

Analyzing the Issues and Strategies for Family Education in the Digital Age: A Perspective on the Online Domain

Ruoqian Yang^{1,a,*}

¹*Bachelor of Science Education School, University of Southampton, Southampton, UK*

a. Ry2g21@soton.ac.uk

**corresponding author*

Abstract: In the digital era, the internet has permeated every aspect of people's lives, profoundly impacting family education. As society advances, the importance of family education for students becomes increasingly evident, drawing significant attention from academia and industry alike. However, there are still notable challenges in the development of family education within the online domain. This paper, based on the context of the Internet age, extensively explores relevant theories and categorizes the issues surrounding family education in the online domain in China into three main categories: conceptual issues, security concerns, and educational methodologies. Furthermore, specific measures are proposed to address each of these issues, such as fostering healthy family interactions, supervising and guiding internet usage, and promoting digital literacy education. These measures aim to assist families in better addressing these challenges and creating a healthy, balanced family education environment. Through an in-depth examination of these issues and strategies, to gain a better understanding of how to cultivate a healthy, happy, and potential-driven next generation in the digital age.

Keywords: internet, family education, educational methodologies

1. Introduction

As the Information Age continues to evolve, the widespread use and application of Internet technology have not only changed people's lifestyles but also profoundly impacted the mode of family education. In this digital era, the internet has become a crucial platform for knowledge acquisition and social interaction, bringing new perspectives and challenges to family education. The issues surrounding family education in the context of the internet domain encompass a duality of opportunities and challenges, demanding serious consideration and response in modern society.

Studies related to educational issues from an Internet perspective appear to concentrate on how the educational system can adapt to challenges in the Internet age. Specifically, ideological and political education in schools may face new problems and influences within the online environment. With widespread information dissemination and diverse viewpoints, schools may need to better prepare students for critical thinking, information analysis, and the cultivation of their critical thinking skills in the digital age. Modernizing teaching methods and enhancing the innovation and effectiveness of online ideological and political education are essential in this regard [1]. However, current discussions tend to focus more on the economic, social, and cultural aspects of family education, often neglecting the distinctive characteristics and changes of the current era. Family education methods may be

influenced by trends such as digitalization and globalization, which require more in-depth research and contemplation [2]. Linlin Li suggests that society should provide greater support to promote cooperation and communication between families and schools, harnessing the positive aspects of the Internet [3]. Nonetheless, gaps remain in the research of family education issues within the broader context of the Internet environment.

Current research predominantly focuses on two aspects: educational issues from an internet perspective and discussions on family education. In particular, the former emphasizes ideological and political education in schools within the context of the Internet, while the latter often delves into practical factors with less consideration for the era's backdrop.

In this era of frequent information exchange and abundant educational resources, how to leverage the advantages of the internet while avoiding its pitfalls has become an urgent issue. This paper explores the potential phenomena and negative impacts that may arise within the framework of family education in the online domain, starting from the issues in the online domain. It employs a literature research method to analyze issues related to family education and online education methodologies, proposing strategies to guide family education toward a more positive and healthy direction.

2. Problems in Chinese Family Education Within the Online Domain

In contemporary society, the internet has deeply integrated into various aspects of people's daily lives. With the proliferation of 5G technology, internet connectivity has become faster, enabling smoother online interactions. Social media platforms facilitate sharing experiences, but they also give rise to certain problems. The trend of digitizing education is evident, with remote learning and online courses becoming increasingly common. However, persistent online security risks, personal privacy breaches, and internet fraud remain concerns.

2.1. Conceptual Issues

Presently, parents' understanding and attitudes toward the Internet can be divided into two main categories. First, some parents, influenced by traditional beliefs and unfamiliar with new concepts, view the internet as entirely harmful. They may resist their children's internet use due to a lack of exposure to this emerging phenomenon. These parents consider the internet as wholly detrimental and oppose their children's internet usage. Novel phenomena often challenge and arouse suspicion among those rooted in traditional beliefs. Lacking understanding and experience with the internet, these parents harbor negative perceptions, fearing that their children may be negatively influenced, such as becoming addicted to the internet or encountering inappropriate content. This attitude may arise from concerns about their children's safety but can hinder their development and learning in the digital age. In implementing their educational beliefs, such parents often adopt a tentative and cautious approach, hesitant to transform their established traditional mindset and reluctant to withstand societal pressure [4]. Such psychological tendencies can lead to an overemphasis on the dangers of the internet, using scare tactics and warnings to deter children from internet usage. This can result in children experiencing anxiety and fear and developing negative emotions towards the internet.

On the other hand, some parents are more open-minded and hold positive attitudes towards the internet. Over time, an increasing number of individuals have recognized the positive impacts of the internet, particularly in terms of its potential in education, information acquisition, and social interaction. Educational institutions and professionals have also started advocating for the proper use of the Internet and educating children on how to navigate it safely. Parents with more open attitudes towards the internet do not perceive it as entirely harmful. They engage with the internet critically and may be influenced, to varying degrees, by the content they encounter, sometimes passing on

misconceptions to their children. For instance, they may encounter false advertisements or see exceptional children online and inadvertently convey these misconceptions to their children, potentially leading to comparisons and affecting family harmony. In more severe cases, open-minded parents may fall victim to pyramid schemes, fraud, and other online crimes. Such situations can result in financial losses for families, or even personal safety threats and family disintegration. Open-minded parents may adopt a more tolerant and positive attitude toward the internet but can also face challenges. Although they may have a relatively better understanding and acceptance of the internet, they can still be influenced by false information, negative content, and misleading information found online. This, in turn, may influence the formation of incorrect values and behavioral patterns in children.

2.2. Online Security Issues

The internet has profoundly permeated people's daily lives and social progress, presenting complex and highly interactive scenarios that offer efficient platforms for various data generation and transmission mechanisms [5]. However, students' psychology is not yet fully developed, and their value systems are still evolving, making them prone to becoming lost in the online world [6]. Parents who are at a loss when facing online security issues with their children may lead to information leakage and increased risks. Ineffective guidance can prevent parents from effectively teaching their children to avoid risks such as privacy breaches, communicating with strangers, and other potential threats. This can lead to children divulging excessive personal information online, increasing the risk of internet scams, cyberbullying, and other threats. Additionally, due to a lack of knowledge about internet safety, parents may inadvertently ignore the internet risks that their children may encounter, exposing their children to potential dangers. In cases where parents are unsure how to provide the correct explanations and guidance, children may be led astray by misinformation and misconceptions, such as those related to sex education or exposure to violent content. Such situations can result in children forming incorrect values and behavioral patterns. However, parents who are at a loss may be reluctant to confront the issues, leading to communication barriers with their children. Children may find it difficult to trust their parents and may be unwilling to share their online problems and concerns. This can lead to mental health problems. If children experience bullying, negative influences, or exposure to violent content online without timely help and guidance, it may result in the development of mental health issues. Furthermore, parents who are at a loss when it comes to online security issues may lead to increased tension and conflicts within the family. Parents may feel frustrated and anxious due to their inability to effectively address these problems, and these emotions can permeate the family environment. Such behavior not only can lead to children developing a sense of rebellion but also fails to fulfill the educational role effectively. Parents who are unable to guide their children correctly in using the internet can disrupt family harmony.

2.3. Education Approach Issues

Chinese parents have long been concerned about the issue of controlling and intervening in their children's smartphone usage. Many parents believe that excessive smartphone use may have negative effects on their children's learning and health, leading them to adopt various control measures. This attitude stems from their concern for their children's protection and future development but has also sparked discussions and controversies.

According to the revised questionnaire on parental intervention methods in internet use by Wu Yiling and others published in 2019, it can be observed that there is a positive correlation between companionship and positive assistance with emotional warmth. However, monitoring and technical restrictions show a positive relationship with rejection and excessive protection [7]. It is worth noting

that companionship is positively correlated with emotional warmth, rejection, and excessive protection simultaneously. This suggests that companionship in this context is quite complex. For example, the scenario of “parents staying nearby while you are online,” may be perceived by teenagers as positive companionship, but it can also be interpreted as a form of restriction or monitoring. Such parenting approaches can lead to psychological health issues in children and affect students’ confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy [8].

Li Chengmei mentioned that the current trend among parents is to adopt simplistic and harsh methods of education, lacking a scientific approach [9]. For instance, some parents support strict measures to control mobile phone usage, including limiting screen time, restricting access to specific apps or websites, and monitoring communication records, all to ensure their children’s focus on academics and healthy growth. However, such practices can lead to resentment and dissatisfaction among children, and even strain family relationships. On the other hand, some parents emphasize cultivating their children’s self-discipline and digital literacy, encouraging them to use smartphones moderately and educating them on how to identify and address online risks. This approach emphasizes the child’s responsibility and capability but requires more time and patience.

In summary, the issue of mobile phone control involves balancing family values, educational philosophies, and technological advancements. Parents need to establish appropriate rules for mobile phone usage based on their children’s age, interests, developmental stages, and characteristics, as well as their values.

3. Strategies for Addressing Issues Related to Parenting Styles in the Digital Era in Chinese Families

3.1. Specific Measures for Addressing Attitudinal Issues

To address attitudinal issues, provide parents with education about the online world and digital literacy to help them understand the importance, advantages, and risks of the internet. Parents should approach the internet with a critical mindset, recognizing the importance of verifying online information rather than blindly believing it. Since the online environment is constantly evolving, parents should continuously update their knowledge of the internet. This will enable them to better understand the challenges and opportunities their children face online, allowing for more targeted guidance. Additionally, society and schools should enhance adult education programs for parents. Currently, many parents focus more on their children’s academic tutoring, neglecting the importance of family education itself. Due to limited demand, there are not many organizations offering such programs [10]. Therefore, parents can take the initiative to participate in online activities with their children, such as watching educational videos or playing educational online games together. This can enhance parent-child relationships and help parents gain a better understanding of their children’s interests and needs in the online world.

3.2. Specific Measures for Addressing Internet Safety Issues

To address internet safety issues, parents should maintain open communication with their children and make them feel comfortable sharing any problems or concerns they encounter online. Help children understand the potential risks of the internet, such as cyberbullying, false information, and privacy breaches, and teach them how to handle these risks. Schools can enhance their efforts to educate parents on how to guide students correctly and protect their mental and physical well-being [11]. It is crucial to provide basic knowledge of internet safety, such as how to identify false information, protect personal privacy, and avoid clicking on unknown links. Parents can also use parental control software to filter out inappropriate content and ensure that their children grow up in a safe online environment. Parents can learn about internet safety together with their children, discuss

proper online behavior, and build a closer family relationship. Cultivating critical thinking skills will enable children to view the truthfulness and credibility of information on the internet from a more balanced perspective. Encourage children to share any internet-related issues with their parents at any time, building a relationship of trust so that they are willing to seek help and advice from their parents.

3.3. Specific Measures for Addressing Educational Approach Issues

To address issues related to educational approaches, parents can establish appropriate rules and restrictions on internet usage based on their children's age and developmental stage. Parents can work with their children to set reasonable limits on screen time and specific app usage. These rules should strike a balance between allowing for exploration and protecting the child's needs. Parents can also use family internet filtering tools to limit their children's exposure to inappropriate content. However, these restrictions should be moderate and not excessively infringe on a child's autonomy. Retired teacher Zhang Guihua suggests that parents should lead by example, improve their knowledge and capabilities, and communicate with their children in an equal and respectful manner [12]. Demonstrating proper internet use behavior, such as avoiding arguments and insults and respecting others' privacy, sets a positive example for children. Parents can showcase good internet etiquette through their online behavior, like showing respect for others, responsibly sharing information, and knowing how to identify false information. Such modeling will influence children to develop positive online habits, enabling them to effectively search for information, evaluate the credibility of sources, and handle online challenges correctly. Families should also encourage children to engage in physical social interactions, such as outdoor activities, reading, and play, to balance their online and offline lives.

In contemporary society, an increasing number of Chinese parents are recognizing the importance of internet safety, especially in protecting children from exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying, and privacy breaches. They are gaining awareness of the risks in the online world and actively seeking relevant knowledge to protect their children. Promoting the cultivation of children's digital literacy, including the ability to discern false information, protect personal privacy, and avoid internet addiction, is crucial. Through discussions and guidance, parents can help their children establish the right values and behavior guidelines for the online world.

4. Conclusion

This article explores home education within the context of the Internet, highlighting issues related to mindset, online security, and teaching methods. In summary, home education in the digital age faces several challenges, including conflicts between mobile device usage and education, inappropriate teaching methods, and inadequate digital literacy among parents. The article delves into these problems and proposes a series of solutions. In general, parents and children should work together to improve their educational mindset, enhance their awareness of online security, employ targeted teaching methods, establish open dialogue mechanisms, teach children about online safety, and establish appropriate internet usage rules.

In this digital era, home education requires more attention and guidance to ensure that children can grow up healthily in the online world while developing their digital literacy and critical thinking skills to adapt to future societal challenges. Furthermore, creating a conducive online environment is crucial for maintaining a harmonious family atmosphere, economic stability, and psychological well-being. These comprehensive measures contribute to establishing a healthier, open, and trustful home education environment, providing better support and guidance for children's growth.

However, it's worth noting that this article still has some limitations, mainly in terms of lacking specific recommendations and actionable methods tailored to individual cases. Therefore, future

research can build upon this foundation to explore more specific home education solutions based on the needs of different families and children.

References

- [1] Wang, G.M. (2021) *The Construction of Ideological and Political Education Platforms and Teacher Teams in the Network Environment—A Review of “Reform and Development of School Ideological and Political Education in the Network Environment.”* *Science and Technology Management Research*, 41(06), 227.
- [2] Zhai, B. (2016) *Establishing Values for Family Education in the New Era.* *Educational Research*, 37(03), 92-98.
- [3] Li, L.L. (2022) *Exploring Family Education Issues and Countermeasures from the Perspective of Social Networks.* *Qiu Zhi Dao Kan*, 20, 2-4.
- [4] You, H.J. (2016) *Research on Family Education of Post-90s College Students in the Network Environment.* Beijing: Beijing Forestry University.
- [5] Hu, L.L., Zhou, C. and Li, X.Y. (2023) *Discussion on Cybersecurity Issues and Prevention Measures.* *Network Security Technology and Application*, 7, 167-168.
- [6] Wang, L.J. (2005) *On Family Education in the Internet Age.* *Journal of Henan Institute of Education (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 3, 97-101.
- [7] Wu, Y.L., Shen, X. and Su, Y.J. (2019) *Revision of the Questionnaire on Parental Intervention in Internet Use.* *Chinese Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 27(04), 680-684.
- [8] Da, H.M. (2002) *A Study on the Relationship Between Parenting Styles and Children’s Self-Confidence, Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, and Psychological Health.* *Chinese Health Education*, 8, 13-16.
- [9] Li, C.M. (2022) *Research on a New Path for Family Education Guidance for High School Students in the Network Perspective.* *Contemporary Family Education*, 10, 29-31.
- [10] You, H.J. (2016) *Research on Family Education of Post-90s College Students in the Network Environment.* Beijing: Beijing Forestry University.
- [11] Luo, S.Q. (2020) *Analysis of New Paths for Family Education Guidance for High School Students in the Context of the Internet.* *Scientific Consultation (Educational Research)*, 3, 89.
- [12] Bin, Y.Y. (2023) *Emphasizing Support for Family Education: Together Illuminating the Future of Children.* *Nanjing Daily*, 7.