

The Role of Children in Bridging the Technological Gap of Parents: A Social Philosophy Perspective in the Digital Era

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Abstract

The rapid advancement of technology has influenced various aspects of social life, particularly within the family environment. The current technological progress has resulted in a significant technological gap among the older generation, primarily due to generational differences between parents and children. These differences in generations lead to disparities in understanding and knowledge of technology. The consequences of this technological gap profoundly impact daily life patterns, often resulting in negative consequences. This technological gap can impact parental relationships, as parents with limitations in understanding technology often require their children's guidance. This is crucial because children tend to grow and adapt quickly to a world dominated by various advanced technologies. The primary objective of this study is to gain a comprehensive understanding of how children address the technology gap with their parents. The research methodology employed for this study is qualitative. In the process of data collection, participants were selected from families with school-age children possessing proficiency in using technology, while the parents needed more experience with modern technology. The findings of the research highlight the pivotal role that children play in enhancing the quality of life for their parents in addressing technological disparities. Children serve as valuable sources of knowledge, guiding their parents in learning and using technology effectively.

Keywords

Technology Gap; Parents; Children; Family; Social Life

INTRODUCTION

Technology has become an integral part of human daily activities. In the current digital era, rapid technological advancements significantly influence various aspects of social life, especially in the realms of information and communication. The swift progress in technology compels individuals to adapt to the changing times continuously. Consequently, people readily embrace every new technology that emerges, attracted by the various benefits and new possibilities it offers (Limilia & Prasanti, 2018). In this digital era, all technological

products, spanning electronic devices, transportation, to food, are easily accessible (Arta, 2021). However, the rapid advancement of technology presents a challenge for the older generation to adapt to current technological developments, resulting in a technological gap. This gap signifies the inability of individuals to fully experience the benefits of technology (Hazizah et al., 2021). This condition illustrates the role of children in bridging the technological gap experienced by their parents in technology use. Different from the younger generation, who possess adequate technology usage skills, the

technological gap between parents and children becomes quite apparent.

Parents, in general, need to catch up in technology use due to the generation gap with their children, who were born alongside technological advancements. The challenge is not only for parents to adapt to technological developments, but children must also balance and keep up with the pace of technological progress. In today's era, especially in developing countries like Indonesia, individuals are required to be technologically literate for the sake of survival in this digital age.

In social philosophy, individuals are considered social beings who engage with many people around them, both in groups and institutions, in their daily activities. Regarding the technological gap between parents and children, the younger generation, being accustomed to modern technology, has the opportunity to assist in developing their parents' knowledge of technology use by providing education and guidance. This assistance can help reduce the technological gap between parents and children and strengthen their relationship through the interactions that occur when children assist parents in using technology.

The learning process between parents and children illustrates the exchange of understanding between two generations—the older generation and the younger generation. This concept is referred to as the dialectic between conservatism and progressivism. In this context, children need to be aware of and appreciate the differences in views regarding technological developments in the current digital era. The exchange of ideas and discussions between the two individuals can deepen and broaden their understanding and perspectives on technology. In connection with this, children actively participate in educating parents about the importance of understanding technology in daily life.

Children can assist their parents by initially addressing technical issues, such as suggesting the use of online-based services or introducing useful digital applications for information and communication purposes.

In the social environment, particularly within the family, access to and the use of technology present their own set of challenges. In this context, technology has the dual effect of making close connections more distant while bringing distant connections closer, influencing the social dynamics within families (Lawang et al., 2021). For instance, members of a family may communicate through a social media platform even when they are physically present in the same house. The communication technology used brings them closer than face-to-face interaction within the family itself. Thus, technology indeed has a significant impact on changing how humans communicate (Fadilla et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, the technological gap extends beyond infrastructure limitations, encompassing both media and content-related skills. Social inequality stemming from insufficient motivation and limited ownership serves as the foundation for this technological gap in the country (Jayanthi & Dinaseviani, 2022). Many areas in Indonesia have yet to experience the reach of technology and information systems, such as the Internet, computers, and other technologies. The accessibility of technology, especially among the older generation, is relatively low. In this context, it becomes imperative for the Indonesian government to focus on comprehensive efforts to equalize technological progress. Adequate education for children is also essential to enable them to navigate technology in this digital era. Thus, in situations where the government has yet to distribute technology networks evenly,

children can play a vital role in conveying information from the continually evolving technological landscape (Maslan, 2014).

This research is specifically conducted to understand the manifestation of the technological gap existing among parents today. The primary focus of this study centres on the role of children in addressing the technological gap issue among parents. It acknowledges the crucial role of children in enhancing the adaptability of parents to the challenges posed by the current digital era.

This research is anticipated to offer a comprehensive understanding of the role played by children in mitigating the technological gap among parents. The findings from this research will shed light on the ways in which children assist and guide their parents, who may lack proficiency in accessing technology, ultimately reducing the technological gap in parents.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative method with primary and secondary data sources. Primary data is gathered through informant interviews, direct observations, and questionnaire responses, while secondary data is derived from relevant literature, including books, journals, and articles. The collected data are thoroughly and theoretically analyzed and synthesized into a research report exploring the role of children in the technological gap of parents from the standpoint of social philosophy. The research adopts a phenomenological theory and approach based on a social philosophy perspective, involving participants from families with school-aged children and parents utilizing modern technology. The primary focus is on understanding the role of children in bridging the technological gap among parents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of Technological Gap

Technology serves as a tool created by humans to accomplish specific goals in various human activities. Its primary purpose is to facilitate and streamline work processes (Purwanto, 2009). In the realm of information and communication, technology not only aids in task execution but also contributes to the development of an individual's capabilities in daily activities (Fauziah et al., 2022). Etymologically, the term "technology" has Greek origins, combining "techne" and "logos." "Techne" is understood as art, skill, or a method to achieve a desired goal, while "logos" refers to a word or expression that reflects human thought. Therefore, technology can be perceived as a method or a way of thinking to attain a specific objective (Sandang, 2016).

Throughout history, humans have utilized technology, starting with the transformation of natural resources into simple tools. Over time, these rudimentary tools evolved into sophisticated technologies. The relentless progression of digital technology, particularly for the younger generation born in the digital era, is inevitable. This progression is marked by the advent of advanced technologies such as the Internet, social media, and television (Baharun & Finori, 2019). While technology offers various benefits crucial for human survival, it simultaneously influences social changes in daily life, particularly impacting the older generation less familiar with technological advancements (Nuriana et al., 2019).

Indeed, technology holds a deeper significance beyond being a mere tool. It embodies the application of knowledge for practical purposes (Yaumi, 2021). Furthermore, technology possesses the ability to influence both groups and individuals. Changes in technology within a

group can lead to shifts in human thought patterns and alter interpersonal relationships (Ngafifi, 2014).

The technological gap can be defined as the inequality of access that exists among individuals, groups, or societies regarding the use and mastery of technology networks. Over time, the concept of the technological gap has evolved, encompassing three interrelated aspects: skills, infrastructure, and utilization by human resources (Limilia & Prihandini, 2018). Technological gaps can manifest as intergenerational, intergroup, interregional, and even international disparities.

Children as the Primary Role in Overcoming the Technological Gap in Parents

In this digital era, technology has become an integral part of human life. However, only some people possess sufficient knowledge and skills to adapt to technological advancements quickly. This is particularly true for the older generation, which is not accustomed to using complex technologies such as mobile phones, tablets, laptops, or computers. They often feel left behind and need help with using digital devices.

From here, it is evident that the role of children is crucial. As the younger generation grows up and becomes accustomed to technology, children possess broader knowledge and skills in operating technology. They tend to grasp new features on technological devices more quickly and have the ability to solve technical problems. Therefore, children can play an active role in helping their parents overcome this technological gap.

One of the primary roles of children in overcoming the technological gap is acting as teachers. Children can instruct their parents on using mobile phones, tablets, or computers. They can offer guidance on how

to use specific applications and programs, explain the basic steps in operating devices, or provide tips and tricks to optimize the user experience of technology. In this regard, children must be patient and diligent when guiding their parents because older adults may need more time to understand and master new things. This is also based on the fact that the thinking speed of older adults is slower than it was when they were younger.

Furthermore, children can also assist in securing their parents' devices. Digital security is crucial in this era. Therefore, children can ensure that their parents' devices have adequate security settings, such as complex passwords or facial recognition. They can educate their parents about digital security risks, such as fake news, online scams, data theft, and other threats. Children can also help install and run necessary security software to protect their parents' devices.

Barriers to Addressing the Issue of Technological Gap in Parents

The issue of the technological gap itself is a longstanding challenge in society. Initially, the technological gap focused more on disparities in access and ownership of information and communication technologies. However, with the development of technology, especially the internet, the terminology of the gap has evolved from an access gap to the ability to enhance technology utilization (Azizah, 2018). The efforts made by children to address technological gap issues in parents sometimes take time to proceed smoothly. Many obstacles are encountered by children when guiding their parents in using technology. Firstly, parents with low technological knowledge tend to need help to accept what their children teach them. This lack of knowledge may be the reason why parents are not interested in using

digital technology. They may not really need digital technology in their daily lives because the old ways are sufficient for them to carry out their activities. Secondly, parents may still need to fully understand what has been taught to them by their children about using technology. In this context, children need a long time to ensure that parents truly understand the explanations given to them. Thirdly, parents need more skills in accessing digital technology (Ganis Ashari, 2018) is based on the rapid evolution of digital technology in a short period, making it difficult for parents to keep up with technological developments.

Most parents grew up and lived in a time before technology became a major part of human life. Therefore, most of them still need to receive basic training related to the use of digital technology, unlike the current younger generation. The fourth barrier is the economic condition of parents. Lower to middle-class economics can also mean that digital technology is still not a primary need because they prioritize basic needs such as clothing, food, and shelter (Yayat D. Hadiyat, 2014). Fifthly, there needs to be a generational gap in the understanding of technology. Parents and children grew up in different eras where technology was less intensive than it is now. In this case, there is a difference in understanding the true meaning of technology.

Not only stemming from parents, but barriers to reducing the technological gap, parents can also come from within the children themselves. Some children may be unwilling to learn how and why to operate digital technology. In this scenario, children prefer to use digital technology for themselves rather than teaching their parents. Some children may be indifferent and think that parents do not need to be proficient in using digital technology. They may prefer to play games or use social

media rather than spend their time teaching their parents. Some children need more patience with parents who are technologically challenged. For instance, they may easily become frustrated if their parents are slow in grasping the information provided by the child, and this impatience can negatively impact the relationship between parents and children.

Regarding the barriers to addressing the issue of the technological gap in parents, there are several efforts that children can make to reduce the problem of the technological gap in parents. This includes using appropriate guiding strategies so that parents can easily understand information about technology. Providing specific training to parents in using technology is also crucial, step by step, to gain maximum understanding. The provision of supporting and relaxed networks and resources is essential for parents who want to learn and use technology. With these efforts, children can ensure that parents can also utilize the sophistication of existing technology to improve their daily quality of life, just like what the younger generation gains in using technology in this digital era.

Factors and Impact of Technological Gap on Parents

Factors contributing to the technological gap in parents evolve. Limitations and challenges in understanding and using technology stand out as key reasons behind this gap. The difficulty arises because parents may have yet to be exposed to technology before, leading to unfamiliarity and subsequent challenges. Additionally, education plays a significant role in causing the technological gap among parents. Generally having lower educational levels than their children, parents may hold onto traditional values, fostering resistance to change, including technological advancements. Parents adhering to old

traditions and cultures might not be inclined to embrace technology or invest time in learning about it.

The age factor is another contributor to the technological gap, as parents may become lethargic or resistant to using technology. Some parents may perceive themselves as old and believe that being tech-savvy is not essential in their stage of life. Ageing also affects parents' physical conditions, leading to reduced interaction with technology. For instance, deteriorated vision in older parents can pose challenges when using a cell phone, making it difficult for them to read text on the screen.

In the current digital era, skills in operating technology are essential in daily life. However, not everyone can keep up with technological advancements, especially parents. The technological gap in parents has a significant impact on changes in daily life patterns, resulting in negative impacts such as, firstly, a lack of understanding of technology. Understanding technology is essential for parents because parents play an important role in guiding and supervising children's movements in using technology. Therefore, parents with low knowledge of technology can have negative effects on children who need more supervision in using digital technology. In addition, parents who are not accustomed to using technology will need help in performing daily activities that tend to use technology, such as cell phones, laptops, and other digital devices. Therefore, it is not surprising that many parents feel left behind and need help to adapt to the current technological developments. Secondly, there needs to be more communication between parents and children. In the book titled "Communication and the Evolution of Society" by Jurgen Habermas (1979), it is stated that communication plays a crucial role in social evolution, which can be used as a means to

achieve better understanding among individuals and social groups in society (Kusumasanthi et al., 2023). The advancement of digital technology can have a negative impact on the quality of the relationship between parents and children, where ideally, parents should be guiding their children in this digital era. However, in reality, parents only consider their role towards their children to be limited to education.

Consequently, the development of digital technology leads parents to have minimal communication with their children. This can also lead to social issues for children within their families and social environments (Lasurital et al., 2022). Thus, consideration of the social consequences of actions and interactions between children and parents regarding the issue of the technological gap is necessary.

The existence of a technological gap in parents involving children in addressing this issue also has its impact. One of them is that both parents and children become dependent on technology. This dependency has negative implications if done continuously. Efforts that can be taken include limiting the learning time in using technology.

Social Philosophy Perspective in the Digital Era Towards Technological Gap in Parents

Philosophy is the parent of all sciences, which, in its development, creates products in the form of technology. Technology is created from human intellect. Humans have intellect, so they create technology to solve all problems that occur in life (Suaedi, 2016). Along with the advancement of technology, the relationship between social philosophy and the technological gap in parents is important to study. This is because social philosophy examines various aspects of social life between individuals

and groups. The role of children in addressing the technological gap that occurs in parents is crucial in facing the continuous challenges of digitization in this digital era. The technological gap experienced by the older and younger generations becomes a problem that requires special attention. The technological gap can affect parental relationships, as parents who have limitations in understanding technology need the role of a child as a guide because children grow up and can quickly adapt to a world dominated by various advanced technologies.

In this digital era, the role of children in addressing the technological gap in parents becomes crucial. Children become a source of knowledge for parents who need to become more proficient in dealing with technology, as children are more adept at operating technology than parents.

CONCLUSION

The rapid advancement of technology undoubtedly influences various aspects of social life. Technology, designed as a tool to facilitate humans in achieving goals, does not necessarily mean it is easily accessible to everyone. This technological progress poses a challenge for the older generation to adapt to current technological developments, leading to technological gaps. Three interrelated aspects contribute to the concept of technological gaps: skills, infrastructure, and utilization by human resources. The issue of technological gaps in parents is a longstanding concern in society, arising from factors such as limitations in understanding and using technology, educational disparities, and age-related challenges. Children, as individuals accustomed to modern technology, have the opportunity to assist in developing their parents' technological knowledge through education and guidance. However, the efforts made by children to address

technological gap issues in parents only sometimes proceed smoothly. Several obstacles are encountered, with parents' low technological knowledge leading to difficulties in accepting their children's teachings. In this context, the role of children is crucial in reducing the technological gap among parents.

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