Parental involvement and attitudes towards young Greek children’s mobile usage

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# Abstract

Smart mobile devices are widely used for dealing with information on education and provide
entertainment at home and school. Mobile applications (apps) directed towards young aged children have changed the digital media landscape for infants and toddlers. Parents’ preferences and beliefs towards technology has a major role in toddlers’ and infants’ use of technology as they directly affect the quality and the quantity of digital media available to them especially at home. It is, therefore, crucial to understand how parents perceive the changes imposed by smart screen technologies upon their children’s development; their diverse beliefs, and practices. To date, in Greece, few studies have examined the use of smart screen technologies among young children especially at home. This study presents the main findings from a research conducted with 293 families in Greece between September 2018 and November 2018. It reports on parents’ perceptions regarding children’s usage of smart mobile technologies both at the home and the kindergarten context. The study results show that most of the parents have positive attitudes towards the use of these technologies. Parents want to support their children’s learning and seek to provide a stimulating home learning environment for them. Parents’ answers seem to differentiate depending on socioeconomic background, age and education. Older and less-educated parents seem unable to adapt appropriately to rapid technological progress and thus cannot effectively exploit the advantages that mobile learning technologies have to offer to children. On the contrary, younger parents or parents with a higher education level seem to more easily adapt to the new conditions striving to develop a better learning environment at home. However, the positive parents’ attitudes about mobile learning are hampered by the lack of the knowledge about the choice of apps with ‘substantial educational value’ as well as their use, particularly in the domestic environment. We anticipate that the findings from this study would provide valuable information for early childhood researchers, stakeholders and teachers leading to better learning digital experiences and even better outcomes for young aged children.

# Outcome

The study results show that most of the parents have positive attitudes towards the use of these technologies. Parents want to support their children’s learning and seek to provide a stimulating home learning environment for them. Parents’ answers seem to differentiate depending on socioeconomic background, age and education. Older and less-educated parents seem unable to adapt appropriately to rapid technological progress and thus cannot effectively exploit the advantages that mobile learning technologies have to offer to children.
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