An Analysis of Parental Digital Literacy, Attitudes and Practices Regarding Safeguarding Their Children from Online Hate Content

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
	The rapid development of digital technology has had a significant impact on numerous aspects of family life, including at-home childcare and parenting practices. While working parents have increasingly relied on housekeepers or caretakers for childcare over the past decade, the widespread use of digital devices among children has presented new challenges. Despite efforts to shield children from the negative consequences of technology, many parents provide their children with access to gadgets and mobile devices with internet connectivity, often driven by the availability of educational apps and engaging games. However, this study investigates parental practices and perceptions regarding their children's exposure to online hate content in the digital world. Methods: This exploratory quantitative study was conducted in Sargodha city with a sample size of 210 educated parents with children under the age of 18. Data was collected through questionnaires focused on five key aspects. The results of the conducted surveys indicate that parents actively monitor and closely supervise their children's internet usage. The majority of parents demonstrate serious concern for their children's online safety by imposing stringent guidelines on the amount of time they can spend online and closely monitoring their behavior. Aware of the hazards of online hate speech, sexual content, cyberbullying, and online frauds, they also educate their children about these risks and teach them self-defense techniques.
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