

Navigating The Digital World: An Exploration of Common Parental Strategies for Managing Children's Technology and Internet Use

Jeson Apura Abejuela, Harry Gabriel N. Fornis, Florevil S. Basay, Cheyne Rose J. Ngoa, Jestony M. Vallespin

Don Gerardo Llamera Ouano Memorial National High School, Mandaue City, Region VII – CEBU, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Children and teenagers are growing up in a society where social media and gadgets are commonplace. Although these technologies can be beneficial, they also pose risks, such as being exposed to inappropriate content. Parents must learn how to monitor and manage technology use in order to protect their children's well-being. This study aims to explore the common parental strategy employ to mitigate the negative effects of technology on their children. The participants in this study were chosen using a narrative inquiry design and convenience sampling. After receiving permission, the researchers conducted an interview with parents in Opa, Mandaue City. The collected data will be analyzed thematically in order to correctly interpret themes and patterns. After analyzing the data, the researchers discovered that most parents would limit their children's use of devices such as cell phones. Some parents, particularly those who are technologically savvy, would also provide appropriate guidance. The researchers have also found that communication is very important in making these strategies effective. Lastly, parents should strictly give proper guidance to avoid technology's negative effects. The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) can work together to block access to pornography sites that are not suitable for minor children. School ICT coordinators should create educational videos suitable for children.

Keywords: Parental Strategy, Social Media Usage, Parental Mediation, Management, Content Views

INTRODUCTION

Technology has become an integral part of our lives, and children and adolescents are no exception (Dienlin, Johannes, 2020). They are developing in a society where social media, cell phones, tablets, and laptops are pervasive. These technologies carry risks like cyberbullying, addiction, and exposure to unsuitable content despite the fact that they can be useful in many ways. To protect their children's safety and well-being, parents must control how they use social media and other modern technologies.

In recent years, the world is now largely composed of technology. In a short span of time, we have been immersed in a world of high-definition television, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc. According to Metro News Manila, the most popular social media platform in the Philippines is Facebook (99%), followed by YouTube (57%), TikTok (17%), Instagram (14%), and Twitter (8%). With the rise of social media, the spreading of a variety of content to teenagers is unavoidable. Technology has made a great impact on the lives of people, especially the younger generations. But it is still up to the adults to handle their children

with the use of technology. Much like their children, parents of teenagers now live in a world that is heavily influenced by technology. The reality of today has pushed parents to weigh the opportunities and risks of the content their children might encounter while immersed in technology.

According to Jun Zhao, Parents have always been playing a pivotal role in mitigating children's interactions with digital technologies. (2018). Rules or restrictions from parents have been shown to help mediate adolescents' technology use. (Toh, S.H., Howie, E.K., Coenen, P. *et al*, 2019). Children, as well as adolescents, have the instinctive curiosity to explore anything related to technologies and social media, therefore this study will focus on how parents manage and handle their children with the use of current technologies.

This study aimed to explore the parental strategies for managing children's technology and social media use among parents in order to answer the questions such as, what specific content children usually encounter on the internet, and what strategies do parents employ to mitigate the effects of technology and social media.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As Kitti Kutrovátz (2022) stated, teenagers' extensive or risky internet conduct may be mitigated by parental action in the form of restricting or monitoring their technology use. Additionally, by teaching teenagers specific skills that encourage appropriate online behavior, active mediation techniques may enhance their digital literacy. Therefore, Kitti Kutrovátz argues that Parental mediation has emerged as a vital part of modern parenting techniques. However, the lack of adolescent experience in negotiating online dangers may be the cause of the correlation between restricted mediation and lower Internet use, and higher risks.

Parental mediation is a style of conduct that could protect kids from the harmful applications and impacts of smartphones. Parental mediation is based on parents' danger perceptions as well as threat and success perceptions based on parenting styles and parents' addiction to smartphone use. These predictions were based on the protection motivation theory (Hwang, Choi, Yum, Jeong, 2017). Adolescents are increasingly using mobile touchscreen devices such as smartphones and tablet PCs. However, little is known about how adolescents utilize these devices and the factors that influence their use (Toh, S.H, Howie, E.K., Coenen, Staker, L.M., 2019).

Nili Steinfeld (2021) stated that the ideal conditions for adolescents to establish a solid set of norms and boundaries and the ability to self-regulate their own Internet activities are likely provided by a balanced combination of restrictive and active mediation, according to a study that compares mediation tactics with parenting approaches.

Kutrovátz Kitti (2022) concluded in his study that the intensive parenting ideal shapes parental mediation in such a way that parents use high levels of control and conscious mediation strategies – with the desired form of active mediation – and provide alternative programs to screen time to protect their children from harm and cultivate their development while fostering their autonomy and independence.

Parents are permissive to children using social media when a certain platform is personally used by the parents. Parents consider accessing social media platforms as helpful in the overall growth of the child. As stated in the study by Batau-Projas et AL. (2018) Parents include the rearing official attitude as one of the numerous positive aspects of social media use. In other mediation strategies, parents heavily make use of restrictive mediation. The researchers associate this with the lack of knowledge of other variations of mediation styles. According to Daneels and vanmyscenglu(2017) the lack of a communicative aspect in mediation brings limitations to the possible benefits of the mediation Itself to the children and the parents.

Adolescents in these times have been frequently engaging with technology, though little is known about the possible influences it could have on them. This is where parental mediation comes in. Parental mediation is a style of parental strategy that could protect children as well as adolescents from the negative effects of technology and social media. It is stated in some studies that adolescents' risky behavior might be mitigated by parental action in a way of managing or monitoring their technology and social media use. In addition, active mediation may enhance their digital literacy. Therefore, parental mediation has become a vital part of parenting in modern times.

Behaviorism is a theory of learning based on the idea that all behaviors are acquired through conditioning, and conditioning occurs through interaction with the environment. There are two main types of behaviorism used to describe how behavior is formed. The first one is Methodological behaviorism, it states that observable behavior should be studied scientifically and that mental states and cognitive processes don't add to the understanding of behavior. The second one is Radical behaviorism, it is rooted in the theory that behavior can be understood by looking at one's past and present environment and the reinforcements within it, thereby influencing behavior either positively or negatively. By monitoring a child's behavior towards technology and social media, a parent might lessen the negative impact of technology to their children. Though this might also limit the positive effects it could have on them (Kendra Cherry, 2022).

"Navigating the Digital World: An Exploration of Parental Strategies for Managing Children's Technology and Social Media Use," it is important to consider the role of parental mediation in internet use. Parental mediation theory is a multi-pronged concept that aims to mitigate negative effects of internet use and build essential digital skills. Additionally, it is essential to examine the link between parental perceived concern for media devices and management of their child's media use in the home. To explain how parents actively parent their children, the activity theory framework can be used to understand how parents use rules, tools, and division of labor. Proper training and support for parents can ensure effective parental mediation to reduce the negative effects of technology and social media use on children,

METHODS

Research Design

The researchers utilized narrative inquiry design in this study to explore the experiences of parents with their parental strategies in engaging with their children's use of technology. A narrative inquiry design includes stories that reflect on people's experiences and the meaning that this experience has for them. Since the study will be focusing on parents and their parental strategies, a narrative inquiry will be suited to this research.

Sampling Design

The participants of this study were students' parents of Don Gerardo Llamera Ouano Memorial National High School. The researchers used a convenience sampling design in choosing the participants to join the interview with the researchers. The researchers, therefore, agreed to use such techniques in order to get the interpretation of data.

The criteria for choosing the participants are as follows: they must be parents of students of Don Gerardo Llamera Ouano Memorial National High School, the participants must be living in Opa, Mandaue City, the participants must have existing knowledge in regards to the topic and The criteria in selecting the participants are the parents aging 36 to 49 years with three to five children.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Participants

Participant's Pseudonym	Details (Relationship to the Children, Age, Number of Children)
Maria P1	Mother, 36 with four children
Marites P2	Mother, 41 with five children
Ramon P3	Father, 40 with three children
Marilou P4	Mother, 42 with three children
Marisol P5	Mother, 41 with four children
Joel P6	Father, 46 with five children

Research Environment

The study was conducted at Opao, Mandaue City. The researchers chose this location for the reason that the target participants are parents of students of Don Gerardo Llamera Ouano Memorial National High School. Opao, Mandaue City has a population of 12,014 based on 2020 Census.

Research Instrument

The researchers conducted an interview with parents to collect data on their children's technology and social media use. The researchers asked questions about what strategies do parents employ, what ways they make these strategies effective, and their children's experience with inappropriate content. An interview is a conversation where questions are asked by the interviewer and answers are given by the interviewee. The researchers will be conducting an in-depth interview with a select group of parents to gain a deeper understanding of their management strategies and their experiences with their children's use of technology and social media.

Data Collection Plan

In facilitating the gathering of data, the researchers followed four main steps: (1) the researchers first obtained ethical approval and informed consent from the school administrator and the participants (2) conducted an interview with the participants with the help of the guide questions which contains questions related to the research topic (3) the researchers used an audio recording in interviewing the participants and taking out notes to important details (4) analyzed and summarized the data gathered, this will allow the researchers to compile participant's responses and assess the study's principal goal, which is to know the different parental strategies parents employed in managing children's technology and social media use

Data Analysis

The data analysis method of this study was thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method of analyzing

qualitative data that involves searching for recurring themes or patterns within the data. It is a flexible approach that can be used to identify patterns across a wide range of data types, including interviews, focus group discussions, and open-ended survey responses (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is an appropriate method for analyzing the Parental Strategies for managing children’s technology and social media use because it allows for a deep exploration of the data and can be adapted to fit a wide range of research questions and objectives. Additionally, it enables the identification of meaningful patterns within the data that can provide insights into the experiences and challenges faced by the parents of my respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Table 2. Emerging Themes on Content Views of Children

WORDS	THEME
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence • Sexual • Vlogs • Gameplays (video games) • Educational video 	Content

Content: Children usually view on the internet actually varies, from educational videos that can help them in their studies, to various inappropriate content. Some of them spend leisure time watching gameplays (a recorded play of a player) and vlogs, and although what teenagers usually view on the internet is not bad, encountering inappropriate content cannot be avoided. And this is mostly due to their curiosity, some of these inappropriate contents are violence, drugs, and porn content. Though they may encounter these not on their own accord, some teenagers have specifically searched for these contents willingly due to their own curiosity. These are the narratives of the respondents:

Maria (P1): kanang mga livestreaming sa mga duwa sama anang mobile legend, crossfire og usahay kanang basketball.

Marites (P2). Kanang sa youtube sir about anang pagluto og pag solve sa mga math problems og English lessons.

Ramon (P3): kanang mga kdrama sir na pulos away away og usahay kanang mga action movies na Patayan og kanang mga kabuang.

Marilou (P4): mga vlogs sa iyahang mga paboritong vloggers

Marisol(P5): daghan kaayo og gpangdownload na mga porn videos sa iyahang cellphone . Ang history sa iyahang google kay naglabi mga porn sites.

Joel (P6): kanang mga videos sa facebook og kanang mo pop up ra na mga vidoes akoang mabantayan na lantawon niya

Table 3. Emerging Themes on Parental Strategies for Managing Children’s Technology and Social Media Use

WORDS	THEME
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Limit (time) •Guidance •Diversion(attention) 	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Conversation •Convincing 	Communication

Management: Through technology, teenagers can access various content on the internet. Though some of this might be beneficial to them, encountering inappropriate content cannot be avoided. That is why parents would employ different parental strategies in order to manage their children’s use of technology. Some parents give their children time limits in the use of technology. Diverting their attention can also be of help in managing their technology. Limiting their time can help children engage in other activities such as sports. This will also prevent them from being too addicted to their cell phones. Some parents give their children guidance about the right way to use technology, especially those parents who are well-versed in using them. With the right knowledge of what is appropriate in terms of technology, children can avoid contents that are not advisable for them. These are the narratives of the participants applying restrictive mediation:

Maria (P1): Akoa sila limitan sa oras paggamit sa ilahang cellphone.

Marites (P2). akoga silang tudluan og I guide kung unsay maayo og dili

Ramon (P3): Ang strategy nga gamiton para dili kayo ma kuan ang bata sa cellphone kay imo jud silang tagaan og oras mga mag gadget ra unya naa kay ipabuhat nila nga mawa silang focus sa cellphone

Marilou (P4):kung mag cellphone na siya sir kay akoang lingkuran sa kilid arun mabantayan nako kung unsa ng mga salida sa youtube ang iyahang lantawon kay pataka ra na siya og kubi-kubi . kay kung dili nimo bantayan sir unsa-unsang nalang ang lantawon niya labi na siya nay apan.

Marisol(P5): e limit nako ang paggamit sa iyahang cellphone sir kay nagkadugay nagka gahi akoang anak og dili na masugo unya kung mapasagdan siya kay nabantayan nako d na mag himo og assignment.

Joel (P6): akoga silang tagaan og pila ra ka oras sap ag cellphone unya akoga jud na silang agdahon na magduwa sa gawas kung malapas na sila sa oras na akoang ghatag nila

Communication: Parents implement several strategies in order to manage their children’s use of technology. Strict parental guidance in using technology is one of these strategies. But in order for this to be effective, we found out that parents engage in time-to-time communication with their children and explain to them how to maximize the use of technology. They would make them understand that what they are doing is right or wrong in regard to technology. Through this, we have found out that communication is very important to children, especially in regard to the use of technology. These are the narratives of the participants applying active mediation:

Maria (P1):: Ako jud na silang ka estoryahon kung unsa jud ang epekto ana kung magplabi og gamit .

Marites (P2): ipahimangno nako sa ilaha kung kunsay dangatan nila kung magpalabi labi na karun na lisod kayo amoang kahintang.

Ramon (P3): di jud ta magkuwang og pahimangno nila labi na jud na wala pa na silay dangatan unya atoa jud na sila I convince na gamiton ra na ang cellphone sa pagklce og dilis a kabuang.

Marilou (P4):ka istoryahon ra jud na nako sila og ipasabot na kung masobra nata sa paggamit sa cellphone makadaot jud na sa atoang lawas labi na jud na malingat unya malimot na og kaon.

Marisol(P5): Ipasabot ra jud na nako sa ilaha labi na wala pa kaayo sila nakahibaw kung unsay dangatan niya.

Joel (P6): kombinseron man nako na sila sir na gamiton ra jud sa sakto ang cellphone.

Discussion

In managing their children's use of technology, parents have observed that through engaging in technology, their children have improved their learning. Some parents have also faced difficulties in managing their children, it is mainly because they are not well-informed in terms of technology. Some children would also disobey their parents, and because of this, parents are having a hard time monitoring them. However, some parents do not find it as challenging as other parents in managing their children, this is because they have experience and are well-versed in using technology. Although that doesn't change what they have to do.

Through the internet, teenagers can access many educational videos that could help them acquire new knowledge and learn new things that could be applied to their daily lives. But excessive use of technology could also bring harmful effects to children. That is why parents employ strategies in order to manage the use of technology in their children.

Some parents give their children time limits in the use of technology, such a cell phones for example. Diverting children's attention can also be of help in managing their technology use. Limiting their time can encourage children to participate in other activities like sports and other things. Additionally, this will keep children from developing a cellphone addiction. Some parents provide instruction for their kids, particularly those who use technology and social media themselves. Children can avoid stuff that is inappropriate for them if they have the proper knowledge of what is appropriate in terms of technology. Some parents have claimed that limiting their children to technology exposure can help in avoiding and mitigating the negative effects of technology on children. Setting clear boundaries of what their children should be doing can greatly affect their children's behavior towards technology.

Parents implement several strategies in order to manage their children's use of technology. However, the researchers discovered that for this to be successful, parents must occasionally communicate with their kids and teach them how to make the most of technology. They would help kids realize whether their use of technology is appropriate or inappropriate. Through this, we have learned how crucial communication is for kids, particularly when it comes to using technology. According to Symons (2020) and Kutrovátz (2022) restrictive mediation refers to the parents controlling both the amount of time children spend on media and the type of content they come into contact with while active mediation entails discussing media content, in which critical comments are given or content is explained. Based on the narratives of the parents they must practice active mediation towards their children in using social media rather than being a restrictive mediator such as controlling the time used of social media because it can lead to negative behavior in the children.

Content commonly watched by children varies it found that children usually watch educational videos,

especially students. This video helps them in some cases where they cannot understand the discussion. Though some of them spend their leisure time watching gameplay. Gameplay is a term used to define the way players interact with a certain video or computer game. Many players record how they play and post it on the Internet. This is what teenagers who play the same game usually watch. Even though the content that kids typically access online is mostly positive, it is inevitable that they may come upon inappropriate content. And their curiosity is much to blame for this. Violence, drugs, and pornographic material are a few of these improper contents. According to Lloyd (2018), early exposure means that porn addicts began viewing porn when they were very young. Many people who are addicted to porn did start seeing it at an early age, often as young as the age of 10. Porn addiction means you keep coming back to porn because it has become a regular part of your life. Some kids have actively looked for these items out of interest, even though they may have come across them unintentionally.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Parents can utilize several steps to effectively manage their child's use of technology. This includes closely observing their children's use of technology, what they are viewing, and whether it is advisable or not. Additionally, parents should also strictly give proper guidance in order to avoid the negative effect of technology on their children. It is also essential for parents to utilize various strategies in managing their children. Furthermore, parents must also engage in conversation with their children regarding the use of technology for this can help in making the strategies used effective. Monitoring and setting clear boundaries to your children is also a vital factor in managing their technology use. By observing what their children view online, providing guidance, parental controls, and maintaining open conversation, parents can promote safe and responsible technology use.

The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) can work together to block access to pornography sites that are not suitable for minor children. The government can collaborate with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to implement measures that can block access to such websites. It is important to note, however, that it is not always possible to completely block all pornography sites, as new ones emerge on a regular basis. Parents can also take responsibility for monitoring minors' online activities and educating them on responsible internet usage in order to keep them safe from harmful content.

School Information Communication Technology Coordinator- must assist the parents in creating high-quality educational videos for minor children that will enhance their learning and engage their curiosity. The coordinator can assist parents in locating appropriate resources for creating educational videos, such as online libraries and educational websites.

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

RESEARCH TITLE

Navigating the Digital World: An Exploration of Parental Strategies for Managing Children's Technology and Social

RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR

Harry Gabriel Fornis, Matthew Emmanuel Bate, Marjorie Siaton, Kurt Andren, Julie Ann Diaz, Sherdawn Amante

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to explore the Parental Strategies for Managing Children's Technology and Social Media Use among the parents of students in Don Gerardo Llamera Ouano Memorial National High School. You will be asked how you monitor and guide your children with the use of technology. You will be invited for an interview, and this can be recorded and transcribed as part of the data analysis. There will be other questions aside from the guide questions if necessary. The findings of this study will be able to contribute to existing literature about this specific topic.

RISKS

Whenever you are asked to attend a face-to-face interview, be sure to follow the health and safety protocols by wearing a face mask and face shield all the time. However, you can choose to be interviewed virtually if you opt to.

You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

BENEFITS

Your participation in this study will give a better understanding of how to properly manage and monitor children's use of technology and social media. The results of the research can help not just parents but also other people who are interested in learning how to manage children's use of technology.

CONFIDENTIALITY

For the purposes of this research study, your answers to the interview will not be anonymous. Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality including the following:

- Assigning code names/numbers for participants that will be used on all research notes and documents
- Keeping notes, interview transcriptions, and any other identifying participant information in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher.

Your data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse and suicide risk.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience harmful effects as the result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher through this number _____.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign an assent form. After you sign the assent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT FORM

I _____, agree to participate in the study, **“Navigating the Digital World: An Exploration of Parental Strategies for Managing Children’s Technology and Social Media Use”**

I have been informed, to my satisfaction, by the researcher, about the study. I know that I do not have to bear the expenses of the incident if I suffer from any study-related injury, which may be related to the study procedure.

I am also aware of my right to not be part of the trial, at any time, without having to give reason for doing so.

Name and Signature of Participant Date: _____

Name and Signature of Impartial Witness Date _____

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS

1. What are your experiences in managing your children with the use of technology?
2. What strategies do parents employ to mitigate the effects of technology and social media?
3. What do you usually do to make these strategies effective?
4. What specific content do children usually view on the internet?
5. What inappropriate content do children usually get exposed to?
6. How do parents monitor the use of technology with their children?