Why Do Children and Adolescents Consume So Much Media? An Examination Based on Self-Determination Theory

# Details

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## Sample

The sample included 345 Israeli children and adolescents. The age range was 8-18, with a median of 15 (M=14.41, SD=2.86), and there were slightly more girls (52.4%) than boys. Participants were divided into two age groups: children (up to 8th grade or age 14; 46.2% of respondents), and adolescents (9th-12th grade, 53.8% of respondents).

## Implications For Parents About

Parenting guidance / support

# Abstract

Use of media in general and of new media in particular, by children concerns many researchers and parents. Children and adolescents are exposed to an extensive range of communication channels and a variety of media. In this study, we used self-determination theory to examine why children and adolescents consume so much media. This is a mixed-method study. A total of 345 participants from Israel completed questionnaires; 90 children and teenagers were interviewed. Findings suggest that children and adolescents consume media because they feel that it meets their various needs, some of which are not being met in another environment, and each time choose the media that meet their specific needs, in the process of informed consumption. For example, to surf the Internet, they prefer a particular medium, PC or smartphone, or tablet over other medium, according to the ability of each medium to offer the specific content they are looking.

# Outcome

children and adolescents spend significantly more time browsing the Internet than they engaging in any other activity examined (Zilka, 2018). Furthermore, it was found significant and positive correlations between the amount of time browsing the Internet and the time they spend watching TV, movies and TV content, YouTube and watching content on a tablet. It was also found significant and positive correlations between the amount of time adolescents watch TV and the time they spend watching movies and TV content on the computer, the time they spend watching YouTube, the time they spend watching content on a tablet, and the time the spend watching DVDs.