Walsh University

A Correlational Examination of Family Function and the Media

A Thesis by

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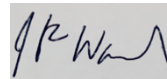
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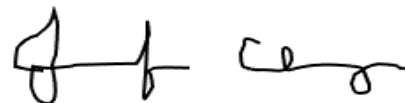Accepted by the Honors Program

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In reflection of this study's progression, I would like to thank all of those who have influenced the development of my thesis study for the Walsh University Honors Program. The project began last year with a literature review wherein I explored the impact media has on family socialization. Choosing this topic was not difficult. For that reason, I have to thank my parents who instilled a sense of critical thinking in me regarding technology and its overall impact on the psychological and physical aspects of the human person. Because of my own familial experiences with social media, I was able to find a subject I was passionate about quickly. Thank you Mom and Dad. I love you both and could not have finished this project without your unwavering support and ceaseless encouragement. My thanks goes out to those who directed, wrote, produced, and were interviewed throughout The Social Dilemma documentary, which was a great source of inspiration to me as well. Thank you to Dr. Clevinger and Dr. Rytwinski for assisting me in this endeavor and for providing me with many an opportunity for growth. The dedication you provide to this program and all of its students is greatly needed and appreciated even more so. Thank you Dr. Wayand for the wisdom and great experience you have provided to me. I could not have completed this project without your knowledge and understanding of the processes involved. Thank you for always seeing the bigger picture and for encouraging me to explore every avenue. My thanks also goes out to Dr. Xu, who was eager to help me in every way, shape, and form, despite my request's unconventional timing. Lastly, I would like to thank my friends and their families. My thanks goes out to everyone who set aside time for that fifteen minute survey. Thank you, thank you, thank you! May the Lord bless and keep you.

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Abstract

This research investigated the effects of technology on family structure and family development. An online survey was utilized to recruit 117 parent and young adult participants. In response to an anticipated lack of participants, both populations were recruited from Walsh by means of a shared email, flyers, and gift card raffle. Although participants remained anonymous, there was an included section at the end of the survey for those interested in the gift card raffle to enter their contact information. Survey questions were incorporated into the study in order to approximate how much time each participant spent on media as well. The survey results showed that both groups provided responses indicative of high media usage and that students maintained higher scores for questions seven through 14, which involved an Internet Addiction Diagnostic Questionnaire. There was however, no significant difference to support that high media users reported lower rates of family functioning. ANOVA and t-test statistics were utilized through Jamovi to analyze the results of the study and explore the hypotheses.

A Correlational Examination of Family Function and the Media

In a world that is becoming increasingly reliant upon technology, many studies have attempted to better understand the effects of media in relation to individual psychology and behavior. However, little research exists in relation to media and family life. This is especially true regarding familial socialization. The purpose of this research is to examine how media usage impacts the relationship between developing young adults and their parents, as well as assess the participants' attitudes regarding technology. Young adults include those between the ages of 18 and 22.

Due to its high demand and easy accessibility, an ever-increasing amount of the population is being introduced to media usage and technology from a younger age than ever before (Rideout et al., 2010). For sake of convenience, technologies have been implemented in businesses, schools, hospitals- virtually everywhere, including the home. Last year, American adolescents were projected to spend a minimum of nine hours a day engaging with digital technology by means of streaming videos, listening to music, and playing games (Caprì et al., 2021). That number was projected last year. Without any considerable disparity regarding demographics, that number has risen considerably since the study took place and does not account for the increased usage of media by parents. This is directly relational to the disruption of the constructs set forth by the *family systems theory* (Keller, 2020). The fa*mily systems theory* focuses on interactions between family members and posits that family function involves the qualities gained by the shared experience of family members (Hodge et al., 2012). According to this theory, family functioning is greater than the functioning of individual persons because of the interactive qualities held between people in a family structure. Familial, shared experiences promote interaction, and those interactions provide feedback (Hodge et al., 2012). Moreover,

healthy levels of family function are characterized by conditions such as consistent communication, clear roles, and cohesion (Alderfer et al., 2008). Such conditions are limited by media devices, which can lead to poor family functioning. The concepts laid out by the *family systems theory* align with the investigation of this study, which explored the correlational potential between family functioning and media usage.

McDaniel and Radesky (2017) found that over half of the parents involved in their research admitted to having checked their phones during mealtime, playtime, and whilst having conversations with their children. As more and more families rely on the media for entertainment, the amount of time spent socializing with each other continues to decrease by the wayside. Since mirroring is common for young children and even adolescents, these findings are predictive of the child's future behavior in relation to media usage. Substantial research also supports that parents who engage in more media usage tend to be less restrictive of their children's media usage (Hodge et al., 2012). The prevalence of this issue is alarming, as unrestricted media usage and overexposure can pose a variety of dangers to individuals. Threats such as social media addiction, cyberbullying, gambling, dark web exposure, pornography, online predators, and more, can have drastic psychological and behavioral consequences. The addictive nature of apps and devices can result in attention and learning deficits, increases in obesity and depression, exposure to inappropriate content, and social insufficiencies (Reid et al., 2016). Despite these effects, societal pressures continue to influence others in engaging in indulgent media behaviors.

The proposed study was administered so as to gauge participant media usage, internet addiction, and family functioning. Participants were asked personal questions about activities and time spent on media devices. Such questions were asked in order to evaluate and compare

the data of both sample groups. Survey questions were adapted from past studies relative to the topic. Reliability and validity measurements were included by means of a 2019 study by Procentese et al., 2019 regarding social media's impact on the family system, the Internet Addiction Test created by Young (1998), and research involving media usage by Rosen et al., (2013).

This research was conducted in order to promote advancement towards a largely underrepresented and overlooked topic. The subject in question has rapidly progressed to become a global epidemic, rather than a societal matter. By partaking in the research, participants were able to expand their initial perceptions regarding media influences on individual and family life. Students and parents who participated in the study were also provided with the opportunity to enter a raffle for a gift card and some students were provided with course credit. This study was intended to raise participant and public awareness, as well as to change insights regarding the consequences of media usage and over exposure. However, the larger intention was for this research to effectively impact all participants in a way that promotes more conscious decision making about technology and the media.

Review of Literature

In and of itself, family function refers to the communicative, emotional, and social properties held within the universal environment of a household (Caprì et al., 2021). According to the Family systems theory, family function includes the adaptable, organizational, and interactive qualities held between family members through their shared experience (Hodge et al., 2012). Whereas poor family functioning occurs within families that maintain high levels of disengagement, inefficiency, and poor behavioral regulation, healthy levels of family function are characterized by consistent communication, cohesion, and clear roles (Alderfer et al., 2008).

Studies show that when families engage in increased media usage, they encounter poor family function. As the amount of media usage increases within a family, so does their level of rigidity and disconnection (Caprì et al., 2021). Thus, it can be assumed that parental media usage is a much more reliable predictor for poor family functioning when compared to children's media usage.

Media Trends & Leisure

The Family systems theory holds that individuals which make up a family are greater than themselves because of the way they interact and how those interactions provide feedback (Hodge et al., 2012). As leisure remains young adults were estimated to have spent at least an hour and a half on the computer every day (Rideout et al., 2010). Today's American young people are estimated to spend a minimum of nine hours a day engaging with digital technology by means of streaming videos, listening to music, and playing games (Caprì et al., 2021). As more families begin to rely on the media for entertainment, the amount of time spent socializing with each other continues to drop.

In relation to internet usage, the estimated use of television has also increased. As the American family's most recognized pastime, television has led to many effects on family life. Whilst television allows for families to spend more time together, the absence of social connection implies a lack of success in helping to build their relationships. It has been estimated that for every hour of watching TV, children spend six minutes less talking to their parents (Dempsey, 2005). Additional research has suggested that family conversation drops by 40% when watching television (Hodge et al., 2012). Thus, spending large amounts of time engaged in the passive experience of watching television provides no opportunity for communication.

This is not to say that media provides a wholly negative experience for families however. There are many forms of media that offer bonding opportunities. Social media, video games, email, and texting provide ways for families to connect outside of other leisure activities. Studies have shown that such activities can result in stronger mental health and better behavior for children who engage in appropriate forms of media with their parents (Coyne et al., 2011). These findings suggest that those who share in media activities are more likely to have higher family functioning, as they maintain higher levels of involvement. In fact, girls who played video games with their fathers were more likely to have better physiological health and socializing skills than other young children (Coyne et al., 2011). Such examples depict the way in which media inspires connection and bonding opportunities. However, much research continues to support that media-based leisure activities have negative social and communicational impacts upon familial functioning.

Effects on Familial Socialization

The social changes brought about by the regular use of media technologies have impacted many families across the country. Mealtime, for instance, has greatly transformed alongside the development of media. Studies have found that television watching during mealtime occurs sixty percent of the time in families (Ferdous et al., 2016). An additional U.S. survey found that 63 percent of eight- to 18-year-olds reported that the television is regularly on during meals (Rideout et al., 2010). It can be assumed that such behaviors manifest and become habitual as a child reaches adulthood. The phrase 'zombie eating' is often utilized to describe the lack of engagement endured whilst individuals occupy themselves with media when eating. This phrase points to the deeply rooted issue that coincides with overindulging in such technologies.

In the past, mealtime was a prime way for families to exchange experience, sensibilities, and moral perspectives about life. Family or "oikos," in ancient Greek, was defined by a ritual practice in which parents and their children engaged in communal eating and exchanged collective narratives (Ferdous et al., 2016). Television and social media are both widely considered to have disrupted such interpersonal aspects of shared meals and leisure time, as they limit the amount of communication shared (Zillmann et al., 2009). Ironically, media sources such as the Internet, TV, Radio, iPhone, and email were created to help individuals communicate more often with family and friends. Researchers are finding however, that the style and type of communication through media devices is much weaker than face to face communication (Ferdous et al., 2016). These forms of media continue to undermine and replace the social constructs in which familial functioning is based. As a result, the overwhelming measure of disconnection experienced for these technologically dependent families has been shown to lead to poor family socialization.

Past research has indicated that young people who spend a significant amount of time on social network sites feel less supported by their parents (Caprì et al., 2021). Due to the negative associations with unsupervised and unrestricted technological devices, families with high media usage experience high levels of chaos and disconnection. Many times, internet addiction can cause individuals to lose their sense of reality and become less emotionally stable. This responsibility falls heavily to parents, as children look to them to set the example for media usage and behave accordingly. An additional study revealed that children who became so immersed in technology ignored their parent fifty percent of the time when they had come home from work (Hodge et al., 2012). This implies that parents who encourage media usage tend to set a negative example for their children. It also suggests that such immersed behaviors continue for

the child as they enter adulthood because media usage becomes more frequent. Such behavior is believed to have been amplified with the increase of teleworking. It has become standard for parents who work from home to spend more time on technology than they do with their children or spouses. Studies have shown that 70 percent of women feel as though their media devices interfere with their familial relationships on a daily basis (Hodge et al., 2012). Therefore, the effects caused by addictive and unrestricted technological use and media are indeed concerning realities. These effects have been shown to relate to familial size and number of children.

This research serves to investigate the effects of technology on family structure and family development. The study's online survey was administered to 117 students and parents from Walsh University in North Canton, Ohio. A survey link was sent out to parents of participating students, although the parent and student surveys were not linked. Both response sets were integral to this study, as they were both needed in order to compare and analyze the findings for any similarities and differences. The survey was released at the beginning of September and remained open until October 31st. The consent form for each participant was obtained prior to the beginning of the survey.

Hypotheses

H1: Both groups of participants will report that they experience media usage at a high rate with respect to the 5- point frequency scale.

A 2013 by Rosen was utilized to develop questions, four, five, and six. These are the questions that were used to test this hypothesis. A t-test compared the average ratings of both sample groups in order to see if parents and students differ in their internet usage. The scale for these questions ranged from one to five with higher numbers indicating more media usage. In other words, high numerical responses were indicative of high rates of media usage.

IV: Parent vs. student participant

DV: Rates of media usage

H2: The groups will differ in respect to media addiction. Specifically, students will maintain higher scores for questions eight through sixteen.

The Internet Addiction Diagnostic Questionnaire (IADQ) was originally developed as an initial screening tool for diagnosis (Young, 1998). Questions seven through 14 utilized the questionnaire implemented by Young, 1998. A t-test compared the average rating for both sample groups. Again, a 5-point frequency scale was used. Higher scores indicated addictive behaviors.

Iv: Parent vs. student participant

DV: IADQ responses

H3: High users will have lower rates of family functioning.

Using data from questions seven regarding screen time report, I separated the participants into high, medium, and low internet usage groups in order to see if they differ on family functioning. The groups were identified based on how minimal or significant entertainment and social based media usage is rated. Question eight provided a scope of the participant's media usage report in relation to work related activity and social or entertainment-based activity.

They were then compared to see if they differ on family functioning using a one-way ANOVA test with three levels. Questions 17 through 25 were formulated using a 2019 study by Procentese et al., 2019 regarding social media's impact on the family system. These inquiries were utilized to rate each participant's level of family functioning. This is a correlational exploration, rather than a claim about causal relationships between the two variables.

These items refer to both positive and negative impacts of media usage upon family functioning, relative to Procentese et al. and the 2019 study on family systems. Higher numbers on the 5- point scale refer to agreement about media's disruption on the family functioning, whereas low numbers show disagreement about experienced media disruption within the household.

IV: High, medium, low users

Based on screen time reports provided by question six.

DV: Family functioning

Questions 15 through 23

Methodology

This study is a quasi-experimental design. The two sample groups being utilized as independent variables could not be randomly selected as they involve participant characteristics. Though there is indeed a correlational relationship between the variables, it cannot be described as causational due to the study's design.

Participants

Nineteen of the 117 participants identified as part of the parent population. The 98 other participants were part of the Walsh student population. The resulting proportions include 16% of the population being parents and 84% being students. Prior to data cleaning, the parent population made up about 18% of respondents. Alongside these trends lie gender disparities. Forty-three of the remaining participants were male and 74 were women. These gaps were further examined throughout the research limitations section.

An email was released at the beginning of September 2022, wherein Walsh students were asked to forward the survey link to their parents. Flyers were also posted around the

university. All participants had to be 18 or older in order to participate in the study between young adults and their parents. The students had to be between the ages of 18 and 22 and were recruited by means of said email, flyers, and an included gift card raffle. They were also recruited by means of the intro to psychology participant pool at Walsh and the FYE classes. The parent group was recruited by means of the forwarded email, Walsh faculty, and the gift card raffle.

Materials

In response to an anticipated lack of participants, the parent population was recruited from Walsh faculty by means of a shared email and gift card raffle. Parents recruited by means of Walsh faculty were surveyed in order to capture their responses as well as the responses of their young adult children. The age of young adults who participated in the research ranged from 18 to 22. Students were recruited by means of a drafted email, flyers, an included gift card raffle, and soliciting volunteers in person through the Intro to Psyc pool and the FYE classes. My email and phone number were provided for interested parties to reach out to if they have questions. Students were told that they needed to be 18 or older to participate.

Although the participants remained anonymous, there was an included section at the end of the survey for those interested in the gift card raffle to enter their contact information. Each of the individuals were assigned a number. One person was picked by means of a random number generator and their information was used to provide them with the 30 dollar Winking Lizard gift card.

Survey questions one and two obtained only necessary demographic information from each participant. Items from the Media and Technology Usage and Attitudes Scale (MTUAS) (Rosen et al., 2013) were incorporated into questions three through six, which were used to measure the

subject's media tendencies. For these items, a 5 itemed frequency scale was used and includes the options of: weekly, several times a week, once a day, several times a day, and several times an hour. Validity measures for the MTUAS included fill in responses concerning the subject's screen time report.

Questions seven through 14 directly incorporated an Internet Addiction Test (Young, 1998), which was utilized as a validity and a reliability measure. These inquiries included items taken from past DSM diagnostic criteria indicative of addiction.

Using the Likert scale, family function was measured in relation to social media's impact on the family system, as it was in a study conducted by Procentese et al., 2019. While this study's prior inquiries focused on the participant habits regarding media usage, questions 15 through 23 are relative to perceived effects on family functioning.

The first hypothesis was based on participant responses to the incorporated questions from the Media and Technology Usage and Attitudes Scale by Rosen (2013). A t-test compared the averages of each sample group in order to see if parents and students differ in their internet usage. By means of said t-test, the first hypothesis was explored using variables of media usage and participant characteristics (parent versus student). I predicted that both groups will report a high rate of media usage. If the student and parent groups provided high numerical responses to these questions, then they have experienced high rates of media usage.

The IADQ developed by Young (1998) was also incorporated into my survey so as to compare the average ratings of internet addiction for both sample groups. A t-test compared the average ratings for both independent variables. The independent variable involved participant characteristics of being a student or parent. The dependent variable involved the Internet Addiction Test responses. If student participants maintained higher scores for questions based on

the IADQ, then they maintained a higher level of addictive behaviors when compared to the other participant group.

Using a past study conducted by Procentese et al., 2019, my study also investigated family functioning and media's impact on the family system. Responses from these questions were used to test the third hypothesis through the use of a one-way ANOVA. The IV involved three groups of media users: high, medium and low. The DV was based on participant responses the questions which measured family function. After separating the participants into groups based on their internet usage, I attempted to discover any differences in relation to group ratings of family functioning. If participants reported a high response to the questions involving their screen time report, then they will have reported lower rates of family functioning.

Research Procedures

Recruitment materials for this study included flyers to be posted around the school, as well as an email with the survey link included. This email was sent out at the beginning of September. In response to an anticipated lack of participants, the 'parent' sample population was recruited from Walsh faculty, a gift card raffle, as well as the email previously mentioned. Students were recruited by means of said drafted email, flyers, the included gift card raffle, and soliciting volunteers in person through the Intro to Psyc pool and the FYE classes. My email and phone number were provided for interested parties to reach out to if they have questions. All students between the ages of 18 and 22 were welcome to participate and send the email containing the survey link to their parents. Likewise, Walsh faculty members were welcome to participate and forward the email to their young adult children (aged 18-22).

Students and parents had to participate in a 10-to-15-minute online survey. All participants needed to use their cellular, internet accessible devices for a segment of the survey which asks

about their daily average screen time report. At the end of the survey, students and parents were provided with the option to enter a raffle for a gift card. The 30 dollar Winking Lizard gift card was awarded once the survey officially closed at the end of October 2022. The survey was open from the beginning of September through October 31st.

The survey questions measured participant media habits, internet addiction, and family functioning. Through two independent t-tests and a one-way ANOVA test, the obtained data was utilized to test each hypothesis. The independent variable for these tests involved participant characteristics of being a parent or student, as well as the rates in which participants use their devices (high, medium, low users).

For the ANOVA test, a grouping variable was required. To do this, I designated each participant with a number based on whether they identified as a student (1) or a parent (2). I then utilized Excel to sum the responses for questions four, five, and six, developed by the 2013 Rosen study which was an empirical analysis of media and technology usage using an attitudes scale.

Risks and Benefits

Participants could have encountered feelings of discomfort when asked to provide personal and specific information about their media habits. As personal information was asked about media usage, familial behaviors, and addiction related behaviors, these feelings could have potentially arisen. These risks are similar to those faced in everyday life.

Immediate benefits for all participants included the opportunity to enter a drawing for a 30 dollar Winking Lizard gift card. Students in the psychology pool at Walsh also earned credit that will go towards their course.

Results

The analytical portion of this study involved processing and cleaning the survey data, which took place prior to any statistical testing. This data cleaning involved an exportation of participant responses onto an excel document. From here, each set of responses were reviewed and scanned for missing or invalid responses. There were 131 columns of data total. These were gathered through the initial export conducted through SurveyMonkey onto Excel. Of the 129 participants, only 117 columns remained as viable data. Five respondents were removed from the data set, as they had not provided responses to questions following their providing consent. Seven other participants failed to answer questions relevant to the hypotheses of this study and were similarly excluded from the running data set.

The initial collection of responses showed that while 64% of participants spent several times a day utilizing social media apps, fourteen percent of people did this several times an hour. Five percent of the respondents attested that they use social media once a day, seven percent limit their usage to several times a week, and eight percent utilize social media weekly or less.

Regarding television and movies, there were significant variations between the sets of participant responses. Around 25%of individuals said that they utilize these forms of media weekly or less, around 33% use them several times a week, 28 responded with

Question six posed a question about the participant's time spent playing video games. Nearly seventy-seven participants responded to this inquiry with "weekly or less." Twelve percent of participants play video games several times a week, four percent use these forms of media once a day, nearly five percent utilize video games several times a day, and 1.6 percent of participants use video games several times a day.

Next participants were asked to look at their screen time report on their personal devices. Instructions were provided for them to report their daily average to the nearest hour. Responses for these questions ranged from one hour to eleven hours. As shown in the figure below, the average response for students (group one) was four hours while the average response for parents (group two) was three. The 98 students (M= 4.15, SD= 2.00) compared to the 19 parents (M= 3.00, SD= 1.45) demonstrated no significant difference in reported media usage, t(115) = 2.39, p = 0.018. There was in fact a significant difference between the reported hours for parents versus that of students.

Figure 1

Independent Samples T-Test

Independent Samples T-Test

		Statistic	df	p
Hours	Student's t	2.39	115	0.018

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Hours	1	98	4.15	4.00	2.00	0.202
	2	19	3.00	3.00	1.45	0.333

Responses from question eight gauged how each participant's screen time report is relative to academic and occupational categories versus entertainment and social activity. Based on the results, 88.5 percent of participants spend their screen time for the purpose of

entertainment or social media activity. Only 11.4 percent of participants use their reported screen time for occupational or academic purposes.

I chose to utilize the Jamovi statistical software package in order to analyze my findings. To reiterate the first premise, it was hypothesized that both parents and students would report experiencing media usage at a high rate with respect to the five-point frequency scale. An independent t-test was utilized to compare the average ratings of both sample groups. 9 parents (M= 6.68, SD= 1.93) demonstrated no significant difference in reported media usage, $t(115) = 1.72$, $p = 0.089$. Figure two depicts the results of this test. Although the findings of the test did not prove to be significant, it was close and trending in the right direction. It was marginally significant.

Independent Samples T-Test

Independent Samples T-Test

		Statistic	df	p
SUM	Student's t	1.72	115	0.089

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
SUM	1	98	7.48	7.00	1.83	0.185
	2	19	6.68	7.00	1.95	0.446

My second hypothesis predicted that the groups would differ in respect to media addiction. Specifically, students will maintain higher scores for questions nine through sixteen. The Internet Addiction Diagnostic Questionnaire (IADQ), which was originally developed as an initial screening tool for diagnosis (Young, 1998), was used to develop nine through sixteen. The participant responses for these questions were summed and measured against the grouping of parent sample groups and students sample groups. The Welch's t test was utilized seeing as Levene's test was significant. The results of the test were as follows: $t(115) = 3.07$, $p = 0.003$. The 98 students (M= 15.6, SD= 4.50) compared to the 19 parents (M= 12.3, SD= 3.11) demonstrated a significant difference in media addiction tendencies, $t(115) = 3.07$, $p = 0.003$. Figure three depicts my findings.

Figure Three:

Independent Samples T-Test

Independent Samples T-Test

		Statistic	df	p
Sum of Responses	Student's t	3.07 [a]	115	0.003

[a] Levene's test is significant (p < .05), suggesting a violation of the assumption of equal variances

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Sum of Responses	1	98	15.6	15.0	4.50	0.454
	2	19	12.3	12.0	3.11	0.713

For my third hypothesis, I reviewed question seven regarding screen time report and separated the participants into high, medium, and low internet usage groups. In order to do this, I found the mean for these responses and based the groupings on this number, one standard deviation below, and one standard deviation above. Thus, the low media groups included those who responded with a screen time report between one and three, the medium group help those with four to six hours, and the high group included those who responded with seven hours or higher. I compared this to the sum of questions seventeen through twenty-five, which had to do with family functioning. The results of this one-way ANOVA are shown below in figure four.

Figure Four:

One-Way ANOVA

One-Way ANOVA

		F	df1	df2	p
Family Functioning Sum of Responses					
	Fisher's	0.941	2	114	0.393

Group Descriptives

	Grouping Variable 1(low),2(med),3(hi)	N	Mean	SD	SE
Family Functioning Sum of Responses	2	58	28.8	5.68	0.746
	1	49	27.7	3.50	0.500
	3	10	27.2	5.01	1.583

Assumption Checks

Homogeneity of Variances Test (Levene's)

	F	df1	df2	p
Family Functioning Sum of Responses	0.783	2	114	0.459

Post Hoc Tests

Games-Howell Post-Hoc Test – Family Functioning Sum of Responses

		2	1	3
2	Mean difference	—	1.12	1.576
	p-value	—	0.427	0.649
1	Mean difference		—	0.453
	p-value		—	0.960
3	Mean difference			—
	p-value			—

Due to these findings, the third hypothesis must be rejected. The ANOVA showed that: $F(2, 114) = 0.941$, p=0.393. Therefore, it can be deduced that there was no significant difference between participants' screen time report and their perceived family functioning. The descriptives indicate that group two had the highest responses in relation to positive family functioning, with groups one and three following. This suggests that those with a screen time report of four to six hours have higher family functioning than those who maintain screen times reports of one to three hours or seven and higher.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that there was no significant difference regarding reported media usage between young adults and parents. Additionally, there was no significant difference to support that high media users maintain lower family functioning. Although the findings of this test did not reach a significant p level, it was marginally significant in that the results were trending in the right direction. Moreover, the second hypothesis did prove to be significant regarding the Internet Addiction Questionnaire. In alignment with past literature, it can be deduced that there is a correlational relationship between users and addictive media behaviors. The findings regarding television and movies also illustrate the way in which social media, in particular, is used more frequently on a daily basis. These results correspond with past research. Future studies should expand upon topics of media usage, technological effects, and build upon these findings in order to ensure that there is no relationship between family functioning and media.

Limitations

The many research limitations for this study range from the small population size to the limited number of valid respondents, to the duration of the survey, to its limited availability, and many further details. Ideally, there would not be such a wide disparity between the number of student participants versus parent participants. Similarly, there would be less of a gap between the number of male and female participants. The research itself did not include questions about the many "dark" aspects of the web that affect family functioning. It also failed to understand the "why" behind participant responses. Conducting personal interviews would have allowed for a more in-depth examination behind the topic. This would have also guaranteed that participants would not answer questions to finish the survey as quickly as possible.

Future Research

  Implications for future research include a more rigorous recruitment plan. Holding in person sign-ups at various universities, advertising online, and canvasing for more than a month would increase the chances of accessing a larger population. In addition, this would extend the sample group to include participants outside of Walsh University's small campus. Changing the study's format to an interview rather than a survey questionnaire would also secure more thorough responses. Future studies should also include questions about how the participant's relationship with media usage has changed over time, as well as its psychological and physical effects on each participant.

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