

The minds of children – The impact of technology on schoolchildren

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Over the past decade, screen-based technology has continued to infiltrate children's lives. The rapid expansion of technology in children's lives has enabled many opportunities for their educational development. Technology can play a large part in facilitating children's academic development.

The technological boom means that children are becoming computer experts at a very young age. As children are learning from a very young age about technology, they're making huge strides as they grow in being prepared for schooling, future career and innovation.

Technology helps children to learn. There are educational elements of technology that can help children learn. From TV programs to apps on smartphones or tablets, there are things that children can be exposed to that can help them develop their mind and teach them new things.

Moreover, technology is used as a classroom tool. Many teachers have started using technology in classrooms to help students learn. Technology helps teachers reach different kinds of learners, reinforce and expand on concepts, and motivate students in new ways.

As more teachers embrace technology, new kinds of learning takes place in classrooms. Technology helps prepare children for future technological career. As technology continues to grow and flourish, there will be demand for professionals ready to take on technology careers, and when children start getting excited about technology and the potential it offers them from a young age, they get prepared for their future and the possibilities it offers.

Technology also helps improve multitasking. Studies show that using technology helps young children learn how to multitask more effectively. While multitasking never allows one to fully focus on one area, students can learn how to listen and type to take notes, or other multitasking activities that can help them succeed in their future.

Technology helps improve visual-spatial development. Spatial development can be greatly improved when technology like video games is used to help train students and children.

As far as improvements in problem-solving and decision making, is concerned technology often presents children with problems, and helps them learn how to make decisions and solve problems. Games and apps on tablets or smartphones can help give children the practice they need to find success down the road. When students wisely use technology they can reap rewards.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, computers, tablets, and smartphones have allowed students to remain connected to the classroom, albeit virtually.

Finally, in the age of social distancing, technology has become a social lifeline for many kids. Young people rely on screens to stay safely connected with grandparents and family members and chat with friends. This helps to stay in touch with loved ones and improves mental and emotional health, particularly in times of crisis. Children these days are blessed with the technology that is around them.

Saukuru raises concerns about youths misusing social media instead of building businesses

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It's sad to say that, not only in Fiji, but in all Pacific islands, we are still using Facebook in a detrimental way. This has been highlighted to fijivillage News by Minister for Youth and Sports Jese Saukuru, who has raised concerns about the growing misuse of social media among young people.

Speaking at the Creative Content Workshop hosted by the National Youth Council of Fiji in partnership with the International Peace Youth Group at the Sun Insurance Building in Suva, Saukuru says many young people continue to use digital platforms for gossip and negativity instead of taking advantage of their potential for business growth and personal development.

Saukuru says the issue is especially evident among Generation Z, those born during the rapid rise of mobile technology, who rely heavily on their devices. He says that while technology offers enormous benefits, it has also contributed to school dropouts and limited interpersonal communication, as many youths prefer working alone on devices rather than engaging face-to-face.

Despite the challenges, Saukuru emphasised that digital tools can significantly enhance productivity if young people are properly trained and guided. He highlighted Fiji's increasing dependence on technology, pointing out that although the population has not yet reached one million, there are more than 1.3 million active SIM cards, an indication of how deeply mobile devices are embedded in daily life.

Saukuru says such reliance, if channelled positively, can support entrepreneurship, messaging, marketing and constructive creativity, but warned that issues such as illicit drugs and mental health remain pressing concerns for the region's young population. Speaking on the workshop, National Youth Council of Fiji Vice President Selai Raqiwa says the workshop is part of a wider collaboration between the Council and International Peace Youth Group to promote peace, recognition and positive storytelling across digital platforms.

Raqiwa says the Council, through the Provincial Youth Forum and Youth Assemblies of Fiji, represents youth leaders from all provinces and communities, including minority groups. She

says the training aims to ensure that participants return to their communities equipped to teach and advocate for responsible digital engagement.

Describing youths as “digital natives”, Raqiwa says the initiative helps them use social media to build collaboration, strengthen community work and uplift one another, rather than contribute to division or misinformation.

Schools prioritise ICT

The Fiji Times Published: March 15, 2025 by Jake Wise

Education Acting Permanent Secretary Timoci Bure during the national consultation workshop on ICT in Education Policy at Novotel on Monday 13.02.25

A RECENT survey revealed that 96 per cent of Fijian schools prioritise ICT (information and communication technology) skills. The 2024 Commonwealth of Learning (COL) Status of ICT in Education in Fiji survey gathered responses from 1036 individuals – 787 from primary schools and 249 from secondary schools. These insights were shared at the national consultation workshop on ICT in Education Policy on March 13.

Opening the event, Ministry of Education acting permanent secretary and deputy secretary Timoci Bure said those findings indicated that schools recognised the importance of digital literacy, with students learning computer functions, internet research skills, and safe technology usage.

“As we stand at the crossroads of a digital transformation, we have a unique opportunity to harness the power of technology to build a more inclusive, sustainable, and innovative education system,” Mr Bure said.

“The People’s Coalition Government’s commitment to ICT integration is a forward-thinking strategy that has the prospective to revolutionise the learning experience for all students, educators, and communities.

“The journey of ICT ranges from accessing information to enhancing critical thinking and from fostering innovation to ensuring global competitiveness, digital literacy equips our students with the tools they need to thrive in the 21st century.”

Despite progress, Mr Bure acknowledged challenges in infrastructure, teacher training, and digital resources, which create disparities among schools.

“Many schools have adopted ICT tools, and there are promising examples of digital learning programs in place. However, access to technology is not uniform, and we must work to

expand efforts so that every school has the tools and support needed for a digitally equipped education system.”

The workshop brought together education stakeholders to discuss strategies for strengthening ICT integration in schools, to ensure all Fijian students are prepared for an increasingly digital world.