

Marijana Miočić

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-9210-1006>

University of Zadar

Sandra Janković

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-6634-0167>

University of Zadar

Parental and Teacher Perspectives on Children's Use of the Internet

Abstract

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of technology and the internet was highlighted when teachers were encouraged to prepare teaching materials, so that online classes could be conducted smoothly and children's education could continue. This form of teaching and activities, as well as isolation itself, resulted in children spending hours in front of the screen. The paper will present the results of a survey of the opinions of teachers (N=43) and parents of school-age children (N=55), regarding the habits, benefits and dangers of using the internet by children in the lower grades of elementary school. Descriptive and frequency analysis, as well as z-test and t-test, were used to process the obtained data in order to determine whether there is a difference in the opinion of teachers and parents about the forms of the child's use of the internet, the benefits and safety of using the internet.

Keywords

teacher, parent, child, internet, dangers

1. Introduction

Today, children use the internet for building friendships, entertainment, learning, and acquiring new knowledge and skills. The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the importance of using technology in education. Teachers had to use various digital tools to ensure the continuity of the educational process. This contributed to an increase in the time children spent in the virtual world. Moreover, the child's inability to distinguish the inner and outer world is an incentive for parents and teachers to raise children's awareness of the importance of safe internet use. It is necessary to explain to the child that, if he sees or receives some inappropriate and disturbing online, he should share this information with his parents and teachers. Children must realize that their interests are understood and valued, but for reasons of their safety and protection against possible malicious attempts to access their personal data, they need to share information about the content they follow.

2. The Role of Parents and Teachers in Protecting the Child while Using the Internet

The digital age has brought numerous advantages and challenges, bringing forward new and interesting learning and communication tools for children. However, there are certain risks present, and parents and teachers play a key role in protecting child's rights in an online environment, in particular, privacy and the safe acquisition of new knowledge and skills.

Parents of children in the lower grades of elementary school are aware of the educational potential offered by the internet: children can explore new worlds, acquire knowledge, gain new insights, awaken their creativity and curiosity. According to parents, the internet offers interactive forms of learning and virtual forms of communication that are attractive and useful to children.

Rapidly developing, the digital technology has greatly changed the way children and adults communicate and behave. Parents' role today becomes more complex: although the internet makes everyday life easier for individuals, parents need to be careful and monitor children's online activities. As much as the internet has made life easier for an individual, the dangers lurking on it are just as pronounced.¹

¹ N. Ružić, *Zaštita djece na internetu*, "Nova prisutnost" 9 (2020), pp. 155–169.

Protecting a child from inappropriate online content is a continuing challenge for parents that requires effective parental control. Encouraging open communication between children, parents and teachers about the child's activities on the internet, and teaching children about online safety, are important forms of child protection.

For parents to adequately teach their child how to use the internet, it is necessary to make them aware of the advantages and disadvantages. The results of a survey conducted in the United Kingdom showed that half of parents believe that using the internet has more advantages than disadvantages, while the other half solicited advice on how to protect the child during the process of using the internet.²

It is essential that the parent monitors the child's online activities, provide guidance on how to safely use internet resources, and create an environment in which the child will feel comfortable sharing their online experience. There are different forms of parental mediation in the child's activities on the internet: active mediation, mediation that includes setting certain rules, simply monitoring the child's activities, and setting technical restrictions.³ There is no definitive conclusion as to which method is more effective, but authors emphasize that parental involvement in the child's activities on the internet can affect the number of risky situations that the child encounters.

Teachers are aware of the value of the internet and digital technology in the child's knowledge acquisition and communication with the environment, as well as the dangers and challenges it poses to the child. For the benefit and safety of the child, the teacher should apply proactive protective measures. In addition to the dangers that internet use can pose to a child, teachers are aware of various resources aimed at awakening the child's educational potential. Online platforms which are accessible to children can encourage learning and develop individual potential and digital competencies.

By using the internet, children may be exposed to inappropriate content, privacy violations, cyberbullying, and various forms of threats that can negatively affect their socio-emotional development. Therefore, the moral role of the teacher is to instruct the child with respect to the knowledge and skills on how

² Office of Communications. Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2019. (2020), https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/190616/children-media-use-attitudes-2019-report.pdf (03.09.2023).

³ T. Velki and I. Letica Borić, *Rizična ponašanja djece i mladih na internetu*, in: T. Velki and K. Šolić (eds.), *Izazovi digitalnog svijeta*, Osijek 2019, J. J. Strossmayer University in Osijek, pp. 61–98.

to safely use the internet in an appropriate and timely manner. Implementing digital literacy within the curriculum emphasises the need for developing digital competencies from an early school age, alongside with the online safety that continues to be less represented. With critical thinking as one of the fundamental curriculum values, the teacher's role is to teach the child how to critically evaluate the information obtained, recognize reliable sources, and protect personal data. Educating a child to become a digitally competent citizen builds the foundations of an individual's ethically responsible behavior on the internet.

2.1. Cooperation between parents and teachers

The cooperation of parents and teachers is necessary, as it establishes a unique approach to developing and building student safety while using the internet, alongside with the involvement of pedagogues and psychologist, since they can provide the child with the additional necessary support. In order to prevent the appearance of inappropriate content when using school online resources, IT support in content filters, monitoring software and a secure communication platform are required. These resources enable the creation of a safe ecosystem within the jurisdiction of the school. Building trust between students and teachers creates a pleasant atmosphere that encourages mutual dialogue during which students present their online experiences, questions and concerns. This can lead to reporting of online abuse or suspicious online encounters, empowering the student to take control of his virtual activity.

By implementing digital literacy and internet security in the school curriculum, encouraging cooperation between teachers and parents, and creating a safe and open space for communication, students develop the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for safe living in the virtual world. Cooperation between teachers and parents is crucial in protecting children while using the internet, as it ensures the overall safety of the child's internet use.

3. Methodology

This paper will present the results of research regarding the opinions of parents and teachers about the forms of their use of the internet, about the online activities of a child from their family/class, as well as the competences of monitoring

and protecting a child from their family/class while using the internet. For the purposes of the research, the questionnaire *Behaviour and habits of children on the Internet: attitudes of children, parents and teachers* was modified.⁴ From the existing *Questionnaire for teachers*, out of twenty scales, those related to personal use of the Internet, friendship with a child from the class on a social network, frequency of the child's use of the internet, forms of the child's use of the internet, personal information of the teacher about violence against children when using the internet were taken and negative behaviors of children in relation to other children while using the internet. The same questionnaire was used for parents and teachers.

The adapted questionnaire contained an explanation of the purpose of the research; independent variables (gender, age and level of education), and closed-ended questions about the forms of personal use of the internet and modern technology by parents and teachers, as well as the child's forms of use of the internet and modern technology. Research participants expressed their opinion through dichotomous answers (YES/NO) to the statements offered. On the scale for assessing the opinion of the research participants on the *Advantages of the internet for children* (k=8) and the *Dangers of using internet for children* (k=8), the research participants had the option of a five-point Likert scale, ranging from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (5) to express the degree of their own assessment of the importance of the statement.

The reliability of the instrument was confirmed using the Cronbach alpha test $\alpha=0.86$.

Frequency analysis of data, t-test and z-test of proportions were used to process the data obtained from the research in order to determine whether there is a difference in the percentage of opinions of parents and teachers in relation to a particular statement.

The research goal was to examine the opinions of parents and teachers in lower grades of elementary school with respect to personal IT competences as a significant factor in the supervision of children's safe use of the internet.

In accordance with the aim of the research, the following hypotheses were set:

H1: There is no statistically significant difference in the opinion of parents and teachers about the forms of their use of the internet.

⁴ E. Muratbegović, S. Vujović, *Ponašanje i navike djece na internetu: stavovi djece, roditelja i nastavnika informatike*, Sarajevo 2016, Save the Children in North West Balkans.

H2: There is no statistically significant difference in the personal use of social networks between parents and teachers.

H3: There is no difference in the opinion of parents and teachers about the frequency and forms of children's/students' access to the internet.

H4: There is no statistically significant difference in the opinion of teachers and parents regarding the advantage of using the internet for children.

H5: There is no statistically significant difference in the opinion of teachers and parents regarding the dangers of using the internet for children.

Primary school teachers and parents from Zadar County participated in the research. After processing the results of the survey, the relevance of the questionnaire data was determined for teachers (N=43) and parents (N=55).

4. Interpretation of results and discussion

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

CLAIMS		TEACHERS		PARENTS	
		f	%	f	%
Your gender is?	Male	1	2.3	7	12.7
	Female	42	97.7	47	85.5
	Prefer not to say	0	0	1	1.8
What is your level education?	Professional degree	11	25.6	7	12.7
	Master's degree	30	69.8	9	16.4
	Other	2	4.6	39	70.9

Table 1. shows that the majority of teachers were women (97.7%), similar to the number of female parents (85.5%), while a small percentage of participants (1.8%) preferred not to state their gender. The majority of research participants from the population of teachers have higher levels of education (25.6% have a professional degree, and 69.8% have a master's degree). The majority of parents (70.9%) belong to the other category (secondary education and unqualified).

Table 2. Forms and frequency of internet use by research participants

CLAIMS			PARENTS		TEACHERS		z-test	p
			f	%	f	%		
Do you use the internet and modern technology?	Do you use the internet?	yes	52	94.5	43	100	-1.555	0.118
		no	3	5.5	0	0		
	Do you use a computer/laptop in your daily life and work?	yes	36	65.5	42	97.7	-3.927	0.000
		no	19	34.5	1	2.3		
	Do you have mobile internet?	yes	53	96.4	41	95.3	0.252	0.802
		no	2	3.6	2	4.7		
How often do you use the internet?	I access the internet every day	yes	49	89.1	42	97.7	-1.637	0.101
		no	0	0	0	0		
	Once a week	yes	3	7.3	0	0	-	
		no	0	0	0	0		
	Several times a week	yes	2	3.6	1	2.3	-	
		no	0	0	0	0		
Where do you use the internet?	At my work place	yes	35	63.6	42	97.7	-4.075	0.000
		no	20	36.4	1	2.3		
	At friend's	yes	13	23.6	14	32.6	0.098	0.327
		no	42	76.4	19	44.2		
	At the bar	yes	31	56.4	18	41.9	-1.424	0.155
		no	24	43.6	14	32.6		

From the results shown in Table 2, it is evident that almost all teachers use the internet and mobile internet, as well as a computer/laptop in their daily life and work. A large percentage of parents use the internet and mobile internet (over 95%), while slightly more than average (65.5%) make use of a computer/laptop in their daily life and work. The results show that parents and teachers access the internet every day. However, there is a difference in the location of internet use between teachers and parents. Applying the z-test, it is observed that there is a statistically significant difference ($z = -3,927$; $p < 0,000$) in the use of the internet between teachers and parents in everyday life and work. It can be concluded that teachers use the internet more in everyday life and at the

workplace than parents. Also, there is a statistically significant difference ($z = -4.075$; $p < 0.000$) in the location of internet use between teachers and parents. These results suggest that teachers and parents are active users of the internet and modern technology, but there is a difference in their use of computers/laptops in everyday life and work, as well as the location of use. Differences in their use in the forms and locations of internet use may imply a difference in opinion and attitude about the safety of children and their use of the internet.

Table 3. Personal use of social networks by parents and teachers

CLAIMS		PARENTS		TEACHERS		z-test	p
		f	%	F	%		
Do you have a social network profile? (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)	yes	49	89.1	32	74.4	1.903	0.057
	no	6	10.9	11	25.6		
My child /A child from my class is my friend on a social network	yes	27	49.1	2	4.7	4.782	0.000
	no	28	50.9	38	94.1		
My child/Child in the class is not in my social networks friends list. but I occasionally follow his activities on social networks	yes	32	58.2	12	27.9	2.990	0.002
	no	23	41.8	25	58.2		
I monitor the activity of my child/child- ren from the class, on the Internet in a different way.	yes	10	19.6	11	25.6	-0.088	0.373
	no	40	80.4	24	55.8		

Table 3. shows that most teachers and parents have a profile on a social network. Although there is a difference between teachers and parents in the percentage of having profiles on social networks, it is not statistically significant. Using the z-test, a statistically significant difference between teachers and parents is visible in relation to the statement *My child /A child from my class is my friend on the social network* ($z = 4.782$; $p < 0.000$). Also, a statistically significant difference was found between teachers and parents in relation to the statement *My child/ The child from the class is not among my friends*

on the social networks I use, but I occasionally follow his activities on social networks ($z=2.990$; $p=0.002$). Parents, regardless of whether they are not friends with the child on the social network, find a way to monitor the child's activities, so they can promptly protect him from possible cyberbullying. Therefore, parents are more often friends with the child on the social network and follow his activities, which is also consistent with the role they play in the child's life.

Table 4. How often does a child from your class/your child access the internet?

CLAIMS	TEACHERS		PARENTS	
	f	%	f	%
He never accesses the Internet	2	4.7	4	7.3
He accesses the internet every day	33	76.7	42	76.4
He accesses the internet once a week	2	4.7	0	0
Several times a week	6	14.0	9	16.4
Once a month or less often	0	0	0	0
Total	43	100.0	55	100

Table 4. shows that most teachers and parents feel that children access the internet daily. According to the data, it can be observed that neither teachers nor parents are of the opinion that children access the internet once a month. Moreover, there is also a small percentage of children who do not access the internet at all. Based on the results, it can be concluded that children access the internet on a daily basis, which implies the need to educate not only children about the safe use of the internet, but also their parents and teachers, due to the advances in digital technology.

Livingston et al.⁵ also found that 93% of children access internet every day. Research shows that children spend an average of one hour a day on the internet.

⁵ S. Livingstone, L. Haddon, A. Görzig, K. Ólafsson, *Risks and safety on the internet: the perspective of European children: full findings and policy implications from the EU Kids Online survey of 9–16 year olds and their parents in 25 countries*, London 2011, EU Kids Online Network, London, UK.

Table 5. A child from your class / Your child uses the internet for the following activities

CLAIMS		TEACHER		PARENTS	
		f	%	f	%
Search for interesting content	Never	1	2.3	3	5.5
	Sometimes	30	69.8	27	49.1
	Often	11	25.6	25	45.5
Communication with friends	Never	3	7.0	4	7.3
	Sometimes	15	34.9	26	47.3
	Often	24	55.8	25	45.5
Play online games	Never	5	11.9	2	3.6
	Sometimes	16	38.1	37	67.3
	Often	21	50	16	29.1
Search for school-related content (encyclopedias, stories, books...)	Never	1	2.3	9	16.4
	Sometimes	30	69.8	24	43.6
	Often	12	27.9	22	40.0
Makes Youtube videos	Never	17	39.5	46	83.6
	Sometimes	23	53.5	3	5.5
	Often	1	2.3	6	10.9

The results in Table 5 show that children often use the internet for various purposes, especially searching for information needed for school, communicating with friends, playing online games and searching for interesting content. The results show that the majority of parents (83.6%) believe that their children never record YouTube videos. Slightly more than half of the participants from the population of teachers (53.5%), are of the opinion that children from their class sometimes record YouTube videos.

The obtained results indicate the diversity of the child's activities on the internet as well as the differences of opinion between parents and teachers in relation to the child's individual activities on the internet.

Table 6. Opinions of teachers and parents about the benefits of using the internet for children

CLAIMS	TEACHERS			PARENTS			t-test	P
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
The child learns new and useful content on the internet.	43	3.26	0.539	55	3.55	0.741	2.241	0.050
Using the internet, the child acquires digital competences that he will need later	43	3.33	0.566	55	3.73	0.804	2.886	0.007
It is better for children to spend time on the internet than in front of the TV	43	2.56	0.881	55	2.35	0.673	1.295	0.390
By using the internet, children develop faster intellectually	43	2.37	1.024	55	2.67	1.072	1.409	0.317
By using the internet, the child learns to search for information independently	43	3.21	0.861	55	3.60	0.955	2.120	0.067
Children develop their abilities better by playing games on the internet	43	2.12	1.051	55	1.98	0.652	0.765	0.887
The use of the internet contributes to better communication between children	43	1.98	0.938	55	2.24	0.769	1.471	0.282
The internet helps children complete their schoolwork	42	2.76	0.958	55	3.38	0.933	3.215	0.002

From the results in Table 6. it can be seen that parents have a more positive opinion about the benefits of using the internet for children than teachers. Using the t-test, a statistically significant difference was found in the opinion of parents and teachers in relation to the statement *The child learns new and useful content on the internet* ($t=2.241$; $p=0.05$), in relation to the statement *Using the internet, the child acquires digital competences that he will need later* ($t=2.886$; $p=0.007$), and in relation to the claim that the internet helps children to complete school assignments ($t=3.215$; $p=0.002$). Comparing all three statements, parents expressed a more positive opinion about the benefits of using the internet for their child. Although there is no statistically significant difference in the opinion of teachers and parents, the results show parents have a more positive opinion in relation to teachers, in relation to the statement *Using the internet, the child learns to search for information independently*.

Table 7. The opinion of teachers and parents of school children about the dangers of using the internet for children

CLAIMS	TEACHERS			PARENTS			t-test	p
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
Regular use of the internet by a child leads to internet addiction	43	3.88	0.793	55	4.24	0.744	2.291	0.043
Children are exposed to violent and inappropriate content on the internet	43	3.88	0.762	55	4.33	0.640	3.109	0.003
It is better for children to look for explanations of unknown words in books than on the Internet	43	3.42	1.006	55	3.18	1.234	1.060	0.577
Excessive use of the internet can separate children from their parents and friends	43	4.05	0.872	55	3.96	1.053	0.462	0.194
Children play sports less because of the internet	43	3.81	0.958	55	3.51	0.940	1.551	0.241
Instead of playing with their peers, children spend time on the internet	42	3.90	0.906	55	3.69	0.998	1.088	0.552
By using the internet, children are in potential danger from predators	43	3.91	0.840	55	4.09	0.800	1.074	0.564
The internet can have a very negative impact on children's development	42	3.62	0.987	55	3.71	0.712	0.504	0.614

The results shown in Table 7. show a statistically significant difference in the opinions of teachers and parents. Compared to teachers, parents expressed greater concern in relation to the statement *Regular use of the internet by a child leads to internet addiction* ($t=2.291$; $p=0.043$) and in relation to the statement *Children are exposed to violent and inappropriate content on the internet* $t=3.109$ $p<0,0038$. In all other statements, there is no statistically significant difference in the opinion of parents and teachers in relation to the potential dangers that a child may encounter when using the internet.

Leung's and McBride-Chang's⁶ research showed that online friendships positively affect the well-being of an individual child and their daily relationships. By participating in games on the internet, following different social groups,

⁶ A. M. Leung, C. McBride-Chang, *Game on? Online friendship, cyberbullying, and psychosocial adjustment in Hong Kong Chinese children*, „Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology“ 32 (2013) 2, pp. 159–185.

children completely immerse themselves in what they are watching, lose their sense of reality, and perceive participation in online activities as a special reward.⁷ Certain studies have revealed that children are generally very little physically active on weekends and holidays, their sleep time and waking time changes, which is a consequence of more time spent in front of the TV screen, computer, and playstation.⁸ The authors believe that the mentioned disorders are the result of poorly structured time management, in which parents play an important role. In order not to endanger the health and safety of children, parents should organize activities that will positively affect the health of the child.

According to Duvnjak and Šincek⁹, peer violence does not occur only once or twice, but is repeated. There are different forms of traditional peer abuse such as: hitting, mocking, malicious teasing or calling names, but also indirect forms such as: social isolation, avoidance or friendship manipulation. Li's¹⁰ research data shows that the same people are prone to violence on the internet and in the traditional sense (about 30%). The goal of both traditional violence and internet violence is to hurt another person.¹¹ It should also be noted that violence on the internet differs from classic violence in that the materials with inappropriate content are published and available to everyone, which can ultimately result in negative social and psychological consequences for the child.

Anderson and Bushman¹² indicate a connection between peer and media violence. Children who are exposed to media violence at an earlier school age become verbally and physically aggressive at a later stage. Based on the

⁷ J. Nakamura, M. Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow Theory and Research*, in: C. R. Snyder, S. J. Lopez (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology*, Oxford 2009, pp. 195–206.

⁸ K. Brazendale, M. W. Beets, R. G. Weaver, R. R. Pate, G. M. Turner-McGievy, A. T. Kaczynski, J. L. Chandler, A. Bohnert, P. T. von Hippel, *Understanding differences between summer vs. school obesogenic behaviors of children: the structured days hypothesis*, „International Journal of Behaviors Nutrition and Physical Activity“ 14 (2017), pp. 1–14.

⁹ I. Duvnjak, D. Šincek, *Vršnjačko nasilje u digitalnom svijetu*, in: T. Velki., K. Šolić (eds.), *Izazovi digitalnog svijeta*, Osijek 2019, J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek, pp. 105–121.

¹⁰ Q. Li, *Bullying in the new playground: Research into cyberbullying and cyber victimization*, „Australasian Journal of Educational Technology“ 23 (2007) 4, pp. 435–454.

¹¹ R. M., Kowalski, S. P. Limber, P. W. Agatston, *Cyberbullying: Bullying in the Digital Age*, New Jersey 2008, Blackwell Publishing.

¹² C. A. Anderson, B. J. Bushman, *Effects of violent video games on aggressive behaviour, aggressive cognition, aggressive affect, psychological arousal and prosocial behaviour: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Scientific Literature*, „American Psychological Society“ 12 (2001) 5, pp. 353–359.

conducted research, Livazović¹³ states that prolonged exposure to violent content can affect a child's behavior.

According to the UNESCO report (2015)¹⁴, the problem of internet safety (delinquency, excessive exposure to the internet, cyber-bullying) is expressed worldwide, with children and young people being recognized as the most at-risk group, since they are not sufficiently aware of the present dangers. Therefore, it is not enough for parents and educational staff to alert children to be careful when using the internet, but it is necessary to teach the child to reduce the risk of using the internet by engaging in responsible and ethical behaviour.¹⁵ According to Borovac¹⁶, a child should learn to understand media literacy in order to be able to think critically about the contents he follows and participates in.

For many years, different theories have described the negative influence of the media on children's behavior: *General Aggression Model*¹⁷, *Cognitive Neo-association Theory*¹⁸, *Script Theory*¹⁹, *Symbolic Interaction Theory*²⁰ and *the Differential Susceptibility to Media Effects Model*²¹. However, the problematization of the threat to the security and privacy of internet users is still in its infancy.

¹³ G. Livazović, *Utjecaj medija na poremećaje u ponašanju adolescenata*, Zagreb 2009, University in Zagreb.

¹⁴ UNESCO, *World Trends In Freedom of Expression and Media Development: Special Digital Focus*, 2015, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002349/234933e.pdf> (20.06.2023).

¹⁵ A. Thierer, *Parental Controls and Online Child Protection: A Survey of Tools and Methods*, Washington 2009, D.C.: The Progress & Freedom Foundation.

¹⁶ T. Borovac, *Pregled istraživanja o informacijskoj sigurnosti*, in: T. Velki, K. Šolić (eds.), *Priručnik za informacijsku sigurnost i zaštitu privatnosti*, Osijek 2018, J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek, pp. 13–34.

¹⁷ C. A. Anderson and B. J. Bushman, *Effects of violent video games on aggressive behaviour, aggressive cognition, aggressive affect, psychological arousal and prosocial behaviour: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Scientific Literature*, „American Psychological Society“ 12 (2001) 5, pp. 353–359.

¹⁸ L. Berkowitz, *Aggression: Its causes, consequences, and control*, New York 1993, McGraw-Hill.

¹⁹ L. R. Huesmann, L. D. Eron, *Television and the aggressive child: A cross-national comparison*, New Jersey 1986, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

²⁰ R. Catalano, R. Kosterman, J. D. Hawkins, M. Newcomb, R. Abbott, *Modeling the etiology of adolescent substance use: A test of the social development model*, „Journal of Drug Issue“ 26 (1996) 2, pp. 429–455.

²¹ P. M. Valkenburg, J. Peter, *The differential susceptibility to media effects model*, „Journal of Communication“ 63 (2013), pp. 221–243.

Research has shown that poor family relationships, weak peer affiliation and certain personality traits (neuroticism, impulsiveness, excitement seeking, unscrupulousness) can be linked to various risky behaviors of an individual on the internet.²²

5. Conclusion

This research aimed to determine the opinion of teachers and parents about personal forms of internet use and competencies in monitoring and protecting children during their internet use. The research results show that the majority of teachers and parents use the internet and modern digital technology in their daily life and work. A higher percentage of parents than teachers are present on social networks. Teachers are not friends on social networks with children from their class, whereas parents and their children are. These results are expected, when considering the role of parents and the importance of their role as primary educators in the child's life. Furthermore, teachers and parents are aware of the frequency of children's and students' access to the internet.

Since this paper investigates the important topic that is safety of children's internet use, the aim was to determine the opinion of teachers and parents about the advantages and dangers of children's internet use. Research results show that teachers and parents agree that by using the internet children acquire new knowledge and develop digital competencies.

Both parents and teachers believe that the internet helps children to independently search for information and complete their schoolwork. They identify the following dangers: potential screen addiction, violence in games, exposure to inappropriate content, social isolation from the real world, and reduction in physical activity.

Furthermore, both parents and teachers are aware of the need for cooperation, dialogue and mutual support in order to teach the child safe and responsible use of the internet. According to teachers and parents, continuous education of the child, as well as their own, is necessary, so that the child's use of the internet is safe and productive, in accordance with his developmental needs and interests.

²² T. Velki, I. Letica Borić, *Rizična ponašanja djece i mladih na internetu*, in: T. Velki, K. Šolić (eds.), *Izazovi digitalnog svijeta*, Osijek 2019, J.J. Strossmayer University in Osijek, pp. 61–98.

This study and similar research provide an incentive for the development of educational policies and programs aimed at promoting safe use of the internet in the family and at school, helping the child develop digital literacy and critical thinking in order to understand the potential risks of the virtual world.

Bibliography

- Anderson C. A., Bushman B. J., *Effects of violent video games on aggressive behaviour, aggressive cognition, aggressive affect, psychological arousal and prosocial behaviour: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Scientific Literature*, „American Psychological Society“ 12 (2001) 5, pp. 353–359.
- Berkowitz L., *Aggression: Its causes, consequences, and control*, New York 1993, McGraw-Hill.
- Borovac T., *Pregled istraživanja o informacijskoj sigurnosti*, in: T. Velki, K. Šolić (eds.), *Priručnik za informacijsku sigurnost i zaštitu privatnosti*, Osijek 2018, J. J. Strossmayer University in Osijek, pp. 13–34.
- Brazendale K., Beets M. W., Weaver R. G., Pate R.R., Turner-McGievy G. M., Kaczynski A. T., Chandler J.L., Bohnert A., P. T. von Hippel, *Understanding differences between summer vs. school obesogenic behaviors of children: the structured days hypothesis*, „International Journal of Behaviors Nutrition and Physical Activity“ 14 (2017) 100.
- Catalano R., Kosterman R., Hawkins J. D., Newcomb M. and Abbott R., *Modeling the etiology of adolescent substance use: A test of the social development model*, „Journal of Drug Issue“ 26 (1996) 2, pp. 429–455.
- Duvnjak I., Šincek D., *Vršnjačko nasilje u digitalnom svijetu*, in: T. Velki, K. Šolić (eds.), *Izazovi digitalnog svijeta*, Osijek 2019, J. J. Strossmayer University in Osijek.
- Huesmann L. R., Eron L. D., *Television and the aggressive child: A cross-national comparison*, New Jersey 1986, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Kowalski R. M., Limber S. P., Agatston, P.W., *Cyberbullying: Bullying in the Digital Age*, New Jersey 2008, Blackwell Publishing.
- Leung A. M., McBride-Chang C., *Game on? Online friendship, cyberbullying, and psychosocial adjustment in Hong Kong Chinese children*, „Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology“ 32 (2013) 2, pp. 159–185.
- Li Q., *Bullying in the new playground: Research into cyberbullying and cyber victimization*, „Australasian Journal of Educational Technology“ 23 (2007) 4, pp. 435–454.
- Livazović G., *Utjecaj medija na poremećaje u ponašanju adolescenata*, Zagreb 2009, University in Zagreb.
- Livingstone S., Haddon L., Görzig A., Ólafsson, K., *Risks and safety on the internet: the perspective of European children: full findings and policy implications from the EU Kids Online survey of 9–16 year olds and their parents in 25 countries*, London 2011, EU Kids Online Network, London, UK.

- Muratbegović E. and Vujović S., *Ponašanje i navike djece na internetu: stavovi djece, roditelja i nastavnika informatike*, Sarajevo 2016, *Save the Children in North West Balkans*.
- Nakamura J., Csikszentmihalyi M., *Flow Theory and Research*, in: C. R. Snyder, S. J. Lopez (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology*, Oxford 2009, pp. 195–206.
- Office of Communications. Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2019 (2020). https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/190616/children-media-use-attitudes-2019-report.pdf (03.09.2023).
- Ružić N., *Zaštita djece na Internetu*, „Nova prisutnost“ 9 (2020), pp. 155–169.
- Thierer A., *Parental Controls and Online Child Protection: A Survey of Tools and Methods*, Washington 2009, D.C.: The Progress & Freedom Foundation.
- UNESCO, World Trends In Freedom of Expression and Media Development: Special Digital Focus, 2015, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002349/234933e.pdf> (20.06.2023).
- Valkenburg P. M., Peter J., *The differential susceptibility to media effects model*, „Journal of Communication“ 63 (2013), pp. 221–243.
- Velki T., Letica Borić I., *Rizična ponašanja djece i mladih na internetu*, in: *Izazovi digitalnog svijeta*, T. Velki, K. Šolić (eds.), Osijek 2019, J. J. Strossmayer University in Osijek, pp. 61–98.