

A Study on Child-Family Relationship in the Use of Digital Media Products

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Abstract

Real-life threats are at the root of all possible threats to be encountered on the Internet. All risk headings for the Internet are situations that can be encountered in real life. Therefore, we should pay attention to the risks of the virtual world by learning to use the internet consciously, safely and effectively, and by teaching our children this, just as we make efforts to protect our children from all these dangers in real life. In this research, the role of the family in children's use of digital media, the risks and solutions according to age groups, and the effect on the development of the child are discussed.

Keywords: Child, Learning, Digital Media, Internet, Development and Growth.

1. Introduction

From daily routines to habits, behaviors and attitudes, with the changing and developing time; The same change continues in all areas of life, constantly and rapidly. Someone who is going to eat or drink coffee at a restaurant prefers to sit close to the outlet. Concepts such as focusing on continuous notifications, the number of likes and shares begin to occupy an important place in mental preoccupation. Therefore, digitalization is becoming an indispensable element of daily life. Roles expected from the digitalization process and digital technologies are generally identity creation and self-identity, social relations, lifestyle and activities, life satisfaction and well-being, knowledge and competence, learning and education, economic convenience (earning income, etc.), employment and job finding. (Selweyn, 2019, p. 3). However, in recent years, there have been criticisms that children are enslaved and imprisoned by digital technologies; It is emphasized that the real relationship with technology is not fully known and cannot be correctly interpreted (Heidegger, 2017, p. 79).

In general, it is thought that the way of use and interpretation are effective in deciding whether digital technologies are good or bad. As a matter of fact, in another source, no technology can reverse the current situation; It is emphasized that a child with a large vocabulary will benefit more from Wikipedia, and a child with behavioral problems will be more affected by video games (Toyama, 2015). In the digitalization process, traditional media understanding is replaced by new media with Web 2.0 technologies; It has allowed individuals who are normally viewers or listeners to settle in a more active place as users and members.

Families should ensure safe internet and computer use for children of different age groups. Today, most of the children's use of information and communication technologies is more advanced than their parents. Families need to have knowledge about the internet and computer technologies, if they do not have enough knowledge on this subject, they should improve themselves, at least learn how to use the internet at a level to guide and supervise their children correctly.

Just as rules are set for children in real life, rules should be set for the virtual environment as well. We should give advice and follow them in virtual environments in order to support the child's conscious use of the Internet and protect it from harm. While these rules change with the age of the child, it is necessary to monitor whether the rules are applied and to ensure that the rules are followed.

Families should use up-to-date antivirus, filter and firewall programs on their computers to protect children from dangers on the internet. Families should encourage their children to let them know when there is something or someone online that makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened (Goodwin, 2018).

2. Method

In this study, traditional literature review was adopted as the research method. In traditional literature review studies; The information dispersed in the relevant literature is handled as a whole, and a link is established between the topics discussed or a synthesis is reached (Baumeister & Leary, 1997). In this context, the child-family relationship in the use of digital media products has been examined based on the literature review.

3. Technology-Media Relationship by Age Group of the Child

- **2-6 Age Group Children**

Children in the 2- to 6-year-old age group should not spend more than one or two hours in front of the computer. Families should instill this awareness in their children and ensure that their children comply with the restrictions. Parents should not leave their children at this age alone in front of the computer or the internet, and should always be with them. It should not be forgotten that children of this age period are play children. Therefore, provided that they are under the supervision of their parents, they can be allowed to use computers and the internet and to play games on the computer. However, for the healthy development of the child, it should be supported to allocate proportional time with other activities in his life.

- **7-10 Age Group Children**

The daily consumption of children in the 7-10 age group in front of the computer should not exceed one or two hours. This age range coincides with the primary school age, it should not be forgotten that the child at this age is the age to participate in the game or friend groups. Play is an important requirement for a child to socialize. For this reason, the time the child will spend playing games with his friends and studying should be much more than the time he will spend in front of the computer.

The computer should be placed in the common area of the family where all family members can see it easily. Families should agree on what types of sites they can visit with their children, and their drawbacks should be explained without prohibiting them. Families should encourage their children to use a child-friendly or parent-controlled search engine, and attention should be paid to the high-level settings of the search engine used.

- **10-13 Age Group Children**

Children in this age group should not spend more than two or three hours on the computer. Although it is difficult with the developing mobile technologies, the computer should be placed in the common area of the family. Since children of this age group are slowly starting to declare their freedom, even if they resist to get the internet in their rooms, no concessions should be made in this regard.

Children should use search engines designed specifically for children, such as “Google Safe Search for Kids” or with parental controls, to browse the Internet. Parents should teach their children of this age not to give information about themselves and their families when using internet communication tools. In addition, an e-mail account can be opened for children of this age period on their behalf, provided that parents can check it whenever they wish. In the opened e-mail account, the e-mail filter must be active against unwanted bad content.

- **14-16 Age Group Children**

Families should remind their children in this age range that they should not add people they do not know to their friend lists during the time on social networks, and they should also be on their children's friend list by being a member of these networks and follow their child from there.

Parents should check their children's privacy settings on social networks. The fact that their accounts and profiles on social networks are open to everyone poses a great risk for the child's safety. Parents should inform their children in this age group about internet chats. In addition, in order to satisfy the child's curiosity, the child may be allowed to have short-term internet chats with people he and his family know.

4. Functions of Digital Media Advertisements on Children

Positive functions of advertising, promoting goods and services; It is to save time for the consumer by providing information about where, how and at what price it will be provided and how to use it, and to increase the price and quality competition between companies and to make the consumer profitable (Yengil, Döner Güner, & Topakkaya, 2019).

Through advertisements, children gain marketplace knowledge of the products they encounter; they get ideas from their friends, relatives and their own consumption experiences. During consumption, children learn which product is good or bad, whether the intention of the advertisement is honest, which brands they will prefer, and even that these products have social meanings other than being functional goods (Yılmaz, 2022). Thus, when children are given the opportunity to shop alone, knowing for what purpose and how to use the products promoted in the advertisements, they can make the purchase on their own (Türe, 2021).

The consumer, who is constantly exposed to advertisements, is unable to distinguish between what is luxury and what is needed. Therefore, the consumer cannot find the opportunity to make an evaluation and comparison about the goods or services they want to buy, and they are directed to be brand addicted and sometimes to unnecessary consumption. This leads to economic wastefulness and monopolization (Gürsoy and Aral, 2016).

Advertisements broadcast on television cause excessive interest of children due to the shortness of the subject, the interestingness of the presentation style and the constant repetition. Especially, children aged two or three record what they see in advertisements as a whole with their music and logo, and repeat what they mean, without knowing where to use them. This is the reason why young children can recognize bank and newspaper logos (Aral & Keskin,

2017). However, this situation causes children to get used to perceiving short and simple messages, weakening their listening skills, decreasing their concentration of attention, making it difficult to concentrate on serious issues, thus blunting their thinking abilities, and children's anxiety affects their school success negatively (Budak, 2006).

5. The Effect of Digital Media on the Development of the Child

The use of technological devices paves the way for worrying results regarding the cognitive and affective development of children (Zeybekoğlu Akbaş & Dursun, 2015). Community-based studies show that excessive use of technological tools in early childhood is associated with delays in social, cognitive, emotional, linguistic and motor development in children (Karayağız Muslu & Bolışık, 2009). Findings from these studies include excessive viewing times, watching adult content, reduced parent-child interaction with television, and excessive use of social media.

- **Cognitive Domain**

Although the attention capacity and duration are limited, especially in early childhood, it causes rapid distraction and difficulty in using attention in a controlled manner.

- **Emotional Development Area**

The child who uses social media finds the opportunity to get to know himself and develop his character while using social media. In this way, the child will have the opportunity to develop his social skills. Social media both immobilizes and makes children nervous, and the child becomes irritable. Thanks to social media, the child will continue to be in touch with his friends and the bond he has established with his friends will be strengthened.

- **Psychomotor Development Area**

Children who spend a lot of time in front of digital media products, overweight children gain even more weight, and the risk of future cardiovascular diseases increases. Skeletal and muscular system damage may occur due to sitting positions in front of media products.

- **Personal Development Area**

It interferes with eating and sleeping patterns. A child watching TV while eating swallows without chewing. If he is constantly in front of media products, the child's laziness increases and he tries to get his parents to do his personal care, homework and other needs.

- **Language Development Area**

Since children's divergent thinking in their own world in media products reduces their communication with individuals, there is a delay in speaking and forming sentences. He cannot form a regular sentence. His speech becomes the language of the internet.

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

Children spend most of their day using the internet, phone, tablet or watching television. It is the most important duty of parents to regulate their children's social media shares and the time they spend on the internet. It should be ensured that the child uses social media correctly, with which he interacts a lot during the day.

Children under the age of 10 should not allow parents to use the Internet. Parents must also be members of the social media used by the child and keep the child under follow-up. Families need to do research and be conscious about using social media positively. If the age of the child using social media is below the legal age, the account must be removed by the parents. Privacy settings should be given importance, and it is absolutely necessary to set who can see the child's private information. Children should not share their address information, phone number and age on social media. In this regard, parents should warn their children in the most effective way.

Parents should be able to turn off the TV and computer from time to time. should not allow their children to watch every program; TV programs should be selected and watched. In addition, families should check whether the sites that children can access are safe on the Internet, and children should be taught that they should never share their personal information on the Internet.

The time children spend on the Internet should be limited. Children under the age of 10 should be under the full supervision of their parents when using the Internet. Instead of visual stimuli, they should be directed to physical, auditory and mental activities. For example theatre, music etc. such as arts events, sports, group activities, summer camps, courses, etc. to participate in activities and socialize.

We should try to be a positive model for the child with our own attitudes and attitudes. Computer and internet use can be very useful and therefore necessary for children, but the sites they access and the games they play should be suitable for their life, psychological and social development. In this context, it is important to have parental control of any game site before offering it to children. As a result, we must ensure that the child uses it in a controlled manner; It is also not the right approach to completely ban television and the Internet for children. Controls and limitations should be determined together by talking to them.

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