

"Are We Losing Out with Digitization?" *Journal of Information Technology Case and Application Research*, Vol. 17, Issue 1, pp. 3-7 (Invited editorial Essay)

Digital technologies are enmeshing us. Their pervasiveness in our processes, interactions, and social connections have reached a point where both people and businesses must deploy and use these technologies to survive and thrive. However, at this point, there are some fundamental questions that need to be raised regarding these technologies:

- Are these digital technologies liberating or constraining?
- Do they improve social interactions or hurt them?
- Do they improve cognitive ability or hurt it?
- Are they improving economic impact or limiting it?

While there is an obvious duality with digital technologies, we tend to accentuate the positive side of this duality.¹ In this editorial preface, I will do the opposite—focus on the negative side. In a global context, this focus is important, as a one-sided accentuation pushes the drumbeat of digital deployment in an indiscriminate fashion. This could blind us to both opportunities and constraints in the digital space. The following text argues that in addition to the evident expansion of social, cognitive, and economic capital promulgated by digitization, a nuanced view could argue for a contraction of the same. Some have discussed this as the “dark side of digitization” and have taken an anti-technology view. My perspective is pro-technology, and I make the case for caution—which I call contingent digitalization.