



Investigation of Parents' Level of Sociotelism with Their Views on Phubbing (Sociotelism) Behaviours of Their Children

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this study is to examine the level of phubbing of parents with children in early childhood and their perspectives on their children's phubbing behaviours. The research was designed using a simultaneous nested model of mixed design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The study group for the research consisted of 183 parents with children in early childhood. The Personal Information Form, the Generic Scale of Phubbing adapted into Turkish by Orhan Gökşin (2019), and the Phubbing (Sociotelism) in Early Childhood Questionnaire prepared by the researchers to explore parents' views on the phubbing behaviours of children in early childhood were used as data collection tools in the study. In the analysis of the data obtained from the Phubbing (Sociotelism) in Early Childhood Questionnaire, a weighted mean was calculated for the Likert-type questions, and content analysis was used for the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. When the mean scores obtained from the Generic Scale of Phubbing were examined, it was found that the mean from the nomophobia sub-dimension was relatively higher than the other sub-dimensions. In line with the qualitative findings obtained from the study, it was observed that parents' children mostly used mobile phones in a controlled or regulated manner. Parents stated that the reasons for their children's phone use were primarily loneliness or boredom, and they expressed dissatisfaction with their children's phone use. It was determined that parents mostly had difficulties due to their children's problem behaviours in using phones, had insufficient knowledge about the applications on the phones, had difficulty controlling the content, and felt inadequate in providing alternative activities instead of using phones.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication media in the millennium period has brought about various changes, especially social change (Bungin, 2006). Modern society prefers to carry out various activities on their own using various technologies in order to individualise and disregard social conditions. Phubbing is a culture born from the uncontrolled effects of modernization (Burlian, 2016). This term was first derived by the Macquarie Dictionary to represent the growing problem of misusing smartphones in social situations (Pathak, 2013).

Phubbing is the act of an individual suddenly lowering their gaze and "losing themselves" in their phone in the middle of a social interaction. The word itself is a combination of the words phone and phubbing and means "the act of belittling someone in a social setting by using one's phone instead of talking to the person directly." Individuals may intentionally use their smartphones to avoid or ignore the people around them; however, phubbing itself is a problematic behaviour that harms both the phubbers and the phubbeds (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016). Phubbing behaviour itself negatively affects interpersonal relationships (Sun & Sump, 2021). Ahn and Shin (2013) stated that smartphone use during face-to-face communication leads to a feeling of disconnection, which damages the perceived quality and quantity of social relationships.

Nowadays, phubbing can be easily observed in almost every social environment such as cafés, classrooms, meetings, or homes (Chotpitayasunondh & Douglas, 2016). When the literature is examined; it is seen that phubbing is quite common, socially accepted and this situation is gaining power. Phubbing can occur in any social context, including romantic relationships, workplaces, and family; however, to date, little attention has been paid to the possible impact that phubbing by parents may have on children (Pancani, Gerosa, Gui & Riva, 2021).

Phubbing has a negative effect on parent and child relationships as well as on many types of relationships. When parents' interactions with their smartphones are greater than their interactions with their children, children tend to feel lonely, and this is associated with lower levels of relationship satisfaction with their parents (Hong et al., 2019). For this reason, it is essential for parents to exhibit conscious behaviours and collaborate with schools to positively expand the impact of technological tools on children, as well as to mitigate potential issues associated with unmonitored usage (Akkoyunlu & Tuğrul, 2002).

When the existing studies are examined, it is seen that phubbing behaviour has been examined within various relationships. In these studies, the relationship between parents and adolescents (Stocdale, Coyne, Padilla-Walker, 2018; Wang, Qiao, & Wang, 2023; Wu, Zhang, Yang, Zhu, Xiang & Wu, 2022; Xu & Xie, 2023), romantic relationships (Abbasi, 2018; Carnelley, Vowels, Stanton, Millings & Hart, 2023; Krasnova, Abramova, Notter & Baumann, 2016; McDaniel & Drouin, 2019; Thomas, Carnelley & Hart, 2022), the relationship between parents and primary school students (Hu, Wang, Lin & Zhang, 2023), the relationship between employers and employees (Roberts & David, 2017; Yousaf, Rasheed, Kaur, Islam & Dhir, 2022). In line with this information, it is noteworthy that in studies conducted, the phenomenon of phubbing behaviour has not been examined in the relationship between parents and children in early childhood. Therefore, it is thought that this study will be useful in meeting the need for this subject by contributing to the field in terms of its originality and will form the basis for new research on this subject.

The study aims to examine the level of sociotelism of parents and their views on their children's phubbing (sociotelism) behaviours. In line with this aim, the research problem consists of the question, "What are the opinions of parents about their level of sociotelism and their children's phubbing (sociotelism) behaviours?" The sub-problems of the research problem are as follows:

- a. What are the parents' total scores on the Generic Scale of Phubbing?
- b. What are the parental views on the phubbing (sociotelism) behaviours of children in early childhood?

METHOD

In this part of the research, information about the research model, study group, data collection tools, data collection and data analysis are given.

Research Design

In the study, both quantitative and qualitative data were used to examine the phubbed (sociotelist) status of parents and their views on their children's phubbing (sociotelism) behaviours. The data collected through the "Generic Scale of Phubbing" constitute the quantitative dimension of the study. The data related to the qualitative dimension of the research were obtained using the "Phubbing (Sociotelism) Questionnaire in Early Childhood." As a result of using the data obtained through the relational screening model in accordance with the quantitative research method and the interview technique in accordance with the qualitative research method, the research was designed within the simultaneous nested model of the mixed design. In this model, both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analysed simultaneously; however, emphasis is typically placed on either quantitative or qualitative data. In this model, as one type of data is nested within another, less importance is given to the nested data type. Data integration is typically performed at the data analysis stage. This model is beneficial when seeking a comprehensive perspective on the studied subject and conducting research involving different groups or levels within a study (Creswell, 2013; Terrell, 2012). In this study, quantitative and qualitative data were combined in the data analysis part, with an emphasis on qualitative data.

Research Sample/Study Group/Participants

The study group for the research consisted of 183 parents with children in early childhood. The study group was determined using the snowball sampling technique. Snowball sampling is used when it is difficult to access the units that make up the universe or when information about the universe is incomplete (Patton, 2005). This technique focuses on individuals and critical situations where rich data can be obtained, and the study group is reached by following these individuals and critical situations. Accordingly, one or more individuals related to the subject of the study are selected as reference points, and other individuals are reached through this person (Creswell, 2013). The data collection phase of the research concludes when data saturation is achieved through the researcher's continued sequential exploration (Kerlinger & Lee, 1999). In the study, the data collection tool was delivered to individuals known to have children in early childhood through a Google Form and filled out online. Then, the parents were asked to deliver the form to other parents they knew. Firstly, another parent was contacted with the help of the already contacted parents, and then another parent was contacted in the same way. In addition, the data collection tool was also sent to the teachers who were known to be preschool teachers, and they were asked to forward it to their parents and fellow teachers. Thus, the study group was enlarged in the form of a snowball effect. Explanations about the research were included in the Google Form, and the consent form was presented to the participants by adding the option of voluntary participation in the research. The demographic information of the study group is as follows:

Table 1. Demographic information about the parents who participated in the study

Gender of Parent	f	%	Age of Parent	f	%	Parent's Level of Education	f	%
Woman	163	89.1	20-29	43	23.5	Primary-Secondary School	12	6.6
Male	20	10.9	30-39	108	59.0	High School	21	11.5
			40 and above	32	17.5	Associate degree	16	8.7
						Licence	94	51.4

						Postgraduate	40	21.9
Total	183	100	Total	183	100	Total	183	100

When Table 1 is analysed, 89.1% of the parents who participated in the study were female and 10.9% were male. It was observed that most of the parents (59%) were between the ages of 30 and 39 and mostly had undergraduate (51.4%) and graduate (21.9%) education levels.

Table 2. Demographic information about the children of the parents participating in the study

Child's Age	f	%	Duration of Child's Attendance to Preschool Education	f	%
3 years old	25	13.7	Not started yet	47	25.7
4 years old	22	12.0	1 year	51	27.9
5 years old	52	28.4	2 years	57	31.1
6 years old	26	14.2	3 years and over	28	15.3
7 years old	18	9.8			
8 years old	40	21.9			
Number of siblings of the child	f	%			
Only child	51	27.9			
2 brothers	85	46.4			
3 or more siblings	47	25.7			
Total	183	100	Total	183	100

When Table 2 is analysed, it can be stated that the children of the parents participating in the study are mostly 5 years old (28.4%) and generally have two siblings (46.4%). In addition, it was observed that the number of children who received one year of preschool education and two years of preschool education were distributed at close rates.

Research Instruments and Processes (Data Collection Instruments and Processes)

As data collection tools in the study, the Personal Information Form prepared by the researchers, the Generic Scale of Phubbing, developed by Chotpitayasunondh and Douglas (2018), adapted into Turkish by Orhan Gökşün in 2019, and the Phubbing in Early Childhood (Sociotelism) Questionnaire prepared by the researchers were used. Before preparing the questions of the Phubbing (Sociotelism) Questionnaire in Early Childhood, a literature review was conducted. Based on the information obtained from this literature review, a draft version of the questionnaire has been prepared. The questionnaire was submitted to the opinions of three experts from the field of preschool education and two experts from the field of computer and instructional technology education for content validity. A pre-application of the questionnaire was conducted with five parents to test the comprehensibility of the questions and their suitability for the purpose. Based on the feedback from the expert opinions and the pre-application, it was observed that the questionnaire items were appropriate and comprehensible for the intended purpose and were accepted as a valid data collection tool. The data collection tools used in the study were transferred to Google Forms. Parents with preschool children, participating voluntarily, were initially informed about Phubbing (Sociotelism). The data collection tools were delivered to the parents online through Google Form between August 13 and September 4, 2023, and they were asked to complete the form submission. The data collection tools that were filled in completely were taken into consideration.

Personal Information Form

In this form prepared by the researchers, information about the child's gender, age, number of siblings, duration of preschool education, age, and education level of the parents were included.

Generic Scale of Phubbing (GSP)

The Generic Scale of Phubbing developed by Chotpitayasunondh and Douglas (2018) was adapted

into Turkish by Orhan Göksün in 2019, and its validity and reliability were carried out. The scale is a 7-point Likert type (1= Never, 2= Rarely, 3= Occasionally, 4= Sometimes, 5= Frequently, 6= Usually, 7= Always) and consists of 15 items and 4 factors. These factors are "nomophobia," "personal conflict," "self-isolation," and "problem awareness." The GSP scale is evaluated on a total score. There is no reverse scored item on the scale. Scores that can be obtained from the scale vary between 15 and 105. The scale gives the total score of sociotelism level. The total score is obtained by summing the Likert values of the participant's responses. When the items of the scale are examined, it is stated that all of them are negative items within the framework of social norms and general acceptance, and from this point of view, a high score on the scale indicates negative behaviours. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was found to be .78. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the GSP scale was found to be .80.

Phubbing (Sociotelism) Questionnaire in Early Childhood

The questionnaire used in the study included 10 Likert-type questions and 3 open-ended questions. Parents were asked to rate the Likert-type questions (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree) according to their own views. Although more than one question is used in studies using Likert-type questions, the researcher does not aim to make a general inference by using the average values of these questions. The questions are handled one by one, independently of each other (Turan, Şimşek & Aslan, 2015). The open-ended questions in the questionnaire offer parents the opportunity to write their personal opinions about Likert-type questions. In the study, firstly, the draft form of the Phubbing (Sociotelism) Questionnaire in Early Childhood was prepared and submitted to three experts from the field of preschool education for content validity. A pre-application of the questionnaire was conducted with five parents to test the comprehensibility of the questions and their suitability for the purpose. The questionnaire questions were finalised in line with the feedback received from the expert opinions and the pre-application. Then, the questionnaire was randomly delivered to parents with preschool children via Google Form and filled out online.

Data Analysis

SPSS 22, a package statistical programme developed for the social sciences, was used to analyse the data. Basic statistical operations such as frequency and percentage were performed with the data collected from the Personal Information Form. The data obtained from the generic scale of phubbing by parents were analysed according to homogeneity and normality assumptions. Since the data were homogeneous and normally distributed, parametric analyses were performed. Descriptive statistical values such as mean and standard deviation for parents' generic phubbing levels were presented. In addition, an ANOVA was conducted to determine whether the generic phubbing levels of the parents showed significant differences according to their age, education level, and number of children. The significance level of the data was analysed at the $p < .05$ level. In the analysis of the data obtained from the early childhood phubbing (sociotelism) questionnaire prepared by the researchers, a weighted mean was calculated for Likert-type questions, and content analysis was performed for open-ended questions.

FINDINGS/ RESULTS/ DISCUSSION

In this section, the data obtained from the research was analysed, and the findings related to the research questions were presented.

Table 3. *Parents' total scores from the generic scale of phubbing*

<i>Sub Dimension</i>	<i>n</i>	\bar{X}	Median	Ss	Min.	Max
<i>Nomophobia</i>	183	15.12	14.00	6.84	4.00	28.00
<i>Personal Conflict</i>	183	7.08	6.00	4.33	4.00	28.00
<i>Self Isolation</i>	183	7.43	6.00	4.03	4.00	28.00
<i>Problem Awareness</i>	183	7.98	6.00	4.60	3.00	21.00

When Table 3 is analysed, it can be stated that the lowest and highest scores obtained by the parents from the nomophobia, personal conflict, and self-isolation sub-dimensions of the generic scale of phubbing

are 4 and 28 points, respectively, and the lowest and highest scores obtained from the problem awareness sub-dimension are 3 and 21 points, respectively. When the average scores obtained from the test were analysed, it was seen that the average obtained from the nomophobia sub-dimension (15.12) was relatively higher than the other sub-dimensions (personal conflict, self-isolation, and problem awareness).

In addition to the scale and questionnaire form, the opinions of 183 parents were obtained through a semi-structured form prepared to examine the views of the parents in depth. The data obtained were analysed by content analysis. The opinions obtained from the parents were supported and interpreted with quotations. Parents' views on their children's phone use were modelled as shown in the figure below.

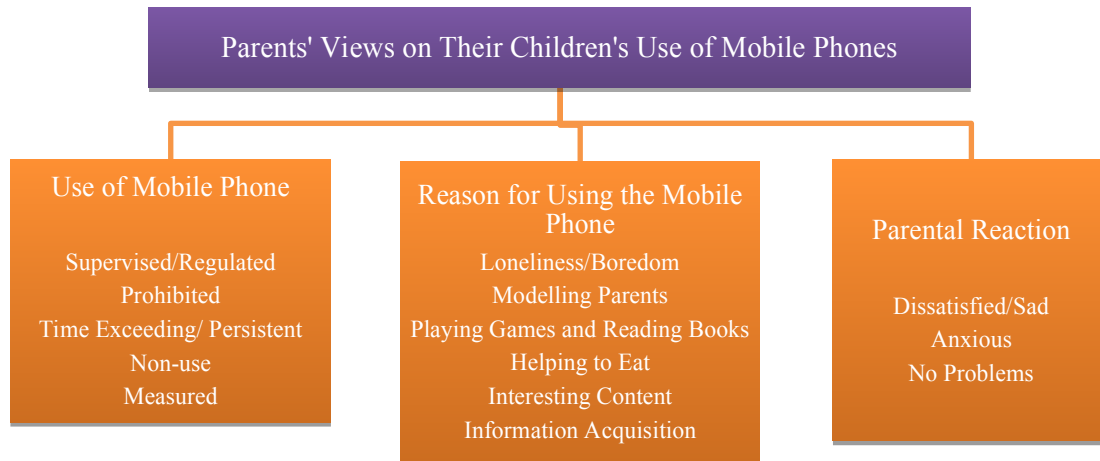


Figure 1. Modelling of parents' views on their children's mobile phone usage

In Figure 1, it can be stated that the opinions of the parents are divided into three themes and fourteen categories. The frequency values for the themes and categories that emerged as a result of the content analysis are shown in the table below.

Table 4. Parents' views on their children's mobile phone usage

Themes	Categories	f
Use of Mobile Phone	Supervised / Regulated	38
	Prohibited	31
	Exceeding Time / Persistent	29
	Non-use	21
	Measured	15
Reason for Using Mobile Phone	Loneliness / Boredom	12
	Modelling Parents	8
	Playing Games and Reading Books	7
	Helping Eating	5
	Attractiveness of Content	5
	Information Request	2
Parental Reaction	Dissatisfied / Upset	13
	Concerned	11
	No Problems	5

When the findings in Table 4 are analysed, the opinions of the parents about their children's mobile phone use are grouped under three themes: use of mobile phones, reason for phone use, and parental reaction. The opinions obtained from the parents were categorised under fourteen headings related to these themes.

Some of the opinions expressed by the parents on the theme of “use of mobile phone” are as follows:

P151: We adjusted the content on the phone according to his age. We disabled applications that are difficult to control, such as Google, YouTube, Play Store. Therefore, he only plays the educational games we have determined. We have no time limitations.

The phone is not indispensable for our child.

P164: I don't want him to use the phone too much. I gave it to him for a while. I realised that when he uses it for a long time, he cannot control his emotions easily. Both content and duration should be controlled and limited.

P51: We have not given any phone calls for a few months; we are in a very good situation.

P101: There are very negative aspects; he wants to watch it all the time; he sees the phone as a playmate; whereas he is happier when he plays with his friends, but he thinks he is happier when he plays with the phone.

P142: I find it appropriate to use mobile phones and tablets to the extent required by the age.

P162: I get very nervous that he won't be able to quit if he starts, so I never give him the phone.

In line with the views of the parents, it was observed that they generally assumed a restrictive, limiting, and prohibitive role in their children's use of mobile phones. It can be stated that children, on the other hand, exhibit an attitude that opposes the restrictive attitude of the parents and seeks opportunities to access the prohibited or restricted phone. According to parents' views, some children do not go to extremes with using mobile phones. There are also children who do not find the mobile phone interesting and do not use it at all.

When the related literature is examined, it is seen that most parents impose restrictions on their children's use of technological devices in terms of time and content (Aral & Doğan Keskin, 2018; Bentley, Turner & Jago, 2016; Çelik, 2021). As a result of overly permissive and permissive attitudes in which parents do not provide sufficient control over their children's use of technology; tablet devices and mobile phones, which are important entertainment tools for children, can easily be used for purposes other than their intended purpose (Çakır, 2013). The risks of using mobile phones and tablets without appropriate time and content and family guidance have been similarly emphasised in different studies (Ateş & Durmuşoğlu-Saltalı, 2019; Cordes & Miller, 2000). The time children spend with smartphones is quite high today. Children who are introduced to smartphones in infancy can turn it into an addiction with the misuse of technology. Spending a long time in front of the screen may cause them to tend not to do even their daily responsibilities without smartphones (Işıkoğlu-Erdoğan, 2019; Urfa, 2020).

Some of the opinions of the parents in the 'reason for using mobile phones' theme are given below.

P91: I have no brother, no father; what should I do, mum?

P135: When we are out or when we are visiting, sometimes I just give it to him to eat because he eats more easily at home. When I say it is over, he leaves it immediately.

P117: He was very addicted at the age of 3, but I think it is completely related to a lack of interest. Children are generally more inclined to play at this age; however, when they cannot find the attention and playmates they want, they turn the phone into a tool to relieve boredom. It is a very disturbing situation.

According to parents, the reasons why their children turn to mobile phones vary. Loneliness of children due to a lack of friends or siblings is one of the most frequently mentioned reasons by parents. The fact that parents have limited time to take care of their children or that they are role models for excessive mobile phone use as parents and that the content is interesting is another reason for children to use the mobile phone. Some of the parents stated that they used their mobile phones as a tool to feed their children. In addition, it was stated that children use their mobile phones to meet their needs for playing games, reading books, and to obtain information.

Kabali et al. (2015) and Kılıç et al. (2019) stated that the most common reason for parents to allow their children to use mobile devices is to keep their children busy while they are doing daily chores or housework. When families have limited options, it is easier for them to abandon their children to the screen (Işıkoğlu-Erdoğan, 2019). Parents first use TV and then tools such as computers and smartphones to keep their children busy. This situation may cause children to see it as a fun tool with which they communicate over time; however, the time spent on the screen can lead to a breakdown in family communication (Güngör, 2015). As in many aspects of life, children accept their parents as role models in terms of phone use. In this case, Ateş and Durmuşoğlu-Saltalı (2019) stated that in terms of preventing children from using mobile phones for increasing periods of time, it may be useful for parents to reduce the time of use of these devices and to review their attitudes towards these technological devices in order to eliminate unwanted consequences.

From past to present, the game and the game tools used in the game, i.e., toys, also change in parallel with technological developments. In this context, in the current century, game tools and playgrounds are also affected by change and take their place in children's lives (İnan & Derwent, 2016). Digital games can have a positive effect on children's developmental areas and academic development. Being able to follow the commands given in digital games shows that digital games support hand-eye coordination and motor skills (Lin & Hou, 2015). In addition, it is stated that digital games support children's problem-solving, reasoning, analysing and decision-making skills (Kim & Smith, 2015), as well as strategy and prediction competencies (Toran, Ulusoy, Aydın, Deveci & Akbulut, 2016). One of the most important criticisms of digital games is that they are perceived only as a means of entertainment and spending time; however, research shows that this criticism has lost its validity, and digital games that attract people are now accepted as primary learning tools (Björk-Willén & Aronsson, 2014; Çetin, 2013). For this reason, children can also use mobile phones as a means of obtaining information.

Some of the views of the parents on the theme of 'parental reaction' are quoted below.

P66: It is an issue that needs to be fought as a society. Since he is young, he can be convinced somehow for now, but I have serious concerns for the future.

P43: I cannot keep track of the content he watches, and I am afraid that he may watch harmful things.

P28: My child does not have a phone, but he has a tablet. We set a daily limit of 1 hour, but this limit was exceeded, especially during the summer holidays. He has no siblings or peers in the close neighbourhood. As soon as the activities we do together are over, or as soon as he comes home, he grabs his tablet. He finishes his daily homework very quickly and switches to the tablet, thinking that he has fulfilled his responsibility. I am very disturbed by this situation.

According to the research data, it can be stated that parents are anxious and unhappy about the fact that their children may be negatively affected by the harmful content of the mobile phone. It can be said that the reason for the concern of parents about their children being harmed is that they do not have sufficient knowledge and equipment on this subject. Parents of children aged 6 and above should set consistent limits on the time spent using media and media types and ensure that they do not replace adequate sleep, physical activity, or other healthy behaviours. Otherwise, the emergence of problems such as addiction in children can be observed. In the study conducted by Toran et al. (2016), a mother's response: "... He sometimes forgets to eat, sometimes even forgets to go to the toilet..." reveals the seriousness of the situation. In order to protect children from the negative effects of the content they watch, parents, as well as content producers and educators have great responsibilities. Cognitive functions such as impulse control, self-regulation, mental flexibility, and the ability to understand the thoughts and feelings of others are negatively affected in children who are alone in front of the screen. Children's imagination, language development and information processing skills may also lag behind developmentally (Mustafaoğlu, Zirek, Yasacı & Özdinçler, 2018).

In addition to this situation, Saltuk and Erciyes (2020) stated that mothers felt uneasy about their children's use of smartphones, but most of the time they unconditionally allowed their children to use smartphones unconditionally and for long periods of time, especially when guests came, when they went to visit or on a long journey, or when they saw other children or adults spending time with their phones or tablets when their children were grumpy. In this context, it is important to raise awareness and educate both children and families about the digital world in general. In addition to the information to be given to children within the family, it is important to provide lessons, trainings, and seminars in schools and to make arrangements to ensure that children use the digital world correctly and effectively from an early age and to be trained to protect themselves from risks before their families (Akbaş & Dursun, 2020).

The opinions of the parents regarding their suggestions for their children to spend less time on the mobile phone were modelled as follows:

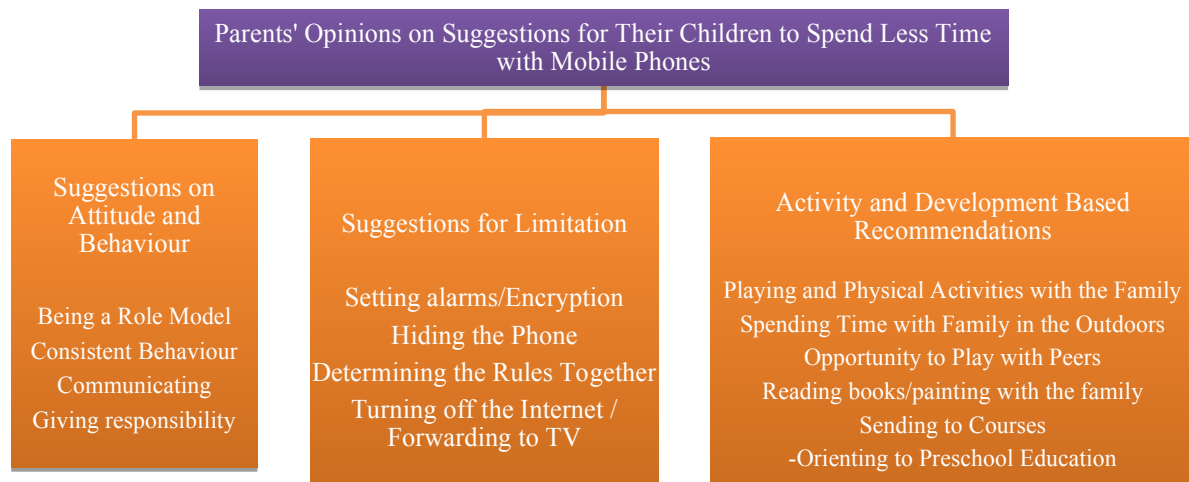


Figure 2. Modelling of parents' views on suggestions for their children to spend less time on the mobile phone

In Figure 2, it can be stated that parents' opinions on their suggestions about their children spending less time on the mobile phone are divided into three themes and sixteen categories. The frequency values related to the themes and categories that emerged as a result of the analysis are shown in the table below:

Table 5. Parents' opinions on suggestions for their children to spend less time on the mobile phone

Themes	Categories	f
Suggestions on Attitudes and Behaviours	Being a Role Model	26
	Consistent Behaviour	14
	Making Contact	13
	Giving responsibility	7
Limitation Suggestions for	Set Alarm / Set Password	9
	Keeping the Phone	4
	Setting the Rules Together	4
	Switching off the Internet / Forwarding to TV	4
Activity and Development Based Recommendations	Family Play and Physical Activities	75
	Spending Time with the Family Outdoors	50
	Opportunity to Play with Peers	30
	Reading books/painting with the family	18
	Sending to Courses	5
	Orienting to Preschool Education	4

When the findings in Table 5 are examined, the opinions of the parents regarding their suggestions for their children to spend less time on the mobile phone are grouped under three themes: suggestions regarding attitudes and behaviours, suggestions for limitations, and suggestions based on activity and development. The opinions obtained from the parents were categorised under sixteen headings related to these themes.

Some of the opinions expressed by the parents in the theme of "suggestions regarding attitudes and behaviours" are as follows:

P29: In order not to set a bad example for my son, I try not to be busy with the phone when I am with him.

P73: I removed attention-grabbing applications (such as YouTube, Instagram, and games) from my phone and had a conversation about the fact that the phone is a communication tool and should be used for this purpose.

In the theme of suggestions for attitudes and behaviours, it was observed that parents showed a persuasive attitude by talking to their children to make them spend less time on the mobile phone. In addition, parents stated that they tried to be role models by implementing what they wanted their children to do first themselves and that they gave various responsibilities to their children at home.

Since children take their parents as role models, the time the parent spends in front of the screen affects the time the child spends in front of the screen (Kırılıoğlu, Kayaalp & Arslan, 2023). Children imitate and watch them. For this reason, parents need to educate themselves both in terms of behaviour and the use of control (Gezgin, 2023).

Some of the opinions of the parents under the theme of "suggestions for limitation" are quoted below:

P4: I set an alarm, and I am determined when it is over.

P123: I set a password and a time limit.

P57: He watches cartoons on TV for a limited time on a single channel.

P5: I leave the phone where he/she cannot see it.

P137: I switch off the internet and put the phone away.

P70: Parents should set a limited time. Let them talk to their children and make decisions together.

It is seen that parents try to manage the time by setting alarms to limit their children's mobile phone use, to put passwords on their phones, to keep their internet off, to hide their phones where children cannot see them, and to allow them to watch a single channel on TV for a certain period of time in order to divert their attention.

In a study conducted by Şahin and Öztürk (2018), it was concluded in interviews with parents with children between the ages of 2-16 that parents tried to set rules for their children regarding the use of smart devices. At this point in setting rules, the most frequently expressed issue was determined as imposing time restrictions. In a study conducted in Japan, it was stated that children of families who did not set rules for the use of technological devices interacted more with technological devices (Arumugam, Said & Farid, 2021). As a result of the study conducted by Topbaş (2022), it was determined that most of the parents set at least one rule for their children about the use of technological devices and that about half of the parents always or frequently apply these rules. The results obtained from these studies coincide with the results obtained in this study. In order to set effective rules, parents should discuss these rules with their children and make joint decisions with them (Topbaş, 2022). Parents should try to provide justification for limitations and consequences to help their children understand their determination to protect them (Goh, Bay & Chen, 2015).

Some of the opinions of the parents about their children spending less time on the mobile phone under the theme of "activity and development-based suggestions" are quoted below.

P10: We spend time with garden flowers (care, watering, etc.). We do activities such as cycling, shopping trips, etc.

P7: We let him play with his peers and go out on the street.

P133: There are materials at home where they can produce many activities. I do not hesitate to spend money on materials where they can explore their creativity. I don't think that the materials will be wasted. Thus, he does not feel the lack of the phone.

P29: I take him to various summer courses. My aim here is not only to support his healthy development, but also to help him get a hobby and stay away from the tablet or phone.

In the activity and development-based suggestions theme, it can be stated that parents mostly suggested spending time outdoors with the family in order for children to spend less time on the phone. In addition, suggestions such as playing games with peers where children can find opportunities for socialisation, taking part in reading and art activities with the family, playing games with the family and engaging in fun physical activities outdoors, and attending courses and schools were presented by parents as a solution to reduce the time children spend on the phone.

The views of the parents on which issue they need the most support regarding their children's mobile phone use were modelled as follows:

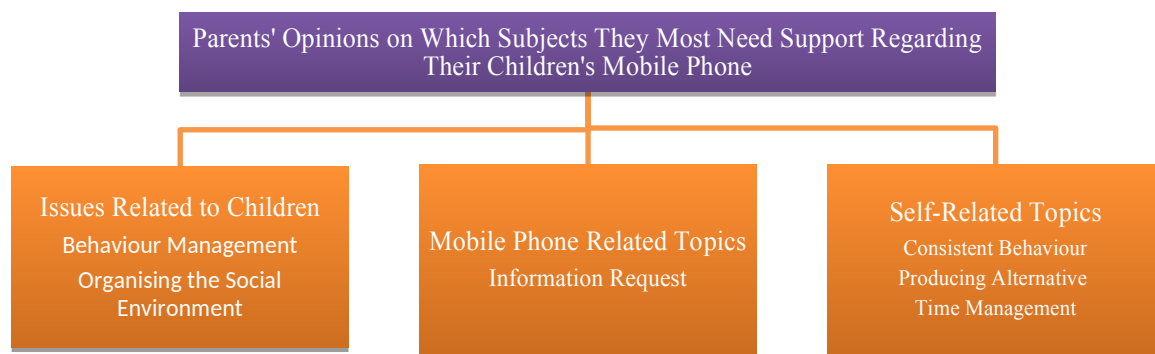


Figure 3. Modelling of parents' opinions on which subjects they most need support regarding their children's mobile phone use

In Figure 3, it can be stated that the opinions of the parents on which issue they need the most support regarding their children's use of mobile phones are divided into three themes and six categories. The frequency values for the themes and categories that emerged as a result of the analysis are shown in the table below.

Table 6. Parents' opinions on which subject they mostly need support regarding their children's mobile phone use

Themes	Categories	f
Issues Related to Children	Behaviour Management	22
	Organising the Social Environment	7
Telephone Related Topics	Information Request	23
Self-Related Topics	Consistent Behaviour	12
	Producing Alternative Activities	6
	Time Management	4

When the data in Table 6 were analysed, the opinions of the parents on which issues they needed the most support regarding their children's phone use were analysed under three themes: issues related to their children, their phones and themselves. The opinions obtained from the parents were divided into six categories. Some of the views expressed by parents on the theme of "issues related to their children" are as follows:

P96: When he wants to play with the phone, although I always direct him to games in which he shows interest and curiosity, sometimes this does not work; he can insist too much and cry.

P102: The most difficult thing for me is his stubbornness and extreme spoiltness, thinking that he can get everything by crying and finally making him do it.

P180: Actually, I know the drawbacks of monitoring, but we have problems at the point of

implementation, especially if we don't give it to him; he somehow takes it from people like grandparents or aunts and uncles, so we had a lot of trouble not giving it to him. If we are in a crowded place or if I have a job to do, he insists on us a lot at such times; he cries and shouts when I don't give it to him; he never lets me go, and there were times when I couldn't stand it and gave it to him.

P132: The thing I have the most difficulty with is that there are children in the neighbourhood who play on the phone so much that I cannot explain to my own child that playing on the phone is very harmful... The child questions other children because their parents allow them to do so...

Problem behaviours such as children being stubborn with their parents about spending time on the phone and trying to fulfil their requests by crying were among the most difficult situations that parents had the most difficulty with regarding children's phone use. Therefore, it can be stated that parents need support in behaviour management. Cengiz Saltuk and Erciyes (2020) stated that although parents think that they should restrict their children's use of technological tools, they cannot resist their children's requests and allow them to use these tools. In addition, it was stated that parents had difficulties limiting their children's use of mobile phones due to the attempts of other individuals around them to violate this limit and seeing their children's peers interested in mobile phones. Therefore, parents need support in organising the social environment.

The opinions of the parents on the theme of "mobile phone-related issues" are quoted and shared below:

P46: I think it is impossible to raise a child without a phone or tablet at this age. I think that the content should be given close attention. I think that information about the content should be increased in games. Even things that seem harmless can be very harmful to their infrastructure.

P156: If we could restrict everything that would harm them when they have the phone in their hands with an application possibility, or if the phones could be turned to this feature only when they take it in their hands with a nice programme...

P164: It bothers me that I cannot control what you watch all the time. I want more educational applications. I want there to be no in-game adverts.

Parents expressed that they wanted to have more information on phone-related issues such as phone use, applications on the phone, and the content of these applications. Şahin and Öztürk (2018) emphasise that the first point that families should be aware of is the applications installed on smart devices and the permissions given for their use. Studies show that children create artistic and scientific products using technological devices such as computers, tablets, and smartphones when given the opportunity and guidance. When the right guidance is not provided, it is known that children are exposed to excessive and harmful applications that do not allow or negatively affect their development (Yücelyiğit & Aral, 2020).

Some of the opinions expressed by the parents under the theme of "issues related to themselves" about the need for support regarding their children's use of mobile phones are quoted below:

P9: Having limited time to spend time with children while working...

P59: I set limits, but I cannot enforce them.

P111: I think I find it difficult to find another activity to replace the phone.

When the issues that parents need support regarding their children's use of mobile phones are analysed, it can be stated that the issues related to parents themselves include acting consistently, producing alternative activities, and time management. Yıldız, Öztora, and Dağdeviren (2022) concluded in their study that parents behave inconsistently in terms of restriction, and this may make it difficult for children to establish a relationship with these devices within healthy limits.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the results of the study, the levels of sociotelism of parents who have children in early childhood do not differ significantly according to the age of the parents and the number of children they have. On the other hand, parents' levels of sociotelism differed significantly in favour of parents with postgraduate education levels in the problem awareness sub-dimension and total score according to the education level variable. In line with the qualitative data obtained in the study, parents' views on their children's use of the mobile phone, parents' suggestions for their children to spend less time on the telephone, and parents' views on which issue they need the most support regarding their children's use of the telephone were discussed. In line with the opinions of the parents, it was observed that their children's phone use was controlled/ruled, that they mostly used the phones for loneliness or boredom, and that the parents were not satisfied with this situation and were upset. The parents who participated in the study stated that being a role model, setting an alarm, putting a password on the phone, playing games with their children, and engaging in physical activities would be useful for their children to spend less time on the phone. In addition to all these, it was found that parents most needed support in managing their children's behaviours, obtaining information about the phone, and being consistent with the decisions they made regarding their children's phone use.

The suggestions presented in line with these results are as follows:

- Since it is seen that parents need more information on the use of mobile phones, parents can be brought together with experts in pre-school education institutions on issues such as mobile phones, technology, etc. and training can be provided.
- Since it is seen that parents need support in managing their children's behaviour and behaving consistently, seminars on parental mediation can be organised for parents by experts in the field.
- Since parents are important role models for children, seminars on digital literacy can be organised for parents.
- The level of sociotelism of parents can be analysed in terms of different variables, such as gender and education level.

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