Chapter 13
Trends in Technoethics:
The Case of E-Technology A/Buse at Work

INTRODUCTION

Technology... is a queer thing. It brings you great gifts with one hand, and it stabs you in the back with the other - C.P. Snow

The widespread integration of electronic technologies in contemporary organizations is transforming organizational operations and how people work. This can partly be attributed to the advent of reliable technological infrastructures, increased workflow efficiency, and operational cost savings that can be achieved by utilizing electronic technologies. New electronic technologies allow organizational members to exchange more information in less time and with greater flexibility than possible through

traditional means. Electronic technology common to organizations includes, but is not limited to, computer monitoring and filtering systems, surveillance cameras, IM and other chat tools, electronic mail and voicemail, Internet, audio and video conferencing tools, personal data assistants, and mobile devices. Non-work-related use of electronic technologies may include personal use of electronic technologies as well as institutional uses of counter measure electronic technologies to control personal use.

In spite of their ubiquity and remarkable benefits, there are substantial obstacles to ethically responsible electronic technology use that has given rise to debate within organizations. Of particular concern to organizations are electronic technology mis-uses with ethical and legal implications which could compromise organizations and their reputation in the public eye. Documented research on the misuses of electronic technologies within workplace contexts include, cyberloafing, network attacks, information theft, unauthorized transmission of confidential information, transmis-sion of offensive jokes, deceptive communication, exchanging online pornography, online flaming, and online identity deception (Lim, 2002, Redding, 1996; Wilson, 2005). In response to this perceived problem, many organizations have responded through counter measures aimed at controlling personal use of electronic technolo-gies; include the installation of surveillance cameras, the enforcement of electronic technology use policies, and the installation of computer monitoring and filtering systems. This too has raised ethical concerns about human rights, freedom, and privacy issues. This suggests a serious disconnect revolving around technology giving rise to a technoethical crisis in the workplace. This is particularly salient among students who are entering the workforce as new employees. According to a recent survey conducted by Harris Interactive(2008):

Young workers [age 18 to 34] are also the most likely to use their employers' tech-nology for personal reasons. Nearly three-in-four (72%) check their personal email accounts during work, and 77% use their work Internet personally compared to 69% of office workers overall (12).

Unfortunately, the reasons behind controversial uses of electronic technologies in the workplace is a relatively understudied area with a paucity of studies focusing on ethical considerations underlying electronic technology use in work contexts. What are employees' ethical stances on personal use of electronic technologies during work hours? What are employees' ethical stances on the organizational use of counter measures (e.g., surveillance cameras, restriction policies, computer monitoring and filtering software, etc) to control the personal use of electronic technologies during work hours? What would affect employees' decision to use or not use electronic technologies for personal use during work hours? In view of the importance of

10 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/trends-technoethics-case-technology-abuse/40611

Related Content

Globalization and Global Health
Florencia Luna (2015). *International Journal of Technoethics (pp. 47-59).*
www.irma-international.org/article/globalization-and-global-health/131423

Exploring the Depths: Qualitative Research in Psychology
Devi Sekarand Mohanraj Bhuvaneswari (2024). *Methodologies and Ethics for Social Sciences Research (pp. 267-292).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/exploring-the-depths/337060

Ethical Theories and Computer Ethics
Matthew Charlesworthand David Sewry (2009). *Handbook of Research on Technoethics (pp. 186-204).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/ethical-theories-computer-ethics/21580

Obtaining Support for Eradication Programs Using a Common Ethical Language
Cameron David Brewer (2018). *International Journal of Technoethics (pp. 15-25).*
www.irma-international.org/article/obtaining-support-for-eradication-programs-using-a-common-ethical-language/208946

Technology Assessment and Technoethics Inquiry
Luppicini Rocci (2010). *Technoethics and the Evolving Knowledge Society: Ethical Issues in Technological Design, Research, Development, and Innovation (pp. 67-85).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/technology-assessment-technoethics-inquiry/40602