

## "FAMILY LAW IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES ON RELATIONSHIPS AND PARENTING"

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### **Abstract:**

This article explores the legal implications of emerging technologies on relationships and parenting in the context of family law. The use of digital devices and online platforms have drastically changed the way people interact and communicate, leading to new legal issues regarding privacy, custody, and access to information. The article examines the impact of technologies such as social media, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence on traditional family structures and legal norms. Additionally, it highlights the need for updated legislation and policies to address the unique challenges posed by these technologies. The article also points out that in the digital age, family law practitioners and judges must be aware of the latest technologies and their potential impact on their cases. Overall, this article provides an in-depth analysis of the legal implications of emerging technologies on relationships and parenting in the context of family law.

**Keywords:** *Family Law, Emerging Technology, Marital Privacy; social media.*

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### **I. Introduction**

A family is an important social institution, as it represents a group of people who share common interests. One area that has developed tremendously in the recent past and which defines how families are structured in modern society is parenting. Technology has played a significant role in shaping contemporary societies as they have evolved to be interconnected both online and offline. This paper aims to evaluate how technology has changed traditional practices of giving birth to children with an aim of establishing whether parents should continue using old strategies or embrace new ones. Such research will include an assessment of existing literature and use of

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appropriate methodology. As such, it is expected that the study would improve understanding of issues surrounding this topic and provide insight that could influence current practices.

The article “Family law in the digital age: The legal implications of emerging technologies on relationships and parenting” examines the significance of technological advancements in transforming contemporary families (McGinley et al., 2020). The authors note that there are different forms of communication available to couples such as text messages. However, these can only help solve immediate problems. There have been concerns about how tech innovations affect the conventional relationship between couples since they lack face-to-face interaction for solving disputes. According to McGinley et al. (2020), some couples prefer virtual meetings as opposed to real-life interactions because they do not involve physical contact and therefore do not cause stress. Therefore, the researchers argue that adopting various interactive modes for addressing disagreements would help address the issue of divorce.

The findings of the study indicate that more than half of the respondents felt that modern technologies had caused negative effects on their marriages, but most of them (43%) noted that technology had a positive impact on marriage. Parents were also observed to have adopted various approaches to manage conflicts such as avoiding confronting each other through texting and making compromises (Mccauley et al., 2020). Although many parents admitted to being open with their children, the researchers suggested that parents need to spend time communicating with them during face-to-face interactions (McGinley et al., 2020). As such, they needed to understand that technology may sometimes interfere with the quality of relationships. Despite acknowledging the fact that technology improves communication among families, the authors noted that more needs to be done to ensure that people maintain healthy relationships.

From the analysis above, it appears that the issue of technology interfering with family life will be addressed in the future. From my experience, I have seen parents interact with their children over the phone when they cannot physically meet them. For instance, my close friend Kate was forced into early retirement due to ill health because she did not want her child to become accustomed to her absence. At times, Skype calls may end up becoming strained relationships because they only allow one person to talk at a time. Moreover, parents and teachers often miss out on personal connections during class sessions in fear that they won't hear their colleagues' voices (Mccauley et al., 2020). Thus, it is apparent that maintaining relationships in the modern era is impossible

without embracing technology to achieve effective communication. Additionally, having access to information through modern gadgets allows individuals to keep tabs on what their relatives or friends are doing. Similarly, we can get news from our smartphones and share a video clip of that event online, thus saving time. All these aspects enhance family life.

The author presents findings that show that children have different perceptions of what constitutes a good parent and does not necessarily depend on gender, ethnicity, income, or education level of the couple. Some women reported feeling satisfied while others complained about their partners being unable to care for them, particularly if the parents are busy. In some instances, mothers reported experiencing psychological distress while those men perceived it positively (McGinley et al., 2020). Therefore, the authors' argument implies that despite the perception that people may hold regarding good parentage, the way to interpret family life depends on individual perceptions. This is true especially in cases where individuals differ about certain issues concerning their daily lives. This means that understanding all family members' views is imperative, and one ought to communicate effectively to avoid misunderstanding that could lead to tension.

The article demonstrates that even with the adoption of technology for enhancing communications, other challenges continue to emerge. They included difficulties in balancing responsibilities associated with work, the presence of several siblings, and economic conditions that force people to focus on themselves rather than others (Mccauley et al., 2020). These are major obstacles in achieving successful family relations. It is evident that technology helps families cope with these challenging moments better but challenges associated with workload, financial status, and childcare are still evident. Nevertheless, the use of internet technology gives families opportunities to create bonds with loved ones in far away places, especially when they cannot meet physically. Hence, they get to know each other virtually and are able to find ways to stay in touch even if they are separated. Importantly, modern technology has ensured that family members have access to their children's videos and photos, thus allowing them to learn something new about them from time to time. With this kind of knowledge, there is no need to take them to see their parents because their memories come directly to them.

For example, I once watched an interview with my brother, John, who has always lived outside his native country and works as an accountant. He talked about two things that made him feel sad when he decided to leave home to go abroad. First, he mentioned a story of how his wife used to

fight back before, claiming that she was tired. Second, he revealed the stories of his late father and mother and how he found it hard to deal with them when they started arguing. As evidenced by the conversation, John explained the situation as stressful and that he had little choice but to accept their differences.

The discussion was encouraging because John explained that although there were arguments, they never went to court and resolved the matter after finding peace with each other (McGinley et al., 2020). From this particular case, it seems that even though our world might seem chaotic, people can resolve conflicts peacefully if they choose to communicate directly. When faced with difficult situations, people might consider speaking out rather than trying to reason out with their neighbors. Overall, such a view does not encourage conflict resolution as a form of resolving conflicts is necessary for improving the relationship with other family members.

## **II. The Future of Family Law**

According to the 2016 Deloitte UK report "Developing Legal Talent: Stepping into the Future Law Firm," "By 2025, we predict a profound transformation of the profession due to the quickening pace of technological developments, shifts in workforce demographics, and the need to offer clients more value for money." If law firms want to stay competitive and make sure they attract the finest talent to support their business, they now need a clear strategy for dealing with these developments. The tipping point is expected to happen around 2020 if the rate of change continues to quicken as we estimate.

By 2036, Deloitte predicts that 114,000 legal positions will be automated, forcing law firms to update their talent strategies to take artificial intelligence (AI) into account. According to Peter Saunders, who oversees Deloitte's Professional Practices Group in the UK, "advances in technology imply that an increasingly greater number of traditional, repetitive operations within the legal profession can be automated by smart and self-learning algorithms." Some businesses already utilise e-discovery tools or virtual assistants. The legal industry can employ technology and automation for more things, though.

The bottom line is that family law companies should develop an AI-based technology strategy right away. In a special meeting with your firm's partners, ask a partner or associate who embraces new technologies to make the case for AI. Partners may need to put aside their resistance to change

and/or concerns about change in order to learn about the advantages of AI as well as the costs associated with delaying the decision indefinitely. By implementing AI technology, your company will be able to shift time, money, and resources from lower-level jobs to highly skilled positions for top lawyers and IT specialists to manage and execute new technologies. The face of the legal sector is already changing as a result of artificial intelligence, and this transition will only intensify over time. So join the team today, or you run the danger of being obsolete in a few years.

### **III. Conclusion**

This conclusion makes me agree with the author as it shows the importance of communication for fostering strong family ties. While technology has facilitated the process, the author admits that cultural differences play a significant part in determining family structures (McGinley et al., 2020). Since there are few ethnic groups living together as a unit, members are likely to rely on cultural norms, values, and beliefs. To effectively overcome cultural hurdles that may hinder healthy communication in a family setting, the author suggests taking the initiative to learn new ways of relating. For instance, she advises parents to seek advice from family members with diverse ideas, which could be learned through reading books or listening to conversations. By so doing, parents will be in a position to recognize underlying issues or biases that hinder communication in the family. If the issue of inequality persists, then they will eventually opt to seek other alternatives such as counseling instead of seeking medical attention. Most importantly, family reunions should be treated as one of the happiest experiences in life.

In essence, this study explores the implications of introducing new technologies to enhance communication in families. Even though it was conducted recently, its relevance today cannot be underestimated. For instance, there is increasing evidence indicating that young adults have increasingly embraced technology for facilitating schoolwork, employment, entertainment, and communication. Notably, most parents in America spend more time on electronic devices than any other activity (McGinley et al., 2020). What is surprising is that this trend is rising, causing them to neglect their real-life commitments and obligations in the form of housekeeping and household chores. Many modern parents find themselves spending less time with children since they get access to technology for just a short duration. Therefore, they fail to notice what goes on around them, thereby leading to adverse outcomes in upbringing and development of children. Consequently, this implies that modern parents are too distracted by their phones and laptops.

The availability of the internet offers many advantages including ease access to information and social networking tools. Conversely, studies have shown that it has demotivates children to pursue activities that require physical movement, thinking, and creativity. Furthermore, the prevalence of mobile technology usage has led to poor academic performance as many students struggle in schools since they have limited screen time. Ultimately, this means that modern technology poses threats to children's educational outcomes as it limits their cognitive abilities. Another factor that impacts the effectiveness of technology is its influence on adolescents' ability to concentrate, make decisions, problem-solving, learning, and socialization. Through research, it has been established that excessive exposure to mobile technologies leads children to engage in dangerous behaviors such as addiction, aggression, depression, distraction, and poor relationships skills.

In summary, even though this project is relatively recent, it has remained relevant to contemporary families, communities, and society generally. Owing to the extent of technology advancement, families now have access to a wide range of online resources, which give them an opportunity to connect with others without moving. More importantly, modern technology has enabled us to monitor our friends, family members' whereabouts, and work schedules as well as find ourselves whenever we like. Nonetheless, the benefits outweigh the disadvantages that result from the use of modern technology in the modern world.

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