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Navigating the Digital Era with Emotional Intelligence

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Abstract- In today's digital era, the pervasive integration of technology into daily life has raised questions about its influence on fundamental aspects of human behavior and cognition. Technology is becoming more widely acknowledged for its potential to help students develop their emotional intelligence *(EI),* in addition to making the material easier to obtain and improving academic skills. *Emotional intelligence,* often referred to as *EQ,* encompasses the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. This paper aims to investigate the relationship between technology use and *Emotional Intelligence (EI),* a crucial component of human social and emotional functioning. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature, technology can provide opportunities for enhancing certain aspects of emotional intelligence, such as empathy and social awareness; it also presents challenges that may impede its development.

Keywords: education, technology, emotional intelligence, social media, virtual reality, artificial intelligence.

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Navigating the Digital Era with Emotional Intelligence

Ms. Nisha Gurjar [α] & Dr. Mallika Shekhar [σ]

Abstract- In today's digital era, the pervasive integration of technology into daily life has raised questions about its influence on fundamental aspects of human behavior and cognition. Technology is becoming more widely acknowledged for its potential to help students develop their emotional intelligence *(EI),* in addition to making the material easier to obtain and improving academic skills. *Emotional intelligence,* often referred to as *EQ,* encompasses the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. This paper aims to investigate the relationship between technology use and *Emotional Intelligence (EI),* a crucial component of human social and emotional functioning. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature, technology can provide opportunities for enhancing certain aspects of emotional intelligence, such as empathy and social awareness; it also presents challenges that may impede its development. The research article provides a comprehensive understanding of how technology may influence the development, expression, and regulation of emotions in individuals.

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I. Introduction

Given the technological dominance of today's society, emotional intelligence (EI) is crucial. While there is no denying that technological advancements have greatly benefited society, they have also altered interpersonal interactions and communication. In this setting, effective leadership, productive teamwork, and general satisfaction with the job all depend heavily on emotional intelligence *(Zahyd S, 2023).* In recent years, the pervasive integration of technology into various aspects of human life has raised concerns about its impact on social and emotional well-being. The development of digital technology has had a major impact on human life in this era of rapid technological advancement. Notably, there has been a notable surge in children's digital use *(Nu rAzimah et al., 2021).* There are concerns over the possible impact of children's technology use on their emotions and psyche due to the difficulties that arise from it. *Giusi Antonia Toto and PierpaoloLimone*'s new study from *2021* has sparked worries about how technology affects kids' emotional and psychological growth.

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This study formed the assumption that aspects of emotional intelligence would affect an individual's sense of self-efficacy, making emotional intelligence an important factor in the field of technology adoption. The suggested framework connected theories of technology adoption to a relational model of emotional intelligence aspects *(Abu-Shanab, E. A., & Shanab, A. A., 2022).* Studies indicated a connection between DM and EI. Individuals with brain harm struggle with social and emotional problems in their relationships with others, which affects their decision-making. An argument like this indicates how emotional behavior and cognitive skills interact to influence an individual's ability to make wise decisions or decisions that are acceptable to their surroundings. However, one of the biggest challenges to employing technology for DM is technology adoption. Studies have indicated that the adoption of technology is significantly influenced by personality factors *(Abu-Shanab and Pearson, 2007).*

As technology becomes more and more integrated into the lives of both adults and children, it is critical to determine whether and how it affects the psychological processes that underpin human behaviour as a whole. More specifically, there are worries about how technology may affect kids' social and emotional development when it is introduced into the family environment *(Radesky & Christakis, 2016).* A comprehensive understanding of the interplay between technology and human development would require a thorough investigation of the various facets that remain to be explored *(Edwards et al. 2017; O'Connor & Fotakopoulou, 2016).*

A large number of applications available for smart devices encourage daily, even hourly, use *(Milijic, 2019),* which raises questions about how this use affects daily life in general. Thus, scholars tried to examine the connections between various behaviours and smart device use, such as sleep *(Demirci, Akgönül, & Akpinar, 2015),* stress *(Samaha & Hawai, 2016),* depression *(Alhassan et al., 2018),* self-esteem *(Işiklar, şar, & Durmuşcelebi, 2013),* and anxiety *(Elhai, Levine, Dvorak, & Hall, 2016).* Studies on the impact of technology on the social and emotional development of teenagers *(Lee & Lee, 2017)* and school-age children *(Hale & Guan, 2015)* have been conducted, although when researching younger children, the focus is frequently on the parent's use rather than the child's *(McDaniel & Radesky, 2018).*

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According to Danial Goleman (2013), Emotional Intelligence is more significant than cognitive ability in predicting an individual's performance and achievement in life, which means that Emotional Intelligence plays a significant part in an individual's success and well-being. He asserts that a person's success, particularly in learning, is significantly influenced by their level of Emotional Intelligence. *According to Golemen's (1995)* book Emotional Intelligence, an individual's *20% academic intelligence* and *80% skill at efficiently* controlling their emotions determine their level of brilliance. This demonstrates emphatically that successful people place a high value on having a high degree of "emotional management" in their lives *(Zainuddin, 2000).*

Nurul Aini & Siti Marziah (2018) say that positive emotional development is predictive of future success in relationships, health, and overall quality of life. Once more, he asserts that kids with strong emotional intelligence get good grades, attend school longer, and generally make better decisions. Their emotional intelligence can significantly influence a person's level of motivation because of their capacity to control their thoughts, feelings, and mental faculties in specific contexts. As per *Colomeischi & Colomeishi (2014),* the correlation among emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and activity fulfilment shapes the worth and execution of that particular activity, hence refining children's abilities and aptitudes towards their inclinations. As a result, we need to focus enough on enhancing and growing emotional intelligence during the formative years of childhood.

Objectives

- To discuss Technology and Emotional intelligence.
- To discuss the role of Technology in the development of Emotional Intelligence.
- To explore strategies for enhancing Emotional Intelligence in the Digital Age.
- To investigate data on the utilization and perception of Technology for Emotional Intelligence Development across various countries.

II. Review of Literature

The number of studies looking at how technology affects people's mental health has increased recently. *Shek and Yu* warned that Internet addiction is a growing problem globally, particularly among teenagers, in light of the rapidly increasing number of people using the Internet. *According to Milford et al.,* students get used to using a variety of social media platforms (such as blogs, social networks, and forums) for various types of objectives, including communication, learning, and entertainment. *According to Young,* four elements influence students' use of social media: apps, emotions, cognition, and life events. *According to Young,* four elements influence students' use of social media: apps, emotions, cognition, and life events. Emotions have the strongest connections to emotional intelligence of the four characteristics mentioned above. Emotional intelligence includes both interpersonal skills and the capacity to recognize and understand one's own emotions.

In *North America,* according to the statistic "*Over 70% of students say they prefer learning digitally,*" a sizable majority of students claim they prefer digital learning strategies over conventional ones. According to the data, thirty percent of K–12 educators think that by *2021,* artificial intelligence will be more widely used in the classroom. According to the statistic, "*48%* of students report using *online tutoring services* to enhance their learning," almost half of the student body surveyed said they had used online tutoring as a way to augment their academic experience[1] *(Jannik).*

Mobile phones are the most ubiquitous piece of hardware found in schools worldwide, despite their frequent absence from classrooms. Several educational authorities have officially outlawed cell phones in classrooms, even though *62% of people worldwide* own a mobile phone *(Statista, 2021)*[2]. These authorities include the Ministries of Education in *China* and *France*, as well as the provinces, states, and schools in *Canada, Australia, the US,* and *the UK (Wakefield, 2021)*[3]. In *Latin America,* the former Eastern Bloc, and English-speaking European nations, the rate of rise in loneliness has approximately doubled since *2012;* in East Asian nations, it has climbed by *50% (Twenge et al., 2021).* Several experimental studies of global Sesame Street variations conducted in *Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Tanzania, South Africa,* and *Tanzania* have demonstrated that exposure to Sesame Street can lead to positive outcomes on gender-equitable attitudes, literacy, numeracy, and *social and emotional development* in addition to better school readiness *(Borzekowski, 2018; Borzekowski and Macha, 2010; Watson, 2019).* Universities are using *AI* to improve and enhance teaching and learning in *the US, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, France, and the Netherlands.* Developing personalized scaffolds to support students' meta-cognitive skills, leveraging machine learning techniques to better understand self-regulated learning, utilizing lecture transcript analysis to support reflective teaching practices, and assisting university students in developing AI competencies are a few examples *(Pelletier et al., 2021).*

Students in grade 3 in the *US state of California* participated in a game-based *social and emotional learning program* that included weekly videos featuring stories and narratives, a game, and an assessment. As a result, the student's interpersonal communication and

[1] https://wifitalents.com/statistic/technology-in-education/
[2] https://www.statista.com/
[3] https://wifitalents.com/statistic/technology-in-education/

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skills—including *empathy* and *Emotional Regulation*—improved in comparison to the control group *(Sanchez et al., 2017). According to the Singapore Ministry of Education, 2022, The 2019 Education Technology plan encouraged* digital technology and individualized, and self-directed learning. Considering the increased exposure to digital spaces, emotional competencies were given additional room in the most recent curriculum revision. A comprehensive examination of a sizable cohort of youth in the *United States,* ages 2 to 17, revealed a negative correlation between increased *screen time and worse levels of emotional stability, curiosity, self-control, and anxiety,* as well as greater diagnoses of depression. For teenagers compared to younger children, some of these relationships were stronger *(Twenge and Campbell, 2018).* Although AI technology is developing quickly, the skills required of people in the field have not changed much in the last ten years. Along with cognitive talents, working with AI requires a great deal of emotional intelligence in the form of communication, creativity, and teamwork *(Samek et al., 2021).*[4]

III. Technology

The World Bank Group, which works on education projects in more than *80 countries* to provide high-quality education and chances for lifelong learning for everyone, is the biggest donor to education in developing nations. As part of its wider work related to education, the *WBG* collaborates with governments and organizations worldwide to support creative projects, timely research, and knowledge-sharing activities about the appropriate and effective use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in education systems -- "*EdTech*" -- to improve learning and contribute to poverty reduction worldwide. *The World Bank* estimated the percentage of *10-year-old children* who, by the end of primary school, are unable to read and comprehend a short story to determine the extent of "*Learning Poverty*" worldwide. The percentage of people "*learning poverty*" in low- and middle-income *nations is 53%;* in the world's poorest nations, the *average is 80%.* Around *180 nations* implemented temporary school closures because of the *COVID-19 pandemic,* which affected almost *85%* of children globally and resulted in the absence of education for approximately *1.6 billion children* and youth at its peak. *(The World Bank Report)*[5]

Digital technology tools have been widely used by educators, learners, and institutions over the last 20 years. From *0 in 2012* to at least *220 million in 2021,* there were more students enrolled in *MOOCs* (massive open online courses). In *2023,* there were *20 million active users* of the language-learning software *Duolingo,* while in *2021; Wikipedia* had *244 million daily page views. According to the 2018 PISA, 54%* of schools with an efficient online learning support platform available had 15-year-old students, and *65%* of students in *OECD countries* were in schools where principals agreed that teachers had the technical and pedagogical skills to integrate digital devices into instruction. These shares are thought to have increased during the *COVID-19 pandemic.* The proportion of people using the Internet increased globally from *16% in 2005 to 66% in 2022.* In *2022,* approximately half of the world's lower secondary schools had an Internet connection for educational purposes. *(The Global Education Monitoring Report, 2023)*[6]

IV. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence, often known as social intelligence, was listed as one of the main traits of humans in the many intelligences theory put forth by *Gardner (1983) and Gardner and Hatch (1989). According to Mayer et al. (2008), p. 508,* emotion is described as "the integrated feeling experience involving physiological changes, motor-preparedness, and cognitions about action, and inner experiences that emerge from an appraisal of the self or situation."

The idea of emotional intelligence is a growing and developing concept, the concept of which is an extension of the concept of social intelligence proposed by *Howard Gardner, (1983)* in his theory of multiple intelligences. Emotional intelligence is a way of describing the skills and abilities that help a person recognize, understand, and use language in communities to express emotions in themselves and others. In short, emotional intelligence can be proposed in four major dimensions - understanding one's own emotions, managing one's own emotions, understanding the emotions of others, and managing the emotions of others.

Emotional intelligence (EI) was described by *Salovey and Mayer in 1990* as the subclass of social intelligence that includes the capacity to control one's own and other people's feelings. This intelligence regulates emotion to direct one's thoughts and behaviours *(Chrusciel, 2006).*

It is generally accepted that social intelligence includes emotional intelligence as a subset. The ability to manage one's own emotions, assess the feelings of others, differentiate between emotions, and utilize this knowledge to inform one's decisions and behaviour are all components of emotional intelligence. *According to Goleman,* emotional intelligence is the capacity to identify one's sentiments as well as those of others, regulate one's own emotions in interpersonal interactions, and, when necessary, motivate oneself.

[4] https://digitallibrary.in.one.un.org/TempPdfFiles/8207_1.pdf
[5] https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/edutech
[6] https://gem-report-2023.unesco.org/technology-in-education/Global education monitoring report, 2023: technology in education: a tool on whose terms? UNESCO Digital Library.

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Emotional intelligence has been defined by *Bar-On* as a set of non-cognitive abilities and talents that affect how well an individual responds to expectations placed on them by the environment. In terms of human traits, emotional intelligence, *according to Petrides and Furnham,* is a synthesis of traits like emotionality, self-control, sociality, and well-being. The definition of emotional intelligence has been the subject of considerable discussion among these and other researchers, but *Salovey and Mayer* are the forerunners in this field. They defined emotional intelligence as consisting of four components: the ability to perceive emotion, the ability to use emotion to aid in thought, the ability to understand emotion, and the ability to manage emotion. Maintaining emotional self-control is crucial. According to a meta-analysis, academic achievement is well predicted by one's capacity for emotional understanding and regulation *(MacCann et al., 2020).* A comprehensive analysis discovered that when it came to predicting academic achievement, some social and emotional traits—most notably self-regulation—were more important than IQ *(Costa, 2019).*

V. Technology and Emotional Intelligence

Technology's effects extend beyond psychology; they can also be felt from an emotional perspective. When viewed through the lens of child-parent or peer communication, this becomes evident. The framework for understanding the impact of technology on emotional intelligence draws from theories of emotional development, cognitive psychology, and human-computer interaction. Emotional development theories emphasize the role of social interactions and environmental influences in shaping emotional competencies from infancy through adulthood. Cognitive psychology provides insights into the cognitive processes underlying emotional intelligence, such as perception, attention, memory, and decision-making. Human-computer interaction theories offer perspectives on how individuals interact with and adapt to technology-mediated environments *Hashim, N., & Razali, A. (2019).*

Judy Brown, Denise L. Winsor, and Sally Blake talk about the research on the relationship between technology and emotional development, how parents view social interactions in the context of children and adults, the theoretical influences on learning environments, and strategies for using tools to support these crucial domains globally. Since technology has altered the socio-cultural landscape on a worldwide scale, early childhood educators must adapt the way they provide social and emotional support to their students. *(Judy Brown, Denise L. Winsor & Sally Blake, 2012)*

VI. Navigating the Digital Era with Emotional Intelligence

As we navigate the complexities of the digital age, cultivating emotional intelligence becomes increasingly important. Here are some strategies for harnessing technology to enhance our emotional intelligence:

(a) *Practice Digital Mindfulness:* Be mindful of your digital habits and how they impact your emotions and well-being. Set boundaries around technology use, take regular breaks, and engage in activities that promote relaxation and self-reflection.

(b) *Foster Face-to-Face Connections:* While digital communication has its place, prioritize face-to-face interactions whenever possible. Invest time in building and nurturing meaningful relationships with friends, family, and colleagues.

(c) *Use Technology as a Tool for Growth:* Embrace technology as a tool for personal and professional growth. Seek out digital resources, such as online courses, podcasts, and self-help apps that support your emotional development and well-being.

(d) *Practice Empathy in the Digital World:* Be mindful of the impact of your online interactions on others. Practice empathy and kindness in your digital communications, and seek to understand different perspectives and experiences.

(e) *Balance Technology Use with Offline Activities:* Find a balance between your online and offline activities. Make time for hobbies, interests, and activities that nourish your emotional well-being and foster connection with others.

VII. Discussion and Conclusion

In conclusion, the relationship between Technology and Emotional Intelligence is multifaceted, with both positive and negative implications. To leverage the potential benefits of technology while mitigating its drawbacks, it is essential to adopt a balanced approach that promotes mindful and purposeful technology use. Future research should continue to explore the dynamic interplay between technology and emotional intelligence across different contexts and populations, with an emphasis on fostering socio-emotional well-being in the digital age. By understanding and addressing the complex interactions between technology and emotional intelligence, we can strive towards a future where technology enhances rather than diminishes our capacity for empathic and emotionally intelligent behavior.

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