A TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF PARENTS' MOTIVATIONAL INFLUENCE BEHIND THEIR CHILDREN'S SCREEN TIME USAGE

by

Eric J. Phillips

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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Abstract

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study explores the lived experience of parents in managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. The study used 10 parents between 25 and 40 years of age of children ages one to five who attend a public school district and regularly use smartphones and related mobile technological devices. The study describes the essence of children's screen time on digital devices, such as smartphones and tablets, by examining the experiences of a specific group of parents. Parents have experienced conflicts in managing their children's screen time usage for as long as screens exist. Overusing digital devices such as smartphones and tablets concerns stakeholders such as parents, educators, psychologists, pediatricians, policymakers, and researchers, who worry about whether too much screen time will benefit children. The theory that guided this study is the social learning theory proposed by Bandura, which focuses on imitation. The phenomenological research design examined parents' experience of mobile devices that motivate children to screen time. Data were collected by three different methods: interviews, focus groups, and e-journals, which capture the participants' information and developmental themes based on the responses. The data was analyzed and triangulated by coding and determined themes emerged. Four themes emerged: technology saturation, parental influence, behavior modification, parent interest in media platforms, and three sub-themes: home environment, the convenience of mobile devices, and older sibling influences. The study found that parents in the home environment are the motivation behind their children's screen time over usage. Future research recommendations include studying the effects of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on children aged 2 to 5 years.

Keywords: infancy screen time, mobile technology devices, parents' experience, social learning theory

Copyright Page

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to God, my creator, from whom all good things flow!

I dedicate this dissertation to my best friend who is my Pastor, for your inspiration to pursue this doctoral journey and not give up. When I needed to express my frustration, you gave your ear, while praying for me.

To my parents, who gave me moral lessons on discipline from an earlier age, and the prayers given during this study.

To my director of our department, who was the guiding light every step of the way as I researched for this dissertation.

To the memory of my grandmothers, who always believed in my abilities to earn a doctorate.

To my nephews and niece who are like my children may you pursue knowledge throughout your lives.

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First, I want to acknowledge God the Father for the knowledge that comes from the drawing power of Him and receiving faith through the power of the Holy Spirit. By relying on the Holy Spirit, I was able to accomplish one of my objectives: to acquire knowledge and complete this dissertation. John 14:16 (AMP) "*And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor—Counselor, Strengthener, Standby), to be with you forever—."* By seeking God, I was able to gain strength while following his instructions.

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To the prayer support team, I want to say Thank You for your prayers and support. Many times, when I was discouraged, the prayers you prayed uplifted my spirit.

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List of Abbreviations

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

American Psychological Association (APA)

Application (APP)

Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET)

Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD)

Generation Y (GEN. Y)

Non-Image Forming (NIF)

Personal Computers (PCs)

Radio Frequency Electromagnetic (RF-EMR)

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

Social Learning Theory (SLT)

Transmission Control Protocol (TCP)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The role of parenting has changed over the years. But with change being the essence of life, nothing stays the same, especially the parental role. The parental role has therefore changed due to rapid digitization. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (2017) emphasizes that screen time remains a problem between parents and children. Screen time is defined as activities before a screen, including "smartphones, tablets, computers, televisions, and video game consoles" (Sanders et al., 2016, p. 641; Santos & Reeve, 2020). By using such devices, parents and society have motivated children. Consequent to this motivation, children believe that they do not have enough screen time, which challenges parents. As a result of this challenge, parents have difficulty managing their children's screen time (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2022). Parents struggle to answer the question, "What motivates my child to use excessive screen time?" The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to examine what motivates children to use mobile devices at school and home continuously. This chapter presents the background of the problem, the situation to self, the problem statement, the purpose statement, the significance of the study, the research questions, terms relevant to the study, and a summary.

Background

Smartphones and related mobile technologies could augment human cognition when users use them prudently (Weller, 2017). However, because of the increasing frequency of everyday school-aged children's interactions, these tools have prevented users from thinking, remembering, paying attention, and learning how to regulate their emotions (Weller, 2017). In addition, spending time using digital devices results in cognitive, language, and socio-emotional

delays and sacrifices parent-child quality time for school failure (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018). American Academy of Pediatrics (2017) identified a significant concern of stakeholders that children have rapidly interconnected with mobile technologies throughout the stage of development. As children progress through the development stage, such as the sensorimotor stage, from birth to two years of age, they build their world by touching, watching, and listening. Between the ages of two and seven is when children in the preoperational stage construct their world through the acquisition of sets, playing symbolic games, developing language, and abstract thinking (Piaget, 1957).

Piaget (1957) believes that children actively learn through interaction with the world. Children persistently attain new knowledge, take advantage of existing knowledge, and adapt existing ideas to integrate other information. Piaget's (1957) theory, children focus on understanding how to acquire knowledge and the nature of intellect. According to Brown & Council on Communications and Media (2011), parents' smartphones and related mobile technologies have become part of a child's world, from home to school for toddlers up to the age of five (Reference, 2020). The popularity of these devices has played an active role in acquiring knowledge and has become addictive (Brown & Council on Communications and Media, 2011). The following section includes the study's historical, social, and theoretical context.

Historical Context

Historically, screen time was a term used in the movie industry (Poole, 2019). Screen time refers to how much time an actor spends on the screen. A Canadian researcher identified screen time as the length of the run time (a movie length) to story time (a told story) in the 20th century (Poole, 2019). Poole (2019) explained how filmmaking experts correlated movie screens and children's PCs as the root cause of screen time dependence for children. Children have interacted

with digital technology for as long as the computer has evolved (Maryville University, 2022). With the introduction of the World Wide Web in the mid-1990s, developers improved technological toys, educational materials, and software to meet consumer demand (Maryville University, 2022). In the 1990s, excessive screen use became a concern due to overconsumption. Because of overeating, children have become vulnerable to technological screen time (Robidoux et al., 2019). Since the computational power of previous models, technology has grown exponentially with the creation of digital devices, like iPods, smartphones, and even tablets, widely used by young children and have caused more screen time (Winslet, 2021). From smartphones to social media, the world has changed through advanced technology (Winslet, 2021).

In 1991, Tom Engelhardt was the first to emphasize children's awareness of the importance of investing too much screen time in modern technology (Wahl et al., 2019). Engelhardt noted that "a six-month-old child spends on average one and a half hours per day on the screen" (p. 50), suggesting that more use of screening hinders toddler development (Poole, 2019; Wahl et al., 2019). In 1991, Tom Engelhardt and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) became concerned and emphasized the overconsumption of screen time in children from infancy to age two (AAP, 1999; Wahl et al., 2019). Through various publications, the AAP has made numerous suggestions to address the adverse effects of screen time recommended by pediatricians. Consequently, in 2001, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended that parents limit their children's television viewing, which they called screen time for children under two. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) study showed far more potential adverse effects in the media than favorable results for infants. The possible detriment to infants stemming from media use should have been considered. The AAP called for pediatricians to screen all

children for developmental disorders during routine well-child visits. In 2016, pediatricians referred 59% of their at-risk patients to early intervention in television viewing, up from 41% in 2002 (AAP, 2017).

From 2017 to 2022, the AAP emphasized new media usage guidelines regarding parental interaction and educational content over strict time limits, at least for children two years of age and older (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2017). The AAP recommends that children under 18 months should not be involved in screen time usage. Also, they warn against the harmful effects of screens on infants' brain development (Cole et al., 2020). They suggest that screen time be less than or equal to one hour for children ages two to five.

In a 2019 study of 3500 children and their families, the researcher found that their over-utilization of screen time was problematic (Tumana, 2019). According to Tumana's (2019) study, screen time negatively influenced children between the ages of five. The researcher further explored data implications indicating how the over usage of screen time can be a challenge for parents due to the advancement of mobile technology. The advancement of mobile has caused humanity to become highly technologically driven, and the uncertainty about its long-term impact is unknown (Harris & Cooper, 2019). Therefore, these mobile devices provide the user with multiple applications and access to the internet, including high-definition cameras, gaming abilities, and music storage. These innovative mobile technology applications are appealing to young children while attracting them at a younger age every year. The researcher noted that children are more engaged in various mobile application activities on a screen.

Hosokawa and Katsura (2018) expanded that mobile applications target younger children, and significantly increased over time. Children use applications (apps) for entertainment because of their unique physical characteristics, which provide special advanced features that differ from

older technologies. These extraordinary advancements include interactive multimedia displays that stimulate multiple sensory systems and provide instant responses in the interest of motivating children (Papadakis et al., 2022).

Social Context

Screen time has a negative impact on many children, ranging from toddlers to five years old. Hosokawa and Katsura (2018) contend that time spent using a mobile device might influence a child's overall development, including social isolation, health problems, and peer interaction. Social isolation is the absence of social relationships between friends and family. Individuals' social relationships are significant when engaged in a variety of relationships. Social isolation is voluntary isolation that seeks disengagement, like wanting to be alone, and negatively enhancing the human psyche (Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, 2020). Recent evidence in a study of social isolation with technology, children's anxiety, depression, and loneliness resulted from too much screen time. Furthermore, the study revealed that an hour of screen time per day is linked to progressively lower psychological well-being (Twenge et al., 2019).

In addition, quality parent-child interaction time, such as sharing meaningful experiences and activities, may be replaced using both traditional and new media (Tsai, 2023). Increased media exposure is associated with reduced parent-child interaction, including shared reading, and playing with toys, and reduced opportunities for verbal interaction with parents (Auxier et al., 2020). Many studies indicate that verbal parent-child exchange is reduced and associated with less-desirable developmental outcomes including slower language development with an inability to self-regulate, which adversely affects later school success (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018; Twenge et al., 2019).

Auxier et al. (2020) agree that the widespread use of technology and digital devices is occurring, and children's academic performance is declining. If not necessary for educational purposes, technological or digital equipment locations should be away from the children's learning or study area, such as their bedrooms (West, 2019). Besides, the American Academy of Pediatrics (2023) suggests that when children have digital devices in their bedrooms, they are more distracted, which can cause children to suffer academically. According to Knight (2021), assistant director of the Gonski Institute for Education, about three of the five children struggling in school sleep with their digital gadgets regularly (Kim et al., 2020). Researchers recommend that parents manage bedtime routines by removing all electronic devices from a child’s bedroom and prioritizing sleep (Knight, 2021). Once the devices are in the children's bedrooms, children become tempted to use the device instead of learning. Learning is an essential part of sleep for children and indispensable to a healthy lifestyle.

Given the health suggestions and excessive use of screen-based media, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (2022) noted that frequent use of technology/digital devices has increased children's health issues such as obesity (Royal College of Pediatrics and Child Health, 2019). Children are prevented from engaging in physical activity like exercising or walking due to the widespread use of these devices and the lack of time for physical movement. As a result, they develop a sedentary lifestyle that is the primary cause of excess weight, which can result in diabetes and other health risks (Sedentary Behavior Research Network, 2020).

Using such devices can be positive and negative for a child but more negative at the development stage (Mustafaoğlu et al., 2018; Ravichandran & DeBravo, 2022). However, parents have negatively contributed to their children's screen time by using these devices to occupy their time. Parents rely on television, iPads, and iPhones for themselves and as caregivers

for their children (Ravichandran & DeBravo, 2022). Based on these passive features for active entertainment, parents frequently use digital technology, and this early observed behavior influences their children. Madigan et al. (2019) also highlighted that young minds require human social interaction and that too much screen time can slow down children's social interaction. For policymakers, these results can benefit from developing specific guidelines to optimize support for parents at home, thus promoting healthy activities on and off the screen. Parents must make informed preferences as children spend more time in the media than public policy suggests. Therefore, specific details and guidelines that help parents make these optimal choices should be created based on the findings. This research can benefit policymakers for many educational districts that educate toddlers until age five. This research highlights that the more time a child spends in front of the screens, the weaker their academic results are, which can result in failing out of school. Madigan et al. (2019) explained how children struggle to interact with their peers and develop social skills to work together in an educational setting. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (2019), pediatricians urge parents to limit electronics and screen time, especially in their children's developmental years.

Theoretical Context

Multiple theorists defined social cognitive theory (SCT), and it is crucial for explaining behavioral and developmental psychology (Bandura & Walters, 1977). The theory is a model which focuses on learning from others' experiences. Individuals influence and become influenced by their surroundings. SCT considers influences on three multi-directional behavioral factors, such as environmental, cognitive, and behavioral factors, called reciprocal determinism (Piaget, 1964). Bandura and Walters (1977) argue that learned experiences are reciprocal determinism. In addition, self-efficacy is the most significant of SCT theory. Self-efficacy is an individual's belief

that they can execute in a particular context. Social cognitive theory refines social learning, which consists of cognitive processes - concepts, judgment, and motivation. In which people's behavior and the environment affect them (Cherry, 2020). Bandura and Walters (1977) state that the time children spend in screen media correlates with the social learning theory relevant to this study. A central concept in Bandura et al. (1963) social learning theory focuses on imitation which is described as an action of observing others. This theory describes Bandura's theoretical framework, which emphasizes the importance of imitating observed behavior by modeling individuals' attitudes and emotional reactions. Another behavioral theorist Nickerson (2023) defined social cognitive learning theory as humans building knowledge associated with other individuals. This learned behavior is an association that is a substantial portion of what a human being knows from monitoring others (Valamis, 2020). People shape their knowledge base of computer use-effect in mobile technology usage behaviors (Cherry, 2020b).

Therefore, the behavior of parents encourages children to use technology. Furthermore, Bandura and Walters's (1977) work on social learning suggested that the more they can acquire, a new behavioral pattern imitates this particular action (Nickerson, 2023). Recognized in "social cognitive theory, the concept that observing and imitating other entities' behavior is significant to learning new actions on a particular entity" (Bandura, 1999, p.154). Teichert (2020), as a mother and researcher, documented her lived experience using digital tools with her infant son at home. Teichert stated that her home is ‘high technology,’ where frequent digital technology is used within the family, such as two laptops, two smartphones (containing multiple applications, or ‘apps’), an iPad, Netflix, cable TV, two iPods, and a PS3 game console. Teichert (2020) stated that numerous social activities mediated by digital devices were engaged in their home before her son was born. An established communicative practice relied heavily on digital technology.

Teichert (2020) acknowledged in her home the frequent usage of newspapers online, daily TV watching, and communication with friends and family via text message, social media (e.g., Facebook, Snapchat), and direct messages (DM). In addition, her son observed the usage of Twitter while posting daily. Teichert (2020) maintained these practices after her son entered the world. Before the age of two years, her son was engaged with several digital tools in the home. He used Skype or FaceTime on the iPad to interact with grandparents living on the other side of the country.

Problem Statement

The problem is that parents have difficulties managing their children's excessive usage of technology screen time (Beurkens, 2020; Halpin et al., 2021; Teichert, 2020). The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (2017) reports that screening time between parents and children is still problematic. Parents find it challenging to manage their children's screen time without dealing with this problem, which leads to a power struggle. This experience will cause parents to contend with their children about screen usage and the content. As a result, it will lead to confrontation and weakness within the family structure (Brenner, 2018). Digital devices that are popular in homes and schools will continue to cause delays in children's human interaction and cognitive development (Beurkens, 2020). Digital devices can interfere with users' thoughts, memory, attention, and emotional regulation (Brenner, 2018).

A study highlighted the explanation of digital media consumption (Chassiakos et al., (2016). Between May 2020 and April 2021, approximately 18.23% of children in the U.S. accessed content from online media (Beurkens, 2020). Multiple-screen digitization is another sign of children's media consumption. Daily, children watching video content on YouTube (48% aged 0-12) has become a recent phenomenon (Ruvod, 2018). Children's screen time consumption

highlighted in the literature may signify a need for parenting management (Auxier et al., 2020). Additionally, parents provide children with modern access to media for over half of the children from birth to 12 years of age (Ashton & Beattie, 2019). Children can access their parents' smartphones or tablets daily (59%). Listening to parents' experiences of observing how too much screen time has been detrimental to their children can help address the individual challenges of technology overuse that present barriers in their lives.

However, parents play a vital role in creating the family environment as a catalyst for development (Brenner, 2018). Interactive touch-screen devices have become ubiquitous among young children, and toddlers are starting to use touch-screen technology before they are two years old (Ruvod, 2018). Researchers believe that the appropriate amount of time for children to spend using mobile devices leads to a need to study parental habits that influence children's use of technology (Ashton & Beattie, 2019). Children would reduce screen time as parents minimize it in their digital environment using computers, tablets, and even mobile phones (Ashton & Beattie, 2019).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study is to discover the lived experience of 10 parents in the H-School District managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. The central phenomenon of the study is parents managing their children's use of technology and screen time. Technology involves investigating how people use science to solve practical problems (Ehab, 2022). Technology can range from simple tools or machinery to complex computing equipment. The foundations of technology can be traced back to ancient civilizations, with innovations like using waterwheels for grinding grain or creating looms to weave fabric (Ehab, 2022). There is little evidence regarding parents as role models that outlines

the overuse of screen time for children and highlights the importance of parental management (Brenner, 2018). As a result, this study explores the modeling of parental influence on children's screen time.

The popularity of smartphones and related mobile technologies has resulted in a new situation of parental challenges. Auxier et al. (2020) noted that using mobile technology by children has made parenting more challenging than 20 years ago. According to a March 2019 survey by the Pew Research Center, technology is the reason parenting has become more complicated. It was stated that parenting has never been easy (Auxier et al., 2020). The researchers found that as technology has challenged parental responsibility, parents need to be aware of their child's well-being during the critical development of their life (Wartella et al., 2017). In addition, parents must be mindful of the crucial transition period associated with technology, from preschool to primary school.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study section contains a description of the study's contributions to the knowledge base or discipline from a theoretical, empirical, and practical perspective. This study will benefit decision-makers and parents of children in head start to fourth-grade settings. Technology advances and connectivity in homes and schools will not be preventable. Therefore, determining the contributory factors of these devices related to children's development and health problems should be considered and controlled (Riddell, 2012).

Theoretical Significance

This phenomenological study utilized Bandura's (1963) theory of social learning (SLT) and applied the theory to how parents' experiences and parents’ motivations influence their children's screen time usage. Social learning theory focuses on variables to imitate observed

behavior by modeling individual behavior, attitudes, and emotional reactions. Multiple studies highlight that children learn by observing and imitating (observation learning) what they see, even on the screen and with parents, particularly when these behaviors seem realistic or rewarding (Auxier et al. 2020; Cherry, 2020a; Teichert, 2020). Social interaction at home enables children to learn and utilize digital technology. However, the viability of this theory within the scope of this study was determined regarding social learning theory based on the premise that people can learn through observation and imitation.

Empirical Significance

Currently, there are no studies that have been conducted on parents' influence on children's screen time which would fill in the research gap by examining that parental influence. The empirical significance of this study adds to the literature of behavioral science in technology by adding awareness to screen time reduction by sensitizing various technical policies and practices that counteract the adverse outcomes and motivation behind screen time usage. Research has focused on using technology on children's screens (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018; Maker, 2018; Teichert, 2020). However, multiple studies revealed that many parents consider the time spent in front of the screen to be better for children than the free play (unstructured, voluntary, and child-driven activity) that allows children to develop their imagination (Maker, 2018). Parents recognize that screen time on these accessible devices can be valuable to young children and contribute to excessive use. Maker (2018) noted that children have easier access (TV, iPads, computers, and phones) than they did more than 15 years ago and that the motivation behind their use has increased. Frequent use of mobile devices can enhance children's social isolation, hinder opportunities for social interaction, and promote social development (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018). Maker (2018) confirms that these electronics interfere with a child's

development while providing information and entertainment to children and their parents. Children are motivated by their parents' use of electronics in their environment. Child experts and psychologists conducted a study that emphasizes the role of other people and environmental stimuli in shaping children, observing that children's behavior depends on their surroundings, not just their innate needs, drives, and impulses (Kearney & Levine, 2020).

Practical Significance

This study assisted by providing knowledge and valuable information for parents, children, stakeholders, and school districts to understand the issue of the influence of the overconsumption of digital devices on children. In addition, this study helped raise awareness by interviewing parents of school-aged children, from toddlers to five-year-olds, in the local county district experiencing socio-economic factors. The findings provided how much time to spend on devices for their children during the critical development age of children. In addition, this study helped parents to use cautionary strategies to eliminate children's use of these devices during critical development (Adam et al., 2018; Auxier et al., 2020).

Research Questions

Research questions emerged from the understanding of the problem and purpose statement. The phenomenological inquiry should be feasible, straightforward, and insignificant, having social and personal significance (Moustakas, 1994). The research for this study was built upon the central question and three sub-questions, which are:

Central Research Question

How do parents describe their experiences managing their children's screen time on digital devices?

Sub-Question One

What challenges do parents face in managing their children's screen time?

Sub-Question Two

How will parents as role models define children's overuse of screen time?

Sub-Question Three

What experiences do parents face concerning screen over-usage?

Definitions

The following definitions used during this research study:

1. *Development Stage* - refers to the children's transition from preschool to elementary school (Piaget, 1957).
2. *Digital Devices* – refer to any computer device (Adam et al., 2018).
3. *Media Exposure* - refers to the parent association with reduced parent-child interaction, including shared activities with parents (Watson et al., 1999).
4. *Preoperational Stage* – refers to a child from age two to seven, learning sets, symbolic play, and developing language and abstract thought (Piaget, 1957).
5. *Screen Time* – refers to defined activities before a screen and includes "smartphones, tablets, computers, televisions, and video game consoles" (Sanders et al., 2016, p. 641; Santos & Reeve, 2020).
6. *Self-efficacy* – refers to an individual's belief that they can execute a particular context (Bandura & Walters, 1977).
7. *Sensorimotor Stage* – refers from birth to two years old (Piaget, 1957).
8. *Social Isolation* – refers to a lack of social connectedness with friends and family (Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, 2020).

9. *Social Learning Theory (SLT)*- refers to imitation and observation (Bandura et al.,1963).

Summary

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study is to discover the lived experience of 10 parents in the H-School District managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. This chapter presented an overview of the problem that children spend too much time on digital devices too early, hindering their development (Maker, 2018). The integration of new digital devices' accessibility is advancing alarmingly. However, screen time is a critical issue between parents and children. Children feel like they are not getting sufficient screen time, while parents struggle to keep it under control (Auxier et al., 2020).

There are implications that parents fail to realize the importance that their school-age children's screen time may potentially be harmful (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018). According to Hosokawa and Katsura (2018), school-age children spend an insurmountable amount of time using digital devices, struggling with isolation, loneliness, depression, and even parent-child togetherness. Therefore, this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study will explore the lived experience of parents managing their children's screen time on mobile technology.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenology study discovered the lived experience of 10 parents in the H-school district managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. This study addresses the problem that parents have difficulties managing their children's excessive usage of technology screen time. Although researchers have discussed that the rapid development of mobile applications (apps) targeting young children is increasing because of their innovative features (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018). Over decades, mobile technology, from smartphones to social media to television and tablet-based toys, technology has overwhelmed children (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018). Technology advances rapidly, while time spent on the screen influences the development of children. Chapter Two discusses the Overview and Theoretical framework of Bandura et al. (1963) social learning theory (SLT) that focuses on observation learning for this qualitative research and related literature and ends with a summary.

Theoretical Framework

Bandura et al. (1963) social learning theory (SLT) focuses on observation learning. Bandura et al. (1963) defines imitation as integrating current information and behaviors by observing other individuals, known as social learning (observation learning), that assists others in their understanding. This study’s guide to parents’ experiences managing their children’s screen time will be by Bandura et al. (1963) social learning theory. Bandura and Walters (1977) found that people learn through observation. Bandura's social learning theory (2016) emphasizes behavior patterns of imitation and observing a behavioral model. Social learning theory asserts that individuals learn by observing others, which is essential in children's learning. Bandura and Walter (1977) identify four components of social learning theory:

- The first component is attention - Children can only learn if they are focusing on tasks. Children imitate behavior that they consider. The capacity for attention depends primarily on the accessibility of the observed behavior (Bandura & Walters, 1977).
- The second component is retention - Children learn through the internalization of information by recalling that information to respond to a situation. That has elements that remind us of what we learned from retained observation. By keeping the sequence of behaviors and their consequences, the child can retrieve and apply this knowledge to future imitations of the behavior.
- The third component is reproduction – Children reproduce previously learned behavior or knowledge when required. Performing the behaviors demonstrated by the model or referencing these in our actions can improve how we respond.
- The fourth component is motivation - The willingness to perform reward- and punishment-based behavior resulting from modeling actions (Bandura & Walters, 1977).

This reaction to individual learning of various stimuli depends on their surroundings (Bandura, 2016). The interaction between children and their parents contributes to social development and growth. Consequently, individuals' behavior with mobile technology shapes their knowledge (Bandura, 2016). The scope of social learning theory influences how an individual learns from the interaction of cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors. The learning steps include observing others, imitating observed behavior, and modeling.

In a study in the 1960s, using a Bobo doll, children learned by observing the behavior of others (Bandura & Walters, 1977). The Bobo Doll experiment exposed children to various aggressive and non-aggressive adult patterns. During the study, while witnessing adult behavior, children were placed in a room without the doll to see if they could imitate the behaviors. In the

investigation, by using the doll study, children imitated the same aggression by observing others' behavior towards the doll. The doll study confirmed that children's socially aggressive behavior is learned through observational learning and observing another person's interactive behavior. The simulated behavior was the same aggressive behavior (Bandura & Walters, 1977).

The analysis of social learning theory can be used to predict the imitation of an individual's behavior that is seen at home; therefore, children learn by observing the behavior of their parents or other relatives. In social learning theory, children learn by observing how others behave. Theoretically, the human mind is likely to learn from daily interaction with each other and observation (Alkire & Redcay, 2019). Moreover, social learning theory details the learning and observational modeling process and the influence of self-efficacy that produces behavior (Bandura et al., 1963). By observation, school-aged children observe a specific behavior. Bandura argues that individuals' prominent role in social modeling becomes motivation through thoughts and actions.

Bandura's social learning theory (1963) is a framework for understanding people's reactions shaped by their culture. In addition, this theory details the learning process, modeling, and influence of self-efficacy that produces behavior production (Vinney, 2019). Observing and imitating other behaviors is significant for learning new actions about a particular behavior (Bhasin, 2019). Bandura's social learning theory (SLT) was renamed social cognitive theory (SCT) in 1989, offering Bandura an improved description of how we learn from our social experiences. Based on Bandura's (1989) social learning theory, children learn about media-related behavioral norms by observing and imitating parental behavior (Bennett et al., 2002; Eastin, 2005; Gavish et al., 2010; Kraaykamp, 2001; Notten & Kraaykamp, 2010). Observed behavioral norms subconsciously involve children learning and shaping cognitive patterns

without engaging in a behavioral activity. Bandura (1986) emphasized learning through the consequences of typical behavior through social modeling. Social modeling is not just mimetic; new behavioral models that are similar move beyond what has been seen or heard. Furthermore, Bandura has simplified the tedious and dangerous process abridged by social modeling of knowledge and skills.

Konca (2021) study explored the digital environments of children aged three to six at home using social media platforms using SLT as the theoretical framework. An analysis was conducted in which 537 children aged three to six years and their parents participated. The study concluded that the total screen time of children living in digitally rich home environments was estimated to be more than three hours, while the parents' unlimited usage was approximately four and a half hours. Lauricella et al. (2015) discovered that parents' media habits coincide with their children's usage. They concluded that parents and the home environment are critical to children's digital technology interaction.

Consequently, parents have difficulty managing the screen time of their children. Consider the influence of the digital environment on mental health while increasing public awareness of human products that respect digital well-being (Peters et al., 2018). Motivation and psychological well-being have been instrumental in the advent of digital technologies. SLT provides technical designers with robust theoretical methods for integrating the psychology of well-being into technology to enhance the impact of technological development (Maslow, 1962). For instance, a social media application or a digital game may require satisfaction during use because autonomy and skills are satisfied several times (Peters et al., 2018).

However, in cases of compulsive use, the individual can experience frustrations in life as work and relationships may be influenced, and they have a shared sense of control that

diminishes. The analysis of technology in several spheres allows the emergence of these contradictions (Lee et al., 2022). When well-being is understood, motivation and meaningful engagement are all mediated through self-reliance, competence, and kinship when a user's needs are met in a user experience to enhance it. The SLT theory informs how individuals depend on how they interact in their social environment. This interaction includes screen support in their home setting. In this environment, parents use the media, and children tend to emulate their parents' media (Lee et al., 2022).

Related Literature

Literature about parents spending considerable time doing formal and personal work online using digital media gadgets at home is known worldwide. Role modeling links to screen time regarding causes of over-usage for young children. Young children thoroughly observe their ‘role models' by imitating habits and activities, influencing their behavior and learning process (Lauricella et al., 2015). The role models of a young child are the parents and immediate family members, who are always available. Observational learning by a child is the result of watching the behavior of others (Bandura, 1989). Children are often inclined to imitate the behavior of others, to observe someone's skills at home, at school, or in society and the virtual world (Bandura, 1989). Screen time has grown globally in the virtual world, affecting school-aged children. These screen devices, such as television and even DVD players, produce more screen time as the number of digital media devices available to children for use during leisure time increases (Lissak, 2018; Ren, 2023). In the 21st century, children's screen exposure has become a significant societal issue (Lissak, 2018). Ponti et al. (2017) the amount of time spent on any screen, whether a smartphone, a TV, a video game, a computer, or a portable electronic device. Hinkley defines screen time as using electronic devices with displays, such as televisions, DVD

players, video games, and computers (Hinkley et al., 2018). Screen time is the sum of time a person knowingly spends using any screen-based medium (Lissak, 2018). Evidence from a study suggests that preschoolers in Asian countries are as high as screen addiction among younger children due to the influence of observation of their parents as their role models (Ha et al., 2022).

Role Modeling

According to Kearney and Levine (2020), one model is exemplary in influencing others. Parents and guardians are the primary role models in children's behavior. The parental model is essential for developing children's media habits that are essential to their children and families, influencing conversations and media experiences (Rick & Kovacitc, 2018). The first two years of a child aged one to five are critical for cognitive development, socialization, and early childhood education. Parental involvement in a child's life contributes to interiorization through:

- Cognitive Development - Positive parenting skills improve mental, social, and critical thinking skills as children mature. The familial/parental environment is a determining factor in the child's development. The relationship with the child is crucial in determining subsequent patterns of children's attitudes and behaviors toward others.
- Socialization – Parents must care for their children to control their social life.
- Upbringing - Parents are the first to have the most influence and the perceived world through their parents’ eyes. Children accept what they feel is permanent. Adults must assume a notable role in the upbringing of their children (Kearney & Levine, 2020).

When a child encounters their parent or caregiver, they consider them role models, defined as those who set an example for individuals to imitate. Children imitate actions like their parents' observable behavior in their media habits (Schleihauf & Hoehl, 2021). Digital devices interfere with developing their social skills even though positive beliefs about technology and screen time

spent by caregivers and parents on digital devices is a concern because of over-utilization by children (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018; Perry, 2019).

Studies suggest that technology may be educational and beneficial to children's development, such as improving language skills, gaining access to innovative ideas, and promoting community participation (Maryville University, 2022). However, despite the positive beliefs about technology, it can harm the development of an underage child when used habitually, causing social and psychological action during a child's transitional period (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018; Teichert, 2020). Because of the many citing technologies, parents reported that it is difficult to monitor the purpose of children's screens, making parents unconvinced that was over 10 years ago (Auxier et al., 2020). Because of the difficulty of monitoring, parents are not impressed with the use of screen time on children's developmental and health issues due to their positive beliefs about technology (Vaishnav & Sinha, 2017).

The influences of parent screen time on the device or other devices are positively associated with the time parents spend watching TV and the time they spend on computers, smartphones, and tablets (Plowman et al., 2010). Parents noted digital technology usage could be essential for early childhood development (McDaniel & Radesky, 2018). Children are open to imitating their parents in their early years, and in a few studies, parents' media viewing habits predict their children's media habits (Auxier et al., 2020). Konca's (2021) study revealed that children mentioned their parents as a model for their digital technology habits. As a result, problematic digital technology usage among parents is linked to negative issues with children's digital technology use and psychological well-being.

Psychological Wellbeing

Research has shown that the frequency of screen usage can increase a child's isolation during a transition period, leading to psychological health like depression and loneliness (Vaishnav & Sinha, 2017). Children depend on smartphones and tablets and only work well with devices and the internet (Rice & Katz, 2003). These digital devices make children emotionally dependent and prevent them from interacting with friends and relatives. A study of the child population found that mental health was less favorable because of the time spent on screening (Twenge et al., 2019). As a result of the excessive use of these devices, children become isolated and agitated when told that the benefits are insufficient. For instance, in a study, a parent later realized that her son became outraged, leading to angry attacks when said that the usage time was appropriate for educational, technological time on the iPad.

Since Apple's iPad (tablet) introduction in 2010, parents have purchased tablets, smartphones, and e-readers for their children at an alarming rate. At this rate, these devices have replaced a more traditional way of leisure and learning. As a result of these mobile devices, children were distracted from reading due to the indications through various applications within the device (Merga et al., 2019). Young children must read without distractions to fully retain what they should obtain through the text (Yienger, 2016). The growth and popularity of such devices have made reading a book unfavorable. The more accessible they are, the more ways of doing things traditionally become adverse, such as reading. These devices contain an array of activities within a single device capacity, and these devices have become the new norm.

These devices are a convenient way to keep young children entertained and distracted. Children with regular access to electronic reading devices (like e-readers, iPods, and mobile phones) do not tend to use their devices to read (Drew, 2019; Merga et al., 2019; Yienger, 2016).

Research has also shown that the more a child have access to devices, the less they generally read because the applications will leave room for distraction, allowing users to switch between applications (Merga et al., 2019). The research shows that providing children with eReading devices can inhibit their reading and that traditional ways of learning and reading - paper books are often still preferred by young people (Merga et al., 2019).

Research has examined the relationship between books and digital devices (Drew, 2019; Qureshi, 2021; Merga et al., 2019). Furthermore, books are essential because they serve as a cognitive organizer for the reader while building a sense of thought (Qureshi, 2021). Reading books daily is imperative in helping children comprehend various available knowledge. Reading is critical in making a difference, including the benefits of mental development, preventing cognitive decline, empathy, and enhanced confidence (Christ. et al., 2019).

Comparing children reading printed books and e-books shows that parents are more interested in reading printed books (Bus et al., 2020). In the literature, parents noted that their children not only read traditional books more than e-books but also appreciated them more and gave more attention to them (Dore et al., 2018). In discovery, the researcher used a questionnaire asking parents/caregivers about the difference between reading books and eBooks for their children (Horowitz-Kraus & Hutton, 2018). The questionnaire feedback highlighted positive feedback that early reading of printed books is the basis for literacy among children and is positive for children. The frequency with which parents read to children reflects their value in encouraging them to read, especially printed books (López-Escribano et al., 2021). As a result, the frequency of book reading relies primarily on parent interactions regarding book reading (Ece Demir-Lira et al., 2019). When sharing a digital book, children may become occupied by

the interactive elements (tapping hotspots initiates sounds, simple animations, and dialogue/sounds from the characters) while ignoring the story (Ece Demir-Lira et al., 2019).

Even though there are negative implications of e-readers for reading, the e-reader also has some positive associations, such as children's social interaction with their parents and other children. Children need social interaction for social experiences, especially in the early years of life (APA, 2019; Eutsler & Trotter, 2020;). American Psychological Association (APA) (2019), infants and toddlers cannot learn from traditional digital media as they do from social interactions due to intangible symbolic memory and caring skills. Parents would prefer children to read printed books because the iPad/tablet comprises apps and has a high concentration level that is challenging to reach and maintain (Strouse & Ganea, 2016). Parents often act as intentional media educators by providing those features that keep the child engaged as a modern-day guardian or conciliator (Elias & Sulkin, 2019; Heller, 2021). In a study of 289 parents of children in Israel ranging from 18 to 36 months of age, the researcher identified that parents use technology every day for the purpose to use media: (a) to achieve the satisfaction of their perceived parental needs, such as keeping the child occupied (i.e., “babysitter”), (b) soothe the child, (c) reward them for their desired behavior, and child-parent relationship - time in the family (Elias & Sulkin, 2019; Heller, 2021).

In addition, a study focusing on children's weekdays highlights that screen time is linked to easing child acceptance of when it is time to eat or sleep (Ferguson, 2020; Heller, 2021). Whereas weekend screen time was most heavily associated with keeping children aged three years occupied and rewarded for acceptable behaviors (Hoel & Tønnessen, 2019). These devices have become a reason for the lack of persistence among young readers instead of classical

reading methods. A study revealed that children's reading habits changed 30 years ago; 60% read weekly when the weekly rate was 85% and above (Ferguson, 2020).

Parents argue that traditional ways of learning are more effective and efficient than digital methods (Teichert, 2020). Teaching and learning tools use conventional methods like pens, tables, notes, and textbooks to learn. Historically, children used sand for writing and learning as well. They would put sand in a bag and spread it on the floor to write their alphabets. Writing their alphabet in the sand has led children to learn to pronounce it, a learning method that develops motricity (Anzaone, 2021). Parents strongly believe that children's physical and mental well-being in these traditional ways of learning, such as face-to-face interactions, writing and education, and practical knowledge, is best suited to their children (Anzaone, 2021).

According to Anzaone (2021), smartphones and tablets have grown in popularity. Children's use and brain development in preschool children is decreasing due to screen time. Children are intrigued by their surroundings and fear missing out. When children are afraid to miss something, they are distracted from their ability to pay attention. Hosokawa and Katsura (2018) concentrated on the unfavorable use of the screen because children have a problem with attention to tasks. They discovered that time spent in front of a screen for children could interfere with the development of a child's concentration if fascinated with their screens, which means they are distracted from homework, people, and engagement. Screen time has become an impediment to a child's progression and growth. A child's concentration can be hindered by screen time, making them unable to focus. Furthermore, spending time in front of a screen can reduce communication, even if it also encourages person-to-person exchanges.

An in-depth, qualitative interview of 26 preschool children's mothers' behaviors was conducted (Bentley et al., 2016). In a study exploring parental involvement with technology,

several mothers described their experiences observing their children's use of technology regarding observed behaviors, including the amount of screen time and noted that they should manage their preschool usage (Bentley et al., 2016). During the interview, several mothers said they should be more concerned about viewing their preschool-aged child while establishing rules and limitations for using mobile devices.

Teichert (2020) details the lived experience in her dual role as a mother (the model) and researcher using digital tools with her infant son. Before age two, her son used several digital tools at home because of his parents' frequent use of digital technology. Their everyday activities relied heavily on digital devices, such as online newspaper reading, television, communication, and text messaging. "As a mother, she struggled with the screen time that her son took" (Teichert, 2020, pg. 542). Teichert's (2020) study is consistent with the conclusions of the American Academy of Pediatrics on limiting screening time for children. Teichert's (2020) study emphasizes that parenting modeling and mediation are critical to children's media behavior development. Time spent on media innovations follows a parental model, but only if parents are involved in active mediation (Muller et al., 2018). Parental use of media forms patterns that influence children's use of media. Based on Bandura's social learning theory (1986), children learn media-related behavioral norms by observing and imitating parenting behavior. Study reveals that parents teach children how to use media, and parents become their role models while cultivating critical thinking and mindsets (Bandura, 1986; Levine et al., 2019).

Parents must model screen time usage while demonstrating the importance of these devices at an early age (Levine et al., 2019). The most apparent family and psychosocial context have a considerable influence on them. Studies have shown to help children and parents should monitor media-related behavior in making wise media choices (AAP, 2018; AAP, 2022; Levine

et al., 2019). Before kindergarten, the child spends most of the day with their parents (López-Escribaon et al., 2022).

However, children are resourceful in using a mobile phone which is a channel to trigger many behavioral changes such as disobedience, anger, whining, and not following directives (Levine et al., 2019). Parents in the United States have stated that parenting is more difficult now than 20 years ago because of the rise of smartphones and other multimedia devices (Auxier et al., 2020). Studies suggest that parents are overwhelmed by the difficulties associated with parenting due to the increase in these devices. The long-term factor in their child's development has resulted in parents becoming overwhelmed and anxious about their child's development (Auxier et al., 2020).

Parents worry about the harm and benefits these devices bring (Auxier et al., 2020). Parental distractions challenge parents themselves. When asked if they spend too much, too little, or not enough time on their phone, more than half of parents overall (56%) say they spend too much time on their smartphone, while about seven in ten (68%) say they are at least sometimes "distracted by their phone when spending time with their children" (Auxier et al., 2020, p. 2).

Child Development

Critical Early Life Experience and Transitional Period

The use of media is crucial at the stage of child development. Piaget (1957) states that children move through sensory and preoperative developmental stages. According to Piaget's theory of child development, the sensorimotor stage is the first stage of a child's life, beginning to build their world by observation from birth to two years old. Through this time, children interact with their environment. At this stage, interactive learning involves an experience of life. Piaget (1957) predicts that children's intellectual development is upon the assumption that:

- Children acquire knowledge of the world through their own experiences.
- Children acquire knowledge on their own, regardless of their educational status or the influence of others or adults.
- Children's motivation to learn means there is no need to reward it (Piaget, 1957).

From two to seven years old, children learn about the world during the preoperative stage, the second stage of their life. Children learn from their surroundings through logical thinking and imagination as they progress toward this step. The imagination develops as a child transition from the sensorimotor to the preoperative phase. In this stage, they imitate or role-play a person in his environment (McLeod, 2018). In a child's environment, they learn to adapt based on the role model (Piaget, 1957).

The socio-economic status of children in the family positively or negatively impacts social interactions, health, intellectual capacity, educational success, and behavior (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018). According to a research study, factors around the development of children were because of their socioeconomic status (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018). The acute period of growth in a child's life involves experiential learning—an experience expectation helps shape emotional and cognitive development, feelings, and processes (McLaughlin et al., 2021).

McLaughlin et al. (2021) identified four critical period features that stand out from other learning processes, emphasizing increased changes in brain function. During an acute period of a child's life, neutral responsiveness adapts to specific environmental factors that require extensive exposure. Brain circuitry is incredibly flexible in the acute phase of a child's life. Brain function factors actively suppress plasticity to protect the experience and produce effects on brain function and behavior in a sensitive period in a child's life. As a result, research on sensitive periods in a child's life encodes environmental experience to facilitate flexibility and learning in

human development (Süss et al., 2018). Children under two need hands-on exploration and social interaction to develop cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional skills during a child's transition period (American Academic Pediatrics, 2011). Cognitive psychologists and neurologists state that the brain needs inputs from the environment to grow normally. A review of existing literature highlighted that television, video, and mobile interaction might benefit education but place well-being challenges on young children between zero and five (Süss et al., 2018). Continuous environmental input has a lasting influence on brain function and behavior, particularly during a child's sensitive development period—adults and the environment influence children with smartphones and related mobile technologies.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is a professional organization of pediatricians dedicated to children's global health and well-being (Swift, 2022). Children spend an average of seven hours daily using entertainment media, including television sets, computers, telephones, and other electronic devices (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2022). This increased media visibility shows that media technology has become vital to children's lives, and media accessibility is everywhere (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2022). Because media is accessible, preschoolers are vulnerable, and their ability to access and use various mobile devices is developing and increasing, with limited capabilities (Cordes & Miller, 2000). They can only review media data but cannot create multimedia content. The AAP's recommendations, especially for children in school, are aimed at maximizing children's participation in outdoor activities, sedentary behavior, and sleep time (Swift, 2022). AAP's recommendations are the following:

- It is not recommended for children between the ages of 0 and 18 months to be exposed to screens.

- It is recommended that children aged 18-24 months use digital monitors for video calling only for short periods.
- It is recommended that children between 2 and 5 limit screen time to no more than an hour per day.
- It is recommended that six years old should have specific boundaries.

Effects of Screen Use

Sleep Disorder and Screen

A study on sleep has indicated that artificial intelligent devices are associated with adverse effects on children's sleep (Goldstein et al., 2020). The researchers examined the influence of excessive smartphone use on sleep among one- to five-year-old children. They indicated that children could take smartphones anywhere before bed. This exposure creates a new experience because these devices always provide continuous stimulation. The researchers found that smartphones can be more harmful to sleep than the traditional screen compared to television or computer games which causes sleep disturbance associated with these devices (Owens et al., 2000). Television and smartphones are popular digital devices for preschool children; few studies have focused on smartphones (Fry & Rehman, 2022).

Evening and night access to electronics can affect children's sleep (Fry & Rehman, 2022). Spending more hours of the night on the monitors leaves fewer hours for sleeping, and persuasive content could reduce sleepiness. Electronic devices produce blue light that impairs sleep (Newsom & Singh, 2023). The visible blue light composes the human biological clock in the neuron clusters of the hypothalamus compared to the solar cycle length (Wahl et al., 2019). Shortwave lengths, considered blue, are the most potent synchronizers in the circadian system, keeping most of the inner biological and psychological rhythms synchronized. Circadian rhythm

is essential to the optimal functioning of circadian bodies, and sleep disorders or chronic misalignment often result in psychiatric, neurodegenerative diseases and melatonin suppression (Suni & Suni, 2023).

Melatonin is a hormone that rises several hours before bedtime, signals darkness, and sleeps in the body (Kubota et al., 2002). Melatonin suppression increases children's self-luminous (property of light bright emitting) (Figueiro et al., 2018). Devices such as computers, cell phones, and tablets emit a short wavelength light (blue) that suppresses melatonin to the maximum extent possible. This suppression of melatonin causes sleep delays and limitations as a result. In recent technological design, improved appearance, the short wavelengths of blue light displayed on cell phones, computers, and tablets are associated with melatonin suppression and delayed sleep (Figueiro et al., 2018).

Studies of brain development have shown that using blue screen devices that emit light, such as digital devices, before bedtime, can disturb sleep patterns by suppressing melatonin secretion (Division of Sleep Medicine at Harvard Medical School, 2007; Ruder, 2019; Sandle, 2020; Suni & Suni, 2023). The general principles of light affect melatonin in children whose eyes are sensitive to light. Children's eye structure is more significant and becomes less sensitive to light. Researchers found that melatonin is suppressed more in children than adults when the time approaches (Division of Sleep Medicine at Harvard Medical School, 2007; Sandle, 2020).

Brain Damage and Screen

Digital devices also cause brain damage (Ruder, 2019). A child’s brain experiences a significant period of growth from birth to three producing more than one million interactions per second every second—many factors of mental development that influence the child's relationships, experiences, and environment (Ruder, 2019). Children's brains develop between

three years of age at an alarming rate. Brain development is about every aspect of a child's social development. A child's brain grows in cognitive development through thoughts, learning, and problem-solving (Bailey, 2022; Ruder, 2019). A child's first three years are essential for learning and development by engaging in genuine interaction with daily activities. The brain's frontal lobe is fundamentally based on human interactions that manage your interactions with others (Bailey, 2022, World Health Organization. (2020). The human brain's frontal hemisphere is a region that allows people to understand and is responsible for social interactions (Margalit, 2016).

Understanding the brain mechanisms that drive social interaction and economic decision-making based on non-verbal cues influences the behavior of individuals. The frontal lobe regulates behavior and helps you know what is socially acceptable and what is not. During the critical years of the preschool stage, excess screen-associated use with cognitive side effects and speech delay (APA, 2019). Children discover their world through natural exploration, the connection of neurons, and strengthening existing relations (Blanchard & Moore, 2010; World Health Organization, 2020).

In the study about the functional cerebral cortex, MRI has shown an association between increased screen use and decreased microstructural integrity of brain white matter tracts, which supports language and literacy skills (Hutton et al., 2020). Children increasingly use wireless gadgets, with increasing concerns about their vulnerability to radiofrequency electromagnetic fields (RF-EMR). The increasing neurological systems of children are considered sensitive to RF-EMR fields (Hu et al., 2021). Additionally, compared to the size of a child's head, more RF-EMR may penetrate their brain tissue, causing more exposure to RF fields than adults (Hu et al., 2021). Exposure to RF fields hinders the brain mechanisms that control social and economic decision-making based on non-verbal signals influencing behavior.

Depression and Screen

The researcher found that children can understand what they are watching by approximately two and a half years and have more interactive screen time (Shah et al., 2019). As modern technologies flourish in the new millennium, the extended screen length of digital displays has led to higher depression and control of emotions among children who have difficulty putting their electronic devices down (McHarg et al., 2020). During interaction screen time, children with regular daily exposure to screens have difficulty controlling their emotions during early childhood (McHarg et al., 2020). Interactive screen time is more likely to result in depression due to obsessive use and hyperarousal (Shah et al., 2019). The rise of depression shows that interactions between social media users are emotionally less satisfying, which makes them insane.

Obesity and Screen

The researcher found a correlation between obesity and screen time that increased consumption of unhealthy foods, stating exposure to unhealthy food while watching television increased the likelihood of the child consuming unhealthy food. Unhealthy food increases the risk of obesity because more than 50% of the advertisements shown during children's programming are unhealthy food (Gonzalez-Nahm et al., 2018). Consequently, children's fitness needs are age-dependent. Children between three and five are expected to be active throughout the day (Van Rooij et al., 2018). Childhood obesity is an ongoing epidemic related to early childhood screen use (Sedentary Behavior Research Network, 2020). Children who spend more time indoors with their phones or tablets do not spend as much time outdoors (Twenge et al., 2019). They develop technology usage habits that do not require exercise (Sedentary Behavior Research Network, 2020).

Screen viewing, including television and handheld mobile devices, is increasingly prominent in young children's sedentary behavior (Padmapriya et al., 2021; Twenge et al., 2019). Elevated levels of sedentary behavior impair health, regardless of other factors, including body weight, diet, and physical activity (Sedentary Behavior Research Network, 2020). Screen time is associated with decreased physical activity levels that may shift physical activity while increasing the risk of being overweight or obese (Van Rooij et al., 2018; Veronese et al., 2018). Overweight and obesity are due to a lack of physical activity and tend to form eating habits as children are on the screen (Royal College of Pediatrics and Children's Health, 2019).

Academic Performance Decline

Children's use of screen media plays a vital role in the brain, recognized from a growing body of evidence to include academic achievement and skills (Horowitz-Kraus & Hutton, 2018; Hutton, 2018; Kostyrka-Allchorne et al., 2017). Using smartphones for social media and entertainment could make it hard for students to concentrate on their work, leading to unsatisfactory academic outcomes. Smartphone use is highly associated with assessing school stress and increases the probability of abnormal school stress (Sandle, 2020). One explanation might be that using mobile phones and other electronic devices for homework may cause a child not to focus. Mobile phones and other electronic devices cause a child not to focus, supported by a research study that found that children primarily use smartphones and other devices to finish tasks. As a result, the amount of time spent using a device may reflect, in part, the schoolwork students expected to do and the associated stress. Research suggests that screen support may reduce functional connectivity among cognitive functions (Kostyrka-Allchorne et al., 2017; Horowitz-Kraus, Hutton, 2018).

Parents' Behaviors and Attitudes Towards Screen Use

The evolution of child-rearing in the age of technology has resulted in parents using the media to address their needs as parents (Auxier et al., 2020). Children in affluent societies spend more time with media than any other activity because of the multiple contents of these devices (Süss et al., 2018). Parental knowledge of children's screen time, defined here as the time spent using a device such as a smartphone, computer, television, or gaming console, has become a significant problem. Regarding the use of parental TV and the time spent on children's TV, parents are distracted. Parents find that the time they spend watching TV corresponds to their children's time watching TV.

Technology Leaders and Children's Screen Time Usage

Further examining screen time usage, several technology leaders, chief executives, and venture capitalists limit their children’s screen time, often banning all gadgets on school nights and allocating ascetic time limits on weekends (Fleming, 2015). Apple launched the iPad, and the CEO was questioned about their children's use of digital devices. The CEO, Steven Job, was a low-tech parent with strict limitations and stated that the devices were limited to their home (Biliton, 2014). The use of technology by children at home is limited (Isaacs, 2018). Despite the public promotion of these devices, his children were limited in using multimedia devices (Weller, 2017). Even during mealtime, Job's children only discussed books and history; no devices were used. Technology developers share a mindset like Jobs in removing technology from their children until they reach a specific age (14, 17, and 20) because of their sleep quality and disrupting sleep cycles (Prothero, 2022).

Several technology leaders know children's self-efficacy (how they think, behave, and feel) and the danger they pose before they deplore them (Prothero, 2022). In a study conducted

by an MIT psychologist, tech industrialists thought that their children would be influenced by the cynicism and fear of these devices (Weller, 2017). The study highlights that attending an anti-tech school with limited or no screen time reduces the risk of emotional and psychological problems (Weller, 2017).

Technology developers contended that technology devices help individuals make conscious decisions that aim to boost users' time while making them more habit-forming (Langvardt, 2019). The designers' intent of these products is informed by the behavioral design strategies many casino industries use and possess the same qualities. The behavioral design uses persistence, ingenuity, and grit to make technology devices habit-forming (Fogg, 2019; Langvardt, 2019; Media Smart, 2022). Therefore, there is a growing body of evidence that technology leaders believe the environment for children should be free from all electronic devices (Bhandari, 2019).

Children have quick access to their tablets and phones, which is motivating. These devices inspire children, which is rewarding while providing them with a sense of pleasure (Halber, 2018). As a result of creating these devices, programmers have discovered how the brain works by using codes to get the brain to do various things, and the user feels rewarded (Koch & Marcus, 2020). The value of feeling rewarded translates to motivation through the circuitry of the brain, known as the reward system. Users feel rewarded through human actions motivated by these devices; rewards are essential to life (Halber, 2018). Any object or thing can be a reward if it encourages that individual. Individuals seek to comprehend their world and work through a subjective sense of their experiences – their ideas about objects or things (Parke et al., 2010).

Dopamine

In a recent study, dopamine experts discovered that the brain produces dopamine, a neurotransmitter that passes through the nervous system. Dopamine is a chemical messenger between nerve cells that plays an essential role in feeling pleasure and the uniquely human ability to think and plan (Bhandari, 2019). Dopamine concentrates and fills the excitation of children and even individuals while spreading through the brain through four essential pathways: the cortex, the brainstem, the basal nodes, and the cerebellum (Bhandari, 2019). Daily overusing the telephone develops a habit-forming problem compared to gambling (Bhandari, 2019). Many technology developers use various habits training apps like Facebook and even Candy Crush on their devices to apply behavioral techniques to make their products more habit-forming (Eyal, 2019; Fogg, 2019).

Eyal (2019) cognitive psychologists define habit forming and addiction as triggered automatically by situational cues. Countless "distractions compete for attention, and companies learn to master new tactics to keep users relevant" (p. 131). Technology developers who design applications make them addictive. Many organizations use triggers in apps, sports games, and even work that is called the crochet pattern. In the hook model, there are four stages to the hook pattern: triggering (what they want), acting (for entertainment), investing (improving performance), and rewarding (stimulating) (Consuunt, 2023).

Consuunt (2023) explains that the first stage used in the hook model is the trigger. The researcher stated that this is when companies know their users' motivations. The triggers are embedded within the apps to cause users to return or become addicted. As a result, when users began to use the apps, the better the user-friendly experience and easy interaction with the product or website. Zakrzewski (2021) discovered that companies are aware of an individual's

inner desires, like that of children. Children are attracted to various apps such as TikTok because of its recognition and fame, which allows them to demonstrate their skills and feel acknowledged or accepted. Fame may not be something everyone desires, but some people would like to be recognized. Companies use action to bring clients closer to their desires in the second stage of the hook model (How Tech Giants Hook Our Children, 2021).

The task is accessible and engaging, and the children feel that these actions help them to fulfill their desires. Activities are accessible and appealing, making users think they can satisfy their desires. The third phase of this model is investing. Users even get hooked when they see their rewards enhanced by investing time to upgrade their skills or money (Consuunt, 2023). For example, they can design videos; they are rewarded for the challenges. Finally, the fourth stage of the hook pattern is the prize (Consuunt, 2023). The award is what users get that keeps them hooked on the app. These rewards are driven by their actions (Consuunt, 2023). That is where the hook pattern is activated, and a tunnel is in mind (Eyal, 2019).

In the hook model, used as a method for producing marketing and advertising attempts to create a need or desire in the product companies, companies use variable rewards to create desire, such as a neurotransmitter dopamine surge (Eyal, 2019). Dopamine causes rewards within the brain that reward behavior. When drugs manipulate dopamine, the response to the brain leads to addiction (Langvardt, 2019). In a recent study, dopamine experts discovered that tech designers trick the brain into unleashing dopamine, which plays a significant role in making these apps addictive, habit-forming, and increasing engagement and revenue (Parkin, 2018). Tech designers even use multiple tricks to physiologically crave notifications, such as the like prompt to keep users inside the app (Parkin, 2018).

Digital-Rich Home Environment

In a study of 537 children aged three to six and their parents, the findings suggested that children live in a digitally rich environment. Parents and the home environment are crucial to their children's digital technology interaction. Digital technology is essential for the study of children's lives. During school and with the increase in the availability of digital technologies in daily living, the age of use of digital technologies has decreased (Ofcom, 2019; Rideout, 2017; Guram & Heinz, 2018).

Regularly digital technology usage by children within the classroom and at home makes investigating young children's digital technology use a fundamental interest in today's educational research (Konca, 2021). According to recent results from the United States, 97% of homes have at least one smartphone, 75% of families have a tablet computer, and 44% of young children have a tablet computer (Rideout, 2017). Also, children's use of tablet computers significantly increased from 2015 to 2019 in the United Kingdom (Ofcom, 2019). While in Australia, families have one or more televisions, more than 90% of households own a mobile phone, and 80% own at least one touchscreen tablet, laptop, or mobile phone (Konca, 2021).

Parents' Education

Children's screen time is shaped by parenting norms and attitudes that influence them. Society has increased the importance of screen time as a part of work-life, entertainment, and education (Määttä et al., 2019; Teichert, 2020). Parents with a lower educational background tend to exhibit more pressure from society on children's screen time in buying the latest electronics. Parents have been influenced by society's sporting activities and the ability to operate the specified electronics (Määttä et al., 2019). Technology is evolving, providing various unique applications (Purdue University, 2022). This evolution contributes to the parenting roles

that affect children's screen time. Parents affect children by limiting children's screen time, as national guidelines recommend. This limitation will prevent mental and physical health issues; however, recent studies demonstrate that children from low socioeconomic status have a higher screen time engagement (Määttä et al., 2019). Because of parental socioeconomic status, their education is vital to the time preschool children spend at home on screen.

Parents with higher education are more consistent in controlling the screen time of preschool-age children than those of low socioeconomic status (Määttä et al., 2019). Research has shown that parents with low educational attainment may experience more screen time than is appropriate for preschool children. This information can be vital in providing interventions to assist parental roles in monitoring preschool-age children's screen time (Määttä et al., 2019). Parents should focus on children's time promoting health intervention that transforms the norms (Määttä et al., 2019), promoting broadcasts such as "turning off the television for a week" to help families with low socio-economic status. Expected socioeconomic parents are to implement the practice of beyond-average screen time for children.

Integration of Mobile Devices

Digital devices are powerful educational tools when used appropriately in the classroom, but in some circumstances, they can also impede learning (Ryan et al., 2021). More screen time can affect young students at an early age (Abidin et al., 2017). By integrating mobile devices in classrooms, educators believe that integration into school or education promotes and influences too much screen time (Sahlin et al., 2017; Sigman, 2019). However, the complexity of integrating mobile devices into a classroom or even a school remains diverse and limited (Resilient Educator, 2020).

Because digital devices have become integral to life, students must develop the skills to manage these tools responsibly. Allowing too many digital devices could hinder a student's performance in class, whether it is social media or texting, or another distraction at school (Ryan et al., 2021). Various schools responded by prohibiting digital devices (Selwyn, 2019). Prohibiting the use of devices at school is one way to tackle the problem, but it does not help students learn how, when, and why to effectively manage their use of digital devices for learning (Sigman, 2019).

Hudges (2021), an ELA teacher and class management communication expert, revealed that since the pandemic, COVID-19, technology has enabled educational institutions to survive in the past year and a half (Gursoy & Chi, 2020; Roos et al., 2021). They used technology more to communicate and teach learners online (Hudges, 2021; Ross et al., 2021). Therefore, the reality is that traditional classrooms in schools without technology could not have been able to function; thus, school closures changed everything (Hudges, 2021). As a result of its dependence on technology and digital overload, American education should re-examine its role in the school system, especially in younger classes (Gursoy & Chi, 2020). The objective for students to be digitally literate when they graduate from high school is to put iPads in the hands of kindergarten children. Consequently, too much technology early can interfere with students' learning such as (Hudges, 2021; Ross et al., 2021):

- Technology dulls the senses – When young children constantly use digital learning with all the characteristics of animation, flashing lights, bells, whistles, and instant rewards, traditional or regular learning can dull in comparison. Whatever the teacher's vitality or engagement, it is not easy to compete with animation. It has been argued that because many preschool children are already dependent on screens, this is the only way schools

can engage them. However, the education of children who have had iPads since birth is complex, and students' excessive dependence on electronics is another reason for limiting it. Allowing more time for children with digital dependencies increases their reliance on digital stimulation. As a result, they have more incredible difficulty concentrating. Using technology to engage children dependent on technology will exacerbate the problem and perpetuate the cycle of indifference to other forms of learning (Hudges, 2021).

- Technology dependency – Some children are too reliant on technology and addicted in a way that is comparable to drug addiction. Our brain gets a dopamine response from things like attaining the next level in a video game or getting likes on social media. Educational games and learning tools are likely to lead to addiction, and many work on the same instant reward principle.
- Technology prevents good habits from developing – Studies show that children and adults learn and remember more when they write by hand. Working digitally rather than manually causes children to be distracted from their work. Excessive computer work prevents students from learning the importance and habit of paying attention to detail.
- Technology can limit creativity - Many applications, programs, and games enable children to do fun things digitally. But they are no substitute for glue, scissors, paint, and all the other joys of childhood. Like other forms of digital learning, children enjoy graphic design because of its usability and instant satisfaction. It is often more challenging for young children to create anything impressive with a paintbrush than with a computer program.
- Technology is a source of distraction and abuse – students at an early age should learn to focus on physical tasks, before learning and working online. Before putting the powerful

internet in front of children, teaching students to work hard and remain concentrated offline makes more sense.

- Technology development can cause challenges to children academically and cause the child to become unfocused.
- Technology in the classroom is based on monetary value - the driving force behind Ed-tech companies is not in the student's best interest in using technology in the classroom. There is little reason to believe technology is the key to student success. As a result, there is evidence that too much technology harms children and overstimulates technology (Hudges, 2021; Ross et al., 2021).

Summary

This transcendental qualitative phenomenological study explores parents' experience managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. Through these devices, parents and society were able to motivate children. As a result of this motivation, children believe they have insufficient screen time, which challenges parents. The researchers identified severe concerns regarding excessive screen time. The use of Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT) (1963) as a framework for theorizing how children observe learning will highlight its connection with screen time. Observational learning is critical for helping others understand their environment. In their environment, parents use media, and children tend to emulate their parents' media (Lee et al., 2022). This problem is children's exposure to screens in the home environment, causing them to replicate their parents' media habits in their early years. In some studies, parents' highlight media viewing habits predict their children's media habits (Auxier et al., 2020). Researchers have analyzed the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines specifically related to children's screen time, attempting to address the need to eliminate children's screen or setting strict time

limits (AAP, 2017). The current research demonstrates a continued need to focus on screen time outcomes of children due to digital mobile devices popularity and resultant learning gaps.

In current research in the 21st century, displaying children on screen has become a major societal challenge and the time spent in front of the screen developed in the virtual world, affecting school-aged children (Lissak, 2018). These screen devices, such as television and even DVD players, produce more screen time as the number of digital media devices available to children for use during leisure time increases (Lissak, 2018; Ren, 2023;). By listening to and analyzing parents' experiences, the researcher will capture the essence of their screen time, which influences their children's screen time (Auxier et al., 2020). Parents recognize that screen time on these accessible devices can be valuable to young children and contribute to excessive use. Maker (2018) found that children have easier access (TV, iPads, computers, and phones) than they did more than 15 years ago and that the motivation behind their use has increased.

Currently, limited research has been conducted on parents' influence on children's screen time, which will fill in the research gap. As a result, by examining parents' influence on children's screen time, this study explores the modeling of parental influence. The proposed research can address gaps in the existing literature by adding to the investigation due to research that has not been researched on parents' influence on children's screen time. The gap widens when looking specifically at the extent of the child-development effects of mobile devices depending on the amount of time spent on devices by children. Investigating children's screen time while instantaneously recognizing the parents' challenges in managing this time is essential. This research will fill in the research gap by examining parents' influence on children's screen time.

This study's theoretical value significantly advances and adds to the literature using Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT) (1963) on how children observe learning. Observational learning is vital in assisting others in their understanding of their environment. Considering the child has entered the developmental behavior, they model by observing. When a child encounters an individual, he considers them a model, defined as those who give an example to imitate. The frequent time a child, one to five years old, spends in front of the television of mobile device is imitated by the observation use of parental influence. Children search for meaning by connecting to their environment, particularly with tools such as smartphones and related mobile technologies (Piaget, 1936). Children are motivated by their parents and society to use digital devices and feel they do not have adequate screen time. Children's perceptions of their inspired experiences by motivation, ability, and triggers are the basic models for understanding human behavior (Fogg, 2019).

The practical value of this study is to influence change in the home setting by teaching parents about their overuse of screen time. In addition, this study will update teachers and administrators that screens are not an effective teaching tool for infants and toddlers, and it could shift face-to-face interactions that help young children learn. In today’s technologically driven world, many parents use screens to entertain or distract young children. Cognitive psychologists, studying the brain and the impact of screens, continue to study the effect of these devices. However, they discovered what will help parents understand how important it is to offer off-screen experiences. Instead of remembering the facts, they use technology, which makes the brain reorganize during the transition period. Addressing the issue of screen time led to this proposed study because many children are impacted by screen time at an alarming rate globally. The interaction between these devices is the motivation behind this study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological study is to discover the lived experiences of 10 parents in the H-School District managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. Technology is advancing rapidly, whereas the time spent in front of the screen has influenced children's development. Children today have more access to digital media compared to any other generation. As a result, the increased accessibility of these persuasive mobile devices and the ownership of these devices have created challenges for increasing the unhealthy use of digital media (McArthur et al., 2021). The media industry has targeted parents and children aged one to three, as referred to in the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (2019). Parents and children have been critical consumers of electronic media, as highlighted in their AAP policy statement. This transcendental qualitative phenomenology study explores parents' experiences managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. This chapter focuses on the research design; research questions; setting and participants; researcher positionality, emphasizing interpretive framework, philosophical assumptions, and the researcher's role. In addition, the data collection, procedures, and plan, followed by analysis, will be discussed. The final section will focus on trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Research Design

To understand the phenomenon in this study, I explored the essence of parental motivation on their children's screens using the transcendental phenomenological approach of qualitative research. I have chosen a qualitative approach because it is helpful for researchers to analyze how people think, react, and have a purpose (Patton, 1990). Researchers using the qualitative research method are interested in answering the problem in a natural context (Creswell & Poth,

2018). The general design allows for detailed descriptions of study participants (Gall et al., 2007). Exploration of the lived experiences of study participants is a form of the phenomenological qualitative research study (Byrne, 2001).

Phenomenological research is appropriate for this study to describe several parental experiences they have in common with this phenomenon. Husserl developed transcendental phenomenology to understand human experience (Moustakas, 1994). The transcendental phenomenology established by Husserl seeks to understand human experiences while emphasizing the participants' experiences and less on the researcher's interpretation (Moustakas, 1994). In a transcendental phenomenology study, researchers must practice epoché, setting aside their biases and preconceived ideas using a fresh perspective (Moustakas, 1994). The researcher practices epoché to get a new fresh perspective, allowing the true meaning of the phenomenon to emerge and embracing the idea of identifying the lived experience of the parents who experience the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). In determining the phenomenon of the study, I bracketed out my experience while collecting the data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon to combine statements into themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Bracketing allowed me to set aside my experiences to take a fresh perspective under examination (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Research Questions

The research for this study focuses on the central question and three sub-questions to uncover the relationship between children's screen time and their parent's screen time usage. This study provides an answer to the following questions:

Central Research Question

How do parents describe their experiences managing their children's screen time on digital devices?

Sub-Question One

What challenges do parents face in managing their children's screen time?

Sub-Question Two

How will parents as role models define children's overuse of screen time students?

Sub-Question Three

What experiences do parents face concerning screen over-usage?

Setting and Participants

The information in this section pertains to the specific school site and participants selected for this study. The site played a vital role in this study, and the participants, ranging from Head Start to PreK-Grade 3, were chosen according to specific criteria. Collecting data from the site was beneficial in allowing parents to reflect on their experiences.

Site (or Setting)

The study focuses on a local school district in H, Mississippi. U.S.News (2021) reports that the H School District has nine schools and 2,642 pupils. In the community, 100% are Afro-American students, and 55.4% are socio-economic disadvantaged (SES). The school serves 1.1% of students as White, 98.4% as Black, 0.2% as Asian or Asian/Pacific Island, 0.1 Hispanic/Latino, and 0% as Native American or Alaskan. There 48% of students are female, and 52% are male. In this school district, 55.4% of participants get free or discounted meals. The school district does not have data on the number of licensed teachers or teachers with several

years of experience. The student-faculty ratio is less than the state average of 14:1 (County School District, 2020).

This district has no full-time counselors on staff. The local school organizational chart flows with the Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools, Schools Principals, Local County Police, Chief School Leadership, Federal Programs, Public/Community Relations, Chief Academic Officers, Executive Assistant to the Board of Education and Superintendent, Athletic Director, Chief, Finance & Operations, Director, and lastly Director of Human Resources (County School District, 2020). Under the Superintendent of the local county school district, there is a special assistant to the Superintendent, along with the Chief Academic Officer and Chief of School Leadership, Testing, Enrollment, and Accountability (County School District, 2020).

Participants in the study are in school district H and are economically underprivileged parents to children in this chosen area (Welfare.org, 2021). Hosokawa and Katsura (2018) stated that many socio-economically disadvantaged children have a higher frequency of mobile device usage. Economically disadvantaged children are affected by developmental issues more than those not socioeconomically underprivileged (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018). The central phenomenon of the study of school-age students in the local county area is observations of students facing socioeconomic (SES) burdens, including early education students. Therefore, I selected the students in school district H, Head Start, PreK-Grade 3, from five schools for this project in this school district. When analyzing information for each student and the site's privacy, I adhered to confidentiality (pseudonyms) assigned to individuals and institutions. I ensured that students and the institution's information was kept confidential concerning the research (Pseudonym, 2023).

Participants

This qualitative study used purposeful sampling from the target population. Using purposeful sampling, only participants who met specific qualifications and criteria were chosen. For this study, 10 parents or guardians, Gen. Y, of students attending the local school district for children, Head Start, PreK-Grade 3, between the ages of toddlers through five. The teacher assessed the student's eligibility from the participation flyer (Appendix C). In addition, practical sampling was used to distribute the survey for the entire academic year. The general population was parents of students of toddlers to five years of age across the local district with various technological devices within their homes, such as iPads, desktop computers, Google, Alexa, E-readers, PlayStation, and cellular devices.

Researcher Positionality

My research follows the social constructivism paradigm designed to use individuals' lenses through a view of the world where they live and work (Creswell & Poth, 2018). I am interconnected in two roles – guardian and researcher, and my lived experience related to mobile technology in my home. The interaction between my nephew and his smartphone is the motivation behind this study. He is currently enrolled in PreK and relies on his iPhone as a focal point for learning and entertainment. I became increasingly concerned about his overuse of this mobile device at an early age. He learned this behavior by observing me as his caretaker and my continuous use of digital tools (computers, iPad, TV, and iPhone) found throughout my home. This observation of my nephew's usage has served as an interest in exploring the rationale for monitoring the use of technology. It will be a practice used by the researcher to reduce this over-usage of screen time.

My nephew's digital device prevented him from experiencing social interaction with his

family and peers. Even when he was in bed, he had the iPhone with him. From my observation, he enjoyed his time on the device, but it isolated him from the family as an unaccompanied activity. He gave the device all his time and energy, which kept him disconnected from other activities. One of my questions was whether he used this device for his well-being. I used simple digital tools at home, such as smartphones, iPads, YouTube/TV, iPod, newspapers online, Facetime, and texting. At the same time, I work as a technical assistant for an entity in my town. I help educators with technology in the classroom, like smart boards, projectors, laptops, and document cameras. In addition to my responsibility, I assist in troubleshooting hardware and software issues in the classroom and monitor students on the computer. As a tech support assistant, I observed and educated tech students. Through my experience and observations, I have learned that children are intrigued by mobile technology. However, observing their behavior in class made it evident that their parents had no role in managing or helping them manage their time spent on these devices.

Interpretive Framework

In social constructivism, "individuals seek to comprehend the world in which they live and work" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 24). Individuals develop a subjective sense of their experiences directed toward a particular object. Social constructivism is an idea suggested by Lev Vygotsky in 1978. As the researcher, I focused on the lived experiences of parents' motivation behind their children's screen time usage in their day-to-day lives. Therefore, the learning concepts are transmitted through language, interpreted, and understood through experience and interactions within a cultural environment. This theory asserts that language and culture are the frames by which humans experience communication and understand social reality. In addition, communication with individuals or participants helped me understand how

each participant experiences the world. Participants' encounters and interactions between individuals shape their understanding of children's physical world merely through language and physically apprehended senses (Akpan et al., 2020). I used social constructivism to explain the social interactions of knowledge as an essential aspect of learning and a means of achieving learning objectives.

Philosophical Assumptions

To understand the world in which participants live and work, three philosophical assumptions - ontological, axiological, and epistemological - are critical to this study.

Ontological Assumption

Ontological assumptions relate to one's values. My ontological assumption is that "multiple realities are constructed through experiences and interactions with others" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.35). This assumption allows me to relate to nature's reality and its characteristics (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The core of my belief system is that knowledge comes from the drawing power of God and receiving faith in Him through the power of the Holy Spirit. Through the drawing power of the Holy Spirit, I began to pray to Christ because I wanted to align myself with Christ's purpose. Concern about my nephew's excessive screen time came to mind through prayer. Later, a more comprehensive way of thinking is whether other school-age children are influenced. Ontological assumption focuses on the reality that the truth of God is the only truth, thus a singular reality. In John 14:6 (KJV), Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Therefore, reality has been perceived over my lived experience as a Christian screen time user in technology usage. This will give me insight into the affairs of the participants. I will be able to capture multiple realities from the participants reporting emergent themes of the research and their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). As a result, I will review parents'

perceptions of their children's use of digital devices and report numerous views. Based on the data collected from participants, I will present different ideas on how parents and children use screen time.

Epistemological Assumption

Epistemology is the study of knowledge. Reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the researched, shaped by individual experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018). My epistemological assumption is that knowledge is gained from the participants that will be shaped by personal experience. Obtained data will be from all participants through interviews, focus groups, and e-journaling. Through analysis, I will learn information about the phenomenon.

Axiological Assumption

Axiology is the study of values. Creswell and Poth (2018) explained that "individual values are honored and negotiated among individuals" (p.35). Based on my experiences, my value can impact how I interpret each participant's lived experience by bracketing out, avoiding the potentially deleterious effects of preconceptions that may taint the research process (Tufford & Newman, 2010). By explaining my role to the participants as a specialized technical assistant, biases will be present due to my experiences with technology and as a caregiver. Providing participants with information on my role as a caregiver, researcher, and specialist technical assistant will be helpful as the research evolves. To my knowledge, bracketing out my biases was necessary to avoid biases and maintain accurate accounts of participants. Moustakas (1994) states that epoché is being aware of judgments and prejudices that must be set aside.

Researcher's Role

One of the data collection methods for qualitative research is the researcher, considered an instrument (Creswell, 2007). In this study, I serve as the human instrument while bracketing out

biases – epoché from my experiences as a Microsoft technology support assistant. During the research process, I will remain ethical and professional while experiencing the truth, which will cause a pleasant process for the participants. I acknowledged my bias in the study through my experience and observation as a technology support assistant at an entity in my city. I observe and educate technological students throughout my role. I have a Master of Education in Learning and an Information Technology Associate from Microsoft. I invested in helping to teach technologies such as smart boards, using projectors, laptops, and document cameras, with support from teachers. Through my assistance and observation of the student's behavior in the classroom, I have learned that students are fascinated with mobile technology.

Throughout the study, I conducted interviews to avoid the relationship the researcher has developed with the leadership of this educational institution. Furthermore, I had no authority over the parents, which gave them the freedom to speak—allowing the participants to discuss, as I listened to the focus group participants on their experiences. This comforted the participants because of my experiences as a technology support assistant teacher. I refrained from getting involved and giving feedback during the dialogue. Listening to the discussion with the participants gained from shared experiences across demographic groups.

In addition, I used bracketing to eliminate bias created by the relationship formed with the educational institution. Bracketing is used in qualitative research to diminish the potential effects of preconceptions that may ruin the research process (Tufford & Newman, 2010). Bracketing eliminates the beliefs that can contribute to bias (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998). In the research process, it will be challenging to eliminate your preference but articulate the reason for the cause of the research while explaining the research objective, informing parents that children are

spending and accessing digital devices at early school age and how it could hinder a child's development from becoming aware that there is a problem (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018).

Procedures

The procedure section explains the study permission, the process of Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (see Appendix A), and the participant recruitment plan. This section discusses data collection and analysis for each data collection method for the study. In addition, this section examined and concluded the data synthesis to achieve triangulation. The descriptive procedure allowed the study to be replicated for potential future researchers.

Permissions

I obtained the site approval from school district H, Head Start, PreK-Grade 3 (Appendix B). The proposal was defended, and the study was conducted, after obtaining written permission from Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Liberty University, 2020). Once approval was obtained from the IRB, I contacted the school director/administrator and the Head Start, PreK-Grade 3 administrator to request a Google or Zoom video meeting to discuss the research and its requirements, such as recruiting flyer and parental consent form. Additionally, I explained and answered questions they had.

Recruitment Plan

Participants from the target population were selected for this research using purposeful sampling. The purposive sample was used because it identified people in the population who had some shared experiences. This allowed me to select people who met the study criteria, focusing on a small sample. The participation flyer (Appendix C) was sent home by each child for the recruiting process. The participants of this study were comprised of 10 parents or guardians, Gen. Y, of students attending the local school district of children, Head Start, PreK-Grade 3,

between the ages of toddlers through five, from homes that have numerous technological devices such as iPads, desktop computers, Google, Alexa, E-readers, PlayStation, and cellular devices. The parents' lived experiences of these devices were collected.

After meeting with the school director/administrator and educators, the teacher/educator the student's eligibility was assessed. Educators notified the parents via text message (SMS) informing parents about the research, the recruitment/participation flyer (Appendix C), and the parent consent form (Appendix E) that their child had brought home. In addition, the participation flyer (Appendix C) and the consent form (Appendix E) were included by the teacher in the children's "Communication Folder," a tool that was designed for homework and even communication between teachers and parents or caregivers. From the communication folder, the educator retrieved the signed forms (Appendix E) while contacting the researcher about the signed participant's form. After receiving the signed consent forms from participants (Appendix E), assigned pseudonyms to participants as well as an email was sent of dates to schedule an interview. Before the interviews, I sent a confidential, secure email with a copy of the signed consent form, the interview questions (Appendix F), and instructions on downloading the e-journal/diaries from the App Stores (either iPhone or Android) (Appendix G). While constructing cellular phone e-journals, I disclosed to participants how to secure their data through virus protection software and a secure password to ensure trustworthiness during logging to ensure honesty and verify member-checking (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, a focus group, and e-journals/diaries. The interviews and focus group were conducted and recorded through Zoom Meeting and transcribed using Microsoft/Excel software. All transcriptions were uploaded to the Qualitative Data Analysis (QDAS) software, ATLAS.ti., and e-journals. ATLAS.ti helped

transcribe the data gathered from many participants. Afterward, I had to opportunity to listen to the recorded sections of participants' responses to the questions, which helped with needed modifications. All corrections were done manually to the printed documents. Corrections were made to the manuscript, participants received and were able to view the transcript while verifying the accuracy of the information via secure e-mail.

Data Collection Plan

Data analysis for this transcendental phenomenology study captures the essence of the participants' experience (Moustakas, 1994). Transcendental phenomenology analysis uses central themes, including epoche′ (bracketing), transcendental-phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation (structural essence of the experience), and synthesis of meaning that will be used for this research (Moustakas, 1994). During data collection and analysis, I bracketed out my experience. Bracketing ensured that all prejudgments, preconceived ideas, and biases were set aside during the research. To capture the parental experience of screen usage, the data collection approach began with various forms, including interviews, recorded interviews from a recorder of the focus group, and e-journals/diaries. Through interviews and focus groups, participants were able to engage with me, with both data collection structured through open-ended questions. Moustakas (1994) clarifies that interviews are essential to engagement. Participants, through interviews, were used to gather evidence of their experience. The collected evidence using research questions guided the investigation to uncover the qualitative factors in behaviors and experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Participants provide detailed information through e-journaling/diaries through written communication, capturing evidence of observation, and statements of specific experiences related to the use of digital devices.

Through e-journaling/diaries, field notes were used to capture information recordings in collecting an effective way of gathering data from the interview recording. Using field notes and recording was very accessible and reliable. Field notes allow the researcher to access the subject and record what they observe unobtrusively. Collecting all the data and then analyzing it by placing information in a Microsoft Word/Excel document is an excellent way of coding the critical point of the information as it relates to the interview (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Triangulation of the three data collection sources allowed the researcher to respond to the three research questions.

Individual Interviews Data Collection Approach

An interview is a social interaction in which the knowledge composition is conducted between the interviewer and the interviewee (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The interviewee will be selected from the response from the participant's flyer. The interviewer's interaction with the interviewee attempts to comprehend the participant’s world through semi-structured questions. Well-designed, direct, and precise interview questions are crucial to accumulating valuable data. It provided a profound insight into the participants' minds as the questions were asked (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). To ensure that the interview questions are well structured, a pilot study with volunteer parents outside the scope of the study was used. This enabled the individual interview and focus group questions to be applied to determine the construction of the questions. The 10 participants participated in a particular discussion, answering interview questions using live teleconference from their homes for about an hour, allowing a thorough answer to each question. All interview questions were recorded and transcribed, then sent to participants for member-checking. Including open-ended questions below will give an understanding of the topic (Cohen, 2006).

Individual Interview Questions

1. Please introduce yourself to me as if we had just met one another. (CRQ)
2. Please tell me what digital devices you use in your home and why you use them. (SQ1)
3. What motivated you to use digital devices? (SQ1)
4. Tell me about your experiences using digital devices at home. (SQ2)
5. How long have you been using digital devices within your home as a parent? (SQ2)
6. How do you, as a parent, prioritize using various digital devices in your home? (SQ2)
7. How much time do you spend on a digital device as a parent? (SQ2)
8. What are the leading causes of more than allotted screen time for parents in our society? (SQ2)
9. Describe what you experience/feel when there is too much screen time. (SQ2)
10. At what age did your child start using the digital device? (SQ3)
11. By observing your child's usage, what is the most significant time they use the digital device in your home? (SQ3)
12. What do you think is the appropriate period for you as a parent to spend on a digital device in the company of your child? (SQ3)
13. Why are school-age students attracted to digital devices? (SQ3)
14. What role do you, as the parent, play in your child's digital device screen time usage? (SQ4)
15. What is the relationship between digital device use and a child's development progress? (SQ4)

16. In your observation as a parent, how has your experience of using digital devices hindered your child's development? (SQ4)
17. How can you, as a parent, manage your children's screen time? (SQ4)

Interview questions 1- 3 allow the interviewer to personally engage the respondent to understand the research and create a welcoming atmosphere. Moustakas (1994) states that the researcher should create a welcoming atmosphere - participants should feel comfortable participating in the research process.

Questions 4 - 9 use social learning theory (SLT) to analyze how participants describe their motivation/need to learn (Bandura et al.,1963). The questions support social learning theory and focus on experiences that lead to imitation. These interview questions will link the person interviewed and gather information about their technology usage, which will underline the motivation behind children's digital devices (Bandura et al., 1963). Furthermore, the questions generated data related to Sub-questions 1 and 2 in giving the participants to describe their experience and present challenges they might have encountered with their children's screen time usage. The questions were semi-structured, and participants were provided with follow-up questions and clarifications.

Interview questions designed from 10 – 13 are related to observation to determine children's experiences with digital devices. Using these questions highlights parents as role models for the children's use of technology by imitating parents' behavior that inspires social learning. Bandura and Walters (1977) social learning suggested that the more people believe, the more they can acquire a new behavioral pattern, imitating this particular action (Reid Chassiakos et al., 2016). Observation of children's usage of digital devices while discovering their beliefs on the topic is needed to correct children's problems when using these devices. Also, questions 14 –

17 will be asked to align the research on parents as role models for children's screen time usage, which too much screen time disables the development of students who frequently use them in time. Sub-question 2 highlights the parent as the role model that influences their children. These questions will give the researcher an aim to align the research.

Individual Interview Data Analysis Plan

All interview questions were recorded and transcribed manually from the Zoom platform used; afterward, they were sent to participants to verify the accuracy of member verification. interview data was collected, recorded themes and significant statements were highlighted/coded (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Coding the data of statements was completed manually using hard and digital copies of the interviews, which allowed me to use highlighting with assorted colors to determine information related to a parent's experience (Research Rundowns, 2009). I was able to mark, add comments, and highlight the transcript with different colors, each broad concept, and categories, such as the participant's feelings, thoughts, and experiences. Once the codes were determined, the data was organized into categories and grouped into commonly emerged patterns. These patterns and themes were used to create the text description of the lived experience (Moustakas, 1994).

Every significant statement and direct quote was highlighted and given equal value, called data horizontalization (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). These themes and significant statements during the examination of the interview transcript focused on the parents' experiences and the phenomenon of the study (Creswell & Poth 2018). The interview transcription analyzed the participants' textual reports of their experiences. When completing horizontalization and analyzing the data, significant theme clusters were captured and manually placed in categories

(Creswell & Poth, 2018). This facilitated me in writing a deep textural description of parents' experience with screen time on the everyday experience.

Focus Groups Data Collection Approach

The focus group's purpose is to determine participants' experiences related to the use of mobile technology. A focus group and an interview are essential for collecting qualitative data. I used this task force to gather information on participants' views (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participants were asked questions in a collaborative setting while encouraged to engage in open discussions with other participants. In the open and accessible interactive environment, discussions generated ideas and offered valuable perspectives to the researcher. I used six focus group participants to gather present and future thinking ideas (Subrahmanyam et al., 2000). The results of the focus group interviews helped to understand the lived experiences and perspectives of participants to gather insights and feedback. Focus group participants were selected based on their lengthy experience of using their technological devices. The recommended facilitation of one group provided the respondents with an appropriate blend of perspectives and ideas (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

I used the Zoom platform (virtually) for the focus group participants to secure confidentiality. I ensured confidentiality while conducting the interviews, participants were asked not to use their digital devices to ensure confidentiality, and they were given pseudonyms for the Zoom discussion group meeting. To maintain privacy, instill confidence and comfort, each participant was renamed using the 'Enter New Name' box. In response, the participants were encouraged to use their microphones or raise their hands. Also, to keep a calm atmosphere, participants were asked to mute their microphones so that the shared information and

background interference would not hinder what was said. The Zoom meeting was recorded, which helped transcribe the information. Each participant was given a copy of the transcript.

Focus Group Questions

During the focus group interview, open-ended questions were asked to discuss the problem of using digital devices that both the parents and children have in common. Interviewed respondents asked the following questions:

1. Please introduce yourself and tell us about your children. (CRQ)
2. Describe your experience with the in-home use of mobile technology. (SQ2)
3. What understanding do you have about mobile technology's over-utilization of screen time? (SQ1 & SQ3)
    a. How did you learn about it? (SQ1)
    b. What valuable information (if any) have you obtained about excessive screen time usage in mobile technology? (SQ3)
    c. What beliefs did you have about excessive time spent on the screen after you became concerned about excessive use? (SQ2)
4. To what extent are you knowledgeable about digital mobile technology? (SQ1)
5. What are your thoughts, feelings, and associations about using digital technology? (SQ1)
6. What has been your motivation for the use of technology? (SQ1 & SQ3)
7. What has been the most challenging digital device experience for you? (SQ2)
8. Describe your role modeling that has made a difference to your child's use of mobile technology. (SQ4)
9. Describe the most significant concern related to screening time that should be included in preventing challenges in parenting. (SQ4)

10. What would you be interested in sharing with the group regarding screen time? (CRQ)

These semi-structured questions allow the participants to ask follow-up questions and provide clarification. Question 1 creates a welcoming interaction for the group while creating comfort (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher should create a welcoming atmosphere - participants should feel comfortable participating in the research process (Moustakas, 1994). This question serves to encourage an open dialogue. Questions 2 – 4 use social learning theory (SLT) to analyze how participants describe their experience, knowledge, and utilization of digital devices. That underlines the role modeling of digital devices (Bandura et al.,1963).

Questions 5-8 engagement and the probing question are used to get participants to talk about the research topic, identify the learned knowledge of the participants in sharing their experience with the group, and analyze the participants' approach to understanding the experiences in the over-utilization of screen time of digital mobile technology. These probing questions lead the participant to delve deeper into the research question with detailed responses. Questions 9 -11 are intended to enrich the relationship between the interviewer, the respondent, and the content (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Focus group questions serve as the data point for the triangulation process.

Focus Group Data Analysis Plan

This transcendental phenomenology study's analysis of focus group data captures the essence of the participant's experience (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas (1994), van Kaam modification will be followed. The focus group data analysis will utilize main categories, including epoche′ (bracketing), transcendental-phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation (structural essence of the experience), and synthesis of meaning that was used for this research (Moustakas, 1994). Focus groups were small to allow all participants to collect accurate

data from each participant. Each participant shared their thoughts, feelings, and expressions during the focus group discussion. This enabled me to gather group data and make notes of motivations about mobile devices. The Zoom focus group recording transcript was reviewed to check for accuracy, called member checking. Member checking ensured accuracy (Creswell & Poth, 2018). After accuracy through member checking, statements made by group members were highlighted related to their experiences, defined by horizontalizing (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994).

In addition, coding statements were made manually using hard and digital copies of the interviews, allowing the researcher to use highlighting with assorted colors to determine information related to a parent's experience. I was able to mark, add comments, and highlight the transcript with distinct colors, each broad concept, and categories, such as the participant's feelings, thoughts, and experiences. Once the codes were determined, the data was organized into categories and grouped by commonly emerged patterns. These patterns and themes were used to create the text description of the lived experience (Moustakas, 1994).

Lastly, transcendental-phenomenological reduction to eliminate unrelated statements of the participants during the focus group (Moustakas, 1994). Similarities were grouped in the focus group. The researcher found emerging common themes that caused data patterns to be interpreted. The themes were used to create textural descriptions of lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The textual and structural description developed, and the phenomenon's essence was highlighted (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Journal Prompts Data Collection Approach

Another strategy for collecting essential data was using an e-journal/diary for this qualitative phenomenological research study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The e-journal/diary

referred to participants exchanging thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences through writing and other media. The electronic diary documented participants' experiences with their natural environment. An e-journal (Appendix G) is a journal and a link in that it is a mix of personal reflections, narratives of events, and descriptions of experiences (Chabon & Lee-Wilkerson, 2006). All participants were asked to journal in the app about their mobile device usage of their day-to-day experiences. These experiences included the experiences that coincide with each day involving negative and positive practices that led to their experiences with their children's mobile device usage. In this study, participants were asked to create a diary for one week, with one to two pages, for seven days. Setting a time limit from start to end encouraged participation (Norman et al., 1982). During the week, I followed up with participants to trigger participation and "increase motivation,", especially in the later stages, where journal-keeping tends to be inconsistent (Välimäki et al., 2007).

For the first time journaling some participants felt vulnerable or anxious as they documented intimate details, which is normal for journaling. They also feared negative judgments based on their contributions to the journal. I ensured the security of participants by using blogs or web pages dedicated to logging, like Day One, a journal application. Knapik (2003) found that participants in their study were more likely to complete an online journal than a paper one – this could also be true for participants in research projects. By clearly indicating the content expectations, I clarified the required content of the review and ensured that participants stayed on topic. As participants devoted valuable time to their contributions, I provided practical and usable results. E-journal (Appendix G) is a free downloadable app that offers essential iOS, Mac, and Android services. Include functions such as a single journal, unlimited entries, templates, export, and daily writing help messages to guide participation and

confidence in the depth of the information. In an era of technology, digital journaling is an excellent way to express your thoughts. In a digital journal, participants typed into the app every day for a week, as though they were typically writing in a physical journal. Within the digital journal participants who use digital journaling were able to edit their entries later. In addition, participants were able to print each entry daily of the prompt:

1. What electrical devices have you utilized today? (SQ1, CRQ)
2. What e-devices has your child used today? (SQ3)
3. About how much time do you spend on your electronic devices? (SQ1)
4. About how much time do your children use electronic devices? (SQ3)
5. What was your experience as a parent while on the electronics? (SQ3)
6. What did you observe when your children were on electronic devices? (SQ3, SQ4)

E-journal questions one and three will allow the participants to engage participants to think about the device they use that day while feeling comfortable in journaling. Moustakas (1994) states that participants should feel welcome and comfortable participating in the research process. Questions three, four, five, and six support the social learning theory that focuses on experiences that lead to imitation (Bandura, 1964). Question four, observation of children's usage of digital devices while discovering their beliefs on the topic, is needed to correct children's problems when using these devices.

Journal Prompts Data Analysis Plan

Data analysis for this transcendental phenomenology study captures the essence of the participant's experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Transcendental phenomenology analysis uses central themes, including epoché (bracketing), transcendental-phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation (structural essence of the experience, and syntheses of meaning that will be

used for this research (Moustakas, 1994). I printed out all journal entries. The printed journals were read for accuracy. Accuracy was verified through member verification (Creswell & Poth, 2018). After checking for accuracy, I was able to color code. The color code helped organize developed themes or sub-themes. Each statement was highlighted related to their experiences defined by horizontalization (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). Horizontalization builds on the data from significant statements, sentences, or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon, which was captured and placed in categories (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This helped me write a deep textural description of parents' experiences with screen time on the everyday experience.

Data Synthesis

Moustakas's (1994) final phase in the phenomenological research process incorporates combined textual and structural descriptions in a unified declaration of the essential experiences of the phenomenon. The synthesis, text, and structural description of the vital elements of the interviews, focus groups, and electronic journal data were collected and organized. This provided meaning to the participants' experience through textual-structural descriptions of the phenomenon. In using the textural-structural description of participants, ATLAS.TI., a qualitative data analysis package, helped to organize and analyze complex textual and multimedia data. Using this software emerges themes—the process of the ATLAS.TI software produces codes that connect themes and pattern phenomena (Moustakas, 1994). Utilizing the interviews, focus groups, and e-journaling revealed how the participants experienced the phenomenon while answering the research questions and emerging themes of the participants' experiences. The phenomenon was documented by comparing participants' experiences related to

themes. The research data collected from participants revealed how the experience is comparable to using the mobile screen.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the study's validity to ensure the study's quality. Trustworthiness is linked to credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Stahl & King, 2020). To obtain reliability, I used member checking to improve the validity and credibility of the qualitative research. I collected the data and then returned the collected data or results to respondents so they could cross-check with their own experiences. Cross-checking the data with the respondent's experience helped to minimize confusion, errors, or misunderstandings regarding the recorded data. Validating the data allowed the interviewee to build a good rapport with the respondents (Farnsworth, 2023).

Credibility

Credibility is needed to determine trustworthiness. Credibility requires that the study be accurate and ensure all validation procedures are in place so that the information gathered is credible (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To achieve credibility for this study, I used triangulation to gather information from multiple sources to identify themes through focus groups, interviews, and e-journals/diaries, validated through member checking. Member checking establishes credibility (Birt et al., 2016). The data, interpretations, and conclusions were shared with the participants to ensure the respondents' experiences, which minimized confusion, errors, or misunderstandings regarding the recorded data (Nowell et al., 2017). In addition, member checking ensured that their stories were reported accurately (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Transferability

Transferability is a way to ensure trustworthiness. Creswell and Poth (2018), the researcher must provide a thick description to ensure transferability. Describing the details of the participants or setting, I explained in detail the information of participants involved in the study that provided transferability. Transferability establishment offers readers evidence that the research study's findings could apply to other contexts, situations, times, and populations. Data was collected through interviews, focus groups, and e-journaling/diaries, allowing me to identify similarities and related themes.

Dependability

Another way to ensure trustworthiness is dependability and confirmability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated trust in reliability is another name for dependability. As a researcher, I actively developed a relationship of trust with the participants during the interviews and focus groups. To ensure validation, I used member checking (also known as a participant or respondent validation) to establish the credibility of the results (Birt et al., 2016). For member checking, I transcribed the interview and focus group results (Birt et al., 2016). I allowed the participants to read the transcript before the analysis to establish accuracy and reliability while identifying errors through member verification.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the process of getting as close to objective reality as possible (Kyngäs et al., 2020). Confirmability shows that the research is neutral and not influenced by the assumptions or biases of the researcher. The stability and trustworthiness of this study strengthen my credibility by using an audit trail (Farnsworth, 2023). In audit trail keeping records of the raw data, I used field notes that helped systemize, relate, and cross-reference data, as well as ease the

reporting of the research process is all means of creating a clear audit trail (Creswell & Poth, 2018). During the interview and focus group, I documented my thoughts, ideas, and queries regarding observation and interviews and potential biases when conducting the research. The usage of field notes enhanced the data and provided a rich context for analysis (Creswell, 2013; Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2005; Patton, 2002). Some objective reality must be present to subject one's research to auditing (Stahl & King, 2020). The audit trail details each step of data analysis, and the findings are not colored by conscious or unconscious bias but accurately portray the participants' responses to the interview and focus group (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Ethical Considerations

For ethical reasons, I received approval from the Liberty University Institution Review Board (IRB) for this study. The research participants were asked for written consent before participating. Parents were informed of the study through a text communication tool explaining its purpose while providing the procedures. Parents were made aware that they were not obligated to participate. After obtaining consent forms, pseudonyms were assigned to each recording to protect the identity of each participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Each participant's name was coded (pseudonyms to protect their identity). The participants were not deceived about the nature of the research and provided data through interviews, focus groups, and e-journals. A created database is used to store all data to ensure safety by the software ATLAS.TI.

Summary

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenology study is to discover the lived experience of 10 parents in the H-School District managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. Many children spend insurmountable screen time on digital devices, which

causes development issues for a school-aged child. Children struggle with social and psychological development, including isolation, loneliness, depression, and parent-children togetherness (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2018). By collecting data through interviews, focus groups, and an e-journal, the researcher will obtain information to support this study. I collected while conducting the interviews and focus groups and engaged participants in e-journaling. Through the triangulation of the data analyzed, the synthesis of emerging themes was developed to support the experiences of the participants.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenology study is to discover the lived experience of parents managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. Data were collected by semi-structured in-depth interviews, focus group interviews, and responses to electronic journal/diary entries. The data analysis results are presented in Chapter Four, including an overview, results, participants' lived experiences, outliers, and answers to research questions.

Participants

The study was conducted with ten parental participants aged 24 to 40 (Generation Y) from the H-School District. The recruitment flyer's responses guided the selection of parental participants who are digital natives (tech-savvy). They were required to use modern-day technology influencing their behavior, such as televisions, computers, tablets, or mobile phones. Participants self-identified into three ethnic groups: four African Americans, three Caucasians, and three Hispanics, as presented in Table 1. Interviews, focus groups, and electronic journaling/diaries were used to capture the data on participants' experiences.

The researcher and participant opted for Zoom or Zoom meetings with online telephone interfaces due to the participant's location and COVID restrictions. The participants shared their experiences and described their motivation for using screen time. Table 1 features participant's demographic information. During the data collection phase of this study, pseudonyms were given to each participant. There were five males and five females among the participants.

Table 1

Participants demographic

Participants Name	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
Alice	24	Female	Hispanic
Barbara	26	Female	Hispanic
Carter	30	Male	Afro-American
Christine	27	Female	Afro-American
Christopher	26	Male	Afro-American
Fred	32	Male	Caucasian
Martha	28	Female	Caucasian
Markt	34	Male	Caucasian
Nancy	40	Female	Afro-American
Omari	26	Male	Hispanic

Table 2 is a list of all devices that are present in the participants' homes. According to the participants, their children can access several devices. The most popular devices that occupy participants' homes are televisions, tablets/iPads, and smartphones.

Table 2

The devices in the home

Participant's Name	**In-Home Devices**				
	Television	E-Books	Tablets/iPad	Smartphones	Laptops
Alice	5	2	4	5	2
Barbara	6	4	5	4	2
Carter	5	3	6	6	1
Christine	5	4	5	5	2
Christopher	6	3	4	4	2
Fred	5	2	5	4	2
Martha	6	3	5	4	3
Markt	5	3	5	5	2
Nancy	4	2	6	4	2
Omari	6	4	5	5	3

Table 3 shows the average hourly screen time per day with their child. It also shows the child's age and educational level.

Table 3

Parents' modeling average hourly use of screen time with their child (ren)

Participant Name	Hours per day of screen time with a child	Child's Age	Child's Educational Level
Alice	5	Ten months	Early Care
Barbara	6	Ten months	Early Care
Carter	6	Ten months	Early Care
Christine	5	01	Head start
Christopher	6	01	Head start
Fred	5	02	Pre-K
Martha	6	02	Pre-K
Markt	5	02	Pre-K
Nancy	5	03	Pre-K
Omari	7	04	Pre-K

Results

This study was guided by the central research question and sub-questions to investigate parents' motivation behind their children's screen time over usage. A list of codes and data categorization was also maintained. Four themes emerged: technology saturation, parental influence, behavior modification, parent interest in media platforms, and three sub-themes: home environment, the convenience of mobile devices, and older sibling influences. Table 4 presents open codes, themes, and sub-themes.

Table 4

Codes, Themes and Sub-themes

Codes	Code Frequencies	Themes	Sub-themes
Every room	8	Technology Saturation	Home Environment
Environment	10		
Multiple Devices	8		Convenience of Mobile Devices
Mobile Devices	147		
Immobile Devices	53		
Mobile Convenience	10		
Modeling	20	Parental Influence	Older Sibling Influences
Influence	22		
Parenting	16		
Sibling Interaction	10		
Caregiver	6	Behavior Modification	
Boredom	6		
Behavior	15		
Rewards	8		
Platforms	7	Parent Interest in Media Platforms	
Excitement	8		

Technology Saturation

The first theme that emerged from the research was technology saturation. Technology saturation was evident throughout the participant interviews, the focus group, and the e-journal/diary in the home environment. The participants' data revealed the number of devices within the home environment in Table 2. Technology saturation is evident in every room. Participants use smartphones, smartwatches, voice-controlled devices, tablets, laptops, and PCs for their personal and professional lives when they interact with digital technology daily. During her interview, one participant, Alice, shared that she has "several household devices, from TVs, smartphones, and laptops to iPads, in every room, even in the bathroom" (Alice, interview,

2023). She also explained that convenience is the primary justification for having different devices in rooms, particularly TVs. When asked about mobile convenience, she stated:

> You can watch TV in the kitchen or move to the family room or living room to catch the latest newscast. If you already have the necessary TVs or devices in the room when you move between rooms, you don't have to take them with you (Alice, interview, 2023).

Another participant, Christine, had a similar experience and had "multiple digital devices in every room" for convenience. While resting, Christine mentioned that instead of walking to another room to access other devices, she uses the device in her bedroom instead of going to her office (Christine's interview, 2023). Christine benefits from having various mobile devices at home because of her personal and professional life as a Community Librarian Assistant. Carter mentioned in an interview that having these devices in different rooms was therapeutic. They helped him maintain his privacy during his divorce experience (Cater, focus group, 2023). Carter stated that by using "various devices in different rooms," he obtained guidance and instruction while focusing on privacy using various devices in the desired room.

Home Environment

The home environment was identified as a sub-theme of technology saturation. The convenient use of multiple devices in the home environment significantly influences children in this study (Belsky, 2006). The participants mentioned that other relatives, such as grandparents, influence children to use mobile devices in the family dynamic associated with using these devices at home. Alice directly correlated family dynamics and the association with electronic devices (Alice, e-journal, 2023). She stated that her child's older siblings assist her child in accessing these devices and making the younger siblings engage in playing games while watching videos. Nancy shared that her mother plays a tremendous "role in her home being the

caregiver for the children in her absences" (Nancy, e-journal, 2023). Her mother contributes to the child's upbringing and their love for technology. Nancy would observe her child clenching to her mother (the child's grandmother), paying attention to her when using various devices. Nancy's mother, the child's grandmother, loves mobile devices. She found out that her mother loves sharing receipts via Facetime.

Consequently, her mother taught her children how to use FaceTime and Facebook, even to call her at work to stay connected (Nancy, interview, 2023). When mentioning the home environment in the focus group, the participants stated that their goal is to recreate a safe environment for their children compared to the environment they were used to when they were growing up. Children's survival and development are crucially affected by a safe environment, particularly at an early age.

Convenience of Mobile Devices

Participants stated that there were mobile devices in every room for their convenience as an incentive to make life easier. In the focus group, the participants agreed that the internet motivates them by allowing activities that make them happy. The second theme that emerged from the research was mobile convenience. The convenience of mobile devices is the ability to be used in every room, including a television, handheld device, phone, or tablet. According to the participants, to make life easier, the convenience of mobile devices was present in "every room for their convenience" as an incentive. A participant, Christine, had multiple devices in her home during the interview, from the family or living room to the kitchen (Christine, interview, 2023). In making her life as convenient as possible, her child uses his iPad, and she has her own. The devices she uses in her bedroom and office are different due to the uploaded essential files that

are prohibited. In the focus group, the participants agreed that the internet motivated them by allowing activities that made them happy.

The participants agreed that access to the internet speed inspires and supports using mobile devices. They contend that mobile devices would not be convenient without internet access. Several participants stated that the internet allows them to access social media platforms and helps them to stay socially connected. The internet enables mobile connections with long-distance relatives instead of traveling to visit family members.

Parental Influence

The second theme that emerged from the research was parental influence. Parental influence can significantly affect a child's development, regardless of whether it is positive or negative. Parents influence a child's development as their role models who set an example for them to follow. The standards they set for their children are based on their actions and values. According to social learning theory, children learn by watching others and imitating their actions (Bandura & Walters, 1977). In this study, parental influence was evident throughout the participants' interviews, the focus group, and the e-journal/diary. Participants expressed their feelings about being the primary role model in influencing children's behavior during screen time and that it is crucial for developing children's media habits. During the interview, Martha shared that her son's phone and computer usage was high at age two (Martha, interview, 2023). As a parent, she noticed that her son mimicked what she did on the device by making facial gestures while laughing at what was on the device. Martha emphasized the significance of parents as role models for screen usage. She stated that her son would constantly be attached to her while on the laptop or the phone and, afterward, would mimic what he observed as it relates to the device. She would utilize the TikTok platform; consequently, her son may access TikTok videos and

navigate to her favorite video. Martha revealed her intention to emulate the TikTok video, and her son would imitate her behavior.

A divorced educator, Carter expressed similar experiences in his e-journal/diary. Carter frequently uses Twitter and Microsoft Teams to send work-related email messages from his laptop (Carter interview, 2023). In addition, Carter uses social media to browse the web, listen to music, explore, and read exciting information. At an early age, Carter expressed that his son became more interested in these mobile devices (Carter, e-journal, 2023). Using these devices daily, Carter replied that his son would sleep and play near him while using the laptop, texting, and FaceTime (Carter e-journal, 2023). During the focus group, Carter stated that his child imitated him, unaware the child was observing while influencing his son's actions on the device. During his nightly usage, his child would be on the iPad, strolling through the device and watching Carter's favorite YouTube station. Through Carter's occasional media engagements, his son learned to access the YouTube station that Carter loved watching (Carter, focus group, 2023). Carter also noticed that his child spends more time watching television and requesting to play on their smartphone and tablet devices instead of talking. The child is more engaged on weekends, using his tablet from morning until night.

Participants also stated that they, as parents, influence young children's screens. Participants shared their modeling of screens in the presence of their children and their usage of various devices. Barbara mentioned her love for technology and frequently uses it around her children (Barbara, interview, 2023). She observed her child's eagerness to use technology at an early age. Upon retrieval of the device from the computer desk, the child will imitate her actions when using the device by touching the screen as she would (Martha, interview, 2023). Nancy stated, "Anna pretended to conversate with someone on the phone, pretending to be like her"

(Nancy, e-journal, 2023). Martha's phone was also used by her daughter, who called her grandmother for the first time while playing with the phone but was unfamiliar with the name and number. When she dialed the number, which was the last call Martha placed, a loud voice was heard by her daughter, whom she recognized as her grandmother. According to Martha, the child conversed with her grandmother as she entered the room. Her child had the phone in her ear, resembling when talking with her mother.

Furthermore, Martha asked whom she was talking to from the recognized voice, and she said, "me-mom" (Martha, e-journal, 2023). Martha was surprised and wondered how it was possible by what was brought to her attention and how it was possible. However, she realized that using her mobile device around her child was the reason for the child's device usage.

Older Siblings Influence

The older sibling influence is a vital sub-theme derived from the data. Younger siblings' lives are influenced by their older siblings, who serve as role models and even teachers in helping them develop skills. Participants discussed how their older and younger siblings interacted in their home environment during the individual interview and focus group. The participants shared how their children's siblings spend as much or more time with each other in the home than their parents. In this study, because the children's siblings interacted, they learned and mimicked them. In the interview, Christine shared that younger children become exposed to technology by their older siblings via the internet and the touchscreen smartphone. Christine observed on several occasions that her young child would be engaged with the older siblings, especially when playing games and using various apps on the device. Christine unveiled that their apps, such as YouTube, encouraged them to become attached (Christine, interview, 2023).

Christopher shared a similar experience of his older children coming home from school, retrieving their devices immediately, and using them in front of their younger siblings in daily activities (Christopher, interview, 2023). Christopher stated that the older siblings' behavior encouraged the younger siblings to use smartphones, MacBooks, Mac Desktops, and various HP laptops at home during screen time (Christopher, focus group, 2023). Christopher's home is often tranquil, and he attributes this peaceful environment to the children's engagement in their devices. Because there are fewer human interactions with potential conflicts, the child is engaged in their devices, in which Christopher can study without interference (Christopher, e-journal, 2023).

The participants discussed how children gained new abilities through the bond between older siblings and younger siblings. A participant, Nancy, stated that her "son did not know how to get on YouTube until after playing with the oldest sibling." He showed him how to access the device to get on YouTube. The younger sibling operates an iPad while accessing YouTube, a new skill constructed through sibling relationships. The younger sibling understood the iPad, this psychological tool, through sibling interaction.

During two consecutive days in the family room, bedroom, and kitchen, Nancy observed the interaction between the children, particularly in how the older sibling was helping the younger sibling use the iPad to operate the numbers app (Nancy, e-journal, 2023). He was helping the younger sibling develop a skill in showing how the application functions and how to use it effectively. Another participant, Omari, expressed his belief that successful parents and the home context with older siblings help develop relationships between the younger and older siblings, especially in engaging them using various devices. He shared the importance of this interaction and what supports are needed to assist in the development of their younger siblings'

good or destructive characteristics. Similarly, Christopher explained how he loved viewing the interaction between the older and younger siblings develop because it gives more structure when the parent is away. This type of interaction magnified how older siblings used technology to collaborate with their younger siblings.

Behavior Modification

The data revealed a third theme, which was behavior modification. Motivational methods, such as positive and negative reinforcement, extinction, fading, shaping, and binding, can be used in behavior modification to change human behavior (Morin, 2021). Positive reinforcement: the participants explained how device usage becomes a reward that keeps the child occupied. According to Fred, children's minds can be distracted by mobile devices, and their behavior can be influenced, mainly when they are at the doctor's office for appointments. Markt reported something similar when his child became preoccupied with the device and did not bother others waiting in the doctor's office for appointments (Markt's e-journal, 2023). Observing his child, he recalled how tedious it was sitting in the doctor's office. The child's behavior would be different at the doctor's office by bothering others while waiting. They would be on the floor, crying or making loud noises. In a similar experience, Nancy mentioned that her children use these devices in the doctor's office to avoid boredom and misbehavior (Nancy, e-journal, 2023).

Several interviewed participants revealed that behavior modification patterns of using rewards to modify a child's behavior were prevalent. They shared how technology has been a positive behavior reward for their children. For example, Omari expressed that rewards are suitable for influencing his child's behavior, such as "If you do your homework, you can play with the iPad" (Omari's interview, 2023). Omari added that there were conditions for iPad usage

and demonstrated how homework assignments must be accurate to obtain this reward (Omari's interview, 2023). Omari stated that these digital devices alter the child's behavior (Omari, focus, e-journal, 2023).

The participating parents stated that when their child is requested to turn off or put the device away, it results in behavior such as anger, frustration, and disengagement. One participant, Markt, stated, "When trying to pull my child from the device, primarily when they watch YouTube, the child throws a tantrum (Markt, interview, 2023)." When asked to turn the device off, the child rages. However, when the device is turned back in, the child becomes happy and engaged.

Theme 4: Parental Interest in Media Platforms

The final theme from the data was parental interest in media platforms. The data collection revealed that participants confirmed that they were interested in mobile devices, the device contents, and the platforms they offer. Various participants said they loved these devices and could not live without them. Nancy's e-journal described her usage of Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, and other media platforms like YouTube (Nancy, e-journal, 2023). Nancy stated, "The platforms she currently utilizes are what she finds most enjoyable." Her followers' various posts and pictures are entertaining and exciting view.

The various media platform applications attract parents and children, allowing individuals to display their skills and feel acknowledged or accepted. The data revealed that parents' behaviors on these devices and sharing the excitement with their children fostered a desire amongst the children to play more with these devices. Fred stated that the iPhone has been a tremendously exciting tool because of the features available, such as texting, face recognition, and Facetime, instead of having the phone in their ear. Christine shared that her interest became

her child's interest at age one. It was evident in watching the child interact with TikTok and Facetime with family and friends (Christine, interview, 2023). The participants shared their interest in mobile platforms as a source of interest, even though they have yet to learn about the magnitude of technology as a communication tool. While shared on this platform, the TikTok videos created by Christine have become a source of interest for her child. Centered around the child's fascination were the sounds or expressions the device produced while she was using it.

Outlier: Child's BMI Increase

The participants acknowledged that having a formal written technology plan advised by their pediatrician or school psychologist at the beginning of technology discipline would be advantageous. One participant, Omari's e-journal, contained an unexpected finding: he was concerned about his child's BMI. This participant expressed their concern about their child's BMI. He shared that his child's BMI tremendously increased from a prior pediatrics visit. He stated that his child's BMI increase was due to the lack of being inactive because of watching television and mobile engagement. An explanation of the findings is below.

Omari shared how his child consumed snacks while watching TV in conjunction with the activity in which they were engaged. Media engagement significantly increased the child's BMI from the last pediatric doctor examination visit (Omari, e-journal, 2023). While using these devices, his child started consuming unhealthy snacks, which led to weight gain. Omari realized that health problems and issues can occur without activity. Excessive weight or poor eating habits could begin to cause health problems. The pediatrician advised Omari that his child must visit the pediatric doctor for a yearly physical examination, including checking his blood pressure, cholesterol, sleep patterns, exercise, and eating habits. Omar recalled that the physician advised that the children should be active. Following the physician's report, Omar agreed that his

child was inactive and constantly engaged in mobile screen time. The child's constant engagement was a factor in his inability to engage in outdoor activities.

Research Question Responses

This section offers the reader concise answers to your research questions to prime them for the discussion in Chapter Five. This section must supply short and direct narrative answers to each research question using primarily the themes developed in the previous section. Select appropriate participant quotes to support the responses to the research questions.

Central Research Question

The central research question was, how do parents describe their experiences managing their children's screen time on digital devices? The theme that addressed the central research question was parental influence and technology saturation. Additionally, the subthemes were the home environment and convenience of mobile devices. The way parents describe their experience is that they must first model controlled screen usage and find innovative ways for their child. To manage screen time, parents must be positive role models in the presence of their children. With screens in every room, monitoring a child's screen time can be challenging, especially when the participant's home environment is saturated with multiple devices. In the participant's home environment, the convenience of using various devices, including a television, handheld device, phone, or tablet, significantly influences a child's usage. From the focus group, several participants shared that they should develop clear rules to limit the child's digital media usage to control screen time management. Additionally, set and enforce daily or even weekly limits of screen usage, such as no exposure to devices an hour before bedtime or even dinner.

Parents admitted that the intense feelings of the connection to mobile devices were evident during the interview, focus group process, and e-journaling. The intense feelings for

these devices revealed that they are incomplete without mobile devices, especially cell phones. The participant reflected on the challenges associated with controlling the use of digital devices and the child's screen time as the children react negatively in situations where parents attempt to decrease their usage. This study revealed how parents need to observe how much time their children are engaged in screen time and understand the health risks associated with over-usage, such as a significant increase in the child's BMI. Consequently, this research was beneficial in educating parents on the health risks associated with overusing screen time.

Sub-Question One

Sub-question one was, what challenges do parents face in managing their children's screen time? The theme of behavioral modification addressed this question. Parents' challenges included behavioral and emotional issues when they requested the child turn off the device, particularly at bedtime. In addition, many children would sleep with their devices and wake up to the same device. The more time a child spends on screen time, the more challenging it is to get them to stop using their devices. When the parents attempt to control the device, the child isolates themselves from the family, especially during breakfast or dinner time. During these times, this level of device engagement has interfered with the child's ability to converse and engage in all family gatherings.

Sub-Question Two

Sub-question two was, how will parents as role models define children's overuse of screen time? The themes of parental influence and parent interest in media platforms address research question two. In self-reflection, participants described the child's overuse of screen time by correlating their usage as a role model in the home environment. Parents define children's overuse by their influenced screen time usage, and their child mimics their behavior. Therefore,

parents might consider leading by example and decreasing screen time to reduce their child's usage. One of the participants stated that their child is always watching them when they use their device. Overall, this practice is an example of how the child learns from the parental actions and will imitate these actions. Parental activities allow the parents who engage in video games with their children to create another way of supporting the over-engagement of screen time. Parents' behaviors on these devices and sharing the excitement with their children fostered a desire amongst the children to engage more with these devices.

Sub-Question Three

Sub-question three was, what experiences do parents face concerning screen over-usage? The theme of behavioral modification addresses this question. Parents may experience significant difficulties with children regarding time usage and the content of screen time. Markt stated, "My child over the weekend is playing with their smartphone all day." It is challenging to pull them from the device, primarily within the time they watch YouTube, a media platform that children tend to use due to various content like music, cartoons, and even video games (Markt, interview, 2023). Parents and children face behavioral experiences concerning screen over-usage by exhibiting behaviors such as becoming dependent, angry, anxious, frustrated, and disengaged. When disengaged, parents and children may withdraw from each other, leading to a tense or even hostile home environment.

Summary

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenology study is to discover the lived experience of parents managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. Ten parental participants aged 24 to 40 (Generation Y). There were five males and five females among the participants. Once triangulated, the data's main themes emerged from the participants'

quotes, technology saturation, parental influence, behavior modification, and parent interest in media platforms. This supported the narrative from the central question and three sub-questions developed for this research. In addition, subthemes include the home environment, the convenience of mobile devices, and older sibling influence. Data from semi-structured interviews, journal entries, and emerging themes from the focus groups were shared throughout this chapter. The themes and sub-themes included: (1) Technology saturation; this theme and subtheme of home environment and mobile convenience address the central research question and highlight that the participant's home environment is saturated with multiple devices in comfort. Trying to manage the children in using these devices will be a challenge. Participants could share their experiences of screen time usage along with their children's use. These experiences are viewed as unfavorable due to the mismanagement of screen time for their underage children. Participants' intense feelings of connection to mobile devices were evident during the interview, focus group process, and e-journaling.

Many participants revealed that they are incomplete without mobile devices, especially cell phones. (2) Parental influence, this theme, and subtheme older sibling influences highlight that all participants' influencing children's screen time answer sub-question two. The parents in this study share how they spend two or more hours daily on Facebook or other media platforms. (3) Behavior modification: this theme answers sub-question three. The theme of behavioral modification addressed this question when many parents reflected on how children would act angrily when the parents requested the child to end using the device, especially at bedtime. When parents attempt to control the device usage or stop the child by turning the device off mode, the child will become disobedient and reactionary by exhibiting sadness or anger. Due to the overuse of these devices, many children isolate themselves from their families, especially during dinner

or breakfast.

Many children sleep with their devices and wake up to the same device. This level of device engagement has interfered with the child's ability to converse and engage in all family activities and regular eating times when the family unites. (4) Parent interest in media platforms: Parents' behaviors on these devices and sharing the excitement with their children fostered a desire amongst the children to play more with these devices. The parents reported that the household supports using various devices, including flat-screen televisions, computers, iPads, and smartphones, divided into multiple rooms throughout the house, including their children's bedrooms designed for study or play. This research disclosed the overuse of devices and how overconsumption has contributed to significant health risks, including obesity, substance abuse, and vision impairment. However, the child-parent believed there was no problem with the excessive use of mobile devices at home. In addition to themes and sub-themes, one outlier theme was the child's BMI increase. The focus of this outlier theme was not on specific research questions or sub-questions but rather on the perception of biases and subjectivity.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenology study was to explore the lived experience of parents managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. This study examined parental participants who are digital natives (tech-savvy) in a home environment that affects their children's excessive screen time. Chapter Five presents the interpretational findings, implications for policy and practice, theoretical and methodological implications, limitations and delimitations, recommendations for future research, and conclusion of the study.

Discussion

The research revealed that the participating parents spent hours utilizing various mobile devices through digital play. This utilization of over-usage is evident through the findings revealed from individual interviews, a focus group, and e-journals/diaries. Parents' overuse of mobile devices is a principal indicator of children's usage of mobile devices. Parents interacting with these popular mobile devices in the home environment with their underage children resulted in new challenges for parents, such as behavior, psychological, and health issues. As a result of the challenges of these devices, parental usage has caused an increase in their children's screen time usage. This knowledge gained from the research will help shareholders such as educators, parents, and other caregivers. The discussion section examines the following: interpretation of findings, implication for policy or practice, theoretical and empirical implication, limitations and delimitations, and recommendations for future research.

Interpretation of Findings

Parents are responsible for developing and instructing their children, but they can also affect a young child's chances of endurance and development (Belsky et al., 2006). These

popular mobile devices have hindered children's development due to their excessive usage at an early age through role modeling. The parents' screen time in the home environment has resulted in children's behavior, psychological, and health issues due to their parental role. This role modeling nurtures a critical environment as technology advances.

Summary of Thematic Findings

The following themes emerged from the data analysis of this transcendental phenomenological study: technology saturation, parental influence, behavior modification, and parent interest in media platforms. Technology saturation sub-themes include the home environment and the convenience of mobile devices. Participants reported having multiple digital devices in every room in their home environment for convenience, as evident by technology saturation. Participants shared that they use smartphones, smart watches, voice-controlled devices, laptops, and even PCs daily for their personal and professional lives. The primary justification for having these devices in several rooms is their convenience. Participants stated that mobile devices make their lives as convenient as possible. The devices they use in their bedroom and office are different due to the uploaded essential files that are prohibited. In addition, it is beneficial while resting. A participant mentioned that instead of walking to another room to access other devices, the participant uses the device in their bedroom instead of going to the office.

For the theme of parental influence, the subtheme included older sibling influences. Participants stated their feelings about being the primary role model in influencing children's behavior during screen time and that it is crucial for developing children's media habits. A participant noticed that their son mimicked what they did on the device by making facial gestures while laughing at what was on it. Through this process, the child unconsciously imitates them. A

participant expressed that their son has become more interested in these mobile devices while using them daily. Participants reported that their children would sleep and play near them while using the laptop, texting, and FaceTime. They also mentioned that their child was observing their actions on the device. In addition, another participant expressed their belief that successful parents and the home context with older siblings help develop relationships with older siblings, especially in engaging them using various devices. Older siblings influence their young siblings.

For the theme of behavior modification, participants stated that mobile devices distract children's minds and influence their behavior, especially when they are in the doctor's offices for appointments. Several interviewed participants revealed that behavior modification patterns of using rewards to modify a child's behavior were prevalent. They shared how technology has been a positive behavior reward for their children. One participant stated that trying to withdraw their child from the device displays behavior issues. The participating parents stated that when their child is requested to turn off or put the device away, it results in behavior such as anger, frustration, and disengagement.

For the theme of parent interest in media platforms, various participants said they loved these devices and could not live without them. They currently utilize the media platforms they find most enjoyable, such as Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, and other media platforms like YouTube (Winkelman & Beaton, 2023). The various media platform applications attract parents and children, allowing individuals to display their skills and feel acknowledged or accepted. The data revealed that participating parents' behaviors on these devices while sharing the excitement foster the children's desire to play more with these devices. Parents and children have been extremely excited about developing mobile devices that utilize media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat, and YouTube.

Emotional Connection. The emotional connection was evident throughout the data collection. The emotional connection with technology was extremely important because participants stated that they could not live without their devices. The participants in this study mentioned emotional connection as a significant factor in their usage of devices. Dolton (2023) explores emotional connections that are characterized by dependence, anxiety, and the use of smartphones as a source of comfort and emotional connection to gadgets (Studarus, 2021). Studarus's (2021) study highlighted that the connectivity and technology provided by smartphones are why people feel emotionally attached to them. The proximity of these devices enables one to share one's life with the apps and networks that connect, while a smartphone's customization and personalization possibilities can lead to emotional connections. Participants stated mobile devices have become indispensable in their lives (Collar & Ali., 2021). These devices have become more than just tools; many have formed emotional bonds, making them personal. For instance, various participants would leave their devices at home before going to work. Considering that they had left their mobile device. Whether or not they arrive late for work, they will return home to retrieve their device. A participant stated that they feel withdrawn or unable to function when their mobile device is left at home. Individuals carry their phones everywhere because of the emotional bonds formed between them. As well as establishing close connections with others by using digital devices on various platforms.

Through this emotional connection with these devices, the ten participants shared their excitement and dependency on their digital devices and formed emotional bonds with other users via the internet, which impacted their mobile usage. The media and the internet are now a unified whole. It is a significant aspect of modern life that allows users to work and even interact with each other (Sattorova & Rakhmatullayevich, 2023). By supporting one another, participants

online gather to share information. Many participants credit the internet for bringing others together—for instance, family members and friends they had not seen in several years. Many participants found relatives they did not know they were relatives. Therefore, using mobile devices makes them feel connected to the world. The internet has brought more connections than mailing letters or the regular telephone. The participants stated that telephones presently are more accessible, with face-to-face capability. They could view their friends and family via Facetime instead of waiting for holiday visits. Alice conveyed the emotional connection between her device, like the iPhone. She expressed that the device was designed for her to stay in touch with her family and friends personally via Facetime and Facebook. Her life would be incomplete should something happen to the technology. Barbara, a participant, stated that technology would make her life incomplete. Barbara stated that instead of having a daily newspaper, it is more accessible on the iPad/iPhone (Barbara, focus group, 2023). Barbara says that reading the newspaper and browsing more on the iPhone capture more data on a screen (Barbara, interview, 2023). Several participants have Google as their preferred workplace platform because of Google Workplace. Alice noted that her favorite time is her child's interaction with the iPhone at the age of ten months and how her child uses various applications for children on the phone.

***Enhanced disconnection*.** Enhanced disconnection was evident throughout the data collection. Each participant revealed the disconnection with their children that had been intensified by the excessive use of screens. This excessive usage causes many parents and children to become disconnected from each other because parents become too involved with these devices. During a child's age of zero to three years of age, which is a crucial time for interaction with their parents, parents instead are interacting with their devices. This interaction influences a child's function, such as personality formation, academic achievement, behavior,

and empathy. The parent-child relationship is essential to a child's behavior and development. Parents are a child's primary influential teacher (American Academy Pediatrics, 2022; Gonzalez & Birnbaum-Weitzman, 2020; Teichert, 2020;). Carter noticed that his child spends more time watching television and begging to play on their smartphones and tablet devices instead of talking. During the weekends, the child is more engaged from morning until night. Many participants shared their modeling of screens in the presence of their children and their usage of various devices. Many children sleep with their devices in their beds, and when they wake up in the morning, they wake up to the device (Managing Childhood Screen Time, 2022). Due to these devices, a behavioral model, children isolate themselves from the family during dinner or breakfast. This excessive usage causes enhanced disconnection in families.

Parents must model good screen time in the presence of children. Modeling of screens in the presence of children correlates with Bandura et al. (1963) social learning theory (SLT) which focuses on observation, learning, and imitation. Bandura's social learning theory emphasizes behavior patterns of imitation and observing a behavioral model. In Bandura's discovery, people learn through observation, especially children.

Implications for Policy or Practice

The implications of this study for practices were considered after the findings from the data. The findings from the study reveal that parents and children have been critical consumers of electronic media. The media industry has targeted parents and children aged one to three (Sheehan et al., 2019). Researchers have discovered that during the critical development age of children, parents should use caution to eliminate children's use of these devices (Auxier et al., 2020; Gonzalez & Birnbaum-Weitzman, 2020).

Implications for Practice

The study reveals practical implications for parents, children, stakeholders, and school districts to understand the issue of the influence of the overconsumption of digital devices on children. During the critical development age of children, parents may also use cautionary strategies to eliminate children's use of these devices (Adam et al., 2018; Auxier et al., 2020). Using cautionary strategies can be effective for overall environments. The practical importance of the study will help raise awareness of the data indicated by the interviews of the parents of school-aged children, from toddlers to five-year-olds, in the local school experiencing socio-economic factors. Parents play an influential role in the screen time behaviors of children through role models. Parents will help decide how much time to spend on devices for their children by modeling the appropriate time and through device control. Parents who actively engage and communicate with their children about screen time and the harm that over-usage may cause are more likely to create a better mobile technological home environment. A technological home environment that controls mobile device usage is the perfect way to start children learning to control their screen time. Since each participant focuses on the motivation of screen time, they should consider it and become aware of their perspective, which can result in continuous improvement in the discipline of screen time usage. As a result, parents should learn more about the various developmental issues these devices have on children and themselves and best practices. By using best practices, the overuse of these devices can be eliminated, and their impact on children's development at an early age can be considered.

Some challenges, such as children becoming hostile when asked to do chores or obligations, make parenting challenging. Many children would get angry and upset if asked to put the device down or power it off, and they would even become isolated; for example, Omari

noted "that rewards are good in changing his child's behavior, such as "If you do your homework, you can play with the iPad." (Omari's interview, 2023). Omari has a plan that when assignments are completed and reviewed, the children will be rewarded, for example, by using their iPads. He stated that the homework must be accurate to obtain the device (Omari's interview, 2023). This behavior modification pattern of using rewards to modify a child's behavior was particularly prevalent. They use a digital device as a reward, present among the parents attempting to alter a child's behavior (Omari, focus, e-journal, 2023).

In addition, school districts should provide media development opportunities to training educators and even the parent community. School leaders should seek media-learned opportunities to understand media habits better, develop children, support effective related strategies, and eliminate overuse. The use of media is crucial at the stage of child development. Piaget (1957) states that children move through sensory and preoperative developmental stages. According to Piaget's theory of child development, the sensorimotor stage is the first stage of a child's life, beginning to build their world by observation from birth to two years old. As children progress through the development stage, such as the sensorimotor stage, from birth to two years of age, they build their world by touching, watching, and listening. In the preoperational stage, age two to seven, learning sets, symbolic play, developing language, and abstract thought (Piaget, 1957). Through this time, children interact with their environment. At this stage, interactive learning involves an experience of life. Even though technology can be educational, school leaders should consider its opposite effect on children, especially at their development stage, as stated by Piaget (1957).

Theoretical and Empirical Implications

Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory (SCT) formed the theoretical framework for this study. In this study, SCT is essential for explaining behavior, developmental psychology, and learning from others' experiences that are influenced by their surroundings. There are few studies regarding parents influencing their children's screen time usage. The available literature focuses on teenagers and screen time. Related literature regarding theoretical and empirical implications supports the study's findings. The study's implications were guided by new knowledge produced by the participants' experience.

Theoretical Implications

Bandura et al. (1963) social learning theory was used to provide the framework for this study focusing on imitation. The theoretical framework of social cognitive theory refines social learning, which consists of cognitive processes - concepts, judgment, and motivation. In which people's behavior and the environment affect them (Cherry, 2020). The study shows the viability of the theory, finding that the best media technology practices use elevated levels of experimental learning and practical application. Social cognitive theory focuses on the interaction between people, environments, and behaviors. It also outlines how individuals initiate and maintain behaviors, considering their social context (Cherry, 2020). People shape their knowledge base of computer usage in mobile technology usage behaviors (Cherry, 2020b). Therefore, parents' behavior in this study encourages children to use technology.

Bandura and Walters (1977) argued that the more an individual acquires knowledge, the more a new behavioral pattern imitates the behavior (Nickerson, 2023). The study's findings show the theoretical framework's viability while highlighting parents' role modeling screen time over usage, which influences children's screen time. This effect on their children's screen time in the

home environment is because of parental role modeling. The ten participants in this study noted their motivation behind overusing screen time based on their experiences and reflections. The popularity of these devices has played an active role in acquiring knowledge and has become addictive (Brown & Council on Communications and Media, 2011; Reynolds et al., 2011). Parents should learn about screen time and how it can affect their child's development and self. Learning about a child's development in their role is valuable as a parent, as it allows for an initiative-taking approach to determine the health length of time most influential during their child's development stage.

Empirical Implications

Regarding empirical implications, studies have been conducted on parental usage of technology and the researchers found that parents do motivate children with technology in the home environment (Gonzalez & Birnbaum-Weitzman, 2020; Maker, 2018; Teichert, 2020). Gonzalez and Birnbaum-Weitzman's (2020) examination of Teichert's (2020) autoethnographic study of a mother's struggle over 'no screen time' with her infant son, a centralized theme relates to the findings of this study. Teichert (2020) reported how digital tools were integrated into her daily life and that of her 18-month-old son. In the study, the key to children learning and using digital technology is the social interaction of parents within their homes, as advocated by Teichert (2020).

Gonzalez and Birnbaum-Weitzman (2020) and Teichert (2020) assert that technology can be found in every aspect of the family home, and smartphones are the main method of communication used by adults, which supports this study. Based on the data the child learns about digital communication through internalization and imitation in their play (Papadakis et al., 2022; Teichert, 2020). The findings of the current study also concur with this research findings.

It was evident in this study that parental influence in the home environment was present from the e-journal/diary analysis that correlates with the information that parents are influential to their children. In addition, several participants stated in the interview and focus group that their child imitates them in the usage of their devices. The researcher expressed the importance of being the primary role model for parents in their homes, which is the key to children's learning and the use of digital technology in influencing children's behavior and media habits.

Bentley et al., (2016) found the views of mothers and their preschool child's screen-viewing behavior in a qualitative study exploring parental involvement with technology. Several mothers described their experiences observing their children's use of technology regarding observed behaviors, including the amount of screen time, and that they should manage their preschool usage. The participants stated that during the interview, they should be more concerned about viewing their preschool-aged child while establishing rules and limitations for using mobile devices.

Hosokawa and Katsura's (2018) findings that coincide with this current study are that unfavorable use of the screen because children have a problem with attention to tasks. They discovered that time spent in front of a screen for children could interfere with the development of a child's concentration if fascinated with their screens, which means they are distracted from homework, people, and engagement. Screen time has become an impediment to a child's progression and growth. The concentration of a child - time spent on screen has become an impediment to their attention, and they cannot focus. A child's communication - time spent in front of a screen reduces social skills. Interaction of a child with other people - screen time can facilitate person-to-person exchanges (White & Hughes, 2017).

The results of this study concur with the findings of Papadakis et al. (2022). They found that mobile devices are used abundantly among preschool-aged children. Papadakis et al.'s (2022) study of interactive touchscreen devices has become ubiquitous among young children and toddlers in the city of Patras in Greece. Touchscreen technology is first experienced by children and toddlers in the home environment before age two. The finding is consistent with other researchers on this topic that the experience in the home environment is influenced by parents, who play a vital role in the developing child. Parents are the role models of interactive touchscreen screen-viewing behaviors in this vital role and may be responsible for this influence. Hosokawa & Katsura (2018) also found that technological advancements have heavily influenced the study of interactive touchscreen screens for children (Maker, 2018; Teichert, 2020). Findings of Radesky et al., (2016) concurred that technological advancement outcomes of possible adverse of frequent technology usage by young children in previous years have been voiced by scientists. In the study, scientists highlighted that media exposure and the use of technology, including audio-visual media exposure, have often been linked to adverse effects on cognitive development and academic achievement. Research links children's cognitive development with touchscreen devices and well-designed mobile applications (apps) (Portugal et al., 2021; Sheehan et al., 2019). Parents need further guidance because of the lack of knowledge about app developmental appropriateness.

Işikoğlu et al. (2021) found that the overuse of digital devices, including tablets and smartphones, has led to overuse among young children and adults. Işikoğlu et al. (2021) findings were that parents play a role, particularly during a child's early life, when they are responsible for most of their experiences that coincide with this study. Parents significantly influence their children's lives by furnishing them with materials and observing them using devices in their

presence. Furthermore, parents must supervise and monitor their child's usage of these devices. Parents' excitement is responsible for creating these devices, fostering their children's excitement and desire. Children often imitate their parents' behaviors by observing their parents using digital devices. Even though children often follow their parents' lead, the parents who took part in the article stated that their children had been using their devices excessively, which caused concern for their health and mental well-being.

The participant's collective responses in this study were consistent with findings reported in the literature that parents recognize that screen time on these accessible devices can be valuable to young children and contribute to excessive use. Maker (2018) found that children have easier access (TV, iPads, computers, and phones) than they did more than 15 years ago and that the motivation behind their use has increased. Parents should gain knowledge of media and children's development and how screen time impacts the home environment. Participants should reflect on the American Association of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendation regarding screen times (AAP, 2022). Several of the participants indicated that since the lack of knowledge of screen time in the development issues of their child, they should consider learning more information. Studies also exist on empirical evidence as it relates to screen time in the lives of children. However, few studies focus on motivation that influences parent's screen time. Therefore, parents should gain the necessary knowledge regarding the impacts of overusing screen time for children and the parents. There is a gap in the literature about parents' influence on children's screen time and, therefore, an opportunity for extended research on creating and implementing rules for limiting screen viewing in the home environment. This study will fill the research gap by examining parents' influence on children's screen time, leading to developmental issues.

Limitations and Delimitations

The primary limitation of this study was restricted visitation to the H-School District facility due to the pandemic of 2020. The concern about the COVID-19 pandemic is that specific settings and activities can make individuals dispose of the virus (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022). The settings and activities prompted concern by the facility's administrator and parents due to the underage children the school serves. The school was initially concerned about the COVID-19 pandemic in the initial discussion about what platform would be used. Some participants became detrimental due to a rise in virus mutation, limiting in-person activities, a strategy that helped reduce the spread of COVID-19 while maintaining a safe operation.

The second limitation of the study was the work schedules of the participants as well as the researcher. This led to the inability to conduct face-to-face research in the initial stages of the study. Due to working schedules, interviews were delayed, adjusted, or rescheduled. The researcher had to adjust their working schedule for this study to accommodate some of the participants' work schedules to collect data. This factor made it difficult because several participants had different work schedules that prevented them from participating in the interview. In addition, many participants lived hours away from their homes and traveled to and from work, which prevented them from participating in the one-on-one interview.

The third limitation of the study was due to its limited sample size. Skepticism prevented the study from obtaining a larger sample, which was its limitations. There were 10 participants at the maximum. Several parents were uncertain about my identity and the real goal at the beginning of the study. Uncertainly regarding participation hindered participation, which resulted

in phone calls not being answered and returned. This uncertainty limited many of the participants from participation.

By evaluating their relevance to the study, the delimitations of this study were determined. The first delimitation of the study was that the participants were chosen to conduct the study. This study focuses on the mobile device usage of H-School District participants aged 24 to 40 (Generation Y) who are tech-savvy. A group sample was generated due to the high number of tech-savvy parents in the school district. A wide range of parents is comprised of diverse backgrounds. This group provided a comprehensive understanding of mobile technology. The results of this study are restricted to demographic delimitations of parents in the H-School District, who are accountable for spending too much time on their devices. Participants who live in this school district had a high level of Socioeconomic Status (SES) and were chosen for the sample to be drawn. Therefore, the possibility to evaluate the outcomes of mobile device use by parents and children. Research questions, participant journals, and focus group discussions allow participants to describe their experiences and identify themes that emerge from those shared experiences.

The transcendental phenomenology approach is another delimitation that utilizes Moustakas's (1994) approach to create a fresh understanding by removing biases through bracketing. By using this approach, bias about the phenomenon, research questions, and site locations is eliminated. This study's findings target parents in the H-School District. Aligning interview research questions, e-journals/diaries, and focus group questions to the study's purpose allowed participants to describe their reflective experiences. Their collective reflective experiences produced themes created by their experience and represented the shared collective experiences of participating parents.

Recommendations for Future Research

By studying how parents and children interact with their devices' screen time, researchers can improve their knowledge and fill in research gaps. This information could be beneficial in helping participants understand that a child's first three years are essential for learning and development by engaging in genuine interaction with daily activities. When parents are distracted by screen-time, they may not have enough time to interact with their child, which can lead to future consequences. Further investigation is required to broaden the study of when parents are absorbed in their devices and how this interaction impacts the development of a child. Parents' bonding with their child is disrupted when time is occupied with these devices. To support interaction in a child's development, it is necessary to expand this study.

In the future, the focus should be on analyzing the effects of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on children aged 2 to 5 years. American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Communications and Media (2024) stated that the learning and development of young children is being impacted by AI in early childhood education (ECE). AI tools are being used more by children at an early age to complete their homework by assisting them in solving complicated problems. In addition, children use AI to uncover facts and explore content to acquire more knowledge about a complex subject. Even though AI has the potential to be helpful, this tool is causing critical concern, especially due to its potential impact on children's lives (Munzer, 2024). It is necessary to expand this study to support interaction in a child's development in analyzing the effects of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Future research is needed on setting technology restrictions to reduce digital distraction and the associated mental health risks. To reduce restrictions, a technology-free environment could be created. Research should be conducted on how far to enforce these restrictions on using

technology in and outside the classroom, even though technology has changed how children learn. In addition, research will be needed to determine the components to create a technology-free environment to build the perfect technology tech training program, including a technology management guide to help parents and school leaders.

Conclusion

This transcendental theological study was developed to understand the experiences of parents' influential screen time usage on their children, and an extensive review revealed a need for more information in the literature of empirical evidence about children and parents and screen time in their development. Bandura et al. (1963) social learning theory (SLT) focuses on observation learning. Bandura et al. (1963) defined imitation as integrating current information and behaviors by observing other individuals, known as social learning (observation learning), that assists others in their understanding. This study's guide to parents' experiences managing their children's screen time will be by Bandura et al. (1963) social learning theory. The study was designed to answer the following central research question: How do parents describe their experiences managing their children's screen time on digital devices? I collected the participants' lived experiences using a transcendental theological approach to uncover emerging themes. A sample of ten parental participants experienced over usage of screen time. This resulted in a participant aged 24 through 40 (Generation Y). To facilitate triangulation, data was collected through interviews, focus groups, and e-journaling e-diaries—data analysis followed by Moustakas (1994) van Kaam modification. The van Kaam method horizontalizes the data, clusters everyday experiences, and develops textural and structural descriptions of the phenomenon's essence.

The data's main themes emerged: technology saturation, parental influence, behavior modification, parent interest in media platforms, and three sub-themes: home environment, the convenience of mobile devices, and older sibling influences. Interviews, focus groups, and e-journaling from the participants were used. Children would reduce screen time as parents minimize it in their digital environment using computers, tablets, and even mobile phones (Ashton & Beattie, 2019). Researchers believe that the appropriate amount of time for children to spend using mobile devices leads to a need to study parental habits that influence children's use of technology (Ashton & Beattie, 2019). Studies highlight screen time but have not been conducted on parents' influence on children's screen time, which will fill in the research gap by examining parents' influence on children's screen time.

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Appendix A IRB APPROVAL

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

June 6, 2023

Eric Phillips
Veronica Sims

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY22-23-1621 A TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF PARENTS' MOTIVATIONAL INFLUENCE BEHIND THEIR CHILDREN'S SCREEN TIME USAGE

Dear Eric Phillips, Veronica Sims,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:
The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

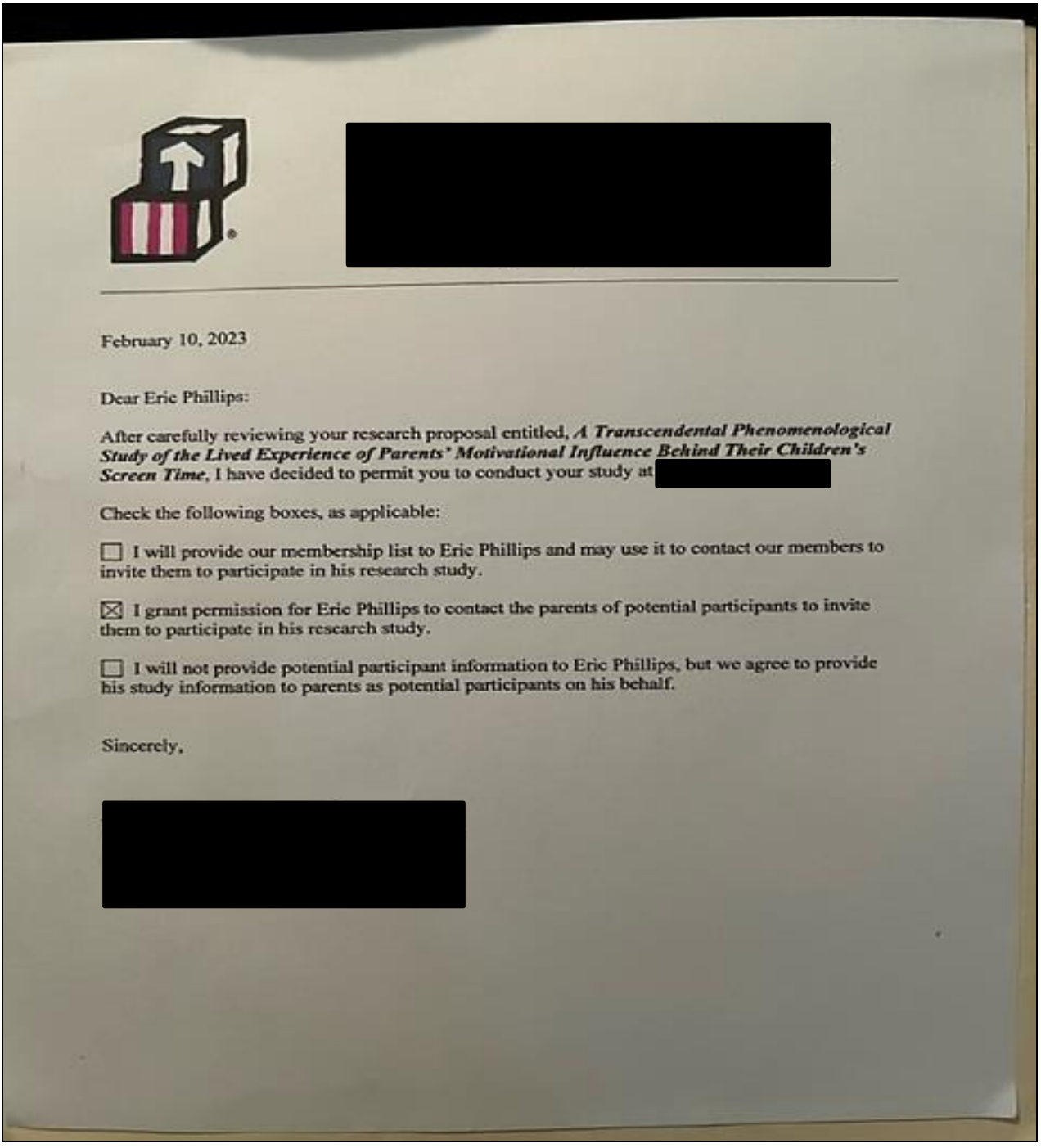
Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

Appendix B SITE APPROVAL



[redacted]

February 10, 2023

Dear Eric Phillips:

After carefully reviewing your research proposal entitled, ***A Transcendental Phenomenological Study of the Lived Experience of Parents' Motivational Influence Behind Their Children's Screen Time***, I have decided to permit you to conduct your study at [redacted]

Check the following boxes, as applicable:

☐ I will provide our membership list to Eric Phillips and may use it to contact our members to invite them to participate in his research study.

☒ I grant permission for Eric Phillips to contact the parents of potential participants to invite them to participate in his research study.

☐ I will not provide potential participant information to Eric Phillips, but we agree to provide his study information to parents as potential participants on his behalf.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Appendix C PARTICIPANTS FLYER

Research Participants Needed

A TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE LIVED EXPERIENCES

OF PARENTS' MOTIVATIONAL INFLUENCE BEHIND THEIR CHILDREN'S SCREEN

TIME USAGE

Are you 25 and 40 years of age or older?
Children aged one to five years old.
Attend X School

You might be eligible to participate in a research study if you answered yes to either of the above questions.

This transcendental qualitative phenomenological study explores the lived experience of parents managing their children's screen time on mobile technology.

Participants will be asked to participate in an interview, focus group. E-journal/diaries.
Benefits include.
Participants will be entered in a raffle for an iPad.

If you would like to participate, and complete the survey, contact the researcher on [redacted].

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey/will be given to you at the time of/one week before/etc. the interview/focus group/etc.

Eric Phillips, a student/doctoral candidate/faculty member in the Department of Education of the School of Education at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

[redacted]

APPENDIX D: RECRUITMENT LETTER

Date: _____

Dear Administrator:

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Philosophy of Education Doctorate in Higher Administration. The title of my research project is exploring the lived experience of parents managing their children's screen time on mobile devices. I am requesting your permission to conduct my research in/at school district/school name, church name, business name, organization name, etc.

Participants will be asked to complete the attached survey/contact me to schedule an interview/etc. Participants will be presented with informed consent information before participating. Participating in this study is entirely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on an official letterhead indicating your approval. A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
Education Specialist

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS
CONSENT FORM

Title of the Project: A TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF PARENTS' MOTIVATIONAL INFLUENCE BEHIND THEIR CHILDREN'S SCREEN TIME USAGE

Principal Investigator:

Eric J. Phillips

Liberty University School of Education

Invitation to be part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study to explore the lived experience of parents managing their children's screen time on mobile technology. Participants must be 25 and 40 years of age. I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at Liberty University and will be conducting the study. You were selected because your child was identified by their teacher as a frequent user of the iPad/tablet. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. Please read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to participate in this research project.

What is the study about, and why are we doing it?

This transcendental qualitative phenomenological study explores the lived experience of parents managing their children's screen time on mobile technology.

What will participants be asked to do in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask the following things:

1. Interviewed with a series of semi-structured questions. That will take 30 to 40 minutes, during which the interview will be recorded.

2. Allow the researcher to observe your current media practices. This process will take approximately 20 minutes, and field notes will be taken.

3. Use your diary to capture thoughts while dealing with your media device.\ and or your observation of your child. This process will take approximately 20 minutes, and field notes will be taken.

How could participants or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect a direct benefit from participating in this study.

What risks might participants experience from being in this study?

Risks: There will be no risk involved in this study. Therefore, risks are minimal, which means, "The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- To protect the privacy of the participant(s) and the confidentiality of their data: Participant responses will be kept confidential by assigned pseudonyms. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.

- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted upon completion of the study.

- Interviews/focus groups will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your participation will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any questions or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should be done if a participant wishes to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, the data collected will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Eric J. Phillips. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [redacted] You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, [redacted] at [redacted]

Whom do you contact if you have questions about rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and want to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered, and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your [Consent/Opt-Out]

By signing this document, you agree to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. **You will be given a copy of this document for your records**. The researcher will keep a copy of the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

☒ I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record as part of his/her participation in this study.

_____

Printed Participant's Name Date

_____

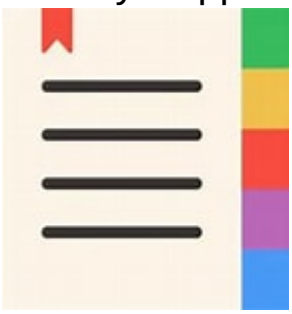
Participant's Signature Date

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

1. Please introduce yourself to me as if we had just met one another.
2. Please tell me what digital devices you use in your home and why you use them.
3. What motivated you to use digital devices?
4. Tell me about your experiences using digital devices at home.
5. How long have you been using digital devices within your home as a parent?
6. How do you, as a parent, prioritize using various digital devices in your home?
7. How much time do you spend on a digital device as a parent?
8. What are the leading causes of more than allotted screen time for parents in our society?
9. Describe what you experience/feel when there is too much screen time.
10. At what age did your child start using the digital device?
11. By observing your child's usage, what is the most significant time they use the digital device in your home?
12. What do you think is the appropriate period for you as a parent to spend on a digital device in the company of your child?
13. Why are school-age students attracted to digital devices?
14. What role do you, as the parent, play in your child's digital device screen time usage?
15. What is the relationship between digital device use and a child's development progress?
16. In your observation as a parent, how has your experience of using digital devices hindered your child's development?
17. How can you, as a parent, manage your children's screen time?

APPENDIX G: E-DIARY

E-Diary - App Store



iPhone

The E-Diary – App Store **4+**
Your electronic diary
Daniel ILLESCAS ROMERO
Designed for iPad
- Free
- Offers In-App Purchases

E-Diary - Apps on Google Play