

## O que é smartphone? perspectiva filosófica: reflexão sobre o uso do smartphone na nova vida normal

What is smartphone? philosophical perspective: reflection on the use of smartphone in the new normal life

¿Qué es el teléfono inteligente? perspectiva filosófica: reflexión sobre el uso de teléfonos inteligentes en la nueva vida normal

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### **Resumo**

O uso de *smartphones* durante esta pandemia aumentou rapidamente. Estes aparelhos são os meios de comunicação mais utilizados em comparação com outros. Isso ocorre, em grande parte, porque os smartphones têm vários recursos e aplicativos que podem ajudar os usuários a concluir seu trabalho, obter entretenimento e interagir com outras pessoas. No entanto, em toda tecnologia usada pelas pessoas, sempre há riscos em potencial. A filosofia, como a mais antiga maneira sistemática de pensar, procura descobrir o que há por trás desses dispositivos móveis. A filosofia da tecnologia, que surgiu na era moderna, é um ramo da filosofia que busca examinar a natureza da tecnologia; ontologia, epistemologia e axiologia. Com base no pensamento dos filósofos modernos, filosoficamente, os *smartphones* não são apenas um meio de comunicação. Isso muda a maneira como os seres humanos entendem o mundo. Um mundo sem smartphones é um mundo material no qual as pessoas vivem como organismos

vivos. Por meio desses dispositivos, o mundo se transforma em digital, onde tudo se torna possível. Ele possibilita várias facilidades para interagir e explorar o mundo virtual, oferecendo aventuras que muitas vezes, não podem ser realizadas no mundo real. A facilidade e o prazer proporcionados pelos *smartphones* acabam criando apegos que tendem a se transformar em dependência. Esses problemas que devem ser percebidos imediatamente pelas pessoas, para que não sejam muito complacentes no uso desses aparelhos na nova vida normal.

**Palavras-chave:** Smartphone; Filosofia; Novo normal.

## Abstract

The use of smartphones during this pandemic increased rapidly. Smartphones are the most widely used communication media compared to other communication media. This is because smartphones have various features and applications that can help users in completing their work, getting entertainment, and interacting with others. However, in every technology used by humans, there are always potential dangers that threaten them. Philosophy, as the oldest systematic way of thinking, seeks to discover what lies behind smartphones. Technology philosophy, which emerged in the modern age, is a branch of philosophy that seeks to examine the nature of technology; ontology, epistemology, and axiology. Based on the thinking of modern philosophers, philosophically, smartphones are not just a means of communication. It changes the way humans understand the world. A world without smartphones is a material world in which people live as living organisms. But, through smartphones, the world changes into digital where everything becomes possible. It offers various facilities in interacting and exploring the virtual world, offering adventures that cannot be done in the real world. The ease and enjoyment provided by smartphones eventually creates attachment that tends to turn into dependency, problems that must be realized immediately by people so they not to be too complacent in using smartphones in the new normal life.

**Keywords:** Smartphone; Philosophy; New normal.

## Resumen

El uso de teléfonos inteligentes durante esta pandemia aumentó rápidamente. Los teléfonos inteligentes son los medios de comunicación más utilizados en comparación con otros medios de comunicación. Esto se debe a que los teléfonos inteligentes tienen varias características y aplicaciones que pueden ayudar a los usuarios a completar su trabajo, obtener entretenimiento

e interactuar con otros. Sin embargo, en cada tecnología utilizada por los humanos, siempre hay peligros potenciales que los amenazan. La filosofía, como la forma de pensar sistemática más antigua, busca descubrir qué hay detrás de los teléfonos inteligentes. La filosofía tecnológica, que surgió en la era moderna, es una rama de la filosofía que busca examinar la naturaleza de la tecnología; ontología, epistemología y axiología. Basado en el pensamiento de los filósofos modernos, filosóficamente, los teléfonos inteligentes no son solo un medio de comunicación. Cambia la forma en que los humanos entienden el mundo. Un mundo sin teléfonos inteligentes es un mundo material en el que las personas viven como organismos vivos. Pero, a través de los teléfonos inteligentes, el mundo se transforma en un ser digital donde todo se hace posible. Smartphone ofrece varias facilidades para interactuar y explorar el mundo virtual, ofreciendo aventuras que no se pueden hacer en el mundo real. La facilidad y el disfrute proporcionados por los teléfonos inteligentes eventualmente crean un apego que tiende a convertirse en dependencia, problemas que las personas deben resolver de inmediato para que no sean demasiado complacientes al usar teléfonos inteligentes en la nueva vida normal.

**Palabras clave:** Teléfono inteligente; Filosofía; Nueva normalidad.

## 1. Introduction

Before this pandemic, modern people had lived a double life, two interconnected lives, complementary and defeating each other, the life that we call the real life and the virtual one. Living in two types of lives in two different worlds gives many advantages and disadvantages for people. It is because things that cannot be done in one world can be done in the other, and vice versa. The real world is the actual world in which humans live in, interacting using their bodies, while the virtual world can only be entered using the latest tools, a combination of communication and information technology, which is minimized in a tool called smartphone.

At the first time, the pandemic was named The 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), then WHO announced a new name on February 11th 2020 namely Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) virus. The SARSCoV-2 sequence is similar to a coronavirus isolated from bats, so the hypothesis appears that SARS-CoV-2 originates from bats which then mutate and infect humans.

Antivirus for covid 19 is not expected to be found soon, while life must go on. Several countries in the world have begun to adopt new lifestyles to stay side by side with covid 19

while continuing to apply health protocols according to WHO standards, the way of life known as new normal life. In the new normal life, people are again allowed to live their lives, work, go out, interact with other people but by carrying out covid 19 prevention procedures, such as physical distancing, using masks, hand washing and so on.

When people applied physical distancing, they don't have to do social distancing, actually, because human beings are naturally born as social creatures. People always need other people, even if they are not physically close to one another. Philosophically speaking, ontologically, humans are being in the world and being with others (Heidegger, 2001). People cannot live alone to fulfill their existential needs, even though they may not admit it. No such thing as a man who exists singly and solely on his own (Heidegger, 1977). Human's relationship with his world is not just a cognitive relationship, but more than that, he cannot separate himself from the world and the world cannot be separated from him, that Being in the world in a unitary phenomenon (Oaklander, 1996).

Physical distancing immediately turns into social distancing. People move away from each other and feel suspicious each other. Economic activity is disrupted when people are prohibited from interacting with others, even for work. Schools are closed, and teaching and learning activities run virtually. Going through a lockdown or new normal period is indeed disturbing life in the real world, but it does not the same in cyberspace. People can still live a normal lives in cyberspace, and that happens only by smartphones. Smartphones, thus, play a very important role in human life, both in the real and virtual worlds.

When people blinded by the benefits and functions offered by certain tools, people tend to ignore the potential threats that can arise. Heidegger stated: "What is dangerous is not technology. Technology is not demonic; but its essence is mysterious "(Heidegger, 1977). The danger is when people don't know what their hands are holding, that the tools helping their works can hurt themselves.

Some modern and contemporary thinkers have written their thoughts about technology in a philosophical perspective, both from the perspective of ontology, epistemology and axiology, such as Heidegger, Borgmann, Ihde and so on. They do this so that people fully understand technology, not just its function or material.

This study seeks to uncover the nature of smartphones from a philosophical point of view by using the thoughts of technology philosophers as the basis of analysis. Some parts of this article are parts of a larger study that we are doing about smartphones from a philosophical point of view to find their effect on human existence.

## 2. Research Methodology

This research is philosophical study and, therefore, used qualitative research methodology. Using philosophical thinking of technology philosophy main figures, such as Martin Heidegger, Albert Borgmann and Don Ihde, as stand points, we search to understand the essence of smartphone and see its relevances in this covid era.

We used Heidegger's "Question Concerning Technology" (1977), Borgmann's "Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life" (1984) and Ihde's "Technics and Praxis" (1978) as the primary sources to analyze the ontology of smartphone. Three of them have one thing in common beside their concern about technology. All of them used phenomenology as their basic philosophical stand point, and this made them as existentialist philosophers.

## 3. Albert Borgmann's Focal Thing

The development of tools from simple form to sophisticated and modern one makes the role of tools increasingly felt in all human activities and touches all aspects of life. The success of tools in helping humans is based on the tool's functioning factor such as 'imitating' the human body role which is better in many ways. Simply stated, the relationship between humans and technology is driven from the usability principle formulated by Daniel Fallman in five E's; effective, efficient, engaging, error tolerant, and easy to learn (Fallman, 2010).

According to ISO 9241-11 standard, usability is the level at which a product can be used by certain users to achieve specific goals effectively, efficiently, and satisfactorily in a particular use (Fallman, 2009). Furthermore, Fallman calls this the usability as 'paradigm'. Paradigm is a basic belief, a foundation to see the world, which although implicit in nature, but greatly influences human behavior. One characteristic of a good technology is automation. The smaller of the humans role, the better is the technology. The technology was developed by engineers by utilizing artificial intelligence to make the task can be completed with less effort, expertise and patience, just by pressing a button. The button finally became a thing that spread throughout the world and became a kind of tradition for all human kind. This was termed by Albert Borgmann as the paradigm device.

Borgmann, like Heidegger, saw technology as a negative thing if the potential danger contained therein is not realized. "Technology ... promises to bring the forces of nature and culture under control, to liberate us from misery and toil, and to enrich our lives .... Implied in

the technological mode of taking up with the world there is a promise that this approach to reality will, by way of the domination of nature, yield liberation and enrichment "(Borgmann, 2001).

Borgmann, thus, stated that what is offered by technology makes people believe that a good life is a life that is supported by technology. Borgmann's statement was based on his reading of the thoughts of Descartes and Bacon who saw knowledge and technology as the main conditions for human mastery of the world, that the purpose of developing science and technology is domination of nature (Borgmann, 1984). Borgmann's opinion received support from Strong who stated: "The good life that devices obtain disappoints our deeper aspirations. The promise of technology, pursued endlessly, is simultaneously alluring and managing '(Strong, 2000).

The convenience offered by modern technology makes technology inseparable and plays a very dominant role in human life, to displace old things that were once part of human life, such as cooperation, hard work and patience. Human involvement in the process of achieving something is getting smaller, and all can be done by pressing button. As a result, the togetherness that characterizes humans as social creatures is marginalized. According to Borgmann, togetherness in achieving something is called the focal thing. The 'fire furnace', an example used by Borgmann, not only serves as a provider of warmth to the occupants of the house, but also a symbol of togetherness where all family members gather and enjoy comfort by interacting each other. "It is provided for the entire family a regular and bodily engagement with the rhythm of the seasons that was woven together with the threat of cold and the solace of warmth, the smell of wood smoke, the exertion of sawing and carrying, the teaching of skills , and the fidelity to daily tasks "(Borgmann, 1984). Focal things, then, are a unifier of a family or group, which presents harmony when family members work together to maintain or achieve a common goal. ... a focal thing is not an isolated entity; it exists as a material center in a complicated network of human relationships and relationships to its natural and cultural settings (Strong, 2000).

When modern technology enters the household, the furnace is replaced by television, the interaction between fellow family members fades, because all attention is on the television, not their fellowmen. Technology, therefore, is a threat to focal things. Technology is the opposite of focal things; because technology is disposable, mass-produced, intermittent and independent of the larger context, such as harmony between humans, and harmony between humans and the world. The characteristic of focal things, according to Borgmann, is to unite means and goals, work and results, individuals and groups, mind and body, and body

and the world (Fallman, 2010). Bringing warmth through a furnace requires joint efforts such as finding firewood, burning, maintaining a flame and so on, where those efforts require energy from family members, reason, effort, expertise and patience, all of which are strung together.

Borgmann saw that modern technology, which is driven by advances in information technology, tends to deconstruct existing things and reorganize them into mere tools or modern technology, which leads to a modern lifestyle which is poor in social and ecological values. Strong added: "In this rising tide of technological devices, disposable superseded commanding presence, discontinuity wins over continuity, and glamorous thrills trump centering experiences (Strong, 2000). The disposable and discontinued nature of modern technology is based on a spirit of innovation and continuous development that results in technology quickly becoming obsolete when new technologies emerge. In addition to innovation factors, modern human lifestyles also create a consumptive culture that always thirsty for new things, so that, in its aftermath, many technologies are developed not only to help human work, but rather to comply with market demand that arises only to fulfill a modern lifestyle.

In his book "Holding onto Reality - The Nature of Information at The Turn of the Millennium" (2000) Borgman divides information into three groups; information about reality, information for reality and information as reality. Information about reality is a type of information that is generally understood, that information is delivering news about something, such as news delivered through objective mass media. A person is informed by a sign about something (Borgmann, 2000). Information for reality is information about something so that something becomes a reality, such as information about building design. Borgamnn calls this type of information the term cultural information. Cultural information is distinctively for the shaping of reality. Architectural drawings or musical scores can be easily recorded as a recipe for making buildings or music (Borgmann, 2000). When an architect draws the design of a building, then the picture it presents is not information that just needs to be known by others, but is intended so that the information contained in the form of building design is realized in the form of a real building. Information as reality is typical of modern technology in which information technology is no longer just a role to convey information, but technology is information itself (Borgmann, 2000). This is due to the ability of modern technology not just to take pictures and present them, but more than that. Modern technology can improve the image of an object beyond reality. Using a memory chip, a person can take pictures, then save the portrait for enjoyment wherever and whenever. Frances Yates in "The Art Of Memory"

says "in the ages before printing a trained memory was vitally important" (Yates, 1999). Through the memory chip, trained memory is no longer needed. Memory chips and all forms of modern information technology, in Borgmann's perspective, are reality itself.

For modern people, this is the third type of information that makes information technology so loved, and creates a new culture that has never been found in the history of human civilization before. Information technology is no longer just a tool to convey a message about something, but technology itself is a message, a reality. The medium is the message is thus the term used by McLuhan in Understanding Media-The Extension of Man (1994). Borgmann and McLuhan have something in common in viewing information technology as not just a means of delivering information. Supported by the consumptive lifestyle of modern society, information technology acts more as a self-image, to show social status or economic status, for example.

Internet-based information technology makes communication between people increasingly infinite. Digital interactions that cut costs and distances of thousands of kilometers defeat face-to-face interactions involving blood and flesh. Communication run only with the touch of a finger strongly supports the principle of 5E; effective, efficient, engaging, error tolerant, and easy to learn, and does not require effort, skill and patient, the typical of focal things.

#### 4. The Body and Technology

A complete philosophical description of embodied technology was first made by Don Ihde in his Technics and Praxis (1978) who tried to describe what he called the phenomenology of human-machine relations (Ihde, 1978). The form of relations that occur between man-machine world is exemplified by Ihde through chalk that is etched onto the blackboard. When chalk scratches the blackboard, we feel the surface of the blackboard through the touch of the chalk tip. Chalk seems to replace the role of the fingertips that touch the surface of the board. We feel rough or smooth whiteboard through the touch of the tip of the chalk. "... the chalk is only secondarily an 'object', while more primarily it is absorbed into my experience as an extension of myself" (Ihde, 1978). When the hand holds the chalk, the chalk only seems to be the object of the hand, but what actually happens is the chalk becomes part of the way we experience their world because the chalk has become an extension of the person's hand.

Although chalk seems to play the role of a finger, something else is lost when the role of touch is replaced by chalk. The finger does not feel the chill warm surface. Something was reduced in that relationship. Limestone cannot play the role of the sensory nerves of the fingertips (Ihde, 1978). Chalk, or other tools, that create transparent spatial relations between humans and the world. The human-tool-world relationship shows the space or distance between humans and the world, the distance represented by the tool. But the tools that create space between humans and the world are transparent, obscured by the role played by the tool. The better the quality of a tool, the more transparent it is (Ihde, 1978).

Ihde, using a phenomenological perspective, calls the mediating role of the tool "technological intentionality" (Ihde, 1990), in the sense that technology has its own direction, resembling consciousness in Husserl's terminology (Verbeek, 2005). This shows the influence of Husserl and Heidegger so great on Ihde. Ihde, thus, agreed with Heidegger who stated that the technology is ready to hand which is always in a position 'in order to'.

For Ihde, technological intentionality in its continuity is manifested in technological embodiment. Man intentionality to his world is through awareness that is thrown through his body mediated by tools. The tool, therefore, seems to portray the human body, the tool becomes the human body. There are things that cause humans to choose to use tools as a mediator with their world. The most dominant cause is to overcome the limitations of the body, both in terms of material and shape. The tool was created to produce a magnification of basic human capabilities. Tools are made stronger, faster, more accurate than human organs, the character that humans need to help solve their life problems, and at the same time to conquer nature. In addition, on the contrary, the tool also reduces human capabilities. In many cases, some tools were created precisely to reduce human biological capabilities, such as feeling hot or cold. The ability of humans to create tools with characters chosen and adapted to human needs makes the role of tools very dominant in human life, and sometimes makes dependence on them.

The various tools that mediate human relations with the world apparently do not play the same role. Ihde divides the form of human interaction with the world through tools in two parts; first: embodiment relation, which he described as relationships (human-instrument) -> world, second: hermeneutical relations which he described as relations human-> (world-instruments) (Ihde, 1978). The difference that occurs in a relationship is determined by the type of tool that is the medium of human relations with the world, between traditional tools and modern tools.

(Human-instrument) -> the world means that humans use instruments to connect with the world. Here the role of the instrument is only as an extension of human organs. Natural limitations that accompany the organs of the human body are tried to be overcome by creating tools. When a tool replaces the organs of the human body, the material form of the tool becomes obscure, so that only roles appear by the instrument (Ihde, 1978). In this case, Ihde seems to be influenced by Heidegger who states "The assignment themselves are not observed; ... But when an assignment has been disturbed - when something is unusable for some purpose - then the assignment becomes explicit"(Heidegger, 2001). An instrument becomes 'invisible' just when the instrument is damaged. Instrument disruption (un-readiness to hand) in its function makes it visible, and becomes present at hand, in Heidegger's terminology (Heidegger, 2001).

Modern tools and traditional tools can be easily recognized. The working system of traditional tools can be easily understood by ordinary people. The workings of scissors, fishing rods, hoes can be understood only with the naked eye. While the working system of modern tools is not easily understood by ordinary people. Calculators, computers, smartphones and so on operate in a process that is not understood by its users, except by people who specialize in and time to learn it. In Ihde's perspective, all traditional tools form bodily relations with humans (embodiment relations). This is because traditional tools only work to replace the role of human organs and do not yet have an artificial intelligence that can replace the role of the human mind. Meanwhile, some modern technology still plays the role of bodily relations, because indeed not all modern technologies are equipped with artificial intelligence that is able to analyze the world and expose it to humans.

The second relation, human -> (world-instrument) is a hermeneutic relation. It means that the world understood by humans through tools. This is clearly different from bodily relations which place the tool as an extension of the human body. In hermeneutic relations, humans understand the world through instruments, or instruments present the data that humans need to see about the world. In this relation, instruments and the world, no blurring occurs (Ihde, 1978). One example given by Ihde is an infrared image where what is seen by the naked eye is different from what is presented through the instrument.

Microscope technology is able to perform the amplification and reduction of objects which is clearly far different from pre-modern optical devices. The microscope is capable of displaying the smallest images of an object that cannot be seen through the human naked eye. But, when the microscope displays the smallest image of an object, the overall image of the object disappears. When the microscope shows an image of leaf cells, for example, the leaf

itself becomes invisible. This is stated by Ihde as mono dimension (Ihde, 1978). The ability of the instrument in amplification and reduction is the reference for the discoveries of modern science. Scientific knowledge in the modern era is generated through the use of modern instruments. Therefore, Ihde stated "Contemporary science is technologically embodied science" (Ihde, 1978). "The successful search for atomic subparticles, for DNA structures, for the various varieties of the micro-structure of the world appear through the mediation of the sophisticated instrument" (Ihde, 1978). The instrument used to examine invisible things works indirectly in the role of the eye, and through the complicated process of turning data into images, or vice versa. This is called Ihde as instrumental intentionality that is able to display things invisible, displaying high contrast forms of the results of amplification and reduction. In addition, modern instruments are able to perform analytes automatically which reduce objects to mono dimensions used to examine objects. These things are seen by Ihde as "the only way to gather knowledge about the highly micro or macro elements of the World" (Ihde, 1978).

Both forms of this relationship put technology as a mediator for humans and their world. We work, overcome, and understand the world through technology. The invention of the processor, artificial intelligence, which has only occurred since the modern era has changed the shape, function, ability and role of technology as a mediator that is far more autonomous than human intervention. Modern technology no longer plays the role of bodily relations, which only enhances the function of human organs, but furthermore technology also becomes an extension of human consciousness. Modern technology is able to analyze, remember, and process relatively better than human mind. At this time, only human feelings have not been able to be imitated by technology.

## 5. Smartphone According to Philosophy

Heidegger states that technology enframe modern people to see the world as *bestand*, as standing reserve that are always waiting to be exploited. So, using technology, the world is no longer seen as it really is, but has become a kind of raw material that is waiting to be processed to become something else, something for the benefit of humans. What Heidegger said was the essence of technology, that technology changes the way humans understand the world. Technology, therefore, is the way humans see, know and understand the world, an epistemology. Different understanding of the world will trigger different actions towards the world because most human actions are indeed dependent and determined by human

knowledge. "The kind of dealing which is closest to us is not a bare perceptual cognition, but rather that kind of concern which manipulates things and puts them to use; and this has its own kind of knowledge " (Heidegger, 2001).

The idea that technology is only a kind of applied science, which confirms that only science determines human knowledge, and not the material that forms a technological hardware is increasingly abandoned, because when someone uses technology, a different understanding of the world emerges, even if that person did not understand the science that underlies the creation of the technology. People believe the truth of the calculation using a calculator even though that person does not know how to work a calculator. Science and technology, thus, have different epistemologies.

Don Ihde, continuing Heidegger's view, divides world human relations using tools in two groups, (human-instrument) -> world and humans -> (instrument-world). The first type of relationship, (human-instrument) -> the world is a general form of relationship, where humans use tools to understand, interact, use and or conquer the world. This relation applies to all types of equipment, from primitive, modern, simple or even complex and sophisticated, both manual and automatic, from hoes to tractors, from abacus to computers. Ihde calls this relation the term instrumental relation.

The second relation, namely human-> (the tool of the world) is a relationship in which humans understand the world through the data conveyed by the tool, and therefore, the tools involved in this relation do not apply to all types of tools, but only the tools which are able to obtain, process and provide information to humans about things that are difficult or cannot be obtained by humans only by utilizing human's natural abilities about the world. This second type of relation relates only to the way humans see, understand and know the world in which tools give a greater role in the process, while humans who use tools are 'passive' to the information provided. Ihde calls this relation the term hermeneutical relation. In general, a tool that functions in this second type of relationship is a tool that has been equipped with the ability to think, analyze and draw conclusions, a tool that already has a kind of intelligence in itself, an artificial intelligence

Smartphones are used by humans for both types of relations. As a tool in general, smartphones change the way humans view others, and the world. The world, through smartphones, is no longer seen as an enormous reality, gripping, and full of mystery, but has been transformed into two-dimensional images that can be captured, manipulated, spread, then manipulated again, and spread again in a cycle that seems without limits. Humans, through smartphones, see and understand the world differently than humans see through

naked eye. An event that occurs is not just remembered and told orally, but recorded through a camera screen, then spread in cyberspace through social media and become social consumption. This shows that the perspective of humans towards an event has changed since the use of smartphones in everyday life. In some cases, the desire to record and capture an event seems greater than the desire to take part in the event.

Existing features in smartphones are made and always developed, in addition to making it easy for users to do work, also to provide fun, including through games, multimedia facilities, and connectivity with the world. These built-in and pairing features make users feel comfortable dealing with smartphones compared to the real world. The pleasure of using a smartphone can make people forget with the real world, ignorant of everything that is materially around them. These things become obscured when all views, attention and awareness are directed at the smartphone screen. Even though many things displayed on the smartphone screen are imitations of the real world, still it's not the real world.

Don Ihde called the tool is an extension of the human body. This also applies to smartphones. What makes the difference is that generally the tool is only an extension of one of the organs of the human body, for example a bicycle as an extension of the leg, binoculars as an extension of the eye, a hoe as an extension of the arm, and so on. This is different from a smartphone because a smartphone device is an extension of various organs of the human body. Humans see using a smartphone, talking, doing a task, thinking even using a smartphone. The smartphone seems to embody the slogan 'world in your hand'.

The role of smartphones as an extension of the human body, which touches almost every aspect of human affairs sometimes raises dependency, Marshal McLuhan calls it technological technological determinism, which makes smartphone users seem unable to carry out their life activities without a smartphone. Technological determinism, if connected with epistemology, will come to an understanding that humans depend on smartphones to understand the world and without smartphones humans have difficulty understanding the world. This can be seen how humans feel like 'missing the news' if they don't use their smartphone for a while. The flow of news that is spread through social media or online news media at any time undergoes changes and developments because the news is always reported every new event occurs, does not wait for certain hours broadcast on television, or until tomorrow when it is published in print news media.

Someone with a smartphone connected to the internet means that the person is connected to all information available from all corners of the world. Just by using a smartphone, one can learn everything instantly, from simple things like how to cook rice to

the most complicated things like how to make a plane. If smart people used to have to spend hours every day to read books, both at home or in the library, now concise and practical information can be directly obtained by opening a smartphone, anywhere and anytime.

Smartphones provide all kinds of information about the world. In Ihde's perspective, the ability of smartphones in this case shapes human relations with the world through smartphones is no longer merely instrumental, but also a hermeneutical relationship. Humans understand the world through smartphones. Smartphones play a role as sources of information, sources of knowledge. Users do not have a role in shaping or formulating information obtained through smartphones. He only receives, reads, understands the information conveyed. The only role that can be done is to determine the various information conveyed through smartphones to be sorted and selected according to the wishes, suitability or educational background of the user, while for the information content he gets he is passive.

All types of information in cyberspace can be accessed using smartphones, online scientific journals, free writing (blogs), digital libraries, or status on social media. The ease of getting information using this smartphone can create dependency, creating lazy nature to learn, because only by using a smartphone the same knowledge can be obtained without the need to waste the time reading books in the library or buying book. In terms of epistemology, smartphone, for some people, has become a kind of opium for its users, which makes it easy but easy to relax, idle and even fool.

As a result of smartphones, humans have evolved into *Homo conecticus*, humans who are always connected with other people and with the world. Being a *homo conecticus* means that humans are always connected to other people even when they are not using their smartphones. When someone enters the virtual world, anyone can interact with him, including people who are not known in the real world. If in the real world a person can choose guests who can enter the house, then in cyberspace it cannot be done. In the real world, a person can choose what information he wants to know, choose a reading book, ask a certain person, in cyberspace, all kinds of information fill the space. Curiosity about things that might actually not need to be known. When curiosity requires fulfillment, exploration will be carried out to obtain that information, information that could be dangerous for himself and for others.

Another problem that arises in smartphone epistemology is the validity of truth. When everyone can write and express opinions, ideas, thoughts and all kinds in cyberspace, the level of truth of the information conveyed becomes vague. Not all information in the real world or the virtual world is true, or wrong. But the level of validity of information that exists in the real world tends to be easier to prove, because what is faced is the real information maker.

This is different from information in cyberspace. The author or provider of information is anonymous, it could be the identity of the information maker is the real person, but it is very open to the possibility that the identity is not that person's identity. In addition, it is possible that any writings in the cyberspace refer to writings that are spread in cyberspace as well, making it difficult to check the validity of information or the identity of the author.

As a tool in general, smartphones are developed to help people in their life, both as social creatures and individual beings. Smartphones are used to bring entertainment, work, communicate and interact, help with work, and so on. Smartphone is not just an extension of human body, but also at the same time is an extension of human consciousness. Smartphones work like computers that capable of helping human tasks. Artificial intelligence technology embedded in smartphones makes smartphones a thinking tool. Human memory limitations can be overcome by using smartphone memory, limited analytical ability can be overcome by the processor planted in the smartphone. The process of remembering and thinking which is the main activity to get knowledge becomes easier through a smartphone. Using a smartphone is like using a second head, which can be invited to think without fear of the risk of dizziness. Users only need to determine what themes or material they want to think about, smartphones will think about it. The greater the processor capacity embedded in the smartphone, the faster the smartphone provides answers to the questions.

## **6. The Use of Smartphone in the Covid 19 era**

Smartphones become a bridge between people when the body must be away from each other in order to prevent transmission of this virus. Smartphones, thus, help maintain human existence as social creatures. Through smartphones, physical distancing does not mean to be social distancing. People who often use social media through their smartphones may not be too troubled when forced into physical distancing, but it will be a problem for people who are reluctant or not accustomed using social media to interact. Without a smartphone to communicate or social media, physical distancing will really feel like social distancing.

Fortunately, modern humans are spoiled by the availability of smartphones on the market with very affordable prices, including supported by adequate infrastructure to communicate or to enter cyberspace. Today, almost every adult in the world has a smartphone, even some of them have more than one smartphone for one person. This shows that modern people do not have problems with communication between them. In addition,

almost all other activities can be done via smartphones, such as trading, education, meetings, coordination, seminars, and so on, but of course with a little adjustment.

The ability of a smartphone to connect a person with other or in a community sometimes makes that person neglect the actual people nearby. Being busy interacting with other people in cyberspace makes him forget to interact with people who are next to him in real life. In fact, if someone has become a nomophobia, he will be increasingly ignorant with those around him.

Dependence on smartphones eventually leads to a psychiatric disease called nomophobia, which stands for *no mobile phone phobia*, that is a feeling of fear or anxiety without the presence of a cell phone (Rabathy, 2018). This feeling arises due to the dependence of someone with their smartphone, the feeling of not being able to live comfortably without a smartphone. The sufferer of this nomophobia at least opens his smartphone thirty four times a day and even takes his smartphone into the toilet (Rabathy, 2018). Research results submitted by SecurEnvoy.com in February 2012 showed that 66% of one thousand respondents surveyed in the British plains expressed fear or anxiety when separated from their smartphone. Based on these studies also found that the symptoms of this nomophobia attacking adolescents between the ages of 18-24 years. Nomophobia is considered as a mental problem that arose in the twentieth century (Asensio et al, 2018). A study conducted in the UK in 2008 showed that 53% of smartphone users experienced symptoms of nomophobia (Cheever et al, 2014). The initial symptoms of nomophobia are panic when losing a smartphone. This panic will appear directly when someone realizes that the smartphone is left behind or lost. When someone experiences nomophobia, he considers the people around him as unimportant and less valuable, because he feels he has lost the most valuable thing to himself.

Based on research conducted by Ibrahim Arpacı et al published in the Journal of Medical Internet Research 017 vol. 19 iss. 12 e404 titled "Individual Differences in the Relationship Between Attachment and Nomophobia Among College Students: The Mediating Role of Mindfulness", explains that nomophobia arises because someone who is separated from his smartphone feels himself unable to communicate with others, unable to obtain information, lost connected with others, and loss of comfort (Arpacı, 2018). These feelings result in the emergence of anxiety and discomfort when not with his smartphone. Without a smartphone, people with nomophobia will feel lonely in a crowd, lose the ability to think and get information, lose entertainment, lose connection to the world, so that what remains is a feeling of alienation, solitude, anxiety and discomfort.

Things that need to be considered when people are busy using smartphones when they have to do physical distancing is the emergence of nomophobia massively. Accustomed to using a smartphone to carry out daily activities for several months during a lockdown can make someone comfortable with the situation and are reluctant to return to their previous forms of life. New normal is a transition period between physical distancing life with the previous normal life.

Nomophobia arises because of the attachment to the smartphone. Ibrahim Arpacı, quoting the writing of Kim SM et al "The effect of depression, impulsivity, and resilience on smartphone addiction in university students" published in the Journal of the Korean Neuropsychiatric Association in 2014 states that attachment is the allocation of excessive emotional and cognitive power towards certain objects, constructions or ideas (Arpacı, 2018). When someone experiences attachment to something, then all attention and emotions are directed at it. This attitude raises a sense of discomfort when it is missing from him. Attachment also indicates an over valuing attitude towards something. Something that is the object of attachment is considered to be the most important thing for him, and considers other things to be not so important.

This attachment gives rise to a condition which in McLuhan's terms is known as technological determinism. However, determinism here is not a condition of coercion but an emotional dependence that makes someone as if he could not live comfortably without it. This attachment to its continuation gives rise to a phobia, a feeling of excessive fear for trivial causes. Smartphone attachments, both in the form of nomophobia and addiction effects, in addition to neglecting the existence of others, also result in neglect of one's own existence. When eye contact, focus of mind, emotions are directed at a smartphone, then there is nothing else important besides a smartphone. Other people are considered to be non-existent, even more often it is considered a nuisance if the other person is trying to invite to communicate when he is focused with the smartphone. Smartphone attachment if not controlled properly will eliminate the existence of others in self-awareness, and threaten the existence of oneself, both biologically, psychologically, spiritually, and socially.

The new normal period should be carried out by carrying out social activities that were blocked during physical distancing by starting to do social interactions without a smartphone intermediary but still by implementing health protocols. Thus, humans do not lose their identity as social creatures, but at the same time can prevent contracting this deadly virus.

## 7. Conclusion

Based on research conducted, we can conclude several things. It is obvious that smartphone has become an inseparable tool to modern people in their modern lives. Made with several improvements than the previous technology, smartphone turned into the most influencing technology nowadays. It is not only functioning as a medium of communication, it has become the medium of modern way of life. Amazed with the use of smartphone, modern people tend to ignore the potential risks came by smartphone, the risks that endanger human life. This is the part where technology philosophy tried to seek the essence of smartphone, so we can be aware of any possibility that can harm by using smartphone.

Martin Heidegger as the pioneer of technology philosophy, stated that the essence of technology is hidden. Technology is something instrumental and anthropological, but it is not the essence. The ontology is hidden behind the ontic. The task of philosophical thinking is to find something hidden, the ontology. This task was well done by Albert Borgmann with his 'device paradigm theory'. This paradigm characterized modern people, a way of life dependent on devices. The previous way of life is full of focal things. Focal things are moments when a member of a family gathered and worked together to provide food, for example. They depend, interact, communicate and help each other just to provide dinner. The effort made them united. But these focal things are slowly and clearly replaced with modern technology. There is no effort to provide meal, no need to gather and work together for cooking can be done only by pressing a button. These device paradigms tend to make modern people more individual but dependent on technology.

Don Ihde, saw technology from a different point of view. Ihde stated that there are two kinds of relationship provided by technology, embodiment and hermeneutical. The embodiment relationship puts technology as a medium to deal with the world, (human-instrument)-> world. This relation means that humans use instruments to connect and deal with the world. Here the role of the instrument is only as an extension of human organs. The second relation is hermeneutical, human -> (instrument-world). It means that the world is understood by humans through instrument. The instrument provides data which a naked eye cannot see.

Based on these philosophical views, smartphone is not a mere medium of communication. Through smartphone, people evolved into Homo concretus, humans who are always connected with other people and with the world. It happens because smartphone changes the world, including human, into digital. Becoming digital means that the world

could be manipulate into anythings and man can changes into anyone and anywhere at the same time.

Smartphone could play both kind of relationship stated by Ihde, the embodiment and hermeneutical relationship. Smartphone is an extension of human body, but also extension of human consciousness. The role of smartphones as an extension of the human body, which touches almost every aspect of human affairs eventually create dependency, something which Marshal McLuhan called it technological determinism. Smartphones work like computers that capable of helping human tasks. Artificial intelligence technology embedded in smartphones makes smartphones a thinking tool. These make smartphone dependencies grow bigger.

In this covid era, the use of smartphone raise rapidly as the result of prohibition of face to face communication. With the spread of the lethal virus named covid 19, people must avoid meeting other people physically, so they need to use medium to interact, digitally. Here smartphone play the most significant role of connecting people, make people still as social beings. Through smartphones, physical distancing does not mean to be social distancing. Nowdays, almost everybody has a smartphone. This shows that modern people do not have problems with communication and almost all their activities can be done via smartphones, such as trading, education, meetings, coordination, seminars, and so on.

This very useful medium unfortunately has side effect. One of it called nomophobia, a mental illness such feeling of fear or anxiety without the presence of a smartphone. Nomophobia arises because someone who is separated from his smartphone feels himself unable to communicate with others, unable to obtain information, lost connected with others, and loss of comfort. Nomophobia arises because of the attachment to the smartphone. In this covid era, people should use smartphone just as medium of communication. Using smartphone beyond the limit will emerge several problems that potentially endanger our existence, as social being and as human being.

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