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**The Control Method to Deal With Smart Communication Tools: Examination of Parenthood of Primary School Students**

Research Project

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**ABSTRACT**

This study is intended to investigate the parent’s perspectives towards controlling the usage of smart communication tool by their children. The research also examines parental practices to set up programs and apply controlling methods for the usage of communication tools. Additionally, it addresses the needs and supports that parents want to restrict the usage of the communication tools and see if the gender of children shape the perspectives of the parents. We applied quantitative approach to generate and analize the data. The survey design (questionnaire) was used to gather quantitative data, 100 parents (either father or mother) participated in the research to answer the research questions. Th findings of the research showed that parents are well aware about the importance of controlling smart communication tools and how it should be limited. The results also revealed that parents have used different controlling methods including using password, scheduling specific time and duration for usage, and allowing children to use the tools only in specific occasions. This research also showed that parents have ability to control the usage of the tools without a particular support. Finally, the research revealed that the gender of the children does not affect the parents to have different perspective towards using the tools by their sons and daughters.

**Chapter1:-introduction**

**1.1 Introduction**

**1.2 Research problem**:-

The use of smart communication tools is considerably increasing by primary school students, which has a negative impact on students, whether psychologically or educationally. Research revealed that spending a lot of time on social networks have a negative psychological effect on children.  In a study, it has been mentioned that spending more than one hour online and spending time in social communication tools has a negative influence on the mental state of children and makes children 14% unsatisfied with their situation, especially among girls. (Postles H,2017). Due to the lack of available research on this subject (based on our best knowledge), it is not clear how parents in the Kurdistan region see the side effects of using smart communication tools for their children. Therefore, this research is an attempt towards this end.

**1.3 Research objectives:**-

This research seeks to know how parents think about the importance of controlling the usage of smart communication tools by their children. We want to investigate parental practices to set up programs and apply controlling methods for the usage of communication tools. It is also the aim of this research to address the needs and supports that parents want to restrict the usage of the communication tools and see if the gender of children predict the perspectives of the parents.

**1.4 Research question :-**

1-To what extent is controlling the usage of smart communication tools important for parents?

2-To what extent have parents set up specific programs and methods to control the usage of smart communication tools by their children?

3-What do parents need to control their children from using smarts communication tools?

4- Does gender of children affect parent’s perspective towards controlling the usage of smart communication tools?

**1.5 key words:**-(control, method, smart communication tools , primary school student )

1.5.1 Control :-

Control is a managerial task alongside with those of staffing, planning, organizing, and leading. It serves a crucial purpose in that it aids in error detection and corrective action so that divergence from standards and stated goals are minimized. (Cheyo,L, 2015)

1.5.2 Smart communication tools .:-

They are part of everyone's daily lives and have a significant impact on education, social interactions, and communication methods. Children utilize smart phones at the quickest rate of growth, frequently using them for internet access.(reference?)

1.5.3 Primary-school student:

Although there are different standards, elementary education is primarily geared onkids between the ages of 6 and 11. In the direction of providing universal primary education, significant progress has been made.(UNICEF, 2022)

**Chapter Two: Literature Review**

Scholars have investigated smart communication tools used by children and how parents can play a role in this process. “Nowadays, smart phones and tablets are more approachable and children are not away from using them. ‏Parental controls allows to determine what sites and apps child can access with their smartphone, tablet or laptops. They also let us set limits on how long a child can spend on their device and even allow us to monitor exactly how they’re using it.” (Hiley. C, 2022)

The way that parents and kids interact, have fun, learn, and solve problems on a daily basis has quickly altered thanks to digital media (both in ordinary and exceptional circumstances such as COVID-19 home confinement). The constant use of cellphones and tablets by very young children presents new difficulties for parent-child connections and the parental role. Researchers have addressed the concept of "digital parenting," there is a literature starting from highlighting "conventional" parenting philosophies to more current research on "parental mediation," or the many actions parents take to limit their kids' access to the Internet and other digital media. Empirical studies available on various parental mediation techniques (active or restrictive behaviors) and how they are modified in accordance with the features of the kid (age, digital competences, etc.) or parent's knowledge of and opinions about the media. Scholars also discussing the influence of youths' social engagement, communication, self-disclosure, and digital abilities on parents' attitudes and actions from a bidirectional perspective of parent-child relationships. Discussions about the risks of early and excessive exposure to digital technologies have implications for parent education. (Benedetto.B & Ingrassi. M, 2021)

Lee & Ogbolu, Y. (2018) conducted a research entitled “parental control work with smartphone addiction?: A cross-sectional study of children in South Korea.” The objectives of this study were to (a) investigate the effects of personal characteristics (age, gender), psychological (depression), and physical (sleep time) factors on smartphone addiction in children, and (b) ascertain whether parental control is linked to a lower incidence of smartphone addiction. A self-report questionnaire was used to collect data from kids between the ages of 10 and 12 (N = 208) in two elementary schools. Multiple linear regression, correlation, the t test, and one-way analysis of variance were used to analyze the results. The majority of participants (73.3%) owned a smartphone, and 12% of them used their phone in a harmful way. The multiple linear regression model predicted the smartphone addiction score with an accuracy of 25.4% (adjusted R =.239). Age, depression, and parental characteristics were three factors that were strongly related to the SAS. three variables were left out (control), and (gender, geographic region, and parental control software). Teenagers between the ages of 10 and 12 who scored higher on depression had greater SASs. The SAS is greater the student feels they have more parental control.

Cristin M Hall ,2015 also conducted a study entitled “Technology-assisted Interventions for Parents of Young Children: Emerging Practices, Current Research, and Future Directions,” This paper covers the literature on technology-assisted therapies for parents of young children and their use and evaluation. There are 48 research that describe technology-assisted parent education and interventions, according to a comprehensive evaluation of the early childhood literature. These research utilized a variety of technological tools, including web-based platforms, video conferencing, mobile devices, and discussion boards. Results are discussed in a manner that progresses from assessments of the viability and acceptability of technology-based delivery methods to more thorough analyses that focus on the effects on parent and child outcomes. Technology has the potential to give parents interventions. Limitations of internet-only intervention delivery are explored, such as varied acceptability and greater attrition.

According to Blancaflor et al (2021), the most popular method used by parents to control their children's internet behavior is parental control devices and software. As a result, while this might allay their concerns about internet use restrictions, it also poses serious security and privacy risks. Their study was able to examine the fundamental weaknesses found in frequently used parental control mobile applications and make recommendations based on the found weaknesses. In order to produce a descriptive analysis of the findings, their quantitative research case study employed a vulnerability assessment method using the Quixxi Security application. The three most widely used parental control programs were identified as FamilyTime, FamilyLink, and OurPact, and they shared ten vulnerabilities in common.

**Chapter three :- Methodology**

3.1 Method:

Quantitative method is defined as the process of gathering and interpreting numerical data. It can be used to identify trends and averages, formulate hypotheses, examine causality, and extrapolate findings to larger populations. (Bahandai,2020).

We have applied quantitative approach to achieve the objectives of our research.

**3.2 Sampling and Data Collection Tools**:-

In order to collect original quantitative data, we took a sample of parents who have children in primary schools. We selected some primary schools to be targeted for our data collection process. Through personal link, we were able to identify a school, which had a school-parents meeting. The school staff allowed us to directly participate in the meeting and we were able to talk to the parents and explain our research goals. So they agreed to fill out a questionnaire that we designed for data collection process. We also targeted two other schools. We were not able to see the parents face to face, but the school staffs helped us to hand out the questionnaires to the parents and they returned forms after answering the questions by parents.

**3.3 Questionnaire**

We designed a questionnaire consisting of 20 questions in which 14 questions well reflecting the general research questions.

**3.4 Geographic Area**

We selected three schools in Erbil governorate; two schools in Erbil city including (sarkish) primary school and (Sheikh Raza primary) school, and a school outside of Erbil )sheraswari (school.

**3.5 Finding** :-

We are presenting the findings of our research in this section through tables and describe the tables as they will be used for data analysis in the next chapter which is the discussion part of the research.

Table 1

1:It is okay for children to use smart devices such as smartphone, tablet and etc..

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Answer | Number | Percentage |
| Strongly disagree | 24 | %24 |
| Disagree | 38 | %38 |
| Partially agree | 27 | %27 |
| Agree | 10 | %10 |
| Strongly agree | 1 | %1 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

It is okay for children to use smart devices such as smartphone, tablet and

In statement number one ,only %10 of people agreed to normalizing using gadgets which means 10 participants ,while %38 of the parents disagreed. This indicates that those parents do not consider smart devices as a good thing for their children

Table 2

2:Every children should have their smart device to use.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Answer  | Number | Percentage |
| Strongly disagree | 27 | %27 |
| Disagree | 36 | %36 |
| Partially agree | 21 | %21 |
| Agree | 12 | %12 |
| Strongly agree | 4 | %4 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

Every children should have their smart device to use.

In response to this statement, the large number of participants did not agree that children their own smart devices including 36 participants.

Table 3

3:children should be allowed to use smart devices whenever they want

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Answer  | Number | Percentage |
| Strongly disagree | 45 | %45 |
| Disagree | 40 | %40 |
| Partially agree | 9 | %9 |
| Agree | 6 | %6 |
| Strongly agree | 0 | %0 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

children should be allowed to use smart devices whenever they want

The highest amount of choice was strongly disagree,this indicates that parents do not prefer to give their children full freedom to use wise devices.only %6 of them agreed.

Table 4

4:parents cannot limit their children from using smart devices

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Answer  | Number | Percentage |
| Strongly disagree | 22 | %22 |
| Disagree | 39 | %39 |
| Partially agree | 21 | %21 |
| Agree | 15 | %15 |
| Strongly agree | 3 | %3 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

parents cannot limit their children from using smart devices

In the table No. four, the phrase disagree represents that parents have the ability to control their children from using wise devices and it gained %39 of parents choice(the most selected one).not more than 15 chose agreeing to the statement.

Table 5

5:It is acceptable for male children to use smart devices.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Answer  | Number | Percentage |
| Strongly disagree | 14 | %14 |
| Disagree | 43 | %43 |
| Partially agree | 21 | %21 |
| Agree | 22 | %22 |
| Strongly agree | 0 | %0 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

It is acceptable for male children to use smart devices.

In this table parents want their boy children not to use smart devices rather than using it and 43 of them chose disagreement.%21 are partially agree.

Table 6

6:It is acceptable for female children to use smart devices

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Answer  | Number | Percentage |
| Strongly disagree | 14 | %14 |
| Disagree | 44 | %44 |
| Partially agree | 19 | %19 |
| Agree | 22 | %22 |
| Strongly agree | 1 | %1 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

It is acceptable for female children to use smart devices

Disagreement is in the highest rate of parent’s choice which got 44 (%44)participants to select it.22 (%22) participants agreed.

Table 7

7:parents can allow their children to use smart devices for a limited amount of time.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Answer  | Number | Percentage |
| Strongly disagree | 5 | %5 |
| Disagree | 11 | %11 |
| Partially agree | 21 | %21 |
| Agree | 34 | %34 |
| Strongly agree | 29 | %29 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

parents can allow their children to use smart devices for a limited amount of time.

Parents do agree that screen time should be limited for their children by the rate of %34 and they strongly agree to that statement by the rate %29.this means %64 of the participants and is the highest amount.instead only%11 chose disagreement to the statement.

Table 8

8:Do your children have smart device (tablet or mobile phone) ?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Number | Percentage |
| Yes  | 51 | %51 |
| No | 49 | %49 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

Do your children have smart device (tablet or mobile phone) ?

Many of The children have their own smart devices such as tablet smart phone and etc..,,this survey reveals that %51 of the children have their own smart devices.

%49 of the parents said that their children do not have their own wise devices

Table 9

9:Do you give your children the freedom of using smartphone and tablet how much time they want?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Number | Percentage |
| Yes | 13 | %13 |
| No | 87 | %87 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

Do you give your children the freedom of using smartphone and tablet how much time they want?

Freedom of using smart devices is given by %13 of the parents participated in this survey which includes 13 participants.instead parents think they should save their children from the disadvantages caused by smart devices which took %87 of the respondents.

Table 10

10:What you have done for your children to not use smart devices too much?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Number | Percentage |
| I Locked the smart devices | 14 | %14 |
| I have set limited time for them  | 56 | %56 |
| They only use it when they have done a good thing | 19 | %19 |
| Something else | 11 | %11 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

What you have done for your children to not use smart devices too much?

%56 of the parents have set specific time for their children to use smart devices , for example ,some of respondents talked about giving only one hour a day to use smart devices.some parents give it as reward as the child does something good which are %19 of them.19(%19) participants has locked the smart device to prevent their children from using excessively.

Table 11

11:What do parents have to do to stop their children using devices?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Number | Percentage |
| They can not prevent them | 6 | %6 |
| Stop buying it for them | 36 | %36 |
| Asking for consultant’s guidance | 14 | %14 |
| Setting password for the device | 44 | %44 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

What do parents have to do to stop their children using devices?

Most of the Participants think setting password is the best way to stop their children and 44 (%44) have chosen it.while %36 of them prefer not buying smarts instead.some of them selected asking for guidance from consultant which are not more than %14.only 6 (%6) of them can not stop their children.

Table 12

12:do you know there are applications and settings that prevent children from using some applications smartphone and tablet?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Number | Percentage |
| Yes | 77 | %77 |
| No | 23 | %23 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

 do you know there are applications and settings that prevent children from using some applications smartphone and tablet?

In this question, we wanted to know how much parents were aware that their are special apps and programs to control their children, 77% of parents had information about this program and things,and 23 (%223)of them were not aware of it

Table 13

13:Is it acceptable for your children in both genders to use smart devices same as each other?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Number | Percentage |
| Yes | 63 | %63 |
| No | 37 | %37 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

We wanted to make clear whether parents differed between their boys and girls, and we reached the answer, which the result shows that 63% ensured boys and girls are equal, but unfortunately, 37% differed between their girls and boys which includes 37 participants.

Table 14

14: Do you agree that there are applications and games that are suitable for male children but female?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Number | Percentage |
| Strongly agree | 33 | %33 |
| Disagree | 39 | %39 |
| I don’t have an opinion | 28 | %28 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

Do you agree that there are applications and games that are suitable for male children but female?

39 (%39)participants imply that there are no applications or apps that are not suitable for girls but boys or otherwise.while some admit there are apps and games are not considered acceptable for both genders by rate of%33 and 28 of them have

No opinion about it by 28 percent.

Special questions:

In the end, we had a special question to know how much the age, number of children, and literacy level affect their opinions

15-Age

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Age | Number of people | Percentage |
| 18-25 | 3 | %3 |
| 26-30 | 5 | %5 |
| 31-36 | 20 | %20 |
| 36-40 | 26 | %26 |
| 40+ | 46 | %46 |
| TOTAL | 100 | %100 |

AGE

The survey implies that the highest amount of participants are more than 40 years old includes %46 of the respondents.the range is less in the people their ages between 36 and 40 includes 26 participant.not more than 3 people their ages are from 18 to 25.

16-Gender of parent

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Gender | Number of people | Percentage |
| Male  | 51 | %51 |
| Female | 49 | %49 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

Gender of parent

There is no big difference of the participants gender range.51 of the participants are male(%51), while female participants are 49 in number(%49).

17-career

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of career | Number of people | Percentage |
| Independent job | 28 | %28 |
| Governmental job | 49 | %49 |
| Private job | 2 | %2 |
| Jobless | 21 | %21 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

Most of the respondents are having governmental jobs such as teacher, healthcare and etc..

And they are %49 of the respondents.others that are having different jobs, independent job took %28 while private job is %2.

18-education level of the parent

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Level of education | Number of people | Percentage |
| Elementary school | 24 | %24 |
| Secondary school | 22 | %22 |
| High school | 15 | %15 |
| Diploma degree | 15 | %15 |
| Bachelor degree | 24 | %24 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

Each of the elementary school and bachelor degree got %24 which means the highest amounts of respondents.22 percent of them have studied till secondary school.people with bachelor degree took %15 and this result is the same with people who completed highschool.

19-How many children does the parent have?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Number of children | Number of people | Percentage |
| 1 child | 2 | %2 |
| 2 children | 18 | %18 |
| 3 children | 23 | %23 |
| 4 children  | 23 | %23 |
| More than 4 | 34 | %34 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

How many children does the parent have?

34 percent of the parents participated in this survey are having more than 4 children.while people who have 4 children are %23, this percentage is also right for parents who have 3 children.%18 have 2 children and not more than 2 participants have1 child.

20-Gender of the parent’s children

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Gender | Number | Percentage |
| Male | 8 | %8 |
| Female | 15 | %15 |
| Both genders | 77 | %77 |
| Total | 100 | %100 |

Gender of the parent’s children

77 participants have children in both genders(%77).15 of them have only daughters, and 8 of them have only sons.

**Chapter Four :- Discussion**

**4.1 Discussion**

**To what extent is controlling the usage of smart communication tools important for parents?**

Most of the parents thought there should be limit for children from using smart devices and it is crucial that large amount of them believe that they can limit and control their children, while a few of them did not think in that way. Some of the parents prevented their children from excessive use of the smart devices because it may lead to both psychological and physical disorders.

**2-To what extent have parents set up specific programs and methods to control the usage of smart communication tools by their children?**

Almost of the participants admit that their should be a limited amount of time for screen time. some of them chose to reduce screen time to one hour daily.some even have set passwords and do not let their children know the password. some only allow their children to use smart devices as a reward for something good they have done like studying, and some has other ways.some of parents think there are ways like google family to prevent their children.

**3-What do parents need to control their children from using smarts communication tools?**

Setting a limited amount of time is important for parents to prevent their children from using smart devices excessively or using password and other methods.but sometimes even this methods does not help some parents to stop their children or set a limit the screen time, and some of them do not know how their children use wise devices.even if the parents set time limit they should be aware and look after what their children are doing or what applications and games they are playing.their are setting like restriction in google chrome and some other services like youtube prevent children from seeing what is not suitable for their age.this survey reveals there are some parents know about this apps and setting, but unfortunately some of them have no opinion about it. the community should receive awareness and protect children.

Parents should give advice and awareness to their children before they get in to technology

**4- Does gender of children affect parent’s perspective towards controlling the usage of smart communication tools?**

There was no big effects of gender inequality in this survey but that does not mean there is no discrimination.some of the parents disagreed to female and male children to use wise devices as each other and the table number 13 reveals this fact that %37 of the parents are discriminating.In the table the table number 14 talks about the applications that are suitable for boys but girls the %33 are agree,%39 disagreed snd %28 have no opinion about it. Some of them thought there are apps like football war and other apps that re suitable for boys but girls, and some apps such as make up and doll dressing that are not suitable for boys.

**4.2 conclusion**

This research tried to figure out how important is controlling the smart tools for parents and how parents have used different programs and methods to control their children from using smart tools. This subject has importance for parents , in this research we found out that most of the parents have controlled their children by using different methods e.g. setting up password or setting a limited amount of time or using certain applications. As a result of this research we found out there is no discrimination from parents to their children.

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