

## **Letter to the editor**

### **Digital dementia: Are we getting dumb internet generation?**

Dear Editor,

Humans are currently living in a digital era where we are seeing the peak of new technologies where artificial intelligence can solve large problems in a matter of seconds, and it has become a part of our lives.<sup>1</sup> The term "digital dementia" signifies the concept that excessive usage of the internet and internet-enabled devices shortens memory spans, impairs attention, and potentially speeds up early-onset dementia.<sup>2</sup> As per the 2023 study in India, 23 percent of children's are having smartphone addiction.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the addiction causes decreased attention span, memory problems, depression, mental health problems, stress, early-onset dementia, etc.<sup>1</sup> The left half of the brain is stimulated when using cell phones, but the right side of the brain—which is associated with concentration—remains unused and eventually degenerates. Because people rely so much on their devices to recall even the smallest detail for them, therefore, forgetfulness has increased. Search engines make information widely accessible; thus, consumers are more likely to recall where to discover a fact than the fact itself. Furthermore, people may scan papers on the internet due to the hypertext presentation of information, which impairs memory recall. However, devices help us remember things by storing information outside of our bodies, which frees up space in our long-term memory.<sup>4</sup> Yes, there is no doubt that the use of social media and other applications, including games, is enjoyed by all age groups, but the consequences can be very severe as most of the adolescents spend their time in the virtual world compared to real life. Person-to-person interaction and conversation are very important for the overall development of the human life.<sup>5</sup> Dementia is commonly seen among old people. But due to the overuse of technologies, more and more people are suffering from diminished ability to think and make critical decisions and judgments. Cutting-edge digital technologies elicit many emotions, not just in young people. It should be mentioned that using them excessively can result in addiction.<sup>4,5</sup> To control this, the main reformation should come from the parents itself. Parents should try to limit the use of digital equipment's and need to maintain a convivial environment at home, and they should also restrict

the children from spending time online. The children should restrict the use of mobile phones and need to be pushed to play with others and also to spend more and more time with human interaction. Furthermore, schools should also educate their students regarding the ramifications of internet abuse and restrict the use of phones or any other devices on school premises, along with limited digitization in the classroom.<sup>4,6</sup> Along with that, the government should take pivotal steps to educate the people, from children to old people, regarding internet addiction. A strict policy should be implemented in the search bar area. It is recommended that to combat addiction, a person periodically abstain from digital media in favour of offline social interaction and relationship building. Furthermore, it is suggested that individuals should memorize their personal information to memory rather than storing it on a smartphone. The contribution of technology to human development is undeniable, but its effects must be recognized and understood.

UNDER PEER REVIEW

## Reference:

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