Fenerbahçe Üniversitesi
Sağlık Bilimleri Dergisi
Cilt 5, Sayı Ek Sayı, sayfa 52-60, 2025

Fenerbahce University
Journal of Health Sciences
Volume 5, Supplement, page 52-60, 2025

FBU-JOHS

The Effect of Dyadic Adjustment on Digital Parenting Awareness

Çift Uyumunun Dijital Ebeveynlik Farkındalığına Etkisi

This study was presented as an oral paper at the 8th International and 12th National Psychiatric Nursing Congress (April 16–19, 2025, Diyarbakır).

Fadime Bayrı Bingöl[1], Enise İbrahimoğlu[1], Bilge Doğan[1], Eda Mutlu[1], Sultan Şener[1], Zehra Mercan[1]

[1]Marmara University, faculty of Health Sciences, Başıbüyük Campus, Istanbul, Türkiye

Abstract

In addition to making life easier, technology also brings risks such as exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying and addiction that worry parents. In this context, this study aims to investigate the increase in digital screen time of primary school children and their parents' digital parenting awareness and couple adjustment. Data were collected through an online questionnaire, information form, Revised form Dyadic Adjustment Scale and Digital Parenting Awareness Scale. Data were analysed using SPSS. In this study, 249 mothers with children attending primary school participated. The mean age of the women included in the study was 36.60±6.62 and the mean age of their children was 7.99±1.61(5-10). The mean age of the mothers' children's first contact with technological devices was found to be 4.42±1.94(1-10). It was determined that 60.5% of the women were homemakers and 90.7% did not receive any training on digital parenting. It was determined that the more time the mothers spent on the screen, the more time the child spent on the screen (p=0.004, r=0.18). It was determined that dyadic adjustment had no effect on mothers' digital parenting awareness. Parents should minimise the use of smartphones or tablets as much as possible when they are with their children.

Key Words: Awareness, dyadic adjustment, parents, screen addiction

Özet

Teknolojinin yaşamı kolaylaştırmanın yansıra, zararlı içeriklere maruz kalma, siber zorbalık ve bağımlılık gibi ebeveynleri endişelendiren riskleri de beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu kapsamda bu çalışma ilkokul çocuklarının dijital ekran süresinin artması ile ebeveynlerinin dijital ebeveynlik farkındalığının ve çift uyumunun araştırılması amaçlanmıştır. Veriler çevrimiçi anket aracılığıyla, bilgi formu, Yenilenmiş Çift Uyum Ölçeği ve Dijital Ebeveynlik Farkındalık Ölçeği ile toplanmıştır. Veriler SPSS programında değerlendirilmiştir. İlkokula giden çocuğu olan 249 anne çalışmaya katılmıştır. Araştırma kapsamına alınan kadınların yaş ortalaması. 36.60±6.62, ilkokula giden çocuklarının yaş ortalaması 7,99±1,61 (5-10) ve çocuğun teknolojik aletle ilk tanışma yaş ortalamasının 4,42±1,94 (1-10) olduğu saptandı. Kadınların %60,5 inin ev hanımı olduğu, %90,7 dijital ebeveynliğe yönelik bir eğitim almadığı belirlenmiştir. Annelerin ekranda geçirdiği süre arttıkça çocuğun da ekran başında geçirdiği sürenin arttığı belirlendi (p=0,004, r=0,18). Çift uyumunun, annelerin dijital ebeveynlik farkındalığına etkisi olmadığı belirlendi. Ebeveynler, çocukları ile birlikteyken mümkün olduğunca akıllı telefon kullanımını en aza indirmelidirler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Farkındalık, Çift uyumu, ebeveynler, ekran bağımlılığı

Atıf için (how to cite): Bayrı Bingöl, F., İbrahimoğlu, E., Doğan, B., Mutlu, E., Şener, S., Mercan, Z., (2025). The Effect of Dyadic Adjustment on Digital Parenting Awareness. Fenerbahce University, Journal of Health Sciences, 5 (Supplement), 52-60.

* *Corresponding author: fadimebayri@gmail.com*

1.Introduction

When couples become parents, both partners need to develop their parenting skills, adapt to a new lifestyle, meet their children's needs, and reassess how they share their roles, functions, responsibilities, and tasks in raising their children (Doss & Rhoades, 2017). Children of parents who demonstrate affectionate and supportive attitudes experience positive interactions and develop harmonious social behaviour. The communication and interaction between parents are also closely related to their children's social-emotional harmony. This is because the relationship between spouses also influences their attitudes towards their children (Yavuzer, 2004).

Parents have turned to digital environments more for purposes such as communication, shopping, and continuing their work from home; children and young people, meanwhile, have turned to digital environments more for education, communication, and entertainment. In this era where technology has entered daily life, every area that comes into contact with digital products is subject to change and transformation. Particularly for parents who are not adequately equipped to meet the demands of the digital age, the number of unknown and unpredictable areas in their children's lives is increasing daily. Consequently, digital risks are becoming increasingly difficult to detect. While technology makes life easier, it also brings with it risks that concern parents, such as exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying and addiction. Children can work, play, learn and communicate in the digital world. On the other hand, it has been reported that uncontrolled and prolonged use of computers and the internet can cause physical, social, psychological and even life-threatening harm to children. These harms include decreased physical activity, obesity, eye problems, poor posture and skeletal structure, contact with malicious individuals, paedophilia, harassment, cyberbullying, psychological disorders, exposure to illegal and violent content, and access to harmful content (Hadlington et al., 2019; Keleşoğlu & Adam, 2020).

Parents are striving to keep up with the times and provide these opportunities for their children, yet they are also reported to be concerned about their children's dependence on digital technology and how to protect them from digital risks (Inan Kaya et al., 2018). Smartphones are the most commonly used digital devices. As of 2022, there are 6.92 billion smartphone users worldwide. This figure is equivalent to approximately 84.41% of the global population. In Turkey, the percentage of households with a smartphone is 99.2%, while the percentage of households with internet access is 94.1% (Tuik, 2022). In this context, as is the case worldwide, the rate of smartphone usage and access to internet applications via smartphones is quite high in Türkiye. Smartphones have become an integral part of our lives with each passing day and have become a social accessory deemed necessary for individuals. Smartphones offer users the convenience of communicating, shopping, listening to music, taking photographs, accessing social networks or health applications, and accessing unlimited information. Although parents may have some concerns about their children spending time with digital devices, it is now almost inevitable that children will use digital media for purposes such as entertainment, socialising, accessing information, and education (Ren et al., 2023).

In this context, a ‘digital parent’ is someone who does not ignore the requirements of today's digital world, is proficient in the basic use of digital tools, is aware of the opportunities and risks in the

* Corresponding author: fadimebayri@gmail.com

boundless digital environment, can protect their child from these risks, serves as a role model for their child in the proper use of digital tools, instils in their child the importance of respecting individual rights in the virtual environment just as they would in real life, and is open to technological developments (Yurdakul et al., 2023). Just as under normal circumstances a parent needs to know where their child is and with whom when they are not together, leaving children unchecked in front of digital devices that expose them to countless types of content, or in the boundless environment that is the internet, leaves them vulnerable to numerous risks. Through certain games that allow chatting or social media sites they use, children may communicate with strangers without their parents' knowledge, leading to the development of inappropriate friendships or falling victim to malicious users who approach them with friendly intentions. This can result in serious and irreparable harm, including deception, fraud, leakage of private information related to their families, exploitation, harassment, abduction, and exposure to pedophilia (Yay, 2019).

Healthy families share certain common characteristics, such as being successful, happy, and strong, and as a natural consequence, living balanced and orderly lives. They are aware of how to address issues and what kind of solutions to generate (Atan & Buluş, 2018). For families, the smallest building block of society, to continue to exist peacefully and happily and to raise healthy generations, parents must be knowledgeable and equipped in the field of digital media, one of the most important social phenomena of today (Karaboğa, 2019). At this point, considering the risks and opportunities, regulating the use of technological devices according to the child's age and needs is among the important responsibilities of today's parents.

2. Method

This study is an internet-based descriptive relationship-seeking type of research.

2.1. Aim of the Research

This study aims to investigate the effect of dual adjustment on digital parenting awareness in the shadow of the pandemic.

2.2. Research Questions

Is there a relationship between dyadic harmony and digital parenting awareness?

How does the amount of time mothers spend in front of screens affect the amount of time children spend in front of screens?

2.3. Study Population

The study was conducted using a web-based online survey via WhatsApp. The study population consisted of mothers of children attending a state primary school in Istanbul. The link to the survey, prepared using the Google Forms platform, was shared in WhatsApp groups consisting of mothers with children attending primary school. No sample selection was made for the study; the data of a total of 249 mothers who met the inclusion criteria during the study period were included in the statistical analysis. Mothers who were willing to participate in the study, had primary school-aged children, were literate, lived in Türkiye during the pandemic, and lived with their spouses were invited to participate. If

* Corresponding author: fadimebayri@gmail.com

mothers had more than one child attending primary school, they were asked to answer questions related to their youngest child.

2.4. Data Collection

The research was conducted using a self-administered questionnaire prepared in electronic format. The data collection tools were prepared by the researchers and uploaded to the web. Participants were invited to take part in the research by sharing the questionnaire in WhatsApp groups where mothers were members. The online survey's start page contained information about the research and a consent form for participation. Participants' responses were transferred to data analysis software.

The data for this study were collected using the Personal Information Form, the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Digital Parenting Awareness Scale.

2.4.1. Personal Information Form

The Personal Information Form was created by the researcher. The form included questions such as age, educational status, income status, marital status, number of children, length of time using a smartphone, daily smartphone usage time, and the child's daily screen time.

2.4.2. Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS)

Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale is a revised version of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale developed by Spanier (1976) and re-edited by Busby et al. (1995). Bayraktaroğlu and Çakıcı (2017) adapted the scale to Turkish culture by calculating its psychometric values. The scale was developed to assess the ‘quality of relationships’ in marriages or similar couple relationships. Items 7, 8, 9, and 10 of the scale are reverse-scored. The maximum score that can be obtained from the scale is 70 points, with higher scores indicating a more satisfying relationship. In the validity and reliability study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was found to be .88, and in this study, it was found to be 73.

2.4.3. Digital Parental Awareness Scale (DPAS)

This scale was developed by Manap and Durmuş (2020). It is a Likert-type scale consisting of 16 items. Higher scores indicate a more satisfying relationship. The Digital Parenting Awareness Scale consists of 16 items. The scale has four subscales. These are Role Modelling, Digital Neglect, Efficient Use, and Protection from Risks. Scores on the subscales range from 4 to 20. High scores on the Protection from Risks and Efficient Use sub-scales indicate high digital parenting awareness, while high scores on the Role Modelling and Digital Neglect sub-scales indicate low digital parenting awareness.

2.5. Ethical Consideration

Permission was obtained via email from the authors who conducted the Turkish validity and reliability studies of the scales used in the research. Approval for the research was obtained from the Marmara University Faculty of Health Sciences Non-Interventional Clinical Studies Ethics Committee (2023/118). The consent form, which included information about the purpose of the study, data collection, and the confidentiality of email addresses, was presented on the first page of the online

data collection form. Participants who agreed to participate in the study were then directed to the other questions. Ethical guidelines were followed throughout the study.

2.6. Study Limitations

As the research was conducted online, the inability to generalise the findings is a significant limitation of the study. Another limitation is that the research data is based on the statements of the individuals who participated in the study.

2.7. Statistical Analysis

The data were analysed using the SPSS 28 software package. In the analysis of the data, in addition to counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations, an independent samples t-test was performed to compare the two groups, and a correlation analysis was conducted to compare the scale scores.

3. Results

The mean age of the mothers participating in our study was 36.60±6.62, the mean age at marriage was 23.30±3.89, and the mean duration of marriage was 13.29±6.37 years. It was determined that the majority of the parents included in this study were university graduates (Table 1).

Table 1. Participants' education status

		%	n
Mother's education status	4 years	10.1	25
	8 years	9.3	23
	High school	28.6	71
	University	46.8	116
	Postgraduate	5.2	13
Father's education status	4 years	7.6	19
	8 years	12.1	30
	High school	28.2	70
	University	43.1	107
	Postgraduate	8.9	22

When looking at how the participants met/married their spouse, 50.8% (n=126) met at school/work, and 33.5% (n=83) met through family/arranged marriage. All mothers participating in the study used smartphones, and the mean duration of smartphone use was 12.16±4.24 years. Other characteristics of the mothers included in the study are presented in Table 2.

* Corresponding author: fadimebayri@gmail.com

Table 2. Participants' demographic characteristics

		%	n
Mother's employment status	Housewife	60.5	150
	Works full-time	26.6	66
	Works part-time	8.5	21
	Works from home	4	17
Father's employment status	Full-time	91.1	226
	Unemployed	3.2	8
Financial situation	Income is less than expenditure	13.3	38
	Income equals expenditure	57.3	142
	Income is more than expenditure	27.4	68
Number of children	1 child	22.2	55
	2 children	53.2	132
	3 children	19.4	48
	4 or more children	5.2	13
Mothers' daily phone usage duration	1 hour	26.2	65
	2 hours	25.4	63
	3 hours	17.3	43
	4 hours	10.5	26
Mothers receiving training on digital parenting	Trained	9.3	23
	Untrained	90.7	225
		Mean ± SD, (Min-Max)	
Digital Parental Awareness Scale	Being a role model,	12.36±1.93 (4-17)	
	Digital negligence	11.85±2.15 (4-17)	
	Efficient usage	17.59±1.97 (4-18)	
	Protecting from risks	11.62±2.06 (4-16)	
Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale		51.05±7.51 (29-69)	

In this study, a correlation analysis between the total scores of the Digital Parenting Awareness Scale and the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale revealed no statistically significant relationship ($p>0.05$). It was determined that the mothers included in the study had children attending primary school with an

* *Corresponding author: fadimebayri@gmail.com*

mean age of 7.99±1.61 (5-10) and that the mean age at which the children were first introduced to technological devices was 4.42±1.94 (1-10). Other characteristics of the children are presented in Table 3. It was found that the personal characteristics of the mothers did not affect their digital parenting awareness scale scores (p>0.05). In the correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between the time mothers spent in front of screens and the time children spent in front of screens, it was determined that as the time mothers spent in front of screens increased, the time children spent in front of screens also increased (p=0.004, r=0.18).

Table 3. Comparison of children's characteristics with mothers' levels of digital parenting awareness

		%	n
Does the child have their own mobile phone?	Yes	12.1	30
	No	87.9	218
The technological device most commonly used by children	Telephone	50.8	126
	Tablet	41.1	102
	Computer	8.1	20
The amount of time the child spends in front of a screen each day	15 min	5.2	13
	30 min	8.5	21
	45 min	10.9	27
	1 hour	33.9	84
	2 hour	23.8	59
	3 hour	10.5	26
	4 hour	4.4	11
	5 hour	2.8	7

4. Discussion

It is the responsibility of parents to raise awareness about the safe and efficient use of digital devices, to be aware of the risks when using technology, and to guide their children. On the other hand, parents have been exposed to many challenging conditions for themselves and their children at home during the pandemic. The virus outbreak that emerged in Wuhan, China, in November 2019 has affected the whole world, impacting humanity in many ways. With the shift of education to the online environment, one of the foremost measures to control the pandemic, and the increase in time spent at home, children's screen exposure has also increased. Parents may have different approaches regarding how often and for what purposes digital tools, whose use has increased during the pandemic, should be used. This study found that one in four mothers spent 1 hour, one in four

* Corresponding author: fadimebayri@gmail.com

mothers spent 2 hours, and one in four mothers spent more than 3 hours in front of a screen. One in three children spent 1 hour and one in four children spent 2 hours in front of a screen. This study also found that as the time mothers spent in front of a screen increased, so did the time children spent in front of a screen. If young children regularly use smartphones and tablets, parents should plan their children's use of smart devices and ensure safe usage. Indeed, this study's findings are also consistent with Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Bandura's theory is based on the premise that learning is a process that occurs within a social context through interaction, observation, and imitation. Bandura proposed that individuals can learn many things by observing the behaviour of others. According to Social Learning Theory, children model their parents (Tatlıoğlu, 2021).

In preventing problematic use, parental guidance is important because it influences children's attitudes and behaviours. Foremost among these effects is the increase in time spent on digital devices, which is thought to lead to gaming addiction over time.

Other studies on this subject, according to the results of a study conducted by Yıldırım (2021), report that mothers who use media tools for less than 3 hours have higher levels of conscious awareness than mothers who use them for 3 hours or more. It is suggested that the quality of the couple's relationship, marital satisfaction, and overall marital excellence fall under the broader umbrella term of marital adjustment. Marital adjustment is accepted to represent a dynamic structure that can assess the overall quality of a marital bond. This study determined that there was no relationship between digital parenting awareness and couple adjustment.

5. Conclusion

This study found that digital parenting awareness is not influenced by various individual characteristics such as age, educational status, and socio-economic level, and that there is no relationship between digital parenting awareness and couple harmony. This study also found that as the amount of time mothers spend in front of screens increases, so does the amount of time their children spend in front of screens. Based on the results of this study, it can be recommended that parents take on roles and responsibilities regarding the healthy use of information technology tools so that children can become conscious technology users in the future. Parents can minimise the time they spend on their smartphones when they are with their children. New studies examining the relationships between digital parenting awareness, parental internet addiction, and child internet addiction can be planned. The relationships between variables such as children's healthy development characteristics or problematic internet use can be examined.

Authors Contributions

Topic selection: FBB, Eİ, BD, EM, SŞ, ZM; Design: FBB, Eİ, BD, EM, SŞ, ZM; Planning: FBB, Eİ, BD, EM, SŞ, ZM; Data collection: Eİ, BD, EM, SŞ, ZM; Data analysis: FBB; Preparation of the article: FBB, Eİ, BD, EM, SŞ, ZM; Critical revision: FBB

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest between the authors.

* Corresponding author: fadimebayri@gmail.com

References

Atan, A., & Buluş, M. (2018). Aile iletişim becerileri psikoeğitim programının 5-6 yaş çocukların sosyal duygusal uyumuna etkisi. *Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi,* 44, 213–230. https://doi.org/10.9779/pauefd.442559

Bayraktaroglu, H. T., & Çakıcı, E. (2017). Psychometric properties of revised form of the dyadic adjustment scale in a sample from North Cyprus. *International Journal of Educational Sciences,* 19, 113–119. https://doi.org/10.1080/09751122.2017.1301282

Doss, B. D., & Rhoades, G. K. (2017). The transition to parenthood: Impact on couples' romantic relationships. *Current Opinion in Psychology,* 13, 25–28. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2016.05.007

Hadlington, L., White, H., & Curtis, S. (2019). "I cannot live without my [tablet]": Children's experiences of using tablet technology within the home. *Computers in Human Behavior,* 94, 19–24. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.12.018

İnan Kaya, G., Mutlu Bayraktar, D., & Yılmaz, O. (2018). Digital parenting: Perceptions on digital risks. *Kalem Eğitim ve İnsan Bilimleri Dergisi*, 8(1), 131–157. https://doi.org/10.23892/kalem.377001

Karaboğa, M. T. (2019). Dijital medya okuryazarlığında anne ve baba eğitimi. *OPUS Uluslararası Toplum Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 14(20), 2040–2073. https://doi.org/10.26466/opus.601942

Keleşoğlu, F., & Adam, F. (2020). Covid-19 sürecinde dijital ebeveynlik ile anne baba stresi arasında yordayıcı ilişkiler. *Online Journal of Technology Addiction and Cyberbullying,* 7(2), 70-102. https://doi.org/10.18681/otac.v7i2.475

Manap, A., & Durmuş, E. (2020). Dijital ebeveynlik farkındalık ölçeğinin geliştirilmesi. *İnönü Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi,* 21(2), 978–993. https://doi.org/10.17679/inuefd.711101

Ren, S., Liu, T., Zhao, X., Yang, H., & Elhai, J. D. (2023). Is nomophobia problematic or functional? A perspective from bifactor structure. International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction, 1–20. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-023-01030-0

Tatlıoğlu, S. S. (2021). Öğrenmeye sosyal-bilişsel bir bakış: Albert Bandura. *Sosyoloji Notları*, 5(1),15–30.

Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK). (2022). Hanehalkı bilişim teknolojileri (BT) kullanım araştırması 2022. https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Hanehalki-Bilisim-Teknolojileri-(BT)-Kullanim-Arastirmasi-2022 45587

Yavuzer, H. (2004). *Ana-baba okulu* (11. baskı). Remzi Kitabevi.

Yay, M. (2019). *Dijital ebeveynlik* (2. baskı). Yeşilay Yayınları.

Yurdakul, I. K., Dönmez, O., Yaman, F., & Odabaşı, H. F. (2013). Dijital ebeveynlik ve değişen roller. *Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences*, 12(4), 883–896.

Yıldırım, B. (2021). Okul öncesi çocukların medya araçları kullanımlarında annelerin medya aracılık rolleri ve bilinçli farkındalıklarının incelenmesi (Yüksek lisans tezi, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf Üniversitesi, Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü).

** Corresponding author: fadimebayri@gmail.com*