

Digital Era: A Unique Challenge to parents as well as children

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a) Screen time and vision and
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III- Digital Era as a challenge to children.

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a) Psychological impacts; Anger, depression.

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III - CONCLUSION

THE ESSAY

Yuval Noah Harari, in his famous book *21st lessons for 21st century*, describes various challenges to modern world in 21st century. Advancements in ^{information} technology, as per Harari, are among such challenges confronting the humanity in 21st century. Digital era, which is a by product of technological advancement, offers unique challenges to parents as well as the children. As far as the parents are concerned; lack of knowledge related to cyber issues, economic burdens due to expensive digital devices like smart phones and laptops, health issues of children, equipping children with cyber ethics, saving children from ^{online} political exploitations and hate literature and preserving and inculcating the social norms in children in digital age are few challenges faced by parents. Likewise, children also face various problems like cyber bullying, cyber harassment, mental trauma, privacy concerns, online frauds, and online business trends.

Rural urban divide, online games addiction and extremist behaviours in children are also few challenges confronting the children in modern age.

To begin with, one major challenge parents face in digital age is to cope with cyber security and digital awareness. As the technological advancements expediated in first two decades of 21st century, so most of the parents were not able to equip themselves with information and computer technology (ICT). The problem is more worse in developing and third world states. This is because the literacy rate in developing and third world states is substantially low making digital literacy a mere dream. As the parents are not digital literate, they cannot effectively monitor and guide their children. So guiding the children to confront the digital era ~~while~~ ~~being~~ becomes a challenge for digitally illiterate parents.

Likewise, economic burdens due to digital advancements is another issue

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faced by parents in modern era. Apart from other financial problems related to children, parents has to spent on digital devices which are quite expensive. These devices include smartphones and laptops. These devices have become a necessity to compete in digital era hence no compromise can be made on such devices. Parents have been left with no other options but to spent on these devices.

An average smart phone costs around forty thousand Pakistani Rupees. Likewise, a second hand average laptop costs around fifty thousand Rupees. Burden of wifi or internet charges, which are to be paid on monthly bases, is apart from cost of devices. Thus, it is countries where a significant number of people are living below the poverty line, spending on digital devices, their accessories and internet packages becomes a challenge for parents.

Similarly, health issues of children

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in digital era is another challenge confronting parents. ~~in digital~~ Digital devices have many health related issues and are cause of various health disorders. Vision problems and backbone injury are most common issues associated with over use of digital technology. According to scientific research, the use of screen and colourful animations or cartoons release dopamine, a hormone causing happiness in mind. Thus children becomes addicted to cartoons and use screen for longer period of time. This leads to spending of huge amount of time in front of screen. This cause vision problem due to rays emitting from screen. Spending time on screen also cause backbone injury. Thus, health related issues of children become a major challenge for parents in modern age.

likewise, children susceptibility to get influenced by populists and extremist offers another challenge to the parents in digital era. In modern times, internet and social

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media have become a major source to spread propaganda and misinformation. Young brains are like empty slates and hence are susceptible to propaganda. Thus these young children adopt the ideology of demagogues as they get influenced by them easily. The Gen-Z are most susceptible to the influence of populists. For example, Gen-Z protests in Nepal have been reported to be fuelled by social media through which the government was toppled. Same is the case of Bangladesh. It has been reported that mass protests in Bangladesh were fuelled by social media posts. These reports demonstrate that social media and digital ~~diversion~~ make the teenagers more prone to the manipulations. Thus, it becomes a challenge for parents to prepare their children in such a way that they must deconstruct the information and think critically.

The presence of extremist behaviours in children is also an issue associated with digital exa. Use of excessive screen time and online

games are reported to be associated with extremist attitudes in children. These extremist attitudes become a challenge for parents. According to scientific research, higher times spent in front of screen is directly associated with release of chemicals in brain which cause stress and anxiety and ultimately lead to extremist attitudes. In the same way, as the children in digital age spend more time on online games involving no physical activities so they do not let their frustration out from the mind and body. Physical activities ^{and games} like football and hockey provide a way to get rid of frustration. As the online games do not allow such luxury, the trapped frustration comes out in form of extremist tendencies including anger and other behavioural issues. This is manifested in recent scientific studies. According to psychological manifesto, a German based research firm, a significant surge in extremist attitudes is observed in teenagers in first two decade of 21st century.

compared to the last two decades of 20th century. This research is a manifestation that extremist attitudes of ~~the~~ children in digital era have become a unique challenge to the parents.

Another important challenge to parents in digital era is to preserve the social norms. Digital era has enhanced the globalization of ideas. This globalization of idea has posed significant threats to socio-cultural norms of society. For example, family system, which was considered as an integral part of eastern societies, is declining rapidly due to western ideas spread through digital media. Similarly, Lesbian ^{Gay} Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) culture is another example. LGBT has spread been spread in eastern societies due globalization of idea through digital media including social media platforms. According to a study by John Hopkin research institutes, 60% of girls involved in lesbian relationship in Texas got involved in such relations ~~are~~ through social media specially the

Instagram. This shows that alteration or threat to social norms is another unique challenge faced by parents in digital era.

Like the parents, children also face unique challenges, which are discussed in coming section of the essay.

Firstly, the issue of cyber crimes and hacking is the major challenge faced by children in modern age. As every coin has two faces so the digital era also has positive and negative impacts.

Cyber crimes are among the harmful impacts of digital era. Criminals have got access to sophisticated IT systems and hence trap the children.

Hacking and data theft are among the most common ~~impacts~~ ^{crimes} forms of cyber

hacking leads to capturing the users accounts and then using it for

illegal activities. Youth of today cannot live while cut from the digital

world so it has to face the the cyber related crimes. Facing these cyber

criminal has become a unique

challenge to the children in digital age.

Secondly, the cyber bullying is another problem faced by youth in digital era. Social media applications like Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram have become an easy tool to bully and harass the individuals. Cyber bullying of political opponents and sectarian opponents have become a common practice in today's era. Likewise, sexual harassment through forwarding the vulgar content has become another issue of concern. Both cyber bullying and sexual harassment leads to mental and psychological issues in the children. Anger, anxiety, depression and associated societal trends are the products of psychological problems associated with sexual harassment and cyber bullying.

Thirdly, in era of digital world, real life communications have become another challenge to the children.

As the children spend a lot of time on social media, they do not get the experience of real life communications so they lack the communication skills required for real life experiences and success. Likewise, due to spending more time in virtual

world, they also lack behind in critical thinking abilities. Bridging this gap of communication is vital as the real life dealings require critical and communication skills.

Furthermore, the employer also wants these skills in potential individuals.

These skills are basic requirements of jobs. ^{so} Managing communication and critical ability related gaps has become a new emerging challenge to children in digital era.

Lastly, maintaining social relations in age of digital world is another challenge to the children.

Though the social media and digital world claim that they have bridged the gap between individuals by providing faster communication tools,

there is another side of picture as well. Social media has cut the real life communications and have limited them to the virtual world only. Even the marriage cards and family function ~~invitations~~ invitations are sent via digital applications.

In May 2025, Ayesha Bateel, a Pakistani media influences died at.

her apartment. Punjab police discovered his dead body after 3 months. Though she had more than one million fan follows at tiktok and instgram but due to lack of real time communication her death went unnoticed for months. This shows that social media and digital era have made people insocial and it has made real time socialization a challenge for ~~parents~~ children.

In a nutshell, where ^{as} digital era offers a number of opportunities, it also give unique challenges to both parents as well as student. Parents struggle to cope with their economic crises worsened by digital era. Health issues, societal norms and digital divide between the generations are also ^{unique} a challenges for parents. Children also suffer from mental and psychological issues, online sexual harassment and bullying lack of critical abilities, communication skills and social relations are also impacted in children due to ~~social~~ digital era. So, ~~social~~ ~~media~~ digital era, though have positive impacts

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hold many challenges to children
and parents in modern world.
