An Examination of Parents Opinions Related to Digital Games

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Abstract

In recent years, digital games have appeared in a variety of forms such as console games, computer games and online games. The families are often encountering these games in their daily lives. Because of the dizzying growth in capacity and speed of tablet computers and personal digital assistants, these games are more common in our daily lives nowadays. There are also many positive and negative aspects of widespread use of digital games. Digital games which are used extensively by children lead to transformation by changing the interaction and communication within the family. Institutions and scientists are studying the use of digital games by realizing their importance in our country. Academic studies and reports are published using different variables to determine the effects of the digital games on the people and family. The purpose of this study is to investigate the opinions of parents about digital games.

The study was conducted with 78 parents whose children were studying in a private school providing primary, secondary and high school education in the Ankara province. A questionnaire including demographic information based on the literature was developed by researchers in order to collect the data. The questionnaire, based on expert opinions, was tested on 20 students with a pilot study. Relevant corrections were made after the feedback and the questionnaire was ready for collecting data.

45 of the participants are male and 33 are female. 60% of these participants are university graduates, 18% are high school, 18% are middle school and 4% are primary school graduates. 89% of the parents have computers at home and 84% allow the child to play digital games at home. 11% of the parents stated that the child started to play digital games at 0-5 years old, 82% at 6-10 years old and 7% of them at 11 years old and above. The digital games played vary from traditional to educational, strategy, racing and adventure games. The parents have ranked the reasons for playing digital games as the most time-consuming, learning/educational and loneliness. 68% of the parents stated that digital games partially affected the child's success, 17% had a positive effect, and 15% had a negative effect. While 73% of the parents set the playing time by putting rules on the child, 29% allow the child to play by raising awareness about the digital games. The rate of those who did not respond to the child was 6%. Other significant findings about the effects of digital games on children can be listed as follows:

- 33% indicate that the child is not working on his/her lessons when playing a digital game, and 38% do not agree.

- 37% stated that the child playing digital games negatively affect other activities such as sports, reading books, entertainment, and 36% do not agree.
- 39% are undecided about the fact that digital games have improved their children's knowledge and skills.
- 52% stated that digital games were addictive on children.
- 65% stated that they were wasting time with digital games
- 35% stated that digital games had adverse effects on their children's health, while 33% did not.
- 27% stated that children were affected by the digital games, while 45% did not.
- 75% stated that the child imitated the character in the digital game.
- 45% stated that their child was peaceful after playing digital games.
- 43% stated that the child's mind stayed in the digital game after playing it.

Research findings indicate that digital games are significant roles in the lives of families and children. Digital games partially affect the academic success of the child based on the research findings. One of the important findings was the multiplicity of families who believed that the game was addictive to children. It is very important to make awareness raising activities systematically in such a way as to prevent digital game addiction. In this context, various examples that present examples of proper usage of technology to families are very important.

Keywords: Digital games, parents' opinions, addiction, children