

CRISIS OF READING AMONG NEW GENERATIONS

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The crisis of reading among modern generations is a significant issue that has been observed in recent years. The decline in reading culture is attributed to various factors, including the active lifestyle of modern people, the tendency to engage in superficial reading and skimming, and the influence of social media on reading habits. Social media can reinforce confirmation bias and create echo chambers, limiting people's exposure to diverse perspectives. Additionally, the algorithms used by social media platforms to personalize content may further reinforce people's existing beliefs.

The decline in reading has significant consequences for people's intellectual development, cognitive abilities, social isolation, and attention span. It can lead to intellectual stagnation, reduced attention span, and a narrow perspective on the world, which can hinder personal growth. Promoting a culture that appreciates and celebrates books and reading is crucial to addressing the fall in reading. Balancing digital and analog media in people's lives and limiting distractions are also crucial for improving reading habits.

Factors contributing to the crisis in reading among new generations, particularly Gen Z, include:

1. Lack of Reading and Comprehension Skills

In today's digital age, poor reading and comprehension skills among students, especially in younger generations, have become a growing concern. Numerous teachers have

observed that a notable proportion of kids encounter difficulties when it comes to reading and comprehending simple texts, summarizing paragraphs, and understanding literary or informative content. This deficiency hampers pupils' ability to meet grade-level expectations and sets them up for future academic challenges.

2. Decline in Media Literacy

The decline in media literacy among younger generations, including Gen Z and Millennials, is another significant issue. Media literacy involves critically analyzing stories presented in mass media to determine their accuracy. The rise of social media and algorithm-driven platforms has contributed to a decrease in media literacy skills. Content tailored to individual preferences through algorithms has led individuals to be less inclined to critically analyze information and discern fact from fiction. The prevalence of AI-generated content like deepfakes further complicates the ability to distinguish real information from manipulated or fabricated content.

3. Impact of the Pandemic on Education

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated educational challenges for pupils. Studies show that about a third of children in the youngest grades are missing reading benchmarks due to disruptions caused by the pandemic. Early reading skills have declined significantly, with children from various demographic groups affected. Black and Hispanic children, those from low-income families, those with disabilities, and non-native English speakers have been disproportionately impacted. The risks associated with poor reading skills include higher dropout rates, lower adult earnings, and increased involvement in the criminal justice system.

4. Influence of Digital Age and Shortened Attention Span

The digital age has shifted preferences towards visual content over traditional reading practices. Social media platforms inundate users with visual stimuli, reducing the

inclination to read actual words. Shorter attention spans in today's fast-paced world contribute to the preference for shorter content like short advertisements and captions. The need for quick success, especially among younger generations, has led some to believe that reading is not essential for success due to the prevalence of overnight successes through social media exposure.

In conclusion, the crisis in reading among new generations is multifaceted, influenced by factors such as declining reading and comprehension skills, reduced media literacy, the impact of the pandemic on education, the digital age's influence on attention spans, and societal pressures for quick success. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from educators, parents, policymakers, and society as a whole to promote literacy, critical thinking skills, and a culture that values reading in an increasingly digital world.

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