Exploring Parents' Experience in Guiding Their Children While Using Gadget at Home

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Abstract

Nowadays, along with the rapid growth of the times, gadget becomes an inseparable tool from human life. The relationship between gadget and internet is like a unity which cannot be separated. It is easy to use because it can be accessed freely by anyone, including young children. However, the internet use by children requires parental control and guidance. This research is an online survey involving 55 respondents which aims at exploring parents' experience in mediating and controlling the use of gadget by their children aged of 0 – 7 years old at home. The results revealed that 72,9% of parents used co-use mediation type, technical restriction employed by parents up to 12,1%, and 2,8 % of parents applied monitoring. In addition, some parents also need parenting support because they have difficulty in using their child's gadget. This research has a significance recommendation, especially for parents, they should enhance the quality of parenting patterns, and for government, they should make innovation in providing accurate and appropriate information about the use of gadgets and online security for early childhood through online media.

Keywords: Parental mediation, parenting support, the knowledge of media

1   INTRODUCTION

Many researchers have studied that children spend average of their time on different gadgets like telephone, radio, TV, games, Xbox, iPod and stereo system. As of December 2003, 23 million children in the United States ages 6 to 17 have Internet access at home, which is a threefold increase since 2000 (Media Post, 2003; Chang-Hoan Cho & Hongsik John Cheon, 2010)). In 2013 Daily mail reported that 29% of the toddlers can easily use the gadgets and remaining 70% are master by primary school age (Subrahmanyama K, Patricia G, Robert K, Elisheva G, 2001; Sundus M, 2018). Based on data from KOMINFO (Communication and Information Department), in 2014 found that 98 percent of children and adolescents in Indonesia know about internet and 79.5 percent among them are internet users (Mildayani Suhana: 2017). Furthermore in 2017, Indonesian internet users up to 143.26 million people over 262 million inhabitants

(54, 68%). It makes Indonesia as the fourth largest internet user in the world. The rapid development of gadgets and the internet needs special attention by parents who have young children aged 0-7 years old.

Gadgets are a small electronic device that has a special function to download the latest information with the latest technologies to make life more practical (Indrawan, 2004; Uliyatul Laili, 2017). Actually, gadget is neutral. It has both positive and negative effects, it depends on the user. The gadget and Internet has a double-edged sword characteristic for children: providing many opportunities for learning (ParentLink, 2004; Wartella, Lee, & Caplovitz, 2002) while exposing children to potentially negative content (Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Wolak, 2000). The AAP believed that there were significantly more potential negative effects of media than positive ones for this age group and, thus, advised families to thoughtfully consider media use for infants (American Academy of Pediatrics : 2015). In terms of behavior, there is a

previous research shows that 373 respondents who use telephone, 39.7% had a good attitude and 60.3% had a bad attitude. The association between the attitude of students and time spent on mobile phones indicated most of the excessive phone users (60.3%) had a bad attitude compared with moderate phone users (43.4%) (Maryam K.Master, Charan Preet Kaur, Avantika Narasimhan, Mizrab Nadeem, Musab Ali Rizwana B.Shaik: 2016). Muldayani Suhasana (2017) said that negative effect of gadget usage on children is self isolated from social life and lack of emotional management. It is resulted in lack of interaction and communication. Child become introvert and impatient, interpersonal problem and lack of interpersonal communication skill and keep them away from nature and surrounding environment. Thus, the parental concerns about the use of gadget by young children in this era. Therefore, parenting assistance is crucial for guiding their children's gadget usage. It can be called as parental mediation.

Parental mediation'(Warren : 2001) defined as 'any strategy of parents used to control, supervise or interpret media content for children' (p. 212). There are four kinds of parents mediation while guiding the children using gadget (Livingstone & Helsper : 2008), The first was labelled 'Active co-use' containing nine activities that would have been categorised as active mediation, restrictive mediation, or co-viewing/co-playing in the previous concise theory. The researchers surmised that internet co-use is by definition active or restrictive because conversations with the child are more likely than when viewing television or playing games together. The second type of mediation, 'Interaction restrictions', encompasses bans on five activities relating to peer-to-peer online interactivity. The third concerns the use of 'Technical restrictions', including the installation of filters and monitoring software. Finally, the fourth type was described as 'Monitoring'; i.e., checking teenagers' onlineactivities after they have used a computer.

This study aims at exploring the experiences of parents, especially mothers who are usually more involved rather than fathers (Takeuchi, 2011: Vaala & Hornik, 2014) - in Central Java, Indonesia when their children using gadgets at home. It also informs the widely used mediation type and describes it based on each parent's character (level of education, profession, and age).

2 METHOD

This is a survey research, which means that this research seeks to gather information about parenting patterns performed by parents, especially mothers in Central Java, Indonesia when their children using gadgets at home. Isaac & Michael said that survey research employed to answer questions that have been raised, to solve problems that have been posed or observed, to assess needs and set goals, to determine whether or not spesific objectives have been met, to etablish baselines againts which fature comparisons can be made, to analyze trends across time, and generally, to describe what exist, in what amount, and in what context (Prisilla: 2005).

The survey was conducted using an online questionnaire and involved 55 respondents mostly in Central Java. Based on the Central Java scale, the respondents in this research were still lacking, it is also a suggestion for further research to consider demographic factors. The respondents' characteristics are level of education, profession, and age. In addition, it also informs parents' experience in Central Java, Indonesia when guiding their children in using gadgets, and then describes it according to the character of parents.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results revealed that 55 parents who have children in the age of 0-7 years old, 53 out of 55 have introduced gadgets on their young children, and the other have not introduced yet. The two parents of the child believe that the gadget has no benefits at all for young children. Actually, there are 23 parents who disagree with the use of gadgets for young children, because the gadget has no benefits for children or a lot of negative effects. But in fact, their children have already known, even used gadgets at home. New media technologies are found in family households at an everfaster rate, fundamentally transforming how parents and children live, work, play and communicate (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, & Ólafsson, 2011; Takeuchi, 2011). Even very young children under 8 years can be avid users of electronic gadgets (Gutnick, Robb, Takeuchi, & Kotler, 2011; Ofcom, 2014; Plowman, McPake, & Stephens, 2010).

Parents state that the positive impact of the gadget for children is introducing technological tools in this era and making it as learning media to

develop the children's potentiality. The negative impact of gadgets on young children according to them are: a) children become insensitive to social life, c) they become addicted, d) they are being selfish, hard-nosed, and unstable emotions, e) it can inhibit the physical movement of the child's motoric, so they become lazy to work, and slow response, and, f) they get familiar with violent and pornographic content earlier.

In addition, research has found that social media can strengthen family bonds and feelings of connectedness. Among adolescents, there is evidence that social media are used to keep in touch with family, and parents who use social media report keeping up with their children and other family members as the top reasons for use (Sarah M. Coyne,& Jenny Radesky, & Kevin M. Collier, & Douglas A. Gentile, & Jennifer Ruh Linder, & Amy I. Nathanson, & Eric E. & Rasmussen, & Stephanie M. Reich, & Jean Rogers: 2017). However, parents should give an appropriate parental mediation in using gadget for young children under 8 years old.

Children's Activity in Using Gadget

Gadget's applications commonly accessed by the children are: games up to 35, 5 %; youtube is 29 %; 12,9% for video; Music is 9,68%; 6, 45% for camera / gallery; Cartoon up to 5,38%; and Google is 1, 07%.

Parental Mediation

Surveys from 53 parents in Central Java who have introduced gadgets to their children revealed that most of them used co-use mediation type. It applied by controlling the time and content of applications accessed by the children and also communicating what is being watched.

The answer is derived from the question "What do you do when your child plays a gadget, and How do you ensure your child's online security when playing the gadget?"

As a result, 72,9% parents educate their children while using gadgets with co-use mediation type by accompanying and monitoring their activities when using gadgets, including selecting a good and an appropriate content for children in online and offline. In addition, parents are also more interactive and give more attention to their children. Then the type technical restriction mediation up to 12,1%. This technical restriction leads parents to secure the use of gadgets on their children by using application techniques or digital media skills.

Usually, they encode (lockscreen), lock any application, and download applications that can record children's activities in using the gadget such as software that is specifically intended to improve a child's online safety, such as blacklist filters, monitoring applications or time limiters. Then, monitoring mediation used by parents up to 2,8%, namely rechecking the existing application through History when they are using gadget. Up to 3,7% parents commit daily activities when their child using gadgets, without setting the safety of the phone. There are 1,9% parents who immediately took the gadget from the hands when the child starts holding the gadget, and 1,9% are upset when knowing his child is holding the gadget. However, there are parents did not know how to ensure online safety of their child up to 4,7%.

Parents' Characteristics

Based on parents' characteristics, namely education level, profession, and age, the survey result of the two questions can be seen in the table below:

Table 1. Parents' Characteristics and the Use of Mediation Type

Character	Co-Use	Technical Restriction	Monit oring	Ignore	Mad	Taken	Didn't know how to ensure online safety
Education Level							
Academics (n=37)	59,1%	18,3%	4,5%	6,8%	-	4,5%	6,8%
SMP & SMA (n=16)	65 %	5%	5%	5%	10%	-	10%
Profession							
Educators (n=12)	41,2%	23,4%	11,8%	5,9%	-	5,9%	11,8%
Housewife (n=26)	57,6%	12,1%	3%	9,1%	6,1%	3%	9,1%
Employees (n=12)	66,7%	33,3%	-	-	-	-	-
Enterpreuner (n=3)	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-
	41,2%	23,4%	11,8%	5,9%	-	5,9%	11,8%
Age	57,6%	12,1%	3%	9,1%	6,1%	3%	9,1%
20 – 30 (n=34)	66,7%	33,3%					
31 – 40 (n=15)	100%	-				-	-
> 40 (n=4)	41,2%	23,4%	11,8%	5,9%	-	5,9%	11,8%

Based on the table, it can be concluded that parents especially mothers in Central Java, Indonesia mediate their children using Co-use type. This is in agreement with a previous reasearch conducted by Nikken, & Janz (2013), they state that parents with children between 0 - 8 years, for example, primarily apply supervision and co-use mediation styles to younger children. However talking about the parents' character, it is contrary to western theories, which was explaining that the parents' character decide the use of mediation type. The

parents guide their children's media use and which strategies they apply are related to the characteristics of parents and children (such as educational level, age, gender, media skills) (e.g., Böcking & Böcking, 2009; Nikken & Jansz, 2006, 2013; Nikken & Schols, 2015; Valkenburg et al., 1999, Peter Nikken & Jos De Haan, 2015). This survey shows that the culture of mothers in Central Java, Indonesia apply the same culture of parenting patterns without seeing education level, profession, and age.

Parental Support

We cannot deny that nowadays is the era of technology. There is an increase in the number of users and digital media variant, it causes mothers who take care of their children at home become a dilemma. The concern arises because the gadget can provide all contents; it can be positive and negative.

8 (15, 1%) parents out of 53 respondents find difficulty in controlling the time usage of gadgets on their children when they have fun playing gadgets (15, 1%). Then, 3 (5,7%) parents find difficulty in interacting with their children because their children only focus on gadgets. It will be very dangerous if the children under 8 years old using gadget without supervision. Actually, this problem could be a consideration for further research focus on appropriate parenting patterns for early childhood in the digital era in Indonesia.

The problems show that parental support is crucial for parents. When parents find difficulties in controlling the use of gadgets, both time and form of communication, they actually worry about the dangers of the physical and psychological health of children. As the solution, they should make a deal with their children in using gadget instead of directly taking the gadgets from the children's hands without any agreement. Dallea, Mutalibb, Saadb, Ayubc, Wahabc, and Nasrallad, Muldayani Suhana, (2015; 2017) said that as the effect of electronic media, children have less space to participate in real world. Based on some studies, children aged 0-2 years old should be exposed to gadgets, children aged 3-5 years old are limited only 1 hour per day, and 2 hours per day for children aged 6-18 years old.

In addition, parents not only limit the time usage of children in playing gadget, but also pay attention to their behavior when using gadgets near his children. Moreover, parents may also try to protect their children by critically supervising the child, talking to the child about media content, monitoring the child's digital where abouts, or

applying restrictions to the content accessed or the length of time of media use (e.g., Nikken & Jansz, 2006, 2013; Sonck et al., 2013; Valkenburg et al., 1999; Warren 2003).

Furthermore, the appropriate information search about children should be considered in order to improve the competence of parenting mediation. Most of parents in Indonesia currently use the internet as a source of information. So, they must carefully select the correct and appropriate information for their children. As a consideration, for the government especially KOMINFO (communication and information department) should provide education in the form of reliable information in a practical and more innovative that can accessed by all people, for example using the internet as a medium is also related to the dangers of gadget usage and the internet for children. So, here I can say that, parents should not end studying, from many sources, to improve their parenting quality.

4 CONCLUSION

Based on the result, it can be concluded that 53 parents in Central Java, Indonesia employed co-use mediation type up to 72,9% in mediating parenting patterns for their children in the age of 0 -7 years old. In addition, 12,1% of parents applied technical restriction, and monitoring mediation type used by 2,8% of parents. The mediation type do not influenced by parents' characteristics, namely education level, profession, and age. However, unfortunately there are also some parents who ignore their children in using gadget. Then, 20, 7% parents need parenting support based on their difficulties in interacting and controlling the gadget usage of their children at home.

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