The Associations between Family-Related Factors and Excessive Internet Use in Adolescents

# Details

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## Sample

A total of 10,179 Slovak adolescents aged 11–15 participated in the survey and completed the
self-report questionnaire. Measures listed below were offered only to these children. Items to measure excessive internet use were included only in version A of the questionnaire, which was designed for students aged 13–15 (only 3135 adolescents were given version A). We also eliminated participants who did not provide 50% of the values for any of the variables of interest. The final sample consisted of 2547 adolescents from 13 to 15 years old (M = 14.32, SD = 0.91), with 50.9% being boys.

# Abstract

This study examined the relationship between Excessive Internet Use (EIU) in adolescents and their family environment, namely the family type, the family economic status, the effect of parental care, the level of parental control, the amount of parental monitoring, the quality of communication, and the time spent together. The study was based on data from an international survey, Health Behaviour in School Aged Children (HBSC), conducted in Slovakia. The sample representative for adolescents included 2547 participants (51% boys) aged 13–15. Multiple-step linear regression revealed that higher parental care and parental monitoring predicted lower EIU, while higher parental overprotection and lower socioeconomic status predicted higher EIU. The results suggest that both so-called optimal parenting (i.e., the balance of emotional warmth and protection) and the adolescent′s autonomy lower the risk of EIU. Family factors explained about 14% of the variance, which suggests that aside from personal, cognitive and affective factors, a close social environment also plays an important role in adolescence EIU.

# Outcome

The study revealed several important factors associated with adolescent Excessive Internet Use.
The strongest protective factor was the parental monitoring of their adolescent0
s activities (i.e., parents being aware of what, where, when, and with whom their adolescent children spend their leisure time).
This was supported by higher care (i.e., emotional warmth, atmosphere in the family). "The main
risk factor of EIU appeared to be the parental overprotection (i.e., parental behaviour that harmed
the respondents independence and confidence). Certain risk factors, although very small, were also
brought by the lower socioeconomic status of the family and increased time spent at home, which
were also supported by increased digital screen time." (Faltýnková, et. al., 2020)
These results indicate that optimal parentingis a balance among parental care, protection, and allowing adolescents to build independence and competence. The study points to the potential role of family lifestyles associated with limited resources.