An Investigation of Parents' Use of Digital Media

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Abstract
As the use of digital tools and the Internet becomes widespread and easier, the age of use is also decreasing. The decrease in the age of use makes opportunities as well as risks an important factor in digital environments. Children who are not aware of the risks in these environments may be exposed to various risks, especially as the age of Internet usage decreases. Parents are primarily responsible for protecting their children from risks in these environments. Parents can protect their children if they use digital media consciously and safely. In this context, the aim of this study is to investigate the parent's conscious and safe use of the Internet across Turkey. In accordance with this purpose, the study was designed as a survey study and the data of the study were collected from 9581 parents from 26 provinces with the Conscious and Safe Use of the Internet questionnaire developed by the researchers in the study. Descriptive statistics (%, f, $\overline{X}$, SS), t-test for independent samples, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and correlation were used in the analysis of the data. As a result of the analysis of the data, it was determined that the parents' use of the Internet on weekdays and weekends was similar, but this situation differed in children. It has also been determined that the leading situations that worry parents in digital environments are the harmful and illegal content and excessive time spent in these harmful and illegal environments.

Keywords: Parents, Digital Parents, Conscious Use of the Internet, Safe Use of the Internet, Online Risks

Introduction

In parallel with the developments in information and communication technologies (ICT), the use of digital tools and especially the Internet is becoming widespread and their duration of use is increasing. One of the main reasons for the increase in the use of these tools is the increase in the opportunities in social, economic, political, and cultural fields (Van Duersen, 2010). Many digital platforms such as e-commerce, e-banking, e-communication, and e-government have become a part of daily life and daily business. However, since digital tools also bring some risks, it is insufficient to consider these tools only in the context of the opportunities they offer (Valcke, De Wever, Van Keer, Schellens, 2011). Some of the risks in digital environments are listed as harmful content, cyberbullying, cyber fraud, cyber harassment (Hasebrink, Livingstone, Haddon, & Olafsson, 2009; Van den Heuvel, Van den Eijnden, Van Rooij, & Van de Mheen, 2012; Ybarra, 2004). These risks pose a threat to individuals of all age groups. However, it is also stated that children with low technology literacy are also exposed to many online risks (Akbulut, Şahin, &

Erişti, 2010; Kaşıkcı, et al., 2014). It is observed that the age of starting to use digital technologies tends to decrease in children using these technologies Also access to the Internet by mobile devices is shown as the biggest factor in the decrease in the age of Internet use. The age of starting to use the Internet is thought to be between the ages of 4-11 (Mascheroni & Ólafsson, 2016). It is stated that 91% of the youth access the Internet with mobile devices (Racz, Johnson, Bradshaw, & Cheng, 2017). When the literature is examined, 87% of 5-7-year-old children in England use the Internet (Ofcom, 2012); 64% of 7-year-olds in Finland use the Internet (Pääjärvi, 2011); 70% of 3-4-year-olds in Switzerland are at least sometimes online (Findahl, 2013); almost half of the children in the age group 3-6 in Austria regularly use the Internet (Jungwirth, 2013); in the United States, 25% of 3-year-olds go online daily, while this rate rises to 50% in the 5-year-old group (Gutnick, Bernstein, & Levine, 2011) and in Australia, 79% of children aged 5-8 are online at home. (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). According to NCES data, 45% of 3-4-year-old children use the Internet (McFarland, et al., 2019). In the context of available data, it is observed that the age of starting to use the Internet is lower than 2 in Turkey as well (Leo, 2016).

As the age of using digital technologies and especially the Internet decreases, children may face risks arising from digital technology at a higher and earlier age, parallel to the increase in the time spent in these environments. For example, it is observed that 46% of Internet users between the ages of 9-16 in Europe face at least one online risk and this rate rises to 69%, especially in the 15-16 age group (Duerager & Livingstone, 2012). Although 25% of children in Turkey use the Internet for a long time, 68.4% of these children do not know how to set the privacy settings on social media, 69.9% of them are unable to prevent unwanted messages, and 56.2% of these children do not know how to find the necessary information about safe Internet use (Kaşıkcı, et al., 2014). Given the frequency of children's online risk experiences, the child-Internet relationship becomes a major dilemma.

Protection from online risks is becoming an important issue from the digital rights perspective of children (Livingstone & Helsper, 2010). Livingstone and Bulger (2014) emphasize the need for support from all stakeholders for children to use the Internet and digital technologies safely and effectively. It is stated that one of the most important stakeholders is parents (Guernsey, Levine, Chiong, & Severns, 2012; Rosen, Cheever, & Carrier, 2008).

Digital Risk Perceptions of Parents

In addition to the positive aspects of digital media, there are also negative aspects and risks. Parents are the first to come to mind as responsible for protecting children who are unaware of the risks in these environments (Livingstone and Byrne 2018). If parents are aware of these environments, they can also protect their children. Awareness is also associated with literacy. The most important literacy among 25 different types of literacy is digital literacy (Cassidy, Ortlieb, & Ortlieb, 2019). Parents who are aware of the opportunities and risks of digital media are parents with a high level of digital literacy.

As the awareness level of parents with low digital literacy levels will also be low, they focus on the negative side of digital media. Parents' Internet skills, Internet use experiences, and attitudes towards the Internet are related to the nature and type of their anxiety and concerns (Sorbring, 2014). Parents state that the most common risk in the digital environment is sexual sharing, children send their own nude photos to each other or to strangers, and children communicate with insecure people digitally (Badillo-Urquiola, Page, & Wisniewski, 2019). Considering the concentration of risks by age ranges, cyberbullying is between the ages of 12-18 (Bauman, 2010; Pengpid & Peltzer, 2019), sexual messaging is between 14-16 years (Fajardo, Gordillo & Regalado, 2013), and grooming is between 9-13 years old. (Balanza & Romero, 2014). Many parents worry about their children when they are connected to the Internet and social media with a computer or smartphone (Echeburua, Labrador & Becoña, 2009). Only 8% of parents state that the Internet is a safe place for children (Farrugia & Lauri, 2018), and 53% state that it is only a matter of time before their children face online risks (Badillo-Urquiola, Page, & Wisniewski, 2019). In this context, it can be concluded that parents do not understand the benefits that their children will gain if they use digital media,

also parents are not aware of the risks that may be encountered in these environments and they cannot convey how their children should behave when they face risks (Kaşıkcı, et al., 2014). Parents' main concern is that they do not know where to find information about risky behavior experiences on the Internet (Dowdell, 2013).

The use of digital media and the Internet is related to the age of the parent (Baker, Sanders, & Morawska, 2017). In the We Are Social (2020) report, it is seen that the use of social media is concentrated between 18-34. It can be said that the use of social media is concentrated in the age range that can be qualified as young parents. Digitally literate parents who use social media heavily are better at helping to set their children's social media privacy settings or at talking with their children on the concerns about their child's online posts (Redmiles, 2018). It is stated that young parents under the age of 44 have more control of their children's social media account than older parents, and 44% of young parents use software to block, filter or monitor their children's online activities for parental control, compared to only 34% of parents over the age of 45 (Anderson, 2016). It can be said that the reason for this situation is that young parents have high digital literacy levels. In this context, making parents digitally literate for the social media environments they use increases their digital skills and thus makes them aware of the risks that they and their children will be exposed to while using the Internet (López, Robles, Gómez & Hernández, 2017).

When the parental role is considered, it is seen that parents in the role of mothers display a more rigorous attitude in terms of examining their children's online activities (Anderson, Smith, & Page, 2016). Mothers talk to their children more about the Internet use than their fathers (Anderson, 2016; Fletcher & Blair, 2014). Mothers show more parental control, guidance, support and parental warmth than fathers (Ihmeideh & Shawareb, 2014). The frequency of the Internet surveillance of parents with low Internet literacy compared to parents with more Internet literacy makes a difference in terms of directing and encouraging children to use the Internet (Lou et al., 2010). Parents hope their children will find the balance between the benefits of the Internet and the online risks they may face (Symons, et al., 2019).

This study which aimed to identify the parents' use of digital media and the measures they have taken against the risks their children are exposed to seeks answers to the following research questions:

- Do parents' digital media usage profiles differ according to
  - The language usage
  - Gender
  - Income level
  - Educational status
  - Their weekday and weekend usage?
- What are the situations that parents postpone to spend time on the Internet?
- Do the digital media usage profiles of parents and their children differ in terms of weekday and weekend usage?
- What are the situations that worry parents in digital environments?
- What are the measures parents take against the dangers in digital environments?
- What are the parents' preferences to get information about the safe use of the Internet for themselves and their children?

Methodology

The study was designed on the basis of singular survey model. Survey models are scanning arrangements made on the whole of the universe or a group, sample or sampling taken from it in order to make a general judgment about the universe in a universe consisting of many elements (Creswell, 2014).

Universe and Sample

The data collection process was conducted through a questionnaire developed by the researchers in Turkey. While determining the sample in the data collection phase from overall Turkey, considering the settlement place criterion in the Address Based Population Registration System which was described by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TSI), Statistical Region Unit Classification (SRUC) Level 2 (26 regions) was taken into consideration. One city was chosen randomly from each of the 26 regions in SRUC 2nd Level. From SRUC 2nd Level, cities

of Mersin, Gaziantep, Kütahya, Kars, Ankara, Zonguldak, Mardin, Eskişehir, Düzce, Antalya, Balıkesir, Tokat, Şanlıurfa, Elazığ, Erzurum, Rize, İstanbul, İzmir, Kahramanmaraş, Konya, Tekirdağ, Denizli, Kırşehir, Sinop, Sivas and Van were selected. In order to collect data from selected cities, the number of students in high schools was reached on the basis of the report prepared by the Ministry of National Education (MNE) "the Statistical Classification of Regional Units" for 2016/17 academic year on the number of schools, branches, students, teachers and classrooms according to 1st, 2nd and 3rd levels and education level. The data were collected by making calculations according to 95% confidence level and the range of 1.5 margin of error over the number of students in high schools in Turkey in the 2016/17 academic year. While 5047 (52.7%) of the 9581 participants that the data were collected from were female (mothers); 3930 (41%) of them are male (father). 604 (6.3%) of the participants did not specify their gender. Examining the data set that was collected from overall Turkey from 9581 people, it is seen that the participants concentrated among the 30-50 age range and the monthly income level of 1500-4500 Turkish Liras. Considering the education levels of the participants in the role of mother or father, it is seen that 31.5% have a masters level education and approximately 25% have a graduate education. When the status of the participants having Internet connection at home was examined, it was determined that a result parallel to that of TSI (2016) in the year the study was conducted. While it was determined that 75.4% of the participants had Internet connection at home, it was stated that the rate of households with Internet access as of April 2016 was 76.3% according to the Household Information Technologies Usage Survey (HITUS) report of TSI (2016). Considering the current data, according to the TSI (2019) HITUS report, the rate of individuals using the Internet is 75.3% and the rate of those who have Internet access from their homes is 88.3%. When the smartphone ownership status of the participants was examined, it was determined that 86.1% of them had smart phones. When the grade levels of the children of the parents participating in the study are examined, it is seen that they are mostly at the 6th grade (18.8%), 9th grade (15.5) and 5th grade (15.1%). The least involved parent group is the parents whose children are in the 12th grade (4.4%). Considering the rate of parents whose children attend middle school and high school, the rate of parents whose children attend middle school is 50.2%; and the rate of parents whose children go to high school is 44.4%.

Data Collection Process and Tools

Conscious and Safe Use of the Internet Questionnaire was developed by the researchers to be used in the research. After the demographic data section in the questionnaire, next section includes questions about parents' use of digital media. After this section, the section where questions about determining the digital media usage situations of the children according to their parents are presented. In the next section, questions about the worrying situations for parents in digital environments are asked. In the next section, there are questions about determining the measures taken by parents against worrying situations in digital environments. Some sample questions in these sections are as follows:

- Could you give information about the usage durations of digital platforms? (You can include digital games and smart phones in Internet usage time)
  - Your usage- the Internet – Weekdays
  - Your child's usage- the Internet - Weekdays
- Which one makes you worried about your child's Internet usage habits?
- I am concerned that my child will give his personal information to people or sites he does not know.
- What measures do you take regarding your child's Internet use?
  - I do not take any measures.
  - I am taking technical measures. (e.g. filtering programs)
- Do you know about Secure Internet Service?

Content validity of the questionnaire was performed with face validity. The validity study was carried out by the research team. With the developed questionnaire, pilot data collection stage was carried out before the actual data collection stage. While conducting a pilot study in questionnaires, firstly the sample size is taken into consideration. It is seen in pilot studies that the sample size is generally between

5-10 and 50-100 (Reynolds, Diamantapoulos, & Schlegelmilch, 1993). In the pilot phase, data were collected from 82 parents. It was determined that the response rate of the items in the demographic information section of the questionnaire was high. Items with a non-response rate of more than 10% in answered items are 10.6 (22%), 10.7. (20.7%), 13.7. (11%), 13.8. (15.9%), 13.9. (14.6%) and 17. (26.8%), and the necessary arrangements were made in these items. After the pilot phase, data were collected from 26 provinces across Turkey (Table 2) during the spring semester of 2017-2018 academic year.

Data Analysis

In parallel with the research questions, descriptive statistics (%, f, $\bar{x}$, SS), t-test for independent samples, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and correlation analysis were used to perform analyzes. In the analysis of the data .05 significance level was accepted and the analyzes were carried out with the SPSS program.

Results

In this section, the findings obtained as a result of the analysis of the data collected from the parents from across Turkey with the Conscious and Safe Use of the Internet Questionnaire are presented. Findings are presented sequentially based on the research questions.

When the parents' attention to Turkish grammar rules in digital environments is examined in terms of gender, the situation in Table 1 emerges.

Table 1: Parents' Compliance with Turkish Grammar Rules on the Internet According to Gender

Factor	Group	$\bar{x}$	ss	sd	t	p
Turkish grammar rules in Internet correspondence	Female	3,356	1,546	9580	222,015	,000
	Male	3,123	1,622			
Turkish grammar rules in Internet content	Female	3,107	1,650	9580	167,893	,000
	Male	1,905	1,644			
Making abbreviations in Internet correspondence	Female	2,418	1,486	9580	148,368	,000
	Male	2,357	1,499			

When Table 1 is analyzed, it is seen that women pay more attention to Turkish grammar rules on the Internet than men. It was determined that women behave in accordance with Turkish grammar rules both in Internet correspondence ($\bar{x}$ = 3,356) and Internet content (= 3,107). Considering the use of abbreviations in Internet correspondence, women prefer to use abbreviations more than men. However, the difference is not as much as in other cases. In terms of gender, it was determined that there is a statistically significant difference (p <, 05) in the parents' compliance with Turkish grammar rules. It was examined whether the parents' attention to Turkish grammar rules was affected by their income level (Table 2).

Table 2: Parents' Compliance with Turkish Grammar Rules on the Internet According to their Income Level

	Source of Variance	KT	sd	KO	F	p
Turkish grammar rules in Internet correspondence	Among groups	2299,337	6	383,223	151,917	,000*
	In-Group	24151,125	9574	2,523		
	Total	26450,462	9580			
Turkish grammar rules in Internet content	Among groups	1965,304	6	327,551	120,043	,000*
	In-Group	26123,745	9574	2,729		
	Total	28089,049	9580			
Making abbreviations in Internet correspondence	Among groups	1051,089	6	175,182	78,582	,000*
	In-Group	21343,065	9574	2,229		
	Total	22394,155	9580			

Considering the analysis results, it was found that there is a significant difference depending on the income levels of the parents in obeying Turkish grammar rules in Internet correspondence (F (6,9574) = 383,223; p <.05), Turkish grammar rules in Internet content (F (6,9574) = 327,551; p <.05) and making abbreviations (F (6,9574) = 175,182; p <.05) in Internet correspondence. Post Hoc test should be examined in order to look at the reason for the difference according to the income level. Looking at the condition of variance conjugation status in the selection of Post Hoc, it was determined that p <.05 and Tamhane's T2 test, which is mostly used when variance conjugation condition was not met, was used. When the Post Hoc test result is examined, it is seen that the reason for the significant difference is the participants whose income level is less than 1500 TL and the participants whose income level is between 1500-3000 TL. The relationship between parents' attention to Turkish grammar rules and their educational status was examined (Table 3).

Table 3: The Relationship between Parents' Attention to Turkish Grammar Rules on the Internet and their Education Level

n=9581	Education Level	1	2
Turkish grammar rules in Internet correspondence (1)	0,397**	-	-
Turkish grammar rules in Internet content (2)	0,332**	0,781**	-
Making abbreviations in Internet correspondence	0,204**	0,421**	0,540**

** Correlation is significant at ,01 level

It is observed that there is a positive correlation between the parents' experience of the Internet use and obeying Turkish grammar rules in Internet correspondence (r = 0.387) and content (r = 0.332) and using abbreviations in Internet correspondence (r = 0.204). Cohen (1988) states that if the r value is between .10 and .29, the r value is small, if it is between .30 and .49, the r value is medium, and if it is between .50-1.0, the r value has a strong correlation. In this context, when the values in Table 5 are examined, it can be mentioned that there is a moderate relationship between the educational status of the parents and their compliance with Turkish grammar rules in Internet correspondence and content; It is possible to mention a small relationship between using abbreviations in Internet correspondence. How the daily Internet usage of the parents differ between weekdays and weekends was examined (Table 4).

Table 4: Daily Internet Usage Times of Parents in the Context of Weekdays and Weekends

Daily Internet usage time	Never	Less than 1 hour	1-3 hours	3-5 hours	More than 5 hours	Unspecified	Total
Weekdays	899 (%9,4)	2882 (%30,1)	2957 (%30,9)	995 (%10,4)	614 (%6,4)	1234 (%12,9)	9581 (%100)
Weekends	995 (%10,4)	2573 (%26,9)	2937 (%30,7)	1037 (%10,8)	501 (%5,2)	1538 (%16,1)	9581 (%100)

When the duration of daily Internet use of the parents is examined, it is seen that there is little difference between weekdays and weekends. It is observed that the majority of the parents use the Internet for less than an hour (30.1% - 26.9%) or 1-3 hours (30.9% - 30.7%) both on weekdays and on weekends. The rate of parents who use the Internet for 1-3 hours on weekdays and weekends is high. In this context, what parents can give up for spending time on the Internet has been examined and a structure like in Table 5 has emerged.

Table 5: The Activities Parents can give up doing to Spend Time on the Internet

Activities that are given up	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Generally	Always	Unspecified	Total
Required work related to their job	4672 (%48,8)	1368 (%14,3)	1036 (%10,8)	507 (%5,3)	443 (%4,6)	1555 (%16,2)	9581 (%100)
Doing sports	3446 (%36)	1552 (%16,2)	1433 (%15)	895 (%9,3)	616 (%6,4)	1639 (%17,1)	9581 (%100)
Reading books	3303 (%34,5)	1481 (%15,5)	1619 (%16,9)	975 (%10,2)	609 (%6,4)	1594 (%16,6)	9581 (%100)
Visiting relatives	4315 (%45)	1318 (%13,8)	1133 (%11,8)	734 (%7,7)	470 (%4,9)	1611 (%16,8)	9581 (%100)
Spending time with their spouses	4250 (%44,4)	1322 (%13,8)	1218 (%12,7)	564 (%5,9)	509 (%5,3)	1718 (%17,9)	9581 (%100)
Spending time with their children	4257 (%45,5)	1317 (%13,7)	1101 (%11,5)	587 (%6,1)	498 (%5,2)	1721 (%18)	9581 (%100)

When looking at the activities that parents can give up to spend time on the Internet, it is seen that there are not many. The majority of the parents either never or rarely give up doing required work related to their job (63.1%), doing sports (52.2%), reading books (50%), visiting relatives (58.8%), spending time with their spouses (62.2%) and spending time with their children (59.2%) to spend time on the Internet.

While it is observed that parents use the Internet similarly on weekdays and weekends; It was determined that how long their children use the Internet on weekdays and weekends and how the duration of playing digital games changes on weekdays and weekends, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Children's Internet usage and Digital Game Playing Time according to Parents

Daily Internet usage time	Never	Less than 1 hour	1-3 hours	3-5 hours	More than 5 hours	Unspecified	Total
Weekdays	1050 (%11)	2597 (%27,1)	2586 (%27)	1028 (%10,7)	600 (%6,3)	1720 (%18)	9581 (%100)
Weekend	748 (%7,8)	1976 (%20,6)	2741 (%28,6)	1563 (%16,3)	872 (%9,1)	1681 (%17,5)	9581 (%100)
Daily digital game playing time							
Weekdays	2550 (%26,6)	2308 (%24,1)	1772 (%24,1)	680 (%7,1)	448 (%4,7)	1823 (%19)	9581 (%100)
Weekend	1991 (%20,8)	2098 (%21,9)	2092 (%21,8)	991 (%10,3)	695 (%7,3)	1714 (%17,9)	9581 (%100)

When Table 6 is examined, according to the parents, the rate of their children's use the Internet for less than an hour on the weekdays is 27.1%. Considering the rate of Internet usage between 1-3 hours, it is seen that it is similar to those who use it for less than an hour (27%). When the Internet usage of children on weekends is examined, it is seen that the Internet is used for longer periods than weekdays. While the Internet usage for 3-5 hours or more is 17% during the week; it is seen that this rate increased to 25.4% at the weekend. Looking at the digital game usage of children, it is seen that more than half of them (50.7%) either do not play digital games at all or play digital games for less than an hour during the week. Digital game play time of children increases on the weekend just like their Internet usage. While the proportion of children playing digital games for 3-5 hours or more during

the week is 11.8%; it is seen that this rate increased to 17.6% at the weekend. Children's Internet usage and digital game playing times are stated by parents in this way. Parents indicate the dangers that their children, who spend time on the Internet and digital games, may encounter in these environments as seen in Table 7.

Table 7: Danger Factors that Worry Parents in Digital Environments

Danger factors that worry parents	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Generally	Always	Unspecified	Total
Smart phones	1082 (%11,3)	1267 (%13,2)	2054 (%21,4)	2099 (%21,9)	1536 (%16,1)	1540 (%16,1)	9581 (%100)
Digital games	1811 (%18,9)	1258 (%13,1)	1636 (%17,1)	1753 (%18,3)	1422 (%14,8)	1701 (%17,8)	9581 (%100)
Social networks	1286 (%13,4)	1149 (%12,0)	1889 (%19,7)	1828 (%19,1)	1778 (%18,6)	1651 (%17,2)	9581 (%100)
Harmful and illegal content	2072 (%21,9)	879 (%9,2)	1079 (%11,3)	1408 (%14,7)	2465 (%25,7)	1678 (%17,5)	9581 (%100)
Excessive time/ addiction	1432 (%14,9)	1037 (%10,8)	1401 (%14,6)	1715 (%17,9)	2363 (%24,7)	1633 (%17)	9581 (%100)
Advertising, marketing and commercial sites	2336 (%24,4)	1152 (%12)	1377 (%14,4)	1328 (%13,9)	1571 (%16,4)	1817 (%19)	9581 (%100)
Cyber-bullying	2471 (%25,8)	951 (%9,9)	1153 (%12)	1215 (%12,7)	1993 (%20,8)	1798 (%11,6)	9581 (%100)
Sites that collect personal information	1951 (%20,4)	889 (%9,3)	1153 (%12)	1432 (%14,9)	2389 (%24,9)	1767 (%18,4)	9581 (%100)
Physical and mental health problems	2212 (%23,1)	932 (%9,7)	1233 (%12,9)	1278 (%13,3)	2157 (%22,5)	1769 (%18,5)	9581 (%100)

When Table 7 is examined, it is seen that the most important situations that cause parents to worry about their children in digital environments are the presence of harmful and illegal content, excessive time / addiction in digital environments, the presence of sites that collect personal information, and the exposure to cyberbullying. The use of smartphones by children often or always causes anxiety in 38% of parents. In terms of digital games, this ratio is 33.1%; 37.7% in the context of social networks; 40.4% in terms of harmful and illegal content; 42.6% in terms of excessive time or addiction; 30% in the context of advertising, marketing and commercial sites; 33.5% in the context of cyberbullying; 39.8% in terms of sites collecting personal information and 35.8% in terms of physical and mental health problems. Although parents see their children's activities in digital environments as a danger, it is possible to see the measures taken by the parents to protect their children from these environments in Table 8.

Table 8: Measures taken by Parents against Dangers in Digital Environments

Measures taken	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Generally	Always	Unspecified	Total
Not taking any measures	2895 (%30,2)	1213 (%12,7)	1514 (%15,8)	1050 (%11)	936 (%9,8)	1973 (%20,6)	9581 (%100)
Talking to the child about safe use of the Internet	726 (%7,6)	877 (%9,2)	1387 (%14,5)	2165 (%22,6)	2800 (%29,2)	1626 (%17)	9581 (%100)
Setting rules	940 (%9,8)	997 (%10,4)	1700 (%17,7)	2105 (%22)	2115 (%22,1)	1724 (%18)	9581 (%100)

Using filtering programs	2726 (%28,5)	1060 (%11,1)	1282 (%13,4)	1215 (%12,7)	1363 (%14,3)	1929 (%20,1)	9581 (%100)
Using the safe search options of search engines	1790 (%18,7)	947 (%9,9)	1313 (%13,7)	1604 (%16,7)	2032 (%21,2)	1895 (%19,8)	9581 (%100)
Using parental control tools	2559 (%26,7)	1058 (%11)	1355 (%14,1)	1215 (%12,7)	1422 (%14,8)	1972 (%20,6)	9581 (%100)
Using antivirus software	1767 (%18,4)	925 (%9,7)	1227 (%12,8)	1473 (%15,4)	2259 (%23,6)	1930 (%20,1)	9581 (%100)
Browser control and privacy / security settings	1780 (%18,6)	984 (%10,3)	1273 (%13,3)	1488 (%15,5)	2112 (%22)	1944 (%20,3)	9581 (%100)
Social network control and privacy/ security settings	1085 (%11,3)	846 (%8,8)	1381 (%14,4)	1923 (%20,1)	2542 (%26,5)	1804 (%18,8)	9581 (%100)

When Table 8 is examined, it is seen that the rate of parents who stated that they did not take any measures against the dangers in the digital environment is only 30%. It is seen that the rate of the parents who stated that they talk to their children about the safe use of the Internet most or all the time is 51.8%. The rate of parents who stated that they often or always set rules about the use of digital media is 44.1%. Parents who state that they use parental control tools most or always make up only 27.5% of the participants. The rate of those who often or always use antivirus that provides safe browsing in digital environments is 39%. Almost half of the parents (46.6%) state that they control social networks and configure privacy security settings there.

As another finding, parents' getting information about the safe use of the Internet for their children and themselves and the risks on the Internet were examined (Table 9).

Table 9: Parents' Information about the Safe use of the Internet and Internet Risks

Getting information	I didn't get information	I got information	Unspecified	Total
From my child's school	5146 (%53,7)	2555 (%26,7)	1880 (%19,6)	9581 (%100)
From the friends of my child	5980 (%62,4)	1544 (%16,1)	2057 (%21,5)	9581 (%100)
From the media	2780 (%29)	5283 (%55,1)	1517 (%15,8)	9581 (%100)
From the government institutions	4803 (%50,1)	2809 (%29,3)	1969 (%20,6)	9581 (%100)
From non-governmental organizations (NGOs)	5670 (%59,2)	1777 (%18,5)	2134 (%22,3)	9581 (%100)

Considering the sources from which parents obtain information about the safe use of the Internet and the risks on the Internet, it is seen that the rate of parents who receive information from the media is 55.1%. It is observed that most of the parents did not get information about the safe use of the Internet and the risks on the Internet from their children's school (53.7%), children's friends (62.4%), government

institutions (50.1%) and non-governmental organizations (59.2%).

Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

A fieldwork on conscious and safe Internet use was carried out in the scope of the study covering 9.581 parents from 26 provinces across Turkey. The study was conducted to measure the parents' level of conscious, safe and effective use of information technologies and the Internet, and to reveal their Internet usage behavior. Within the scope of the study, it was also tried to determine the concerns of parents about their children's Internet use, the precautions they take for their children within the scope of conscious and safe use of the Internet and how much importance they attach to awareness raising activities.

The priority areas examined in the study are Internet usage times, social network usage, time spent in digital games, correct use of grammar in the Internet environment, reliability of the information accessed on the Internet, cyber bullying, digital literacy and Internet security. Results and recommendations deemed important in the areas examined are presented in this section.

Three-fourths of the families participating in the study have an Internet connection at home and the Internet has actually become an important member of the family. Many parents own smartphones. Most of the parents participating in the study have children attending middle school or high school. It is possible to say that the Internet is an indispensable communication tool for adults, as a significant portion of the parents use Internet for nearly 3 hours a day, while a significant portion of them use the Internet for at least 1 hour or less.

The primary concerns of parents about their children's presence in digital environments are the presence of harmful and illegal content, excessive time spent / addiction of children in digital environments, and the existence of sites that collect personal information. These are followed by cyberbullying activities. There are similar risks and concerns in the literature. Symons, Ponnet, Walrave, and Heirman (2017) state that most parents are concerned about risk issues such as privacy, exposure to commercial, sexual content, and online bullying. Lafsson, Green, and Staksrud (2017) also cite the risks children are exposed to as sexual images, bullying, abuse of personal data, meeting with people they know online, sexually explicit messaging and producing problematic content. Badillo-Urquiola, et al. state that for (2019) 53% of parents it is only a matter of time before their children face online risks;, the most common risks are sexual, children send their own nude photos to each other or strangers and communicate with insecure people in digital environments.

One of the primary measures taken by parents against the dangers in digital environments for their children is their conversations with their children about the safe use of the Internet. More than 50% of the families stated that they talk to their children most or all of the time. However, it has emerged that there is little awareness of technical measures such as filtering programs and parental control tools in families. Anderson (2016) stated that 94% of parents talked with their children about the appropriate online posts, 95% about the appropriate content that their children viewed online, 95% talked about the appropriateness of the media their children use, and 92% talked with their children about their online behaviors towards others. Stald, et al. (2014) states that 65% of parents talk with their children about what they are doing online. There are various precautions parents take in addition to talking with their children. Parents use software to block, filter or monitor their children's online activities (Anderson, 2016). Parents state that they frequently monitor children under the age of 12 (Harding, 2019). Parents prefer different approaches depending on age. While Ofcom (2017) states that 40% of parents use network content filtering for children aged 3-4 and 5-15, 90% of parents use parental control settings; 53% of the parents of children aged 5-15 stated that they were with them when their children were online and asked their children what they did online. However, many digital tools are now portable and mobile, making it difficult for parents to monitor their children (Sadiku, Tembely, & Musa, 2017).

Considering the sources from which parents get information about the safe use of the Internet and the risks on the Internet, it is seen that the information is mostly from the media (55.1%). 53.7% of the

families stated that their children did not receive any information on this subject from their school. Parents' main concern is that they do not know where to find information about risky behavior experiences on the Internet (Dowdell, 2013). However, It is stated that half of the parents use the Internet at least once a month to support parenting activities, and half of them are for educational purposes, 40% to search or download local activities and events for their children, 30% for social regulation or to get health information and advice about their children (Livingstone, Blum-Ross, Pavlick, & Ólafsson, 2018). However, 43.8% of parents in Turkey stated that they will be able to find information on the safe use of the Internet (Kaşıkçı, et al., 2014).

Based on these results, it is seen that the knowledge level of the parents about the conscious and safe use of the Internet is not sufficient. Although their level of knowledge was not sufficient, it was observed that they were also inadequate at the point of consulting information sources. It is concluded that parents' teaching skills regarding the Internet use are very insufficient against the Internet usage behaviors of children and young people.

Studies should be carried out to communicate the importance and awareness of parental control tools, especially secure Internet service, to parents effectively. Especially the secure Internet service should be broadcast with an impressive spot film at prime time. In addition, it is necessary to ensure that it is broadcast on billboards and platforms where video advertisements are displayed in cooperation with local governments. In addition, it should be ensured that it is broadcast before the movies in theaters. The fact that 1/4 of the participants do not prefer these parental control tools is an important reason for this. Schools need to change their habits of making their parent-oriented programs only as parents' meetings and focusing on the problems of the students and turn them into meetings that will raise awareness about the Internet and social media in cooperation with guidance counselors. In the study, more than half of the families stated that they could not get information about the safe use of the Internet and its risks from the school of their children. NGOs are not in the field enough in awareness-raising activities for families. Schools should be encouraged to increase their cooperation with NGOs and to conduct seminar-type brief informative activities for parents.

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