

THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM THE DANGERS OF THE INTERNET

Dr. Bekada Fatma Ikrame

Laboratory of Religion and Society, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Sociology,
University of Algiers - 2 - Abu Al-Qasim Saadallah, Algeria

Email : ikrambekada@gmail.com

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Abstract:

Researchers and scholars today almost unanimously agree that the Internet is one of the effective media means in engineering human behavior, and some of them argue that the Internet has been able to revolutionize people's moods and people's habits, and culture and it is a tremendous force in influencing minds, attitudes, and values in children. The family has historically constituted the primary agency for raising and upbringing children, and with the entry of the Internet into the home, there has been a noticeable change in her duties represented in the shrinking of its roles in the process of raising its children to account for the Internet, which has gradually begun to take over the function of raising and learning the child through technological media whose content may not be consistent with the goals of good education that families aspire to in Arab societies. From this standpoint, the central problem of this research can be put forward, represented in revealing whether the Internet currently reduces the educational burdens of the family, or increases its troubles and presents it with new tasks.

Keywords: family; children's protection; Internet risks; technological media.

1. Introduction:

The internet is today the most common mass media and the most influential on the lives of individuals and groups, the most closely related to their desires and aspirations and able to satisfy their needs and inclinations, at different ages and social classes. For this reason, many people are accusing the modern technological media, especially the internet, because of the negative effects it can have on the behavior of individuals and their psychological attitudes, values, morals, and culture, and considering this device as a social phenomenon that arouses a lot of interest.

The digital age is a modern concept that has emerged due to the tremendous development in technology in addition to the knowledge and information explosion and is defined as the era that indicates the dominance of digital means in the field of communication, processing, and exchange of information through the internet.

Education is a comprehensive, intentional, and planned social process aimed at preparing an individual for life in all aspects: physical, mental, psychological, moral, and spiritual, discovering his talents, developing his abilities and aptitudes, acquiring skills and competencies that suit him according to his abilities and inclinations to achieve himself in adapting to his environment and the society in which he lives. The education that is being discussed in this study is not education in its traditional sense, but education in its modern concept in light of the digital age to keep up with the times and the challenges it imposes on parents.

Hence, this research seeks to diagnose the negative effects of technological media on children and how to protect them from these harms and determine the family's role in controlling these media.

2. The Role of the Internet in the Process of Socialization

Socialization is defined as the process in which a child's personality is formed through the processes of his interaction with the environment in which he lives to be a social being. (Ali Asaad and Tafa, 1993, p. 183)

Anthony Giddens defines the internet as a global network that connects a number of computers, and allows people to connect and communicate with each other and acquire information from the network extending to all corners of the Earth by visual, audio, and written text means, transcending the boundaries of time, space, cost and distance restrictions, and at the same time defying the control of government censorship. (Anthony Giddens, 2009, pp. 11-12)

Talcott Parsons also defined it as " a process based on indoctrination, simulations, and unification with mental, emotional, and moral patterns in adults and children, and it is a process aimed at integrating elements of culture into the personality pattern, and it is an endless continuous process." (Larzabal,2013, pp. 92-98)

And if socialization involves the process of integrating the individual into society on the one hand, and integrating the culture of society into the individual on the other hand, then we must bear in mind that the internet today occupies a large role in the process of socialization, as it has become an essential means by which children perceive social values, habits, trends, concepts, and knowledge.

To express the importance of the internet in socialization, thinkers began to use significant concepts to describe the impact it exerts on children's lives.

American researchers have dubbed the internet the "spiritual father of the child" (Taysir-Sheikh of the Earth, 1985, pp. 361-375). They called today's children the " children of the internet "or the " internet generation", and by this, they mean that children are being raised by an educational triad consisting of father, mother, and the internet.

The methods of socialization under electronic culture and through the methods that have come to us in what is known as the third wave era have come to affect the formation of the personality of our children who have become living in the information age, which was accompanied by two technological revolutions, namely the revolution of communications and a revolution in information technology through various electronic devices, whether these devices are computers connected to the internet or other electronic gaming devices and the ideas contained in that network and electronic games that Modern communication, especially the internet, which has opened a new era of communication and interaction between people, and in the abundance of information and knowledge that it provides to its users, but on the other side there are fears of the negative physical, psychological, social and cultural effects that excessive use may cause.

Studies and research have shown that the hours in which children sit to use the internet is more than the number of hours in which they sit on the study benches, and it was found through a study conducted in Australia that a child in Australia sits on the internet about 2000 hours before he enters school, i.e. before he reaches the age of five, equivalent to two school years. (Fakhreddin Al-Qala, 1987, pp. 108-116)

Another American study shows that a child aged between five and six years spends four hours a day in front of the TV screen and that children in the age group (8-18 years) spend 7 to 10 hours a day in front of modern media, including the internet, that is, a period that exceeds the time they spend at school, and even exceeds the time they spend with the parents themselves. (Mustafa Ahmed Turki, 1984, pp. 99-125)

Hence, we conclude that the internet, as current research and studies indicate, competes with traditional educational institutions working in the field of socialization, such as family and school, or both. In this context, many researchers interested in the field of the impact of the internet on children believe that with the increasing use of the internet, the role of parents and teachers will take a less important place in the theory of social learning, as " children grow up in the light of special social values that are the primary group environment, but in light of the stressful effects they are exposed to through their roaming on websites and social networking sites in order to reshape them according to what is known in the term psychology as the Reference Group effect (Laban Sharif, 2008, PG.41), and this is what leads to the loss of Interaction with the primary family or group, which in turn is the scene of mutual social relationships that reinforce the values of affection and replaced by utilitarian material values.

3. The problems of parenting in the digital age

Modern parenting for children in light of social transformations and contemporary changes is one of the difficult tasks burdened with material burdens, burdensome responsibilities, and psychological pressures on parents. Parents require new tasks of education to keep pace with the changes of life and contemporary societal challenges to raise children appropriate to their time, which has made parenting necessary and more urgent because it provides guidance, training and comprehensive preparation of the individual throughout his life to keep pace with the changes of the times, especially in light of the

continuous technological development and the development of the family relationship with children in the time of digital devices and the internet.

Parenting today is seriously challenged by the digital revolution, which intrudes on individuals' homes without permission, which leads to the penetration of identities and values and the formation of perceptions and tastes in children.

There are a number of problems that negatively affect the upbringing of children and hinder parents in carrying out their mission towards their children, we mention the following: (Shalabi Amani Ali, 2021, P. 20)

1 - lack of psychological reference: the image that parents form about the psychology of their children is a specific reference for their educational methods, the more this image is based on correct psychological data and knowledge, the more it enables parents to adopt educational methods characterized by flexibility and emotional warmth in dealing with their children based on a strong psychological reference.

2-limiting parents to educational practices that lack supervision and guidance, and this happens most often as a result of parents' absence from home for a long time for working conditions or their neglect of their children.

3-weighting emotional education over cognitive education in the sense of reducing the function of parents in emotional and behavioral education while neglecting cognitive and educational education.

4-the passivity of parents in familiarizing themselves with the knowledge and information of the digital age, and the lack of the role of institutions entrusted with socialization in guiding and guiding children and adolescents.

5-many parents do not care about the danger of the internet for their children, and often they do not monitor what their children see of the dangers on social networks and internet sites and their negative impact on their health.

6-the family's failure to guide its children towards the correct use of the internet and access to good sites, and at the same time, it should also not rely on the security software available now to block sites and bad information on the Internet, children may be able to decipher the blocking codes and thus commit mistakes and deviations that are not to be expected, especially when reassured by the family's preoccupation with them, because today's generation has advanced skills in using technological media to a degree greater than the skills of parents.

7 - The difficulty of communicating with all segments of society, especially in rural communities, and the difficulty of raising their awareness of the importance of parenting in light of the digital age.

8- Children have been affected by the digital age and its various tools by following the way of dress, speech and behavior in line with Western culture in light of globalization on the one hand and the absence of parental control on the other.

4. The positive attitude of families to the educational role of the internet

The internet imprints aspects of behavior with new patterns of values, trends, habits, interests and aspirations, and this device has become an essential part of the life of many families and a necessary

requirement in the priorities of living life, besides being an essential element of fun, entertainment and Recreation.

Some of them believe that the internet is an important family bond and that it does not pose a threat to the life of the family, and mothers believe that the internet is a organizing factor within the family, it makes children calm, some even silence their children by giving them a mobile phone and connecting them to one of their children's favorite programs. (Ali Asaad and Tafa, 1993, p. 184)

And then parents are reassured that children are having fun, but children are exposed to many risks as a result of spending a long time in front of these modern technological means.

The internet has formed one of the methods of educational control and guidance within the family, as some studies have shown that many children are punished by depriving them of a mobile phone , and rewarded by allowing them to use the internet after they have performed good behavior.

From an educational point of view, the Internet contributes to the development of the child's personality and the expansion of his ideas, perceptions, cognitive, intellectual, expressive and linguistic abilities, always under family control, and based on a conscious concept that includes awareness of the nature of mutual influences by directing them to achieve acceptable goals.

To realize the importance of adopting educational methods to counter the influence of these sites, " the involvement of the media in guiding children with the family may hinder the process of integration aimed at family upbringing, especially if what the family teaches to children contradicts what the media directs them to, and while there are many methods of influence used by the media, many families hardly use one or only one of the means of Education intentionally, and a number of families may ignore the importance of using various means of Education.(, 1995,p.12 Ramadan Kafiya)

And to take advantage of the internet, we can use it by integrating it into education and exploiting it for the benefit of the child without the need to ban and prevent him from it.

5. The negative effects of the internet on children

Many families view the internet as a tool of cultural and educational conquest, focusing on the dangers of internet programs and their negative effects on children's minds.

Scientific observations have shown that the negative attitude of families to the role of the educational internet varies with the different social level of children's families, and this means that the more the family's educational and cultural awareness increases, it can take a negative attitude to the internet, especially from some programs such as violence, crime, sex, drugs...Etc

Some studies believe that the internet is like a drug and pushes children to abandon reading and playing, and this affects the potential of children in the field of perception and creativity. (Abdul Wahid Iman Abdul Hakim Rifai, 2020)

The negative side of the internet is also highlighted in the exposure of children to adult programs, and the fact that children continue to watch these programs leads to making deep impressions of adult life on the child's thinking, and therefore this leads to premature early maturation in the child . (Jafar Sabah, 2017, 158)

The negative impact of the internet on the cognitive aspect of the child is manifested in the discrepancy that is observed between the values that parents devote to and the values disseminated by the internet, and this can lead to cognitive psychological disorders in children, and this is also manifested in the child's impact on scenes of violence, sex, crime, advertising and advertising that devote him to cognitive values that contradict the factors of his proper and balanced development .

- One of the dangers of the internet is also the spread of the phenomenon of alienation, alienation and prejudice of cultures in the third world to the West and admiration for its culture and consider it a role model, and from here the fascination with other cultures and abandonment of the original culture.

- On the social level, the digital age has led to isolation from the social environment and the lack of opportunities for social interaction and dialogue, which reduces the role of the family in the development of communication skills, language expression and serious discussion, as happened in the past where parents and children gathered in one room to talk . (Ali Asma FathiElsayed, 2015, P. 11)

- How much the use of social networking sites causes severe nervous pressure on all family members, and this is what makes the whole family live in constant nervousness and tension, so the family atmosphere misses everything that distinguishes it from calm, stability, tranquility, forgiveness and forgiveness and replaces all this anger, tension, anxiety and discomfort.

- Moral degradation in children that occurs as a result of excessive and inappropriate use of technological means. Manifestations of moral degradation appear in the propagation of abnormal and illicit sexual relations following children's browsing of forbidden sites through video cameras. Sexual images increase aggressive and deviant behavior in children, adolescents in particular, because frequent consultation of pornographic sites creates an abnormal psychological state in them, leading to difficulties for parents in their relationships with their children. When children are unable to satisfy their sexual desires in the normal way, this leads them to try to discharge these burdens by other means, through anger, nervousness, and abuse for others. This negatively affects family cohesion and stability.

- Many children are affected by what the Internet offers after the role of traditional educational institutions (home, school, mosque, and media such as radio and television) had disappeared. The Internet has become a teacher for today's children instead of the traditional institutions, and then these age groups of children and young people are carrying ideas and perceptions that are somewhat removed from the generation of parents and grandparents, so the generation gap that exists today due to Internet culture has led to the disruption of cultural constants in children, especially with the lack of dialogue between parents and children, and so children are unable to find what they need to fulfill themselves, except by learning ideas that do not reflect the morals of their society and cultures far removed from the doctrine of society. (Sahar Muhammad Ali Sahar, 2022, p. 134-168)

- Poor school results when children spend a lot of time on the Internet and neglect their studies, especially in the absence of parental control.

- Weak social relationships due to isolation in the virtual world, which creates distance and isolation between children.

- Internet addiction can lead children to deviate from religious values, for example by neglecting to pray on time or visiting sites that question the Islamic faith and promote certain ideas, which can lead to rebellion against their religion and convictions.

- High financial costs: the family usually needs to have large sums of money at its disposal to continue providing Internet services to the home.

- Mental illnesses: such as social isolation, depression, and stress.

- Neurological illnesses: such as spasms and excessive nervousness.

- Excessive use of social networking sites by children is directly responsible for feelings of disruption, anxiety, and lack of sleep in children, as studies have shown that frequent use of smartmobile phones increases the body's secretion of the hormone melatonin, which is responsible for feelings of anxiety and sleep disturbance.

- Children have become lazy and unable to move, which has affected their health and fitness. We are finding that the rate of overweight and obesity is increasing dramatically in children who use social networking sites excessively daily.

- Social networking sites expose children to many problems, some of which they are exposed to because they communicate with strangers, and others to which their peers are exposed, namely their exposure to verbal bullying. Someone may comment on a photo of him which annoys him and causes him a psychological problem he doesn't need, and this is the result of others not knowing how to use this means of communication properly.

To avoid these negative effects, there are several ways in which the media or the Internet can be directed towards the proper upbringing of the child. "These methods are easy to apply and help to reduce the negative effects resulting from the child's viewing of the media, and to reduce his or her negative influence on The most important of these methods is to choose programs that the child is allowed to follow on television or the Internet, and to teach the child the difference between useful and unhelpful programs, and direct him or her in a preachy and advisory way. It is also possible to eliminate the presence of channels that are not suitable for the child and reinforce his behavior in their management, and it is also necessary to determine a dedicated time for the child to frequent at any time the various media without any responsibility. while ensuring that mothers and fathers monitor their children. At present, the media have become very targeted and many media aimed at children seek to create Mythical and legendary heroes and store them in the child's mind. Instead of learning about real heroes and the stories of prophets and companions, for example, which make the absent child a real role model" (www/alukah/net, 20/07/2023)

But is there a degree of agreement between parents on their vision of the media and the methods used to manage them?

The stability of the family enables it to carry out its functions in positive and supportive conditions, and differences are seen as one of the sources of family conflicts that arise in various areas, the most important and common of which are conflicts over child-rearing and the methods used in it. The family

is distinguished from the Internet by its continuity and the presence of a certain stability in parental directives, but disagreements between parents over the importance of the media, the channels available, and the ways in which these means are used allow for a certain ambiguity in the situation that reduces the importance of educational positions, whatever their source.

There is no doubt that parents' awareness of the negative and positive aspects of the media, their recognition of the impossibility of avoiding them all or their influence, and their interest in using diverse and integrated methods to bring up their children must unify their attitudes towards them. and interact with them interactively, consciously, and selectively, it supports the family's educational methods achieves its objectives, and excludes that which conflicts with the values and objectives of the family and society.

6. Conclusion:

We can conclude that the Internet remains an existing and overwhelming social problem with all its dimensions and direct and indirect effects. The problem for us, as Arab societies, remains the extent of the influence of this dangerous device in the name of globalization on our values, trends, and behavior patterns. To confront this phenomenon, we need to unite efforts to educate Arab families in general so that they do not fall victim to the negative aspects of technological media, particularly the Internet, and so that they do not abandon their role in their children's education and leave room for satellite channels to influence their children's minds, tendencies and inclinations, which often leads to serious and worsening family problems, which is why today's Arab families must fight to regain their educational legitimacy.

Websites have become an imposed reality that no one can deny or escape, and anyone who does not use them by now has become outside the times we live in, so trying to cancel or delete them is considered a losing battle. The real issue is not to stop it or disable it, but how to try to benefit from it positively and work to reduce the danger and damage it represents for the individual, the family, and society. by rationalizing its use and educating families on how to invest in it properly. We cannot prevent this technology from reaching our children. Our teenagers, our young people, but we, as parents, teachers, religious and media... can teach them the beneficial use of this modern technology, without causing any defect in the education, morals, ideas, and habits necessary to raise our children and young people in a healthy and beneficial education. Relying on this, and the disadvantages of this realization. In this way, they are protected from the misdeeds of the Internet, to cope with all the deceptive temptations, in addition to the alienating factors that can affect the morals and values of our youth. We know that some young people are quickly strongly influenced by the factors around them, by anything that arouses their curiosity or emotions, whether directly or indirectly. Thanks to the Internet, all kinds of information can be obtained, even forbidden ones, and the need for curiosity and knowledge can be satisfied. Consequently, the existence of the Internet obliges families, parents, educators, and others to pay attention to its use by young people and adolescents. Work, through family education and proper guidance, to develop self-control in these people, or rather to develop what we call conscience or awareness, which represents the most important watchdog over a person in the absence of external control

wherever he or she may be, under any circumstance of temptations, influences or factors. Alienation or corruption. Explain the standards of right and wrong to young people and teenagers, so that they can think correctly, think critically, and constructively, without exaggeration or carelessness, so that they can protect themselves from the evils of the Internet.

7. Recommendations:

- There is a need for more training, qualification, and development of digital-age knowledge and skills for the Algerian family

- The need to organize numerous courses, training programs, and educational seminars by civil society organizations and the media to enlighten parents on the roles they must play in the digital age.

- Educate parents on the importance of parental control to protect their children from the dangers of the Internet, and devote more time to children instead of being almost entirely preoccupied with financial gain, as it is impossible to prevent children from using technological means as they are a requirement of modern life. However, it is necessary to activate the role of family control, which will limit the dangers of the Internet's negative impact on children and family ties, and work on monitoring children. Continue to monitor them when they use social networking sites and the Internet.

- Educate parents on the importance of dialogue with their children and ongoing discussion of what they see on the Internet, with the need for parents to ensure that their children use the Internet in a public place in the home and do not leave it for long hours, in private rooms, with the need for parents to determine the hours of use of these devices and means so that they do not lose their role as transmitters of society's culture, skills, values and positive attitudes.

- The family must ensure that Internet use is aimed at achieving a specific positive objective: scientific, cultural, academic, social or recreational... etc., without using it to create dependency and waste time.

- Explain to parents how to help their children make responsible decisions on the Internet.

- Monitor children's activities on social networks and websites, developing parents' skills in the use of Internet technology, keeping abreast of new developments, and being informed of the latest developments in this field.

- The family should encourage children to pursue their hobbies, read books, and use the Internet to develop their culture, skills, and knowledge of the world's scientific and intellectual fields

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