ADDICTION & SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION

University of Messina - Journal homepage: http:// https://cab.unime.it/journals/index.php/ASMC/
Addiction & Social Media Communication, 2024, n.2, vol.1, pages 30-47

Generational Transformations and Digital Media: continuity and change

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ABSTRACT

We are witnessing a profound change in generational dynamics, driven by technological evolution, in which Artificial Intelligence and digital innovations are redefining the relationship between people and technology. In this context, the concept of generational identity is constantly evolving, influenced by the intertwining of technological progress and sociocultural transformations. In this new era, generational identities are no longer defined only by shared historical events, but also by the ability to navigate and adapt to a constantly changing technological landscape. This research addresses the impact of technological transformations and how they have affected generational communication and values, with a focus on the evolution from the Lost Generation to the emerging AIGen. Through comparative analysis, we highlight the influences of technology and digital media in redefining intergenerational relationships and creating a shared collective memory. The aim is to identify the main points of discontinuity between generations by analyzing the sociocultural implications of technological and digital innovations.

Keywords: generations, digital media, artificial intelligence, generational identity, technological innovation.

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Doi http://10.13129/3035-1383/asmc-4506

Introduction

Humanity has always been distinguished by its ability to adapt and innovate; characteristics particularly evident in the evolution of generations. According to Cristante (2021, p. 15), each generation is shaped by historical events, technological breakthroughs and cultural changes that redefine patterns of communication and learning. Unique historical contexts have contributed to the construction of shared values, with effects that are also reflected in the way technology is interpreted and exploited (Mead, 1970, p. 42). From the face-to-face encounters of the Lost Generation to the formation of AIGen in a world heavily mediated by artificial intelligence, modes of interaction have been radically transformed (Twenge, 2006, p. 67). The technological transition has been an engine of change, redefining what it means to be connected, informed and aware (Meyrowitz, 1985, p. 89). Each advance, from radio and television to computers and the Internet, has expanded the communicative reach and changed the values and priorities of generations (Castells, 1996, p. 123). For example, the Greatest Generation received information through official channels such as radio, while new generations draw on a multiplicity of digital sources, including social media and artificial intelligence systems, which influence opinions in often unanticipated ways (Rainie & Wellman, 2012, p. 45). The impact of technology also extends to the world of education and learning. The shift from face-to-face teaching methods to more interactive and personalized models represent the adaptation of educational institutions to changes in generational expectations (Prensky, 2001a). Whereas past

generations had a passive role in knowledge acquisition, Millennials and Gen Z are accustomed to active interaction through digital tools that promote critical thinking (Tapscott, 1998, p. 78). The introduction of artificial intelligence in education has further expanded these capabilities, allowing for personalized learning paths and immediate feedback, which are key elements for the younger generation (Selwyn, 2014, p. 102). However, rapid technological development brings significant challenges, particularly with respect to ethical issues and changing social values. While previous generations centered their value system around stability and work, for Millennials and Gen Z, self-actualization, work-life balance, and rapid access to information are central (Sinek, 2017, p. 56). With the advent of artificial intelligence, these priorities are further evolving, accentuating the gap between generations and leading to an ongoing negotiation of the values that characterize our society. As Turkle (2011, p. 89) notes, we live in an age where more and more is expected from technology and less and less from direct interactions, a trend that can negatively affect the quality of human relationships. In this context, the analysis of generations in transition is not just a look at the past, but an attempt to understand how technological dynamics shape our future (Turkle, 2011, p. 88). This research explores changes in communication, technology, values and learning styles across generations. The goal is to identify differences and emerging trends to understand how these transformations affect relationships among people and shared priorities.

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Technology scores

"Gradualism," writes palenteologist Gould (1982, p. 226), "the idea that all change should be fluid, slow and steady, was never read from the rocks. It represented a common cultural prejudice, in part a response of nineteenth-century liberalism to a world in revolution. Yet it continues to influence our supposedly objective reading of the history of life.... The history of life, as I read it, is a series of stable states, interrupted at rare intervals by significant events that occur with great rapidity and help establish the next epoch."

One of these rare intervals we experienced in the late twentieth century (Castells, 1996, p. 28), an interval marked by the transformation of our 'material culture' (Fischer, 1992, p. 1-32) by new technological paradigms. Since 1800, the world has experienced a period of extraordinary technological transformation, marked by inventions that have profoundly altered society and people's way of life. Communication, hitherto entrusted to traditional means, underwent its first breakthrough with the invention of the telegraph and, later, the telephone, which made it possible to transmit messages over long distances in real time. The introduction of radio and film in the early decades of the 20th century changed the way information was disseminated, and the masses were entertained, creating a new kind of popular culture that reached an increasingly large audience. The following years saw the advent of television, which brought news and entertainment directly into homes, becoming a key mass communication tool for the rest of the century. The invention of the computer in the mid-20th century was another turning point. In the 1970s and 1980s, personal computers began to enter homes, marking the beginning of digitization. Finally, in the 1990s, with the invention of the Internet and the spread of the *world wide web*, the world experienced a new revolution: the global network transformed the way we communicate, work, and access information, making it possible to share data and knowledge on a global scale in real time. This latest shift has propelled humanity into the information age, laying the foundation for an interconnected, digital society. It is on this fertile ground, marked by two centuries of innovations that have redefined the social, economic and cultural fabric. This transformation, accelerated by the advance of information technologies, has introduced changes at an unprecedented speed, propelling humanity into a new era. Just as Gould describes punctuations (1997)[1] in the

[1] The theory of punctuated equilibrium, proposed by paleontologists Niles Eldredge and Stephen Jay Gould in 1972, holds that evolution does not occur gradually and continuously, but alternates long periods of stability with short, intense moments of change, during which species rapidly transform to adapt to new conditions. Applied to the technological context, this theory can be seen as a metaphor for technological and communications evolutionism, where phases of gradual innovation are interrupted by moments of "punctuation" that introduce profound changes in the way we live, communicate and interact. In the history of communications, each of these punctuations marked the beginning of an era of transformation: the invention of movable type printing in the 15th century made it possible to disseminate information on a large scale, changing the cultural landscape and the transmission of knowledge; the telegraph and radio then enabled instantaneous communication over long distances, while television introduced a new visual dimension to entertainment and information. With the computer and the Internet, the digital revolution finally led to an unprecedented evolutionary leap, transforming communication into a two-way, global process accessible to a vast network of users. Each technological leap had a lasting impact on the generations that witnessed it, shaping their values, expectations and methods of

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evolutionary process, the digital shift has also disrupted a stable state and brought about a new era, with ways of living and interacting that profoundly redefine our relationship with technology and knowledge.

The role of new media

The media play a fundamental role in defining generational identities and shaping relations between different cohorts. They are not limited to being technological tools, but function as true socio-technical apparatuses, described by Colombo (2003: 17) as devices that mediate communication between subjects, integrating deeply into everyday experiences and common sense (Silverstone 1999). In the context of modernity, media are an essential component of social life, offering not only technological tools but also narratives, rituals, characters, and symbolic values that help construct collective imaginaries and shared memories. These elements are sedimented as cultural repertoires that can be used to recall the past and foster mutual recognition within the same generation. In addition, media amplify the experience of significant historical events, facilitating a collective understanding of them, a crucial aspect in the construction of the generation category. One of the most significant functions of media is to create a shared memory that transcends generational boundaries. Narratives, images and symbols transmitted by the media settle into the collective consciousness, becoming common references that unite generations. As pointed out by Silverstone (1999), media are not only an integral part of everyday experience, but also help to construct a symbolic landscape in which individuals of different ages can recognize themselves. For example, historical television broadcasts, iconic sporting events or film narratives represent not only cultural products, but tools that bind different generations together through the re-enactment of shared experiences. These processes of collective memory are not limited to a commemorative function, but also enable mutual recognition between generations. As Mannheim (1952: 265) points out, a generation's ability to orient itself in the world depends on the sedimentation of shared experiences, many of which are mediated by the media. These not only preserve memory, but also create new narratives and rituals that facilitate intergenerational dialogue. Through television programs, films, digital platforms and social media, the media provide symbolic spaces where generations can share common experiences, as happens during globally broadcast cultural or sporting events. These moments become opportunities to develop a collective "*we-sense*," which, as Jedlowski (2005)

interaction. Thus, while previous generations experienced innovation more linearly and gradually, recent technological punctuations have radically redefined the relationship between the individual and the world around him or her, fueling a culture of instant connectivity and constant access to information. In this sense, technological evolutionism follows a pattern of "punctuated equilibrium" in which each new era of communication leaves its mark on specific generational cohorts, shaping collective identities based on the direct experience of each transformation.

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points out, contributes to the formation of a shared common sense. For example, live broadcast concerts, global social media campaigns or even online video games provide opportunities for the creation of symbolic rituals that reinforce collective identity. As Bourdieu (1979) argues, distinctive cultural consumptions often become points of encounter or tension between generations, stimulating both dialogue and reinterpretation of identities. Aroldi and Colombo emphasize another crucial aspect, namely the role of the media in providing tools for generational expression. They do not merely passively represent the values and narratives of a generation but provide platforms through which generations can actively shape and claim their identity. From social media to streaming platforms, modern media enables generational agency by providing spaces for self-production of content and the creation of self-representative narratives. The *observable* outcome of these choices is the concrete uses of different communication technologies, media diets, and symbolic consumption (Aroldi et al., 2013). As Bourdieu (1979) notes, symbolic choices related to media consumption not only reflect a generational habitus, but also contribute to its construction, often in opposition to previous generations. For example, Millennials and Gen Z use platforms such as TikTok or Instagram not only for entertainment, but to express shared values, such as concern for sustainability, social justice, and inclusiveness. At the same time, older generations can use platforms like Facebook to keep cultural and family traditions alive, creating spaces for dialogue and symbolic continuity.

Generational Overview

Each generation lives and goes through life stages within a specific and distinctive social, political, technological, and economic context (Rentz, Reynolds, & Stout, 1983, p. 12). These contexts influence individuals, instilling values that tend to persist throughout life. Exposure to the same environmental factors thus leads members of the same cohort to develop shared values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (Schewe & Noble, 2000, p.131). As Stoller and Gibson (1996) state, historical periods and cohort membership help determine the number and type of opportunities available to individuals. "Each cohort carries with it into old age its own unique history, and this past influences the nature of the later years of cohort members" (Foner, 1986, p. 134). This makes it necessary to define the main generational cohorts that influence today's society. Each generation, marked by unique historical and cultural experiences, has developed a distinct relationship with technology, influencing values, communication methods and learning styles. Here is an overview of the generations under consideration:

- Lost Generation (1883-1900)
- Greatest Generation (1901-1927)
- Silent Generation (1928-1945)

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- Baby Boomers (1946-1964)
- Generation X (1965-1980)
- Generation Y or Millennials (1981-1996)
- Generation Z or Centennials (1997-2012)
- Generation Alpha or Screenagers (2013-2024)
- AIGen (2024-2025)
- Generation Beta (2026-2038).

Lost and Greatest Generation (1883-1927)

For the Lost Generation and the Greatest Generation, the concept of the Internet would have been unthinkable. In this era, the dominant technology included radio and telegraph, with television beginning to make its entrance into the domestic landscape. The fusion of word and image profoundly changed the ways in which knowledge processes were constructed. Beginning in the mid-19th century, magazines of various genres, initially intended only for a small audience that could afford them, began to gain popularity among the general public (Unwin & Tucker, 2016). An important milestone in the history of cinema was reached in 1895, when moving pictures were shown to a paying audience for the first time in Paris. The first films, generally very short, included newsreels, comedy sketches, and short documentaries. Although they lacked sound, they were accompanied by music, live commentary, and a high level of audience participation. These generations lived in an era before the digital revolution and had no direct contact with network technologies.

Thus, their use of technology was minimal and mainly related to radio for information and entertainment. Even with the emergence of the Internet in the late 20th century, the involvement of these generations remained limited, mostly focused on simple communication tools such as e-mail or very basic operation.

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Silent Generation (1928-1945)

The Silent Generation grew up in a period marked by economic hardship and conflict, such as the Great Depression and World War II. As a result, their approach to technology was hands-on. In the 1990s, when the Internet began to become accessible, many members of this generation adopted it mainly for functional purposes, such as keeping in touch with family members through e-mail. After the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of video calling increased for many of them, especially for family communication purposes. However, their familiarity with digital media remains limited, preferring intuitive tools and often needing technical support.

Baby Boomers (1946-1964)

Theirs was a period of economic prosperity and rapid technological progress, and they were the first to experience the rise of personal computers in workplaces (Twenge, 2023, 33-34). This early contact with technology provided a basis for the use of the Internet, which became an important tool for this generation in the 1990s and 2000s. The Boomers adopted e-mail as their primary means of both personal and professional communication and were among the first to experiment with e-commerce. Social platforms, particularly Facebook, were popular among Boomers to keep in touch with friends and family. Despite this, many Boomers find it difficult to adapt to newer technologies and often prefer digital formats reminiscent of traditional media.

Generation X (1965-1980)

Generation X includes individuals born between 1965 and 1980, one of the most educated generations, characterized by skepticism, pragmatism, and a risk-averse attitude (Gurau, 2012, p. 104- 105). Generation X easily assimilated technology into daily life, using the first personal computers in school and growing up in parallel with the development of the internet (Hill, 2017). In contrast to millennials, Generation X individuals were not born into the digital world, but later adopted many aspects of new technologies (Prensky, 2001a). For this reason, Generation X can be considered to be composed of "digital immigrants" because, instead of being born and raised with technology, they have adapted to it (Prensky, 2001b). An example of their ability to assimilate to new technologies (Hill, 2017, p. 349). is their general preference for e-mail and text messaging over phone calls or face- to-face communications, and their high rate of internet adoption.

Xennials, a microgeneration born between Gen X and Millennials, are distinguished by having had an analog childhood and a digital adulthood, making them particularly flexible in adapting to new technologies.

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Generation Y (1981-1996)

Generation Y (or Millennials) are considered the first true "digital natives" (Prensky, 2001a; 2001b; Tapscott, 1998), who grew up with the constantly evolving Internet. With them, the transition from analog to digital society is made within a few years (Pira, 2020, p. 37). They were the first to use social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to create and maintain social networks. They also experienced the evolution from dial-up connections to Wi-Fi and mobile connectivity, making mobile devices their primary means of accessing the web. With the Web revolution that characterized the 1990s, Generation Z has been exposed to an amount of technology unthinkable to their predecessors.

Generation Z (1997-2012)

Generation Z, also called Centennials, is the first generation born into an already connected world. For them, the Internet is not just a tool but an extension of their lives. They have a preference for visual platforms such as TikTok, Instagram and YouTube, which facilitate quick and creative expression. Often referred to as "*net-savvy*"[2] (Narasuman et al., 2011), Gen Z members possess a natural mastery of technology, which they use not only to communicate but also to learn, express themselves and build social networks. Their connection with technology is fluid and focused on video and mobile-first content, with a strong focus on online educational platforms such as YouTube for self-directed learning.

Generation Alpha (2013-2024), AIGen (2024-2025) and Gen Beta (2026-2038)

Generation Alpha, often referred to as "*Screenagers*" (Jolly, 2016), represents the more recent future of digital connectedness, characterized by a deep and intuitive connection to technology. The term "Generation Alpha" was introduced through a 2008 survey by the Australian agency McCrindle Research (2009, p. 199-212). As the founder, Mark McCrindle, states, the label "Alpha" symbolizes the beginning of a new generational cycle. Exposed from early childhood to smart devices such as tablets and smartphones, members of Gen Alpha develop a natural and intuitive ability to use digital technology, living predominantly in front of screens and immersing themselves, from a very young age, in social apps such as Instagram and Snapchat. This constant exposure to technology from an early age significantly defines their identity, leading them to master digital tools and social platforms. Some scholars indicate how Generation Alpha, consisting of children born after 2010, show an advanced understanding and use of technology, resulting in true

[2] The term "*tech-savvy*" refers to a person who possesses advanced skills and a natural familiarity with technology. Being tech-savvy implies not only the ability to use digital tools and electronic devices with ease, but also the ability to adapt quickly to new technologies, understanding their functionality and integrating them effectively into one's daily or work life.

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digital literacy destined to influence their future learning, communication and work (Putri & Umah, 2020, p. 132). In a complementary way, the AIGen, a microgeneration theorized as a bridge between Generation Alpha and Gen Beta, lives in a context where artificial intelligence is a constant and integrated presence in daily life. Unlike Generation Alpha, for whom technology is primarily a means of connection and entertainment, the AIGen perceives AI as a ubiquitous reality, as familiar as the Internet or smartphones are to us today. From early childhood, members of this microgeneration are surrounded by virtual assistants, recommendation algorithms, and devices capable of learning from their habits to respond intuitively to their needs. This continuous exposure will influence not only their use of technology, but also their worldview and social relationships, making them particularly aware of the influence of algorithms and data on their choices and time. Artificial intelligence for the AIGen will thus be more than a tool: it will become an integral part of learning, working, and managing everyday life. It will be at that time that Gen Beta (McCrindle, 2024) will inherit a now stabilized and refined technological environment, finding themselves living in an environment where artificial intelligence is fully integrated and established in every aspect of life and work. Unlike the AIGen, which will face the early and articulate stages of AI adoption, Gen Beta will find itself in a world where artificial intelligence is now a reliable and standardized presence that can be relied upon with confidence. Gen Beta will enjoy the benefits of the answers and advances already developed by the AIGen microgeneration, which will have played a pioneering role in addressing ethical dilemmas and challenges of adapting to an AI that is still in the making.

The following table provides an overview of the main traits that define each generation, highlighting the prevailing technology, values, communication methods and learning styles. These aspects help delineate the impact of technological innovations and cultural changes on the way generations interact, learn and understand the world.

Each generation is also assigned a level of adaptability and digital literacy, characteristics that reflect the degree of familiarity with digital technologies and the ability to adapt to new tools and platforms.

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Features	Lost Generation (1883-1G00)	Greatest Generation (1G01-1G27)	Silent Generation (1G28-1G45)	Baby Boomers (1G46-1G64)	Gen X (1G65-1G80)	Millennials (1G81 1GG6)	Gen Z (1GG7-2012)	Gen Alpha (2012-2024)	AIGen (2024 - 2025)
Technology	Minimum	Radio, primary electronics	Radio, TV, early computers	Personal technology pioneers	Technology skills	Digital natives	Advanced mobile technologies	Integrated digital	Pervasive AI
Values	Survival	Duty	Respect for authority	Work ethics	Adaptability	Personal realization	Access to information	Efficiency	Immediate access to AI
Communication	Face to face	Face to face, telephone	Written, telephone	Email, phone	Email, SMS	Messaging app	Social media	App-based	Mediatized by AI
Learning Style	Frontal teaching	Hierarchical	Structured storage	Structured note-taking	Collaborative	Internet-based	Visual/video	Screen interaction	Adaptive learning with AI
Adaptive Skills	Slow, traditionalist	Flexible, but hierarchical	Authority-oriented	Resistance to initial change, then adaptation	Rapid adaptation	Technology adaptation	High digital adaptability	Native digital adaptation	Deep adaptation to AI
Digital Literacy	Nonexistent	Minimum	Low	Discrete	Good	High	Very high	Native	Deep

Extracted and analyzed from the following literature (Bencsik et al., 2016; Bíró, 2014; Borys & Laskowski, 2013; Eckleberry-Hunt et al., 2018; Granitz, Kohli, & Lancellotti, 2021; Hampton & Keys, 2017; Hernandez-de-Menendez et al, 2020; Issac et al., 2020; Linnes & Metcalf, 2017; Mosca et al., 2019; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Puiu, 2017; Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018; Shamma, 2011; Shatto & Erwin, 2016; Turner, 2015; Wiedmer, 2015; Zemke et al., 2000). Data in the last column (AIGen) are from the author.

Results

The table highlights how each generation, from the Lost Generation to the AIGen, exhibits distinctive characteristics in terms of communication styles and use of technology. These differences are key to understanding how generational context influences interaction with digital tools and emerging technologies, such as generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), especially in educational and work contexts. For example, Generation X, who often balance traditional and digital approaches, may require structured guidance to integrate new AI-based tools into their activities. In contrast, Millennials and Generation Z, who are more digitally native, demonstrate a strong appetite for video- based, real-time, social media-integrated learning environments. This predisposition can guide the development of GenAI applications designed for interactive, media-rich experiences.

Focusing on Generation Z and Generation Alpha, born into a world completely dominated by advanced digital technologies, an evolution emerges in their relationship with technology, especially with the pervasiveness of AI. This change gives rise to the so-called "AIGen," a generation deeply affected by the spread of AI in daily life. Unlike previous generations, which viewed the Internet primarily as a space for information and socializing, the AIGen interacts with a technology in which AI is present in almost every digital experience, from content generation and

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personal assistants to social media algorithms and automated decision making. This generation is characterized by an interaction with AI perceived as a natural and ubiquitous element in their online environment, potentially redefining the concept of digital literacy and technological autonomy.

The emergence of AIGen introduces a new dimension to the study of digital natives, as these individuals do not just use digital technology, but are confronted with systems that can think, adapt and learn. As we study the influence of Millennials and Gen Z in the contemporary technology landscape, it becomes essential to consider how this new, AI-driven generation will influence and redefine digital spaces in the years to come, especially when the characteristics of Gen Beta are also established and defined (and not just assumed).

Conclusion

The interplay between generations and digital media compels us to reconsider long-standing assumptions about technological progress and its social implications. While innovation is often celebrated as a transformative force that drives society forward, it is equally viewed with concern for its potential to widen generational divides. Yet, a closer examination reveals a far richer and more intricate dynamic, where continuity and change intersect in ways that shape not only individual experiences but also collective identities and societal dynamics over time.

A key insight from this analysis is the transformative role of intergenerational education as a mechanism for bridging divides and fostering collaboration. Far from being passive users of technology, individuals from different generations bring unique perspectives to the digital landscape. For example, younger generations, often described as "digital natives," exhibit a natural fluency in navigating emerging platforms, adapting quickly to their tools and functionalities. Older generations, in contrast, offer a wealth of lived experience and historical understanding, which can provide critical context to technological and cultural trends. When these strengths are harnessed together, such as through collaborative educational programs, a powerful synergy emerges. Platforms designed to encourage intergenerational interaction—such as coding workshops where youth teach digital skills to seniors, or storytelling projects where elders share life experiences using modern media—can generate profound learning opportunities for all participants. This bi-directional exchange enriches both parties, fostering respect, understanding, and a deeper sense of shared purpose.

Equally pressing is the issue of digital inclusion and accessibility, a challenge that underscores the uneven impact of technological progress. Access to technology is not universally distributed. Disparities driven by factors such as age, socioeconomic status, education, and geography often limit the opportunities available to certain groups, particularly among older adults and marginalized populations.

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Addressing these gaps requires strategic interventions that go beyond providing devices or internet access. Comprehensive digital literacy initiatives, tailored to the specific needs of diverse groups, can empower individuals to fully participate in the digital world. Moreover, technology design must prioritize inclusivity—not only through intuitive user interfaces but also by ensuring that products are adaptable for people with varying levels of digital proficiency. For instance, AI-powered voice assistants can simplify interactions for older users, while platforms like virtual reality could be designed to accommodate physical or cognitive limitations, ensuring a truly inclusive digital ecosystem.

The emergence of the AIGen—the first generation to grow up fully immersed in artificial intelligence—provides a valuable theoretical framework for understanding the intersection of generational identity and technological progress. Unlike previous generations, whose relationship with technology evolved incrementally, the AIGen experiences AI as a pervasive and integrated element of daily life from a very young age. For this generation, AI is not a tool to master but a constant companion, shaping everything from learning to social interaction. Virtual assistants, recommendation algorithms, and AI-driven platforms seamlessly mediate their experiences, creating a reality where technology is both ubiquitous and personalized. This marks a significant shift in how generational identities are constructed, as the AIGen internalizes AI as a natural extension of their environment. However, the implications of this integration extend beyond convenience: the AIGen is uniquely positioned to confront ethical and social challenges associated with AI, including algorithmic biases, data privacy, and the balance between human autonomy and machine influence. By engaging with these issues early, this generation has the potential to redefine societal norms around technology use, offering insights that can shape future innovation and governance.

Artificial intelligence (AI) more broadly represents a new frontier in intergenerational interaction, offering immense potential but also presenting unique challenges. Younger generations are growing up in environments saturated with AI—tools that adapt, learn, and respond in ways that were once unimaginable. For them, AI is seamlessly integrated into daily life, from algorithmic recommendations on social media to virtual assistants that manage tasks. In contrast, older generations may approach AI with skepticism, viewing it as opaque or overly complex. Yet, with thoughtful design and appropriate support, AI can become a transformative tool for all generations. For instance, AI-powered health applications could assist older adults in managing chronic conditions or staying connected with family members through simplified interfaces.

At the same time, these technologies can also foster intergenerational collaboration, as families adopt AI tools together, navigating and adapting to their capabilities as a shared experience.

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Public policy must take a proactive role in shaping these developments, ensuring that technology serves as a unifying force rather than a source of fragmentation. Policymakers have the opportunity to create frameworks that prioritize social cohesion alongside technological advancement. This includes investing in digital commons—shared spaces where people from diverse backgrounds can engage in collaborative activities. Cultural and educational initiatives, such as digital archives that document and preserve generational narratives, or community-driven virtual reality projects that bring history to life, can serve as powerful tools for fostering mutual understanding. Moreover, targeted policies should aim to address systemic inequalities in digital access, ensuring that rural, economically disadvantaged, or older populations are not left behind in the race toward digital transformation.

Beyond practical interventions, a broader rethinking of the concept of technological progress is essential. Progress is often framed as a series of disruptions, where each generation outpaces the previous one in adopting and mastering new tools. While this narrative highlights the dynamism of technological change, it risks overlooking the importance of continuity and interdependence. Technological advances do not erase the past but build upon it, drawing on the values, knowledge, and cultural practices that are transmitted across generations. Recognizing this interplay allows us to see technology not as a source of division but as a medium for connection—an enabler of shared experiences that transcend generational boundaries. For example, global events like live-streamed concerts or interactive online exhibits provide opportunities for individuals of all ages to participate in collective moments, fostering a sense of community and shared identity.

Looking ahead, the challenge of the future will not be merely to navigate technological change but to harness it as a force for generational solidarity. Digital platforms can play a critical role, offering spaces where innovation and inclusion coexist. For instance, participatory design processes that involve individuals from multiple generations in the creation of new tools and applications could lead to products that reflect diverse needs and priorities. Similarly, intergenerational collaborations in areas like urban planning, environmental sustainability, or healthcare innovation could leverage the unique strengths of each cohort to address pressing global challenges. Ultimately, technology holds the potential to be a unifying force, but this potential can only be realized through intentional action. By combining the creative energy and technological expertise of younger generations with the wisdom and experience of older ones, society can cultivate a richer and more inclusive vision of progress.

This requires an ongoing commitment to dialogue, collaboration, and mutual respect, supported by policies and practices that value diversity in all its forms.

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In conclusion, the future of generational relationships will depend on our ability to transform technological progress into a shared journey rather than a dividing line. By fostering spaces for intergenerational dialogue and collaboration, we can ensure that technology becomes not a barrier but a bridge—a catalyst for building a more equitable, integrated, and resilient society.

Through innovation tempered with reflection, and change balanced with continuity, we can create a future where generations are united by a common purpose and a shared sense of responsibility.

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