



“INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND CHANGE IN OFFICE WORK”

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Today's, information technology has become more important and seen as strategic partner to face the global challenges of modern economy i.e. pressure of intricacy of technologies, economic improbability and quick response. Technological advancement and fast access internet facility give a big push on business cycle to redesign and re-manage their organizations as per the same. This situation requires that port staff is to be aligned with the new changes, challenges and technical advancement and also increase in their level of competencies so that their function is maximized in new age of information technology.

We read the history of office work and analyze how the office work gradually convert or adopt the automation in his nature in organization. What kind of changing's are being develop in office work and it's become easier and authentic rather than past.

THE HISTORY OF OFFICE WORK

Office work is seen as maintain inventory and keeping records. There is no detail story is available of the ancient period. Now days, a huge number of clerks doing commonly related job in their offices. Before the twentieth century, mostly offices/ work offices were small and very often consist on a single man who handled the entire informal office records (Delgado, 1979)¹. A drastic change has become in last 100 years, in office sizing organizing, designing, working procedures, office technologies and women are also in office operation

The early nineties was started with a change of technologies and new ways to manage the office work when recently invented new technologies i.e. telephone and typewriter were started to utilize in office work environment . By 1940s, many manufacturers set up electromechanical machines to manipulate, sort and tally specialized paper records automatically (Kling, 1996). Design a centralized mechanism to integrate the different key

offices, some value able devises and equipments like specialized card-accounting machines which were more affordable and easy to understand introduced in office work. Since, the new technologies are often utilized to upraise and boost up the performance of offices and bring a drastic change in the form of organization: Women workers, increase in number of job and shifts control to central administrator can be viewed as the organizational change. From early to mid-twenties, women start to appointments as typist and clerk in office working and seen as short-term office workers working between school and marriage.

In the 1960s, some business such as banks, insurance companies and public agencies were started to convert and save their huge record on digital information system i.e. computer and replaced electromechanical paper-card system to digital computer system. Office clerks were filled information of firms, clients and different papers on routine basis and periodically delivered to special group of keypunchers which translated the same of cardboard cards known as Hollerith cards (Senn, 1998)². There is a separate department which knows as data-processing department received all punched cards for a week and month to update and produce the different kind of reports. However, some mistakes often seen a few cycles____sometimes weeks and months_____ to be founded and corrected. Computerize system at this stage required more correction and care because mistakes were highlighted very slowly. Data formatted on one system did not access on the other system easily. Reports are generated after a long period and merged from several separate systems were often looked as prohibitively complex, time-consuming and expensive to create. Professionals and managers often waited several months to obtain a new ones. Although, the earliest computer systems were speedier in processing large volumes of highly specialized transaction but they were also very rigid and cumbersome for many people who used (Senn, 1998)

Further, people are well versed in programming, commonly develop transaction-processing and report generation look after the data in data warehouses. Usually, organizations who are transacting a huge data and using a large network of special computer systems are located their data centers ,offices of programmers and computer operators in isolation and far from the organizational life. In last 25 years , a large number of organization has designed their data warehouses for information system and give a quick response, more flexible and to help a charm full display of the organizational activities. Today's a large number of terminals are connected and shared with databases are placed very common in organizations. (King, 1996)

During the 1980s and early 1990s, virtually every organization bought personal computers or PCs and workstations (Senn, 1998). However, this PC revolution could not bring and change in office equipment but it increases the variety for the people range that are ever linked with computers in daily routine, who are often men like managers, lawyers, accountants, architectures and so on. Many large organization are starting to use different computerized linked system like SMS, MMS and electronic mail to help their managers and professionals keep in contact when they are not in their offices. Some organizations are trying to establish their “virtual offices” and experimenting to push some of their staff in locations near to their clients, homes and other convenient locations and went off their regular offices.

Since the last decade many larger organization have been restructuring work methods (Kling,1996). In 1990s, the organizations introduced new trends of management that is decentralization. This new trends was touted by the some analyst as by-products of computerization but some of these were unrelated to computerization. Some analysts argued that the utilization of electronic mail and reporting system through computer made it able to satisfying of this corporate hierarchies. Similarly , in the united states recession of the late 1990s, many organizations laid off numerous workers, and the remaining staff often worked much harder and much longer hours(Kling, 1996). It's unidentified that this new technology i.e. computerization had any drastic influence of this pattern. Still, many organizations reviewed their employment contracts and restructured their working environment before the recession so as they could have increase a ratio of trained and skilled part-time and/or full time workers. This approach brought a spring of full-time and bright career jobs in specific organization that is obviously unrelated to computerization.

Today, a variety of speedy and powerful computers are being more likely used by typical clerk than really equivalent to his/her ten to fifteen year before. This digital machine i.e. computer capable to merge data from various sources and perform multiple processing simultaneously. But have jobs improved in a way that is commensurate with the technical improvement in computer system? This is a key question that will be examined from several vantage points in this section.

IT AND CHANGE IN OFFICE WORK

Maximum working on computer is the ultimate task and final stage of information technology to develop or upgrade the proficiency level of job for clerical workers and management staff. High level attention is needed in work life by two main reasons. These two

reasons are work place and work environment. Work place is mainly concerned to the people lives because computer has been involve and become more visible in their work in any sorts of setting that could be at home, schools, libraries, shopping centers ,bank etc. Workplaces practically understand how the computers solve different kind of problems and tackle a majority of people to a large variety of social and technical needs. Work environment, a path where people manipulates their working with Information Technology and share the practical experiences of computer. For example, Baily and Attewell (from Kling, 1996³) discussed that computerization has seen as less effective to increase the performance of organizations due to workers linked the same technology with their work so to get more benefits to themselves, such as preparing of office documents become more professional and wishing to get esteem with others, or managers becoming counterproductive control-freaks with computerized documents.

IT AND LATEST TECHNIQUE OF OFFICE WORK.

A significant feature of job life is concern to who control the problem of means to organized , the technique to people understand , and the individuals level of skills. In the 1980s, many professionals became enamored with microcomputers (Kling, 1996). The microcomputers seen as latest electronic typewriter for several types of typewriting and the engineers of this latest equipment save a side of their rules. The software of these electronic machines that computerized their calculation and generate different graphical data presentation so the professionals seen and forced the demand for microcomputers as their craze , simplicity and quick response of their computer devices. They think difficult to return on manual procedure of working. These professionals ever try to learn new ways and modified computers in terms to increase their control to their work and products. Computer makes their work more funny and less boring although the work was still remained in labor intensive.

Abbe Mowshowiz wrote in his book "The Social Dimensions of Office Automation." in these words and explain his vision:

Our principal point is that the lessons of the factory are the guiding principles of office automation. In large offices, clerical work has already been transformed into factory-like production systems. The latest technology- office automation- is simply being used to consolidate and further a well-established trend. For most clerical workers, this spells and intensification of factory discipline. For many professionals and managers, it signals a gradual loss of autonomy, task fragmentation and closer supervision-courtesy of computerized monitoring. Work

will become more abstract ... and opportunities for direct social interaction will diminish (Mowshowitz, 1986)⁴

Different researchers have different thoughts and ideas about the new computer technologies like as some think about electronic mail, would create ability in workers to bypass the rigid bureaucratic procedures (Hiltz and Turoff, 1978)⁵. Some other seen as that electronic mail can increase the performance to design their own culture (Finholt and Sproull, 1990)⁶. Some have predicted that electronic mail would break the boundaries for communication in the hierarchy of different level in an organization between the people. And some have hoped that electronic mail would reduce the barriers for communication between people at different levels of hierarchy in an organization. But the evidence is mixed. An interesting case was reported by Zuboff (1988)⁷ that raised the question to ask what situations are most favorably occur under less enthusiastic situation. She studied in a large drug company where as managers urged that the mails are used to communicate each other were mostly seen as policy statement however they are using these mails as informal communication or temporary decisions.

THE COMBINATION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND OFFICE WORK.

Mostly writers, written about computerization and office work, seen the computer system as highly trusted and an elegant device. However, a very few relatively studies in print the ways which individuals actually use software's in their offices, which version is being in their used what spaces in their skills, what kind of problems they are facing with system, how they meet to resolve when problems are occurred and how this sophisticated system can use in broader sense of office work.

These questions do not have simple answer. Many firms, software houses and organizations doing work to make it easier as much as they can. The best example is the working of departmental stores where different items of the departmental stores are linked with computerized cash register and the counter clerks are being used this computerized machine with very little skill of math., Dumais, and Koch (1989)⁸ wrote a case study about customer support representative and highlighted the simplicity of work was a major result of the computerization.

As such, the complexities of computerized system do not bother to look-over the issues of computerization because the simplification of computer system is so common. Clement (1990)⁹ wrote a case of computerization at secretarial level consist on managers of the organization which seen the new system as “super typewriters” and thought that there is no need to get any training but were very wrong. Many popular brands have “full featured” PC which loaded with software packages and consist on more than hundred features of text processing, spreadsheets, and database. Narratives, which gives the importance on capabilities usually and advise that individual can prepared their self to get all benefits offer in system because reality most often differs from these expectations. Individuals generally like to use speedy and powerful software after getting a little know-how that enough to accomplish their urgent and immediate task. Further, workers more commonly using multiple systems and often facing conflict in rules which further reduce the capability of the individuals to “use computer systems of their fullest advantage ”.All these difficulties and problems could be reduced or resolved when organization use uncomplicated software and train their staff to improve their performance and IT competence.

Finally, we discuss the history of the office work and periodically changes which converts the role of the office work from inventory and record keeping to machine. These are 100 years step by step changes where office documentation becomes office automation. IT brought a drastic change in the working of office life when the importance of people is raised especially after using high speed communication media where world become a global village and sharing of information has become too fast. IT also changed the environment of organizations where organizations started to adopt computerization with a variety of hardware and software same as to evolved organizational restructuring and accommodate the new challenges which have social and political factors and also have impact on organizational changes. Accountability, ability to be financially able, customer-oriented and quality driven are the issues of good ‘corporate governance’ and deemed as the top priority of the organization activities. This scenario also raised the level of competency that some identified IT competencies in this study are needed to be review whilst the competencies descriptions need to be ‘adjusted’ in clerical workers accordingly.

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- ³ Kling R. (1996). *Computerization and controversy: Value Conflicts and Social Choices* (2nd Edition) San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
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- ⁵ Hiltz, S.R. and Turoff, M.(1978). *The Network Nation: Human Communication via computer*. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.
- ⁶ Finholt T. and Sproull, L. (1990). *Electronic Groups at Work* *Organization Science*, 1 (1),P-41-46
- ⁷ Zuboff, Shoshana (1988). *In the Age of the Smart Machine: The Future of Work and Power*. Basic
- ⁸ Kraut, R., Dumais S., and Koch, S.(1989). *Computerization, Productivity and Quality of Worklife*, *Communications of the ACM*. 32 (2) P 220.238
- ⁹ Clement, A. (1990). *Computer Support for Cooperative Work: A Social Perspective on Empowering End Users*. *Proceedings of the Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work*. Los Angeles CA. October 7-10, 1990, 223.236