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Parenting in the Digital Age: Implications to Physical, Social and Academic Life of Children in Various Age Groups

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Abstract: Parenting in the Digital Age: Implications to Physical, Social and Academic Life of Children in Various Age Groups. Objectives: This study explores the parents' experiences in the digital age and determines the problems they encountered with children's use of digital technology, the different parenting styles they employed, and how they cope with the high-technology, fast-paced times that their children live in. **Methods:** It used a qualitative hermeneutical phenomenological approach. It strongly relies on the researcher's interpretations of their lived experience. **Findings:** The participants identified problems in discipline, academic, health, and social aspects of the child. Different parenting styles were employed by the participants but varied depending on the age of their children. Participants also highlighted their ways of managing children's misbehavior using digital technology. They set house rules like giving screen time, rewards and punishment, watching together, and open communication. **Conclusion:** Parents should find the right way to manage their children's misbehavior using digital technology and encourage their children to be with their friends and refrain from holding gadgets during playtime.

Keywords: Parenting styles, digital age, technology use.

Abstrak: Pengasuhan di Era Digital: Implikasinya Terhadap Kehidupan Fisik, Sosial dan Akademik Anak di Berbagai Kelompok Usia. ***Tujuan:*** *Studi ini mengeksplorasi pengalaman orang tua di era digital dan menentukan masalah yang mereka hadapi terhadap penggunaan teknologi digital oleh anak-anak, gaya pengasuhan yang mereka terapkan, dan bagaimana mereka mengatasi teknologi tinggi.* ***Metode:*** *Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif hermeneutis fenomenologis. Ini sangat bergantung pada interpretasi peneliti tentang pengalaman hidup mereka.* ***Temuan:*** *Para peserta mengidentifikasi masalah dalam aspek disiplin, akademik, kesehatan, dan sosial anak. Gaya pengasuhan yang berbeda digunakan oleh para peserta tetapi bervariasi tergantung pada usia anak-anak mereka. Peserta juga menyoroti cara mereka mengelola perilaku buruk anak-anak menggunakan teknologi digital. Mereka menetapkan aturan rumah seperti memberikan waktu menonton, penghargaan dan hukuman, menonton bersama, dan membuka komunikasi.* ***Kesimpulan:*** *Orang tua harus menemukan cara yang tepat untuk mengelola perilaku buruk anak-anak mereka menggunakan teknologi digital dan mendorong anak-anak mereka untuk bersama teman-teman mereka dan menahan diri dari memegang gadget saat bermain.*

Kata kunci: *gaya pengasuhan, era digital, penggunaan teknologi.*

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INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, children today are different – they are "digital natives." Computer technology-powered their world, and information is just at their fingertips. The effect of technology on children is one of the most pressing concerns today. Children start playing with tablets and smartphones as soon as they can grasp an object in their hands. It becomes even more alarming as children who use digital technology get younger and younger. Moreover, problems are beginning to emerge.

Over the past decade, children's time spent on digital technology has increased. Many questions are raised on how digitally-mediated activities positively or negatively affect children (Turkle, 2011). Digital technology allows children to access educational resources, connect to peers, and use them for entertainment. Likewise, legitimate concerns arise if children experience cyber-bullying or whether social media may put children's health at risk (Boyd, 2014).

Adults also use digital technology extensively, but concerns tend to center on children whose life period is characterized by cognitive, biological, social, and psychological changes. The formation of identity and positive building of friendships are part of the critical developmental stages that children go through (George & Odgers, 2015). Many individual research studies showed the benefits of digital technology to children (Bryne et al., 2016), highlighting its interactive features, how it opens creativity, and practices relaxation and social interactions with the family (Boyd, 2014). Other research showed how digital technology enhances cognitive, emotional, motivational, and social development (Granic et al., 2014).

Children in the 21st century are more avid technology users than generations past. This rise in use has led to much attention on the consequences of technology use and how it impacts children's brains and socio-emotional, cognitive, and physical development. In recent years, technology use has been on the rise worldwide. According to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2015 results, 95% of 15-year-old students, on average, across OECD countries had Internet access at home (OECD, 2017). Moreover, technology use is rising in other age groups, not just adolescents. Research suggests that preschoolers become familiar with digital devices before being exposed to books (Hooft, 2018). International trends point to increased use and younger ages of first access. In response to this increase, research has been exploring potential linkages between emotional well-being/mental health outcomes and technology use in children over recent years. Although the knowledge base specifically regarding how children under the age of 8 use technology are relatively sparse. Most of the available research is correlational, shows small effect sizes, and the underlying mechanisms of these outcomes are unclear.

Given the ubiquity of technology in today's society and the importance of this issue for policy and practice, it is essential to understand the impacts of technology on children's developing brains and bodies in the 21st century to guide policy delineating safe and effective service. Parents and guardians should be discerning about guidelines and research. At the same time, governments and groups with policy influence should be cautious of prescribing policy without exploring the evidence base in a holistic and thorough nature.

There is a relatively large body of literature exploring television and children; in part, this is because television has been around for a long time. Researchers have studied the implications on verbal abilities and cognitive, physical, and emotional development. Some research has linked viewing television for more extended periods during childhood with adolescent

attention problems (Landhuis 2007). There may be modest adverse effects of watching television before the age of 3 on cognitive outcomes later in childhood (Zimmerman & Christakis, 2005). One contested study suggested that one extra hour of television at age one was associated with a 28% increase in the probability of having attention issues at age 7, with similar effect sizes for the amount of television watched at age three on inattention later in childhood (Christakis, 2004). Other longitudinal research has suggested that watching over three hours of television daily might be associated with a slight increase (0.13 points) in conduct problems at the age of seven compared to children who watched for under one hour (Parkes et al., 2013)

A cross-sectional study among 120,000 children aged 15 found a negative impact of technology use on mental health (Przybylski & Weinstein, 2017); a cohort study of 13,000 children shows the increase in emotional and conduct problems in children aged 5, brought by more than 2 hours of screen entertainment a day. Similarly, in longitudinal research, McDool et al. (2016) showed a negative impact on children's mental health because of too many online activities.

Gaming affects brain regions such as those responsible for reward, impulse control, and sensorimotor coordination (Weinstein & Lejoyeux, 2015). There are links in the literature to dopaminergic or reward pathways (generally associated with substance addiction) being implicated in gaming (Kuss & Griffiths, 2012). While much of the research in this area focuses on adults, there has been some study on children. For example, one study noted small but significant differences in a brain region associated with decision making. Frequent gamers exhibited higher grey matter volume in this region, which was associated with lower deliberation time in comparison to infrequent gamers (Kuss & Griffiths, 2012).

Adolescents (and children to a lesser extent) in the 21st-century use technology to interact with their peers. Research on social media has been published rapidly with the expansion of networking sites. There are differences in how young people use social media versus their older counterparts, with a shift in recent years regarding teens' most popular online platforms. There is evidence to suggest that social relationships of children can be stimulated by digital technology and that online communication has a positive relationship between friendship quality and social capital in studies spanning samples of children, adolescents as well as young adults (Kardefelt-Winther, 2017)

On the contrary, some research suggests that social media use, especially at night, might be linked to outcomes such as poor sleep quality, with minimal relationships between levels of anxiety and depression. In this reference, associations were higher between poor sleep quality and anxiety/depression than between media use and anxiety/depression (Woods & Scott, 2016). According to Turkle (2011), children miss out on experiencing social relationships because they are immersed more on their phones than peers. Likewise, George and Odgers (2015) state that the development of children's social skills is negatively affected because of digital technology. This result in children losing out on significant areas of life due to so much time spent in front of screens. Also, Ferguson (2017) found that screen time of children aged 12-18 is associated with delinquency and depressive symptoms.

Researchers have explored how time spent using digital technology influences children's lives in different domains. Research studies indicated the adverse effects of increased use of digital technology ranging from children's mental health (Kim et al., 2010) to health issues like eye problems and obesity (Sisson et al., 2010).

According to Ortiz (2017), the overuse of electronic devices may impair social skills, including the child's ability to make friends with others, control emotions and temper, show good manners, use polite language, develop empathy for others, and follow verbal directions. The excessive use of electronics may fail to develop a child's listening and communication skills. Children may also be isolated and be less attentive. A child who spends more time using electronic devices affects their mental health. Another study showed a higher risk of sleeping problems, stomach issues, and obesity in children playing video games and too much-watching television. Too much TV time hindered language acquisition. A child may lack motivation and lose interest in playing other than their gadgets. The ability of the child to be patient in reading is also a result of too much watching television (Ortiz, 2017).

Children's overuse of entertainment tech distracts them from the second most crucial factor in their lives: their connection and focus on school. This helps explain why students' reading and math scores fell from 2013 to 2015, and it illuminates why Filipino students are quickly falling behind their global competition in math, reading, and science (Aguilar, 2009).

Parents face new challenges in the digital age, making them meet a problematic duty of balancing children's independent exploration (Pew Research Center, 2016). Parents only want what is best for their children. Thus, they do what it takes to protect their children from any risks associated with digital technology. They also have the responsibility to teach values and social norms to their children. Further, they are expected to help their children in their studies, keep them healthy, and enable children to make sound judgments about places, people, and information.

Parenting styles have evolved too. Gone are the days when children could not speak their minds, and parents used corporal punishment to discipline their kids. Now, parenting is more grounded in trust and open communication. Whether through electronic mail or internet messages, one thing is shared between the children's generation and the parents' generation: the need to communicate with peers constantly. Moreover, because of this need, parents now have many more ways to be involved in their kids' lives coupled with today's technology.

Positive digital parenting respects children's rights online. It empowers children to thrive in the digital environment as parents nurture and guide their children through conversations and trust and regularly offer real-life alternatives to digital activities. Online protection experts gather resources and evidence-based practices from a child. Online protection experts say positive digital parenting engages five essential tools to support their digital families effectively: communication, critical thinking, citizenship, continuity, and community (OECD, 2017). Parents, like the Ilocanos, employ a particular parenting style. Ilocano culture is attributed to Japanese and Chinese societies. Like the neighboring counties in Asia, Ilocanos strongly value family and foster strong family ties (Chao & Tseng, 2002). In general, Ilocano parents practice authoritarian parenting. On the other hand, Ilocano children are expected to follow their parents (Dela Cruz et al., 2001).

Parents and guardians and education and child health professionals may be uncertain about how to structure children's screen time, how this should factor into their daily lives, and how to interpret the latest literature on these topics. There is thus a need for coherent guidelines on the matter. Therefore, it is essential to understand how and why children use technology and with which tools when evaluating these guidelines and determine whether limits are helpful and how they should be set.

The literature review shows the positive and negative effects of digital technology on the well-being of children. With the challenges above of parents on children's use of digital technology, the researchers were encouraged to find out the problems encountered by parents in the digital age. Furthermore, with the desire to contribute to growing knowledge on managing children's behavior, this research on parenting in the digital age was conducted.

The study explores the parents' experiences in the digital age and determines the problems they encountered with children's use of digital technology, the different parenting styles they employed, and how they cope with the high-technology, fast-paced times that their children live in

METHODS

The participants of this study include parents in selected households in Metro Vigan, Ilocos Sur, Philippines. These parents' homes were Vigan City, Caoayan, Bantay, San Vicente, and Santa Catalina. The purposive sample in the interview conducted consisted of Ilocano parents, 17 women and three men, ranging from 29 to 64 years old. For inclusion and exclusion criteria, only parents with children studying in preschool (aged 4-6), elementary (aged 7-12), and high school (aged 13-18) were selected. Twelve parents aged 29-59 participated in the focus group discussion (FGD) as they are deemed to be parents with children in the digital age.

A qualitative hermeneutic phenomenology was employed as its research design. It defines the lived experience of parents in rearing their children in the digital age, and it strongly relies on the researchers' interpretations of their lived experiences. According to Johnson and Christensen (2000), hermeneutic phenomenology happens in a natural setting, which allows the gathering of nonobvious issues and allows the researcher to arrive at rich and holistic findings that focus on teachers' experiences. It gives the participants a stand to share their opinion, live experiences, challenges, and opportunities, along with parenting in the digital age—the research study used thematic analysis of data. Borg and Gall (1983) said thematic analysis is done by identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes within the data. This study was passed through the Ethics Review Committee of the University of Northern Philippines-University Research and Development Office. Consent forms were given to the participants before the conduct of the study. Privacy and confidentiality were always considered. Participants could refuse to provide answers to questions they feel uncomfortable with. They have a choice to decline or stop the interview. The collected data were appropriately stored, protected, and deposed to safeguard the respondents' confidentiality and anonymity. Each of the parents was interviewed, and the proceedings were audio recorded. Each interview took 15-30 minutes to gather the needed data for the study. The final phase of the data collection was the Focus group discussion interviews to validate the parents' responses. Parents are encouraged to answer questions and express their opinions/insights on the issues they might have in parenting; thus, the concept of saturation was saturation employed. When new data tend to be redundant, saturation is reached (Hill et al., 2014). The interview transcripts were transcribed and presented to the respondents for review and verification.

This study utilized a semi-structured interview guide prepared by the researchers to gather the respondents' profiles along with age, sex, highest educational attainment, and the number of children in the family. Three experts in Ilocano Culture/Social Science reviewed and validated the instrument. A 5 point-Likert scale was used to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument. Overall, the instrument received

a 4.80 rating which signifies that the developed instrument for the interview is "Highly Valid and Highly Reliable." Specifically, a semi-structured interview guide was used to ask the participants about the following: (1) What are your experiences as Ilocano parents in the digital age? (2) What are the concerns/problems you have encountered in handling your child's use of digital technology? (3) How did you address or solve these difficulties? Moreover, (4) What parenting practices do you employ at home?

The researchers used Hyper Research to independently code parents' responses by item. The codes counted the number of times they appeared in the coding process. Then a comparison of codes was made. The researchers agreed that codes with three "hits" indicate a pattern; thus, they were considered a reportable theme. The researchers identified a category as extensive when it included almost all cases (n = 17-20), a category was called usual when it applied to half or more than half of the cases (n =10-16), a category was called Partial when it used to a few cases (n = 3-9). Categories identified by one to two participants (rare) were dropped. The researchers came up with pieces and grouped them into categories, and came up with themes.

■ RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

This study aimed to highlight the experiences of Ilocano parents with children being reared in the digital age. For this research, digital technology refers to digital devices, including computers, tablets, mobile phones, television, and digital activities such as the internet, online chatting, signing in to social networks, or playing video games.

Three general themes were recorded, which include (1) Problems with Children's use of technology, (2) Parenting Styles in the Digital Age, and (3) Managing Children's Behaviour. The above listed are major themes under which information was presented. However, it should be noted that categories emerged out of the themes and were also highlighted. The results are shown in narrative form using statements directly from the participants interviewed.

Problems with Children's Use of Digital Technology

Almost all participants perceived an undesirable effect of children using digital technology. This implies that children are now suffering from the side effects of overuse. Kross et al. (2013) reported a negative impact of internet use on adults' and children's well-being.

Table 1 shows that parents of children ages 13-18 (high school) agreed that digital technology had caused discipline and academic problems. Meanwhile, among parents of children ages 7-12 (elementary), parents noticed issues related to children's vision brought by exposure to digital technology and concerns about their children's lack of social relations with their peers.

Table 1. Identified problems in children's use of technology

Theme	Categories	Frequency of Codes	Sample Coding of Verbatim Transcripts
1. Problems with Children's Use of Digital Technology	Discipline Problems	Extensive (17)	
	Academic Problems	Usual (11)	
	Eye Problems	Partial (3)	"have blurry vision" (M1, M3, F1)
	Social Problems	Usual (14)	

A general finding on the disciplinary problems was identified caused by children using digital technology. Participants said that their children intentionally ignore them when asked to do something. This implies that parents observed the changes within their children, which are not for the better. Participant 3 says, *"My child is so attached to using his tablet that he no longer listens to what I say."* Concerns about technology addiction were also raised. Participant 10 mentions, *"My child no longer listens when gadgets are in his hands. It is hard to make him do something. Children are different now when they are holding gadgets."* This observation is congruent to Landhuis's (2007) findings that children who spend much time using devices might have a reduced attention span and ability to focus due to their reliance on technology to pay attention for them.

Further, participant 8 said, *"Telling my child to stop using the internet resulted in defiance and showing attitudes."* It supports the findings of Wartella et al. (2014) that parents find it hard to control their children when their heads are too focused on a device. It implies that parents should be very cautious about giving their children too much freedom to use their gadgets. This suggests immediate action should be taken to minimize, if not stop, children's bad behavior towards them.

Parents also worry about their children's performance at school because of their exposure to gadgets. More than half of the parents raised their concerns about their children's academic performance. Participant 6 said, *"After school, he immediately uses gadgets and forgets to do his assignments."* Parents associated these problems with too much exposure to the digital device. Participant 7 cited, *"He forgets to do his assignments and projects because for him playing comes first. He also has trouble reviewing his notes."*

Meanwhile, participant 2 claimed, *"A teacher called my attention because my child uses a cellular phone during class."* This conforms to Aguilar's (2009) findings that children's overuse of entertainment tech distracts them from the second most crucial factor in their lives: their connection and focuses on school. The presence of a computer, even if intended for educational purposes, may simply serve as a distraction. Found that when left to themselves, children most often used home computers for entertainment instead of learning (George & Odgers, 2015). This implies that adult supervision is critical, and parents should remind their children about the proper use of technology. Thus, finding time to monitor their children after school is essential.

A significant finding in children's health was also identified. This means that it is not only the child's academic life that is affected but also their physical well-being. Participant 1 stressed, *"She told me she chats and talks with her friends on Facebook, so she slept very late and then complained of trouble sleeping. However, I keep giving her reminders because it is for her good."* Parents also noticed issues concerning their children's health. One of which is eye-related problems and trouble sleeping. Participant 11 said, *"My child complains about blurry vision and trouble sleeping due to computer overuse."* Similarly, Sisson et al. (2010) found strong and consistent evidence of a link between mobile device overuse and reduced sleep quality.

Participant 3 added, *"Too much overnight use of computer caused my child to have blurry vision. We went to an ophthalmologist and gave my child an eyeglass."* Further, Hargittai (2018) cited eye overstrain, lack of physical activity, and poor sitting posture in children due to too much technology. As children spend more time in front of those screens, most of the time on the couch, less time they spend

outside playing and running. Over time, those habits can lead to significant eye problems. This conforms to Ortiz's (2017) findings that overuse of electronic devices adversely affects a child's eye development. This implies that parents should be watchful of their children when using gadgets. Allowing children to use these devices for only a certain amount of time may lessen their eye's exposure to radiation. Parents should regulate their children's use of digital technology and encourage alternative activities to engage the child.

Participants also identified their observation of a slight change in their children's social life. Half of the participants observed a significant difference in their children's behavior, particularly in their social relationships with other people. Participant 3 stated, *"She became shy. She prefers playing with her tablet to being with her friends."*. Participant 13 observed the same and commented, *"My child spends more time on technology than with friends."* Participant 4 said, *"I am a working parent, and I only get to see my child when I get home. I see him playing video.*

Similarly, Ortiz (2017) said excessive use of gadgets affects the social development of a child. As children use mobile devices more and more, they can become addicted to them, which results in not spending enough time with their family and/or friends. They are more likely to be virtually connected with friends, share photos, and text online than meet them in person. This implies that parents saw significant changes in their children's social life. They hoped their kids would socialize more and be engaged in outdoor activities. This suggests that parents encourage their children to be with their friends and refrain from holding gadgets during playtime.

Parenting Styles in the Digital Age

Another significant finding highlights the parenting style in the age of digital technology. Different parenting styles must be employed for the specific period of children (Kavi, 2015). Participants have identified the parenting style they exhibit with their children when misbehavior arises caused by digital technology use.

Table 2 shows that among parents of children ages 4-6 (preschool) and 7-12 (elementary), two parenting styles were employed by Ilocanos. These include being authoritative and authoritarian. On the other hand, parents whose child is aged 17-18 (senior high school) use a different parenting style, which is being permissive.

Table 2. Different parenting styles employed by parents

Theme	Categories	Frequency of Codes	Sample Coding of Verbatim Transcripts
2. Parenting Styles in the Digital Age	Authoritative Authoritarian Permissive	Extensive (17) Usual (10) Partial (4)	"freedom to use" (M1, M2, F5, F8)

Almost all participants agreed to be more welcoming to their children. Thus authoritative parenting was employed. They opt to listen and communicate more with their children. Participant 12 said, *"I explain the rules that I set at home with his use of technology.* Parents also tend to explain well the reasons behind their actions not to create fear in their children. This parenting style attempts to control children's behavior by explaining rules, discussing, and reasoning

(Bornstein et al., 2011). Also, Participant 12 said, "*I only use physical punishment when necessary and make sure that my child understands why I do it.* Participant 7 employed a similar parenting style and said, *"I spank my child, but I explain to him why I do it."* For the parents, explaining the reasons behind their actions balances the teen's desire and the parent's desire to be listened to. Authoritative parents are assertive, not restrictive, and make age-appropriate expectations (Weinstein, 2015). The use of a positive discipline model may reinforce good behavior. This implies that parents may give their children some time to use digital technology, but it should come with assured circumstances. This parenting style helps kids develop a sense of independence.

When handling children's misbehavior using digital technology, some parents believe that giving physical punishments and restrictions can still be used to control their children; thus authoritarian parenting style was employed. Participant 8 mentioned, *"I discipline my children physically (spanking, pinching) and scold them."* They also said that their children must always be obedient to their parents. In this parenting style, they are very strict and controlling. It places high expectations on children with little responsiveness. As authoritarian parents, they focus more on obedience, discipline, and control. Participant 20 mentioned, *"I yell at him so that he will listen to what I say. It irritates me when he pretends not to hear anything. That is why I have to control his behavior."*

Further, authoritarian parents are not very responsive and highly demanding. Parents spank, pinch, and reprimand their children when misbehavior arises from digital technology. Participant 14 uttered, *"I admit that I spank and pinch my children to discipline them so they will not repeat misbehaving."* This is consistent with the findings of Espina (1996) and Liwag et al., (1998), noting that authoritarian parents, particularly fathers, restrict and control children who show defiance. This implies that parents find being authoritarian necessary to discipline their children. As authoritarian parent, they may not expect their children to engage in undesirable behavior. This may weaken the bond between parents and their children, as they may want to avoid spending time with them. On the contrary, the parents observed that their children are more likely to be more focused on everything they do, which leads to giving their best. Getting as much information as possible about bringing up a child the right way will go a long way toward using the appropriate parenting style.

Some of the parents employ a permissive parenting style, particularly with their children in senior high school (age 17-18). They believed that permitting their children to use the internet for educational purposes is necessary for their academic life. Participant 1 claimed, *"I give my child the freedom to do what she likes using gadgets."* They allow their children to do things they like and only step in when a severe problem is (Baumrind, 1991). Participant 8 stated: *"I bought my children's laptop, tablet, and cell phone to use in school. They have the freedom to use these gadgets. If they ask me if they could use their gadgets, I say yes, especially if they use them for their classes."*

Additionally, participant 5 said, *"I give my children the liberty to learn things using the internet."* There are very few demands of a child in this situation, and parents are not likely to say "no" as they avoid asserting authority and confrontation. This means that permissive parents are not demanding, and children do not have many responsibilities and are allowed to regulate their behavior and the majority of their choices. This implies that their parents tend to give their children

what they ask for, and they avoid conflict whenever possible. However, parents should still be reminded that too much leniency may result in negative consequences because they may not understand boundaries or follow the rules.

Managing Children's Behaviour

The participants also revealed some of the house rules they set to manage children's behavior in using digital technology. This is consistent with Ortiz's (2017) findings that specific rules set at home manage children's negative behaviors and build children's positive well-well-being.

Table 3 shows the categories from this theme, including giving screen time, watching together, open communication, and providing rewards and punishment.

Table 3. Parents' ways of managing children's behaviour

Theme	Categories	Frequency of Codes	Sample Coding of Verbatim Transcripts
3. Managing Children's Behaviour	Screen Time	Extensive (18)	
	Open Communication	Usual (10)	
	Rewards and Punishment	Partial (8)	
	Watching Together	Partial (4)	"join them in watching" (M3, M5, F6, F7)
	Perceived Ineffective Practices	Usual (7)	

Among parents with children aged 7-12 (elementary), restrictions on the use of devices are practiced. Blum & Livingstone (2016) refers to screen time as the time spent on digital technology. Participant 4 said, *"Study hard and finish home works first before using gadgets."* Likewise, Participant 13 quoted, *"After school, they need to do their assignment first before using gadgets."* This is also consistent with Ortiz's (2017) findings that limiting technology use helps build children's social skills. This implies that finishing school-related work should be prioritized by children before having the chance to have recreational activities using their devices. The parents believed that academics should come first before playing. Participant 17 mentioned, *"He wants to play DOTA after school. However, I tell him to do your home works first, and I will let you play."* For the parents, establishing clear rules and setting reasonable limits for the child's use of digital media is effective. This means that children should be reminded that studying should be the main priority before using gadgets. It implies that after finishing all their schoolwork, parents may confine their children to only limited use of these devices; thus, they must be used more for academic purposes than entertainment.

In addition, parents of children aged 13-18 (high school) conveyed their insights about being open in discussing educational issues like cyberbullying, proper handling of social media, and others related to digital technology. Participant 9 mentioned: *"I discussed at home cyberbullying. I saw a case of suicide in the news because of cyberbullying. I do not want my teenage child to experience this because she is sensitive. I tell her to limit the use of the internet and always be nice so that she will not have enemies."*

Similarly, participant 11 said, *"I am open to discussing censored videos and early pregnancy at home. I am just being protective with my children; especially I do not know*

what they are watching with their phones." The parents believed that good communication is essential for developing a positive relationship. As children get older, good open communication will make talking about things like cyberbullying easier. This implies that parents try their best to inform their children about the harmful effects of cyberbullying. From this, parents must discuss safety precautions at home. Parents should also be cautious in explaining sensitive recorded videos and the context of early adolescent pregnancy to their teenage children.

Further, according to parents of children aged 7-12 (elementary), rewards are still an effective way to discipline their children. Participant 1 claimed, *"I give my child toys as a reward when he finishes homework before playing games."* Participant 7 said, *"If my child does not use his phone for two days, I treat him to his favorite fast-food chain."* Reward systems are positive consequences that encourage behavior change in some way. Parents can use reward systems to teach kids to stop certain behaviors like using technology for a long time. From this, parents must be sure to use rewards consistently and develop reward systems that can be maintained. When used appropriately, rewards can motivate children to change and help them develop new skills (Parkers et al., 2013).

Further, participant 3 said, *"My child behaves because he is afraid to receive physical punishment."* This supports Skinner's Theory of Operant Conditioning that the use of punishment encourages or stops a child's particular behavior. This implies that parents find ways to manage their children's misbehavior using digital technology. From this, parents should not overdo the giving of punishment to balance their children's behavior.

In addition, television shows could influence their children's behavior among parents with children aged 4-6 (preschool). Thus, it is good to monitor what videos and programs their children watch. Participant 17 quoted, *"Watching television with parents is a rule I set at home for my young daughter, and I discuss good behavior."* One of the benefits of watching movies for children is that it lessens behavioral problems. Thus, watching movies with children is an excellent opportunity to instill good values.

Participant 14 said, *"I sit beside my children when watching television. I see to it that I get to choose a cartoon that my kids watch and join them in watching."* As parents, they explain the social situations their children see in the films. Doing so will instill the proper values they need to become better people. For the parents, creating an emotional bond is a vital factor contributing to a child's development. In the age of technology, children who emotionally connect with their parents are more likely to listen to conversations (Akhter et al., 2011). This implies that parents see that their young kids will not get influenced by the television shows they watch. This suggests that parents should constantly monitor their preschool-aged children to avoid negative behavior from the videos they watch on television.

Lastly, the participants identified that their parents before were so used to frowning, which scares them. Parents in the digital age have also tried doing the same, but their children gave a different reaction. Participant 2 mentioned, *"Before, a glaring look means you need to behave, but now it is just an expression."* Also, participant 5 said, *"When my parents start to give us a glaring look, I am in big trouble, so I need to behave immediately. At present, my children respond the other way and still do not listen."*

Further, participant 12 said, *"Before, when my mother raised her eyebrow, I felt terrified. Nevertheless, when I do the same, my children imitate then laugh at me."* Some participants also identified that too much nagging is no longer

applicable today because it creates adverse consequences for children, especially adolescents. Przybylski and Weinstein (2017) also found out that being too authoritarian and too strict does more harm than good to adolescents' mental well-being. This implies that there are practices done by parents that are not suited for a certain age. From this, parents should find the right way to manage their children's misbehavior using digital technology.

■ CONCLUSIONS

The study explores the parents' experiences in the digital age. It determines the problems they encounter with children's use of digital technology, the different parenting styles, and how they cope with the high-technology, fast-paced times that their children live in. The findings of this study would contribute to growing knowledge on how to manage children's behavior in the digital age.

This study provides a voice for parents and validates their experience. The population interviewed for this study involved Ilocano parents with children in preschool, elementary, and high school from five areas in Metro Vigan, Ilocos Sur. Findings show the adversity of parenting in the age of technology. It identified the Ilocano parents' experience in rearing children in the digital age. Children growing up in the age of digital technology with their parents closely monitoring them are integral to forming a sense of self and developing their identity.

The participants identified the child's discipline, academic, health, and social problems. Different parenting styles were employed by the participants but varied depending on the age of their children. Being authoritative and authoritarian are deemed valid among parents whose child is at the preschool and elementary level. On the other hand, being permissive is a parenting style employed by parents whose children are at the high school level. Participants also highlighted their ways of managing children's misbehavior using digital technology. They set house rules like giving screen time, rewards and punishment, watching together, and open communication. Further, participants identified that ineffective practices like raising eyebrows and being too nagging are not helpful, especially for adolescents.

Further study should be comprehensive on parents' experience in the digital age. The small range of locations may limit the universality of parents' insights and practices; thus, the evidence reviewed here is mainly inconclusive concerning parenting styles and the perceived effect of technology on children's behavior, academic, social, and physical life.

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