How parents mediate adolescents’ use of technology?

# Details

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## Sample

1000 Hungarian household with 12-16 years old children. Both the children and the parents were interviewed

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

The widespread use of mobile technology has generated many changes and perhaps even
more expectations, often negative ones in many areas of social activities. This is especially the case when evaluating its effects on children. Concerns have arisen that while mobile devices are undoubtedly an essential information source or a useful tool to be connected to others, devices have a powerful distracting force seriously undermining children’s ability to concentrate. Earlier research has also investigated whether intense internet usage, and most recently mobile devices and applications, can take away attention and time from learning. Intense use of social media applications are often seen as particular threats distracting adolescents’ attention. As a consequence of this phenomenon, deteriorating school outcomes, for example poor grades can be expected. Parents’ social background and existing parental mediation strategies, however, might prove to be significant influencing factors. Although more and more research deals with children’s media use and increasingly ask children’s opinion, parallel research of the two partners (parentchild) in the same survey is almost missing from the growing body of international literature. In this
presentation, we intend to focus on the issue whether and how adolescents’ use of technology, in particular their screentime, affect their learning outcome, measured in grades, depending on parent’s educational background and parent’s mediation strategy. In order to explore the social processes, we include parents’ educational background and the characteristics of parenting mediation strategies as crucial variables explaining and influencing the potential correlation. Parental mediation strategies might curb teenagers’ technology usage by creating and maintaining boundaries or by negotiating about the appropriate use. In this manner, they can affect teenagers’ academic achievement by protecting study activities from the distracting influence of technology. In the course of the analysis special attention will be paid to parents’ and adolescents’ gender. The above discussed questions will be answered by the analysis of a representative survey carried out in 1000 families in Hungary November 2017. In this research 12-16 year-old teenagers and their parents were asked about their experiences and perceptions of the time spent together. The questions related to the amount of time spent with their everyday practices and routines,
 investigating both the quantitative and qualitative aspects, and also adolescents’ screen time and their technology use. The questionnaire addressed parents’ work-life balance, adolescents’ well-being, teenagers’ view on parenting capacities as well. The first results show that one of the most important factors in the analysis of adolescents’ screen time and their school achievement is their parents’ qualification, which is in line with previous research findings. At the same time, we expect different kinds of parental mediation strategy and control depending on the gender of parents and children alike, as well as the age group of adolescents’.
This research might also contribute to the discussion on social effects of youth’s technology use on school outcomes. It might be particularly important that the analysis gives an insight into the relationship between screen time and school grades with the inclusion of different sociological variables, such as parental mediation, parent’s education and gender. The novelty of this research might be also that the analysis of this topical issue will be carried out in a Central European country. The research is supported by the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund project (‘Race against time’ NKFIH K120089).

# Outcome

"The first results show that one of the most important factors in the analysis of
adolescents’ screen time and their school achievement is their parents’ qualification, which is in line with previous research findings. At the same time, we expect different kinds of parental mediation strategy and control depending on the gender of parents and children alike, as well as the age group of adolescents’.
This research might also contribute to the discussion on social effects of youth’s technology use on school outcomes. It might be particularly important that the analysis gives an insight into the relationship between screen time and school grades with the inclusion of different sociological variables, such as parental mediation, parent’s education and gender. The novelty of this research might be also that the analysis of this topical issue will be carried out in a Central European country." (Nagy et al.: How parents mediate adolescents’ use of technology?, in: 8th International Community, Work Family Conference, Book of Abstracts, p: 80)