balance.

Continuous digital accessibility at work can also lead to negative effects on employees' mental and physical health. High levels of stress, resulting from the constant strain of work and the expectation of communicating with others, can lead to occupational burnout, a state of extreme mental and emotional exhaustion (Schaufeli, Taris, 2005). The impact of constant digital accessibility on professional burnout has been confirmed in studies conducted among employees in various industries (Derks, ten Brummelhuis, Zijlstra, & Bakker, 2014).

Excessive stress related to work and continuous digital accessibility can also result in various types of health problems, such as headaches, vision problems and back pain (Pejtersen, Kristensen, Borg, & Bjorner, 2010). In addition, continuous digital accessibility can also negatively affect employees' family and social lives, because it forces them to be constantly ready for work and makes it difficult to spend time with family and friends (Duxbury, Halinski, 2014).

As a result of the aforementioned risks, it is worthwhile for companies to introduce work policies related to the time of continuous digital availability and promote healthy work habits. You can – for example – introduce hours during which employees are entitled to uninterrupted rest, switching off completely from work and related duties. Another way to reduce the negative effects of continuous digital availability is to educate employees about healthy work habits, such as breaks during the day, physical activity and meditation.

It is also important to note the work culture and behaviour of employees. The constant digital accessibility causes work to become more stressful and demanding, which can result in negative behaviours such as aggression or social isolation. It is therefore important to promote a positive work culture that encourages collaboration, communication, and respect for employees' privacy and free time.

In summary, it can be said that continuous digital accessibility at work can have both positive and negative effects. It is worth paying particular attention to the negative ones, such as professional burnout, health and social problems, and introducing work policies and promoting healthy work habits to reduce the risk of these. It is extremely important to consciously set limits between work life and private life and to make a clear distinction between the two spheres. Nowadays, technology makes it possible to have easy and quick contact between employers and employees, even outside working hours. However, it is increasingly common for employers to use this opportunity to require their employees to be available and work out of hours. This approach to contacting employees during their free time is criticised by experts as violating the work-life balance and negatively affecting employees' mental health. Clearly defined work-life borders are important for maintaining a balance between the two areas of life. They enable employees to maintain control over their time, allowing them to recuperate and become more efficient at work. In addition, clear work-life limits allow for better time management and planning of activities, which has a positive impact on the overall quality of life (Kossek, Thompson, 2016). Setting work-life boundaries requires a conscious approach and consistency. Employees should be able to set their priorities, divide their time between work and private life and be able to say "no" to some work duties outside working hours. It is also important to use free time to recuperate and develop interests beyond work. Employers, on the other hand, should respect the limits between the work and private life of their employees and not require them to work outside of their established hours, unless justified by a specific situation (Kossek, Thompson, 2016).

In conclusion, it is important to note that clearly defined work-life limits are essential for maintaining a work-life balance, which has a positive impact on quality of life and professional effectiveness. However, setting limits requires a conscious approach and consistency on the part of both employees and employers. Employees should be able to identify their needs, learn to say "no" and respect the time limits set. Employers, on the other hand, should respect their employees' private time, avoid overloading them with work and involve them in the process of setting work rules. As a result, introducing a clearly defined work-life balance can benefit both employees and employers. Employees will be more satisfied with their lives and work, and employers will gain more effective and engaged employees.

Internet and telephone addiction

Internet addiction and phonoholism are problems that are affecting an increasing amount of people nowadays, both in the private and professional spheres. These phenomena are defined in different ways by various authors, but in general, they involve the excessive and often uncontrolled use of electronic devices such as computers, smartphones, tablets, and televisions.

According to Kimberley Young (1998), Internet addiction is "excessive, uncontrolled Internet use that leads to disruption of daily life and social functioning, as well as psychological discomfort". Phonoholism, on the other hand, is a term that refers to an addiction to the use of mobile phones, especially to texting and receiving text messages, and to using social media on smartphones (Przybylski, Weinstein, 2013).

The causes of Internet addiction and phonoholism are varied and often complex. Among the most common factors are the desire to avoid negative emotions such as anxiety, depression or boredom, the need to satisfy emotional and social needs, and the increased accessibility of electronic devices, which allows easy use anytime, anywhere (Kardefelt-Winther, 2014).

Internet addiction and phonoholism can result in a range of negative effects on both physical and mental health. These include sleep problems, reduced physical activity, eating problems, depression, anxiety, and problems in social and professional relationships (Bian, Leung, 2015). Dealing with Internet addiction and phonoholism is difficult but possible. Among the therapeutic approaches that are used in practice are cognitive behavioural therapy, group therapy, as well as training programmes focusing on the development of social skills and dealing with emotions (Young, 2011; Kardefelt-Winther, 2014). It is also important for addicted people to take independent action, such as reducing time spent in front of a screen, returning to old hobbies, looking for alternative activities, etc.

It is important to remember that Internet addiction and phonoholism are serious problems that can affect personal, professional and social lives. It is therefore important to prevent these phenomena and take appropriate interventions to reduce their impact. Everyone, both employees and employers, should be mindful of their behaviour and know how to set limits between work and private life to ensure their mental and physical health (Shonin, Van Gordon, & Griffiths, 2018; Andreassen et al., 2016).

Internet addiction and *phonoholism* are relatively new terms that have emerged with the development of new technologies. Overuse of the Internet is pathological use of the web that causes negative consequences in everyday life, such as problems in interpersonal relationships, difficulties at work or school, as well as emotional and physical disorders. According to the definition of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), Internet addiction is an impulse control disorder that leads to an increasing

need to use the Internet and difficulty in reducing this behaviour, despite the negative consequences (Jarczyńska, 2015).

Phonoholism, meanwhile, is an addiction to mobile phones and other mobile devices that causes excessive use and negatively affects functioning in daily life. According to a 2019 study of a sample of more than 7,000 Poles, up to 64% of respondents had symptoms of mobile phone addiction.

The causes of phonoholism and Internet addiction are complex and may be the result of many factors, such as a lack of other forms of entertainment, difficulties in establishing interpersonal relationships or seeking an escape from difficult emotions. Losing oneself to the internet and mobile phones can also lead to social isolation, depression, anxiety, and sleep disorders. The effects may be both psychological and physical. The mental ones include emotional problems such as anxiety, depression, stress or concentration problems. It can also result in excessive use of computer games and thus in gaming-related emotional disorders. Physical effects can include, for example, sleep disorders, headaches, neck and back pain, as well as eye problems and excessive caffeine consumption.

There are various methods of dealing with excessive internet use and phonoholism. One solution is psychological therapy, which helps to deal with difficult emotions and also to raise awareness of the negative effects of addiction. It is also important to develop other forms of leisure activities, such as sports, hobbies or conversations with friends, which allows one to disconnect from the virtual world and gain distance from the problem. Education on the use of technology is also an important aspect. Parents and teachers should teach children and young people about the dangers of excessive Internet and mobile phone use and how to deal with addiction.

Introduction to the problem of time management in times of constant availability

Today, with technology providing us with almost unlimited access to information and communication, time management has become an important aspect of our lives. In times of constant availability at work, many people find it difficult to balance work and private life. This leads to health and mental health problems. Managing oneself in time is crucial to prevent professional burnout, improve performance and increase quality of life.

One of the easiest ways to manage yourself in time is to create a list of tasks that need to be completed during the day or week. This allows you to organise your thoughts and better organise your time. Then, there is scheduling, whereby you can work out exactly how much time you need to complete each task and adapt your schedule to your working style. A helpful tool is the Pomodoro method, which involves dividing work

time into 25-minute blocks with breaks after each block. This allows you to focus more on the task at hand and prevents distractions. There are also time management apps and programs, such as Trello, Asana, or RescueTime, which allow you to better organise your work and control the time spent on different activities. Tools that help with time management also include calendars, task lists, planners and online apps and tools.

To implement better time management practices, start by consciously planning your day. It is important to identify your goals and tasks and then assign them the appropriate priorities. You should also regularly analyse how much time you are spending on different activities and look for ways to increase productivity. It is also important to limit distractions such as social media or unnecessary emails.

At work, by contrast, it is also important to set limits between working time and leisure time. Employers should be aware that working beyond scheduled hours can result in job burnout and serious health problems in employees. Significant is to encourage breaks, provide and respect employees' time off, and allow them to switch off from work at the end of the day. In addition, employers can help employees manage their time by offering flexible working hours, time management training and allowing rest and leisure time.

It is also important for the employer to be aware that time off is necessary for the employee to rest and recuperate. One solution that employers can put in place is to establish clear rules for contacting employees during their free time, including setting hours when employees are not required to respond to emails or phones. Another way to do so is to introduce a system whereby employees do not have access to company equipment, such as phones or computers, after working hours. It is also important to define exceptions when contacting an employee outside of working hours is necessary.

The introduction of such practices can contribute to increasing employee satisfaction and improving their professional efficiency and productivity, as well as reducing the risk of job burnout or related mental illness.

In conclusion, employers should be careful about the way they interact with employees out of working hours so that the work-life balance is not compromised. Introducing clear policies and practices for contacting them during their free time can contribute to a significant increase in workplace satisfaction and better mental health.

Positive aspects of spending time online

Another worthwhile point to note is that technology is neither bad nor good (Newport, 2022). The significant aspect is to be able to use it to one's advantage, to develop one's assumptions and accepted values. New technologies with internet access give us many positive solutions. They can serve to:

- Communication with relatives, friends, and acquaintances regardless of the distance separating us – access to the Internet makes it possible to combine audio, video or simultaneous use of both.
- Accessing information – there is a huge resource of knowledge sites on every subject, from all walks of life or science.
- Sending e-mails – e-mail is much faster than sending a letter conventionally.
- Entertainment – films, series, games, music, etc. – The Internet is a "mine" of interesting entertainment.
- Shopping – without having to leave home.
- Dealing with official matters – thanks to the increased digitalisation of many offices during the Sars-CoV-2 pandemic.
- Online banking – this means making payments online or through dedicated mobile apps.
- Booking – whether it's public transport tickets, plane or train tickets, hotel accommodation on the other side of the world or making sure what's on at a nearby cinema.

Referring to the many aforementioned conveniences that we can experience thanks to technological devices, the authors conclude that all too often we get warnings from all sorts of quarters about the low level of online security. Not enough is said about the benefits we can derive from it.

Conclusion

The technological revolution, characterised by the constant implementation of new IT solutions, is a sign of our times. Both parents of primary or secondary school pupils and employees working remotely need to be able to distribute their duties favourably throughout the day. During the COVID-19 pandemic, most societies were obliged to use Internet channels much more frequently to carry out their duties, contact authorities or maintain social ties. For those inexperienced with spending so much time in front of a computer screen, this has been a challenge. Working or learning remotely does not always require a camera and does not mean being constantly watched by colleagues, a boss or a teacher. Success depends on the self-discipline of the person. It was important to manage one's time in such a way as to achieve daily goals. The adult is certainly more focused and can achieve his or her goals more consciously. In the case of the pupil, it is the parent who should provide advice and experience on many issues, as well as take controlling action at some stage. This allows young people to develop healthy habits in navigating the world of virtual technology.

In active professionals, the danger arising from a lack of ability to separate work and private time was also noted. Positive effects come from assertiveness training and regular task planning. From the analysis of sources on phonoholism, it appears that a socially helpful intervention may be the dissemination of principles of hygienic smartphone use.

Digital media users need to be shown the negative aspects of the media, but also the qualities that many people are unaware of. For it is not just a waste of time, but can also be a very good source of knowledge about the world. It can be assumed that the use of digital technologies will gradually become the new "natural" working environment for the majority of society.

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