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Transforming Family Relationships and Roles in the Modern Digital Revolution

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A B S T R A C T

The Modern world; the digital revolution has brought about many changes in our world today and has altered lifestyles and social relations dramatically Families have been directly impacted by these changes as communication between members is more digitized and based on smart devices. This research focused on investigating the evolution of family relationship and function in the age of digital revolution The study followed a descriptive analytical method and distributed the questionnaire among the respondents while the interview as well as the field visit was considered. A balanced sample of 100 families participated, comprising diverse ages, educational levels and social backgrounds. The results Though élevage digital family members of people with high use of digital devices in half of the sample more than four hours a day. There was a significant relationship between high user of digital media and low face-to-face family communication. The research indicates ' a change in knowledge roles where children are more technologically skilled than their parents. The family networks were extended by social media platforms but at times these diminished the depth of real interaction. The results show that lack of family rules about device use leads to more problems relating to digital addiction. Whereas parents' digital literacy suffused the damaging implications of overusing technology use. Technology was credited with allowing people to communicate with relatives far away and to take courses and jobs from a distance. Digital presence is the norm in daily relationship of the family redefining the notion of "family reunions".

"When it comes to technology and family relationships, it is a mixed bag the effects can be both negative and positive depending on how it is used and managed." Both children and parents need to be equipped with digital skills, the research said. It suggested that parents set some household rules that would help organize device use. It was suggested that all the members of the family should become more digitally aware and that dialogue should be fostered in relation to the challenges of the digital world among family members. Emotional connection and direct interaction within families were recommended through regular family activities. The inclusion of digital literacy in education systems and awareness campaigns was also suggested. Family, schools and media can play a part in fostering responsible digital usage. The study found that contemporary families are in a period of flux and need to compatibilize technological advantages with family cohesion. Organizational planning is key to successfully managing the digital transition at home.

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Everyone in the family has to get involved if the family is to adjust successfully to the digital environment. Planning ahead for your family's screen time and a little guidance go a longer way in prevention for all that comes with tech overuse. Knowing the nature of the digital transformation and how it impacts family enables better approaches to right the balance preserving family values. The study identifies the significance of the responsible use of technology in the maintenance of strong familial ties in today's digital age.

Chapter One

Methodological Framework

Introduction

Over the past few years, the world has been changing at an exponential rate due to the digital revolution altering the way humans live their lives in social, cultural, and economic aspects. Technology is not just that thing you turn to when you need help in your day to day life, but it is that place you exist in, where you live, where you come together with others, where you learn, where you work, and more. This fundamental shift can be attributed largely to the penetration of the internet, smartphones, and social media platforms in virtually every home. With the rise of dominant technology companies like Google and Meta, the ways humans communicate and produce and distribute knowledge have never changed so much. The family has not been exempt from these profound alterations permeating the various institutions of modern society. As the core building block of social systems, the family is bound to be affected by any cultural or technological shifts taking place within its surroundings. As a result, digitalization is becoming a crucial factor in the moulding of its internal structure and everyday practices. The way family members communicate has changed a lot in recent years. When it comes to family relationships, in-person is no longer the only or most important method to connect, as it once was. Instead, within the household, we are seeing the emergence of new communication mode facilitated by digital applications and platform. Virtuality is a normal part of daily life now even when people are in the same physical place.

Traditional parents and children have changed roles in the digital age with access to all information. Adults are not available to be an only source of knowledge and authority, as had been the case in traditional cultures. Children have cognitive and technical abilities to process information and use modern technologies and sometimes they are more capable than their parents. This transition has resulted in an inversion of knowledge-based power in today's family. But clearly, the economic dimension of family life has been affected by the digital revolution. New technologies have enabled various forms of teleworking and freelance work via internet platforms, thereby influencing household production, income, and time use. These changes also created unprecedented blurring of lines between professional and private life. The changes have not been confined to the functional-economic sphere, but have also affected values, traditions, and methods of socialization. Children, adolescents and adults are bombarded with a multitude of influences from worldwide digital cultures. As a consequence, the family now occupies a fluid educational space that breaks the barriers of place and stretches across the globe, so to speak. And indeed, psychological and societal concerns have arisen about the overuse of the technology and of smart devices. The most obvious ones are the erosion of family direct communication, the isolation within the home, and the gathering pace of new forms of social pressure related to constant comparison on digital platforms. These changes are therefore certainly shaping future family implications, but at a minimum, they need to be continually assessed and relationships in the midst of this rapid change. Family socialization, care and guidance: Is it still family/traditional? Will it take on new organizational/communicative forms that can be aligned with the digital era of today? Investigating the changes in family dynamics and roles during the digital revolution era is crucial in understanding current social evolution. This it a short term and long term problem that will impact the stability, cohesian and value system of society. It also helps to explain shifts in power, communication and interaction in the contemporary family. Consequently, this transformation's the scope study has a great scientific and social value in the society that changes itself rapidly and continually

Second: Research Problem

The central question of the investigation is :How much has the current digital revolution played a part in redefining relationships and roles in the family ?The above research questions is further divided into the following sub-questions:

1. What are the major changes in family communication patterns in the digital age?
2. What is the impact of digital technology on the traditional roles of parents and children?
3. What are the biggest challenges for the family in the era of modern technology intensive use?
4. Are there some policies to reconcile digital life and real family life?

Third: Significance of the Research

1. Scientific Significance

- ✓ Be the contemporary sociological knowledge on the family in a context of rapid digital transformation.
- ✓ Offer a theoretical framework to connect electronic media, family structure ,and traditional and emerging family roles.
- ✓ This article addresses the question of how much change occurs in patterns of social interaction within the family system.
- ✓ Consistent with research documenting digital media's relationship with socialization (Hannerz, 2020).
- ✓ It could also open the door to future studies on similar matters such as digital identity and electronic socialization.

2. Practical Significance

- ✓ Supporting families and policymakers in raising awareness for the safe and balanced use of technology
- ✓ Contributing to the development of educational and counseling interventions to manage digital change in the family.
- ✓ To help schools and community agencies foster family involvement.
- ✓ To help design awareness campaigns on the dangers of digital addictions and cyberbullying
- ✓ Spreading a social awareness for the relevance of shaping a responsible digital culture, starting from the family.

Fourth: Research Objectives

1. To assess the effects of digital revolution on the definition of relationship and communication in the modern family.
2. To analyze the evolution of family roles (parent, spouse and children) in the digital world.
3. To determine the positive and negative impact of technology use on family cohesion.
4. To investigate the mental and social problems induced by over-use of smart devices.
5. To offer actionable advice for attaining digital balance and sustaining family stability in today's world.

Fifth: Research Hypotheses

1. The use of technology is significantly related to weak direct family communication.
2. Social media plays a role in shaping and reshaping roles and responsibilities within the family.
3. Digital transformation's adverse effects are mitigated by the greater digital literacy of parents.

4. Households that establish clear rules for smart device use see an increase in family cohesion.

Sixth: Research Methodology

This research is based on the descriptive-analytical method, since it has the highest compatibility with analysis of modern social phenomena. In this way, it is possible to narrate the reality of family ties in a digital revolution scenario and to explore different planes. If the study is field based in the following tools may utilized: • Questionnaire: to gather information about patterns of digital use from a group of families. • Semi-structured interviews: to gain insight into individuals' personal experiences within the family. • Statistical analysis: to evaluate hypotheses and relationships between variables. Furthermore, the comparative approach may also be applied between families with excessive use and with moderate use of technology to attain more precise and objective results that feed into the final suggestions of the study

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework

First: Concept of the Digital Revolution

The digital revolution is a era in the history of computing and technology that marked a significant transition from non-digital to digital technology (analog to digital electronic systems; physical to digital representation of data) which has implications on the methods of computing and communication of information, and the processing (and availability) of the data and information used for human activity. The revolution has been quickened by the advent of widespread internet access and computing and communications technologies that have bound the world into a more tightly interconnected global system than ever before in recorded history [1] The digital revolution is founded on encoding different types of knowledge and content – texts, images and sounds – digitally into codes that can be traded through global networks in seconds. Leading global tech companies like Microsoft also popularized the use of the computer with operating systems that brought the technology within reach of institutions and households around the world. In the same way, Apple also played a pioneer role for smart devices that unify communication and computing in one small, multi-functional device.

The rise of dominant search engines such as Google has resulted in a qualitative transformation in the way in which information can be accessed, rapidly organized, and retrieved. The digital age is no longer simply a constrained technological development [2] but a total civilizational theme which composes lifestyles, work styles, learning styles, and modes of human communication. The economy has evolved from a conventional industrial age economy of material production and consumption to a digital knowledge economy based on data and technological innovation. New occupations have been developed in programming, digital designing, e-commerce, content management digital platforms .Besides that , with time and space reconfigured by the digital revolution, communication is now instantaneous between strangers thousands miles apart. It has also increased availability of education via online education allowing individuals to self-educate and gain knowledge from multiple sources outside the boundaries of traditional classrooms, and has beyond garden walls. Furthermore, this revolution has redefined privacy, for our personal data is now a necessary ingredient of daily life in the digital realm. Thus, digital revolution is not momentary occurrence but an on-going and changing process that deeply affects the organization and future of societies [3]

Second: Characteristics of the Digital Society

The digital society is defined as a society which is based on digital technology in the structuring of its institutions as well as that which manages its social, economic, and cultural relations, in day-to-day life, through digital means. And one of its major traits is the incentive to swiftly share information over electronically connected networks with relatively little temporal or spatial hindrance. Networked connectivity, is also said to define the "postmodern" condition, in which relations become horizontally and dialogically organized as opposed to vertically and hierarchically communicated ones. The Twitter equivalents — Facebook, now owned by Meta, and X, led by Elon Musk — remain dominant in the public discourse shaping and social influence stakes. The digital society is arguably signified by a proliferation of information, making it difficult to assess the reliability of what is being read. It also

exhibits a large amount of interactivity: people are providing and receiving content simultaneously and with relatively little institutional barriers. The other hallmark of course, is the prevalence of smart devices, and they are now a necessity in daily life whether it be work, study, entertainment or shopping. Digital society - Digital society: is the "society that is transformed by its information systems." It benefits largely from the analysis of big data, is largely algorithm y driven and it uses advertisements, services and contents to lure users. It also is characterized by rapid and it demands continuous adaptation on the part of both individuals and institutions Change and ongoing innovation [4] are at the core of this, and individuals and institutions must continuously adapt. In addition, this society encourages digital citizenship, under which meaningful participation in society with responsibility and ethics is nurtured along with respect for its values in the use of technological tools in the digital environment [5]. Yet the digital society can also exacerbate the gap between those with the knowledge, and those without - that is, in access to knowledge. Therefore, a digital society is considered as a new social form under the conditions of a complex network, which is global and [6]open.

Third: Social Transformation in the Context of Technology

Infrastructural change in the era of technology is defined as the transformation of values, relationships, and institutions brought about by the rapid advancement of technology. As social and technical products, technologies do not merely exist as neutral tools, they are active agents in shaping our behaviours and the ways in which we interact as individuals within society .Digital media has had a profound impact on the characteristics of social relations as the interaction through virtual relations is now supplementing, or in some cases substituting direct contacts. The definition of family has changed from a somewhat closed social space to a globally influenced concept in the digital space. Knowledge access has been democratized, there is less information monopoly and knowledge-based power has been decentralized in the society .Socialization patterns have also shifted, as children and youth are exposed to education and culture from multiple digital sources beyond family and school. The labour market has also been influenced by technology with the creation of new types of digital-related jobs and the declining need for some traditional occupational types .These transformations have introduced new social values of relational speed, flexibility, and creativity, as well as emotional dependence/self-sufficiency for educational and professional growth. Meanwhile, it has brought about new concerns, such as social loneliness and mental stress caused by overuse of smart devices. In addition, the character of political and social engagement has been altered [7] with digital platforms that are now stages for public debates, campaigns, and public opinion formation. The unique aspect of personal identities[edit] People have transformed personal identity discussions as they now have a digital identity associated with them by their online presence in addition to their real-world identity.

So, social change in relation to technology is an ongoing process that is constantly changing and developing, therefore it is important to analyze it to be able to understand modern societies and predict their development [8].

Fourth: Transformation of Family Communication Patterns

The nature of family communication has fundamentally changed, driven by the emergence of digital platforms which are part daily life in almost every home. Communication is no longer based on' co-presence' in physical space as in the past, but digital technologies have redefined proximity and distance for family relationships .Tools like Twitter and Facebook have fostered a sense of immediate communication and time compression that transcends space and time. Relatives can now send messages, pictures and voice notes without the need for physical gatherings. They have also been used by extended families who wish to connect across borders, distance, or dissolutionof familial ties, as a means to facilitate reunion and keep contact in holidays through digital family groups [9].But the development has also brought with it an effect on communication .Instead of talking, family members may end up sitting around the same living room, each with his or her own device, contributing to "a decline in family conversation and a waning of face-to-face skills" such as active listening and emotional expression.. The idea of "family dinner" has become about gathering in the same space rather than about interacting with one another in a meaningful way [10].

Fifth: Reshaping Roles Between Parents and Children

The digital age has dramatically altered the historically very relationship between parents and children. Historically, parents had more knowledge, guidance, and life experience to share, the family knew well the value of wisdom, and more authority was vested in the older generation. Yet nowadays, children have the world at their fingertips and can get information on just about anything, anytime .There is now access to a wide variety of educational and entertainment content via the Internet, and knowledge can be imparted without having to rely on parental intermediation. The result is a shift of authority within the family, where children 'out-tech' their parents [11] and even instruct them when it comes to digital tools. This leads to a new, knowledge-based interaction instead of a creeping flow of information culture .The role of parents has likewise shifted, from surveillance to guidance and sometimes partnership, in the digital realm. Total control for parents over how much exposure their children have to the digital world is increasingly said to be impossible, and conversation and awareness are said to be more successful routes. This has given rise to the idea of digital parenting with special focus on nurturing critical awareness in children. Parents, too, must raise their digital literacy to keep up with their children[12].

There are times when a digital divide among generations in a family can cause communication to falter or lead to miscommunication. Parents lose their sense of authority as they struggle to keep pace with technology, and children gain more autonomy in making digital decisions[13]. This alters what it means to have authority and obey, inside the family Today's parents have the added responsibility of watching over their children's digital activities and helping them be safe and responsible internet users[14]. Emotional ties are also influenced; technology may facilitate closeness via constant communication between people who are apart but may create tensions (i.e. digital addiction, or exposure to unsuitable contents Nowadays, children are active rather than passive consumers of digital media and they have phenomenal opportunities to participate in content creation [15]. What they do online has the potential to shape the family's reputation and social standing too, introducing a novel element to shared family responsibility .Hence, family roles are not erased but rather adapted to the digital environment. Parent−child relations are now more participatory in certain respects, and more contradictory in others , especially when it comes to control and freedom. The crux of the problem is to develop relationships based on trust and communication, to turn technology from a source of conflict into a factor for mutual understanding within the family [16]

Chapter Three

Applied (Field) Study

The purpose of the applied chapter is to apply the study's theoretical framework in an empirical investigation in order to examine the change in family relationships and roles as a result of the digital revolution. These data are processed and analyzed so that true scientific results can be obtained, which confirm or reject the research hypotheses. In this sense, this chapter is a pivotal point in connecting the theoretical view with social reality and showing the real effect of technology in the modern family.

First: Study Population and Sample

The study community is constituted of families living in urban and semi-urban areas in Al-Musayyib District and they vary in their levels of education and income so as to capture the phenomenon from diverse angles and to have balanced insight [17]. A stratified random sample of a predetermined number of families (e.g., 100 families) was drawn, including fathers, mothers, and children of various age groups, this to reflect a spectrum of views on technology use in the home .The sample selection was intended to reflect both genders and age groups as usage patterns in the digital world differ across generations [18].

Second: Data Collection Tools

The study was based on the following methodological instruments for data collection:

1. Questionnaire A questionnaire was developed for family members with closed-ended and open-ended questions on the following topics:

- ✓ How many hours on average do you use smart devices each day?
- ✓ What kind of digital activities do you take part in?

Extent of direct family conversation in the home.

Degree of parental involvement or guidance in the child's use of digital technology.

2. Semi-Structured Interviews In order to gain further insight into the individual experiences of parents and children with the digital transformation and the corresponding changes in roles and relationships, from their own perspective, semi-structured interviews were conducted. Partial observation was also employed to oversee certain activities related to digital use in the family, for example, cell phone use during family reunions.

Third: Presentation and Analysis of Results

Results of the questionnaire showed that the majority of the sample spend more than three hours a day on smart devices, indicating a high level of digital exposure in the family .The results also showed a negative correlation between the level of family direct dialogue and the intensity of digital use, as a large percentage of respondents indicated a decrease in family talk compared with the past .As for the family dynamics, the findings suggested that a significant proportion of children help their parents to navigate through the app and contemporary technologies, which implies a partial reversal of the knowledge-based power relation among family members .As it is impossible to completely control digital content, many parents said they were taking a more get guidance, don't tell approach .For the good, the findings verified that technology has improved communication with faraway family members and enabled distance learning and working .While on the other hand, attention span, face-to-face family time and certain kind of stress as a result of over device use were identified among challenges [20].

Questionnaire Items

A sample of 100 participants from different families was handed the questionnaire with the following questions:

1. How many hours a day do you spend on your smart devices?
2. Do you use social media daily?
3. In your opinion, has technology decreased face-to-face family conversation?
4. Do you assist your children/parents in using technology?
5. Is there any rule in your family regarding usage of devices at home?

Second: Questionnaire Results Tables

Table (1): Daily Usage Duration

Number of Hours	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 2 hours	15	15%
2–4 hours	35	35%
More than 4 hours	50	50%
Total	100	100%

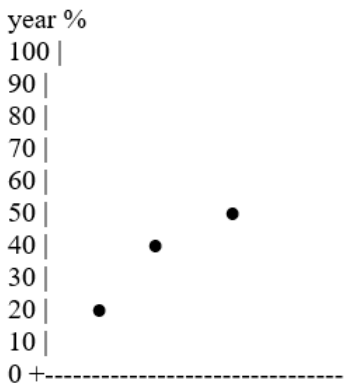


Figure (1) Number of hours of daily use

Table (2): Impact of Technology on Family Dialogue

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	62	62%
Sometimes	25	25%
No	13	13%
Total	100	100%

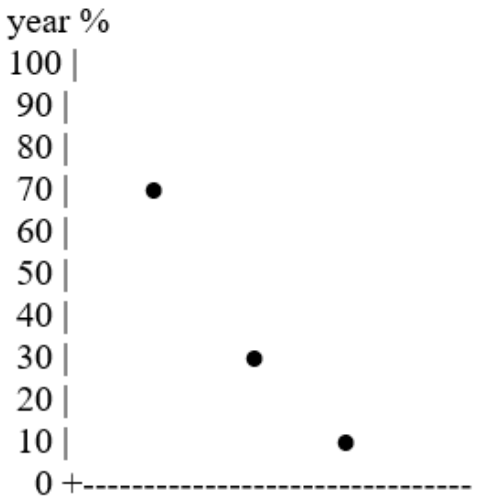


Figure (2) The impact of technology on family dialogue

Table (3): Children Assisting Parents in Using Technology

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	70%
No	30	30%
Total	100	100%

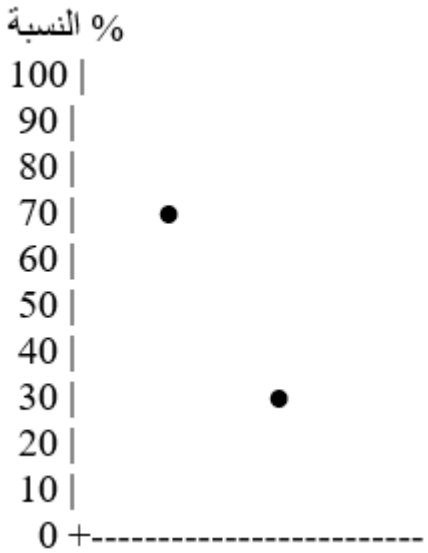


Figure (3) Children helping their parents

Table (4): Presence of Rules Regulating Technology Use

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	40	40%
No	60	60%
Total	100	100%

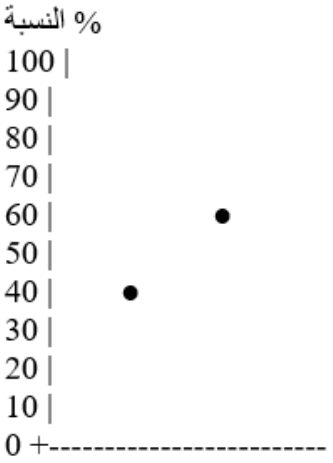


Figure (4) Existence of laws to regulate use

The findings from Table 1 suggest that 50% of sample participants use intelligent devices the daily usage time of which exceeds four hours, it is a clear manifestation of excessive digital exposure among the whole family. Table 2 illustrates that 62% of the participants agree that technology is limiting the amount of direct-family conversation, reinforcing the hypothesis of the relationship between these two constructs, intensity of technology use and weak face-to-face communication. The results presented in Table 3 show that 70% of children actively help their parents with technology, signaling an inversion of knowledge-dependent roles in the family. In the meantime, in Table 4, it is shown that 60% of the families who participated in the study have not set up clear rules on how to use the device, which could be the reason for overuse of digital media. Combined, these results illustrate that technology has become an integral part of daily family life and materially affects how family members interact with one another in the home, reinforcing prior research. They also emphasize opportunities to increase digital literacy for parents and children alike. The results further verify that unmanaged technology use might impair family ties; however, deliberate management may offer mitigation. Consequently, “striking

Chapter Four

Results and Recommendations

First: Results

1. Family daily life has been permeated by technology, and the time using smart devices and social media platforms has been increased significantly.
2. Intensity of use is associated with a decrease in direct family conversation, which in turn is having a negative impact on face-to-face family member communication.
3. The roles within the family related to knowledge have changed, as children are now equipped with digital skills that are far more advanced than those of their parents.
4. Technology has helped to increase social contacts, but in some cases it has also diminished the quality of certain real-life contacts within the home.
5. The parents' d level of digital awareness is also an important factor in mitigating the negative impact of over use of technology.

Second: Recommendations

1. Each parents should define the rules and set specific time limits for usage of smart devices at home, so that enough time is left for digital communication and real interaction with the children's friends.
2. Raise digital consciousness in both parents and children through education and awareness initiatives about responsible use of technology.
3. Have more family discussions about digital issues and less monitoring and control.

4. Set aside weekly family time for activities that foster intimate connections and facilitate face-to-face contact.
5. Bring digital education into schools and work with education and media organizations on building a culture of balanced use of technology.

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