Media Use by Children, and Parents’ Views on Children's Media Usage

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## Sample

333 participants (238 women and 95 men) aged between 27 and 63 years (mean age, 38.7 ± 6.1 years). The age of the participants’ children varied between 1 month and 18 years.

## Implications For Parents About

# Abstract

Background: New (mobile phones, smartphones, tablets, and social media) and traditional media (television) have come to dominate the lives of many children and adolescents. Despite all of this media time and new technology, many parents seem to have few rules regarding the use of media by their children and adolescents.
Objectives: The aim of this study was to evaluate media access/use of children and to evaluate beliefs and attitudes of parents concerning the use of old and new media in Turkey.
Methods: This is a cross-sectional electronic survey of a national convenience sample in Turkey via SurveyMonkey, including 41 questions regarding topics relevant to television, computers, mobile phones, iPad/tablet use, and social media accounts.
Results: The responses of the 333 participants (238 women, 95 men; 27-63 years) were evaluated. The average daily watching alone time was 0 to 2 hours among 53.4% (46/86), and daily coviewing time with parents of children was 0 to 2 hours among 62.7% (54/86) of children below 2 years of age. Regarding parents’ monitoring their children’s computer use (n=178), 35.4% (63/178) of the parents prefer coviewing, 13.5% of the parents use a family filter (24/178), and 33.1% (59/178) of the parents prefer to check Web history. Approximately 71.2% (237/333) of the participants had an iPad/tablet in the house, 84.3% (200/333) of the parents give their children permission to use the iPad/tablet. Of the parents, 22.5% (45/200) noted that their children used the iPad/tablet at the table during lunch/dinner and 57.9% (26/45) of these children were aged 5 years and below. Of parents, 27.3% (91/333) agreed that the optimal age for owning a mobile phone was 12 years, and 18.0% (60/333) of the parents noted that their children (one-third was below 2 years) used the mobile phone at the table during meals. A total of 33.3% (111/333) children/adolescents have a Facebook profile, and 54.0% (60/111) were below 13 years of age. Approximately 89.2% (297/333) of the parents emphasized that the Internet is essential for their child’s education.
Discussion: According to our study results, knowledge regarding the use of old and new media is limited among the parents in Turkey. Our study showed that screen time and mobile device use (including during meals) are common in children below 2 years of age, whereas no screen time was recommended for children below 2 years of age. We concluded that there is need for evidence-based guidelines regarding the use of the Internet and social media for parents and parents should ensure that there is a plan in place for the use of children’s media.

# Outcome

There is limited knowledge regarding the use of old and new media among parents in Turkey. Mobile phones, tablet computers, and social media are widely used by children, especially in the age group where electronic media use should be discouraged. However, there is a lack of sufficient research and guidelines on protecting children’s safety in the use of media devices in developing countries, as well as in Turkey.