'WE'RE JUST CATCHING CRUISE': EXPLORING TEENAGERS' PERCEPTION OF PARENTAL MEDIATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

EMMANUEL, Blessing Oyiza

Kogi State Polytechnic, Lokoja

Corresponding Author: Emmanuel, Blessing Oyiza, blessingemma201@gmail.com, +2348161360695

ABSTRACT

In the digital age, adolescents and children access social media as much as adults and this has necessitated parental mediation to mitigate risks and maximise opportunities arising from their interaction on digital media. Though there are several studies on parental mediation strategies in Nigeria, scholars have called for perceptions and response of teenagers to parental mediation to be incorporated in the Nigerian context. The objective of the study is to find out teenagers' views on their parents' mediation practices regarding their social media usage. In-depth interview was conducted with 12 teenagers in Lokoja between the ages of 15 to 17 years, who are social media users and have received parental mediation. The study used the parental mediation theory to lend credence to the work. The findings of the study showed teenagers perceive the strategies positively in the sense that it engenders self-regulation and proactiveness. On the other hand, they expressed dislike to restriction and parents' perception of their social media content. The study concluded that though teenagers may have some negative disposition to mediation strategies, parental mediation is perceived to be beneficial in guiding against addiction to social media and self-regulation. The study recommended that a balanced combination of parental mediation strategies should be encouraged and teenagers should remain responsive to parental mediation.

Keywords: Teenagers, social media, parental mediation, perception, exploring

Introduction

The pervasiveness of the media in the present information era allows both young and old people access to digital technology and its contents. Part of this population of users of digital technology includes children and adolescents and the stage of childhood and adolescence is one of the most creative and life-changing times of an individual's life.

Douglas et al. (2020) noted that evidence exists showing that the prefrontal cortex underdevelopment in the adolescent brain is linked to impaired executive functioning and decision-making in situations of high emotion or high reward such as sex, substance use and gaining likes or follows on social media. In order to mitigate the negative outcomes that could result from the interactions of adolescents with the media in general, parental mediation practice has been brought to the fore (Mendoza, 2009 in Jiow et al., 2017).

Parents are the foremost agents of socialisation of children within the family with physical and social proximity. The gamut of parental mediation consists of parents' interaction, management and regulation of the media use of children and adolescents in order to mitigate the negative effects or risks associated with internet and media use and maximise the opportunities, for the physical, mental, social and psychological wellbeing of children and adolescents (Iqbal et al., 2021).

Digital media and the risks it possess - such as cyberbullying, stranger danger, invasion of privacy, addiction and risky gaming behaviours, etc. – have made parents become more conscious and more

protective, thus, making it inevitable that parents will mediate their children's use of digital media across all age and nations, leading to an increase in research studies in parental mediation in the contemporary environment (Mathias & Singh, 2023). Various strategies have been employed by parents to mediate the digital media usage of adolescents such as active mediation, restrictive mediation, surveillance, data limiting, technical mediation, etc. as shown in various studies within the Nigerian context (e.g. Amobi, Sunday & Obia, 2020).

While several studies in Nigeria have explored mediation practices of Nigerian parents towards the digital media activities of adolescents (Amobi et al., 2020, Nwosu et al., 2022, Adigwe & van der Walt, 2020), as well as gender differences in digital media usage of adolescents (Adigwe, 2024), teenagers' responses to and experiences with parental mediation has received insufficient attention. Being the recipients of parental mediation, understanding their perception and experiences with parental mediation is necessary to provide knowledge that will be useful to parents, guardians and even educators in improving the strategies used by them, in order to contribute to promoting digital safety of young people.

Few studies (such as Adorjan et al. 2022, Tokovska, E.g., Bell & Tennfjord, 2022) that have investigated this issue were conducted in Canada and Norway. Little or none of such studies have been conducted in Nigeria. To bridge the gap in literature, this study seeks to find out the perception of teenagers in Lokoja, Kogi state Nigeria, to parental digital mediation practices. Kogi state is geographically positioned in the heart of Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

1. To find out teenagers' perception of the mediation practices of their parents towards their usage of social media.

Literature Review

Social media refers to a broad category of websites and applications designed for interaction, sharing of content, collaboration, community-based input and communication (Lutkevich & Wigmore, 2024; Macaulay et al., 2021). Examples of social media platforms includes Whatsapp, Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, etc. Parental mediation refers to the method through which parents manage their children's interaction with the media by regulating, supervising, and discussing the media's content with them. Social media usage has become a daily activity for majority of Nigerian adolescents and youths who are actively involved in content generation as well as content consumption. Their pattern of use revolves around entertainment, identity expression, information and networking, and this affects their social development positively and negatively (Ashiekpe & Mojaye, 2017).

In a report by News Agency of Nigeria (2022), parents expressed mixed perspectives on the appropriate age they allow their teenage children to start using phones. While some advocated for 14 years of age, others said 18 years is most preferred. Some expressed worry that early usage of phones can lead to addiction and exposure to pornographic content. Some said even if teenagers are given phones, it should be cell phones which cannot access the internet. Most at times, if these teenagers need to use phones for any reason, they use their parent's phones or their sibling phones.

However, some teenage children may access smartphones owned by their peers without their parents' knowledge. A three-year study of school children from 13 to 18 years of age in South-east and North Central Nigeria showed that almost 60% of them had internet-enabled phones, mostly bought by their parents, guardians or older siblings and about 31% of them used their personal money to purchase airtime and data bundle to browse the internet (Uzuegbunam, 2020).

In order to mitigate the negative effects of digital media on adolescents, parental mediation is encouraged. There are various parental mediation strategies of digital media usage found in literature. Active mediation is when parents actively engage with their children to discuss and explain media content, providing guidance on acceptable media use. It has been shown to foster critical thinking and enhance teens digital literacy. Restrictive mediation involves parents establishing rules to limit the screen time of teens and restrict the activities that they can engage in on social media, thereby reducing their likelihood of unwanted exposure to undesirable information i.e. content risk.

Non-intrusive inspection entails parents adding their children to their friend list on social media and going through their social media profile, posts and comments. Teenagers are able to refrain to engaging in negative activities when they perceive their parents' presence (Chen, Liu & Tang, 2023). Other strategies include data limiting method and technical mediation when parents use technology-based software to track or monitor their teens social media (Amobi et al., 2020). While various mediation techniques have been established in literature, only few studies have shed light on teenagers' views and perception on digital mediation.

Tokovska et al. (2022) investigated how adolescents in Norway reflect on parental mediation of their use of social media through focus group discussions, through eight focus group discussions with adolescents aged 15 to 19 years. The result revealed that adolescents received instructions from their parents as well as peers and school employees (teachers and nurses) on how to use social media appropriately and their parents made them aware of the risks they might encounter on social media. Another theme showed that parental mediation is something adolescents expect. Also, safety on social media was created through mutual learning.

Adolescents acknowledged that they also taught their parents and other adults who are less digitally competent. Older adolescents expressed more confidence in handling safety issues on social media. However, findings revealed that parents are often focused on the negative aspects rather than the positives. The study concluded that it is important to understand what parents and schools can do to increase safe usage of social media by teenagers.

Adorjan et al. (2022) investigated the understanding and responses of Canadian teenagers to parental digital mediation via semi-structured focus group discussion with the teenagers. Their study highlight's themes related to the role of ICT in promoting addictive behaviours, social connection, differences in parental responses between male teenagers and female teenagers. Findings revealed that teens showed hostility towards punishments by their parents that involved restricting their access to digital technology, that teens experience addiction to technology and understand their parents' drive for restraining their screen time. Some female participants noted heightened apprehension of parents over their daughters' digital safety than their sons'.

These studies were conducted in countries in other continents outside Africa and Nigeria which are different in geographical location and cultural background. This study is therefore pertinent in incorporating diverse views to help in understanding parental mediation across cultural context.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the theory of parental mediation. Research on parental mediation is traced to the 1950sand talked about parental interventions into children's television usage as restrictive, active and co-use strategies. It is a hybrid communication theory that has its root in the information processing theories and social/psychological media effects paradigm. Sonia Livingstone from 2007 advanced the concept to include children's internet use.

Lynn Clark in 2011 advanced the theory in relation to digital and mobile media, with the inclusion of participatory learning where parents and children interact together with and through digital media. According to the theory, parents mediate and mitigate the detrimental impacts of the media on their children's lives by using a variety of interpersonal communication strategies (Clark, 2011).The theory also assumes that interpersonal interactions that take place between parents and children about media have a role in socializing children into society.

In line with this position, this study aims to find out how teenagers perceive their interaction with their parents on their social media use and the parental mediation strategies used by their parents to provide an understanding of how potent parental mediation is in socializing teenagers into behaving responsibly on social media use especially in a developing country such as Nigeria. This makes the theory relevant to this study.

Method

In collecting data, the study applied a qualitative method. Teenagers between 15 and 17 years of age were interviewed. This age group were selected based on the expectation that they would be mature enough to provide answers to the interview questions. The interviews took place between January to March 2024.

The population of the study consisted of teenagers in Lokoja who live with their parents, who use social media with their personal phones, with their parents' knowledge and who have received mediation from their parents on the usage of social media. This set of population is purposively selected because they are in the best position to give responses based on the mediation experiences they have had with their parents. The researchers used a snowballing method to get respondents in which one teenager who fits the criteria required recommends another teenage respondent.

The researcher met with the teenagers in various locations to meet their parents to seek consent for participation. The researcher met most of the parents and the teenagers in their homes, some in places of worship and some online. After the parents gave consent, they gave the researcher and the teenager privacy for the interview to be conducted. The interviews lasted 30 minutes on the average. Semi-structured questions were asked and follow-up questions were asked based on responses. The responses were transcribed and analysed thematically.

In determining the sample size sufficient to reach saturation, Bernard (2013) asserts that there is growing consensus that 10 to 20 core research participants are sufficient to identify and comprehend the central problems in any study of lived experience. Eventually, 12 teenagers were interviewed.

Presentation of Data

S/N	Informant	Code Name	Age	Gender
1	Informant 1	Inf. T1	16	Female
2	Informant 2	Inf. T2	15	Female
3	Informant 3	Inf. T3	16	Male
4	Informant 4	Inf. T4	17	Female
5	Informant 5	Inf. T5	16	Male
6	Informant 6	Inf. T6	15	Male

43

7	Informant 7	Inf. T7	17	Female
8	Informant 8	Inf. T8	16	Male
9	Informant 9	Inf. T9	15	Male
10	Informant 10	Inf. T10	17	Female
11	Informant 11	Inf. T11	17	Female
12	Informant 12	Inf. T12	16	Male

Source: 2023 Field Data Collection

For the teenagers as presented in the table above,6 of them are males while 6 of them are females. Most of the teenagers are students who just completed secondary school awaiting admission into the university. Few are secondary school students.

Theme 1: Teenagers' View on Mediation

When asked about their views on their parents' social media mediation strategies, teenagers in this study expressed divergent perspectives. Their views ranges from how beneficial for them the strategies have been, their attitude or reaction to parental mediation and which strategy they prefer over others.

Subtheme 1: Proactiveness to perceived risk

Most of the teenage respondents expressed positive views of parental mediation, asserting that parental mediation is indeed necessary for them. They confirmed that it has been of help to them in instances when they came across something that could put them at risk, they knew how to respond appropriately because they had been warned by their parents beforehand.

Some of their views are captured thus: '*So it has been helpful to me. I don't take advice from my peers because they can put me in trouble. Some of my peers in school, say that because of money, they date yahoo boys online, that will buy things for them. I just look at them and tell them they don't know the gravity of what they are getting themselves involved in, the day they are used for ritual, they are the ones that know. I used to tell them that it's not good. I have already been told from home about it and it serves as a guide for me.* (Inf. T1).

Another teenager also mentioned that her parents caution influences her proactiveness in guiding her from contact risk with strangers. In her words, '*Anytime a strange number chats me, I try my best to find out if I know the person first, and if I don't and the whole setting feels unusual, I just block the person. I feel like I have this mentality because of my father's no-nonsense attitude that I have assimilated'* (Inf. T11).

Similarly, Inf. T12 emphasized the necessity of the counselling and guidance given by his parent, as it helped him to guide against falling into online scams after being a victim once before. He said: *I feel it's necessary to give instructions and just check my activities from time to time but not to over monitor. The way they have guided me has been beneficial. If my mum didn't give me all those instructions, that 6k that I lost to scammer, I would have fallen into the hands of many more scammers. I only told her about that episode after I had paid"*.

44

Sub-Theme 2: Dislike for restrictions

Most of the teenagers expressed their displeasure on being restricted by their parents because such restrictions (restrictive mediation) at times interfere with their activities on social media. According to the respondents, they are satisfied when they can carry out their activities on social media without interruption. So, when their parents interrupt them while using social media, it displeases them.

In the words of Inf. T2, "*I feel bad at times. I may be chatting with someone about something important and my mum will tell me to drop my phone. Maybe I was busy during the day and didn't have time to go online so I try to go online at night when I have the time but she will just say I should drop the phone*" (Inf. T2).

This was corroborated by Inf. T4, who opined thus: *It's necessary to restrict, just that there's no specific time with my dad. My dad can just come when I am fully engrossed in what I am doing maybe chatting and he will just come and tell me to go offline, that its family time. It will piss me off because I would want to continue but I would just have to put it off* (Inf. T4).

Also, regarding time restriction, teenagers expressed their displeasure on the fact that based on their experience; parents are always more at ease with them when they are not spending time with their phones at all, on social media. Inf. T4 had this to say: *'I really don't know, African parents just complain about everything. It's like they derive pleasure in seeing me without my phone. When I'm without my phone they are always so happy, I don't even get it. For my parents, when they see that everybody at home is watching TV but I am not, rather I am on my phone, it's too much time for them. Or when everybody at home is eating and I am eating too but pressing my phone at the same time, it is too much for them. It creates a big issue at home because my dad will be like 'it is family time; I'm always on my phone' and I'll be like how many times do I really look at my phone screen? You know? They just want to see that we are focused when they see us. Like if they look at us and we are not on our phone. They are satisfied with that''*.

Subtheme 3: Self-regulation

Some of the respondents affirmed that parental mediation has been beneficial to them because it helps them regulate their usage of social media on their own, thereby guarding against addiction. Due to their parents' concern about their teenage children spending too much time on social media, teenagers affirmed that it has made them to restrict their frequency of usage of social media so that their other offline activities do not suffer. Inf. T6 said: *I earlier thought that it wasn't necessary, but now I actually know it was necessary, and I now see the reasons why they did so. The strategies have been helpful to me in a lot of ways. One of which is that I have not been addicted to my phone or social media (Inf. T6).*

Some of the teenagers affirmed that their ability to self-regulate the time they spend on social media came after their parent had seized their phone as part of the strategy for compliance. In the words of informant Inf. T4: *I find myself restricting myself by myself when I notice I have been online for too long to guide against addiction. Most times I just go offline without them complaining or without them trying to make me go offline, after my dad seized my phone once* (Inf. T4).

On his part, Inf. T9 expressed a positive view of his parent restriction of his usage of social media especially during his Senior Secondary school external exams (West African Examination Council exams). In his words, "*It is helpful at times. It helped me to focus when I was writing my external exams, and I came out in flying colours*".

Some of the respondents also affirmed that their parents' monitoring their activities online is desirable as it keeps them in check, regarding the kind of content they post online. For example, Inf. T5 submitted that: *My mom views my status, so there are times when I share memes or jokes that she perceives*

as insensitive. But to me and my own Gen Z generation, it's just a cruise. But I have to take them down because she was uncomfortable with it. And I think it's cool that she does that because sometimes those jokes are actually insensitive. So, I guess that keeps my humanity in check and empathy too (Inf. T5).

Subtheme 4: Over-strictness

Teenagers in this study mentioned that social media monitoring is one of the strategies parents employed in mediation. This involves following them on social media apps such as Facebook, Instagram and viewing their status on WhatsApp. Seizing of phones is also another strategy parents used to ensure compliance. Teenagers in the study while expressing their views on monitoring emphasised that when monitoring becomes too much and parents are too strict, in their estimation, it may be counterproductive as it tends to make them hide their activities from their parents.

Inf. T7 stated thus: *Some parents may go overboard with these strategies, while others may not take enough action. Ultimately, I think it's important for parents to strike a balance between giving their children independence and setting boundaries. It is helpful for parents to set rules and guidelines but they should allow for flexibility and trust. As for their knowledge of social media, it's true that many parents may not fully understand the risks and benefits of social media. But personally, I felt like all the collecting of my phone wasn't necessary but I understood my mum's point of view in doing that so I didn't ponder too much on it* (Inf. T7).

Similarly, Inf. T8 said "*It is not good for parents to be too strict because it will make children not to open up to them when something is wrong*". Toeing the line of Inf. T5 and Inf. T8, Inf. T10 said "*I guess over monitoring is not too good. And parents should not be too strict or too harsh. They should just go slow and not advice in a way that the children cannot respond to*''.

On the other hand, Inf. T4 said "*I think parents educating their children about the social media and trusting them also would ensure teenagers use social media properly*". In essence, teenagers advocated more for the strategy of counselling, giving verbal instructions without harshness by their parents, rather than over monitoring or seizing of their phones. To them, they feel more comfortable when parents adopt a friendlier approach in mediation and express trust in them that they are not doing anything inappropriate online.

Subtheme 5: Difference in content perception

Another area where teenagers expressed a negative perception of their parents' mediation strategy is the area of monitoring what they post online. Few teenagers mentioned that at times, parents expressed their displeasure in the content they put online as they perceive it as inappropriate.

Inf. T10, Inf. T5, Inf. T12, Inf. T11 while sharing their views on the matter, complained of their mothers, particularly, monitoring and at times disapproving of what they post online: *My mom used to view my status, but I blocked her not because of anything but because she doesn't like seeing me post my face on social media. My dad is my friend online, and he doesn't even say anything about what I post and I don't post too much. But the day I post something, that will be the day she comes online and complains. I have unblocked her now, though* (Inf. T10).

The response also shows that teenagers can at times block their parents who monitor their social media activities in real time, at times without the knowledge of their parents, as they are more knowledgeable on how to use these platforms to suit their purpose. Inf. T12 shared this position when he said *'I was in the barber shop where I learn how to barb hair and I just carry my camera, recorded a video of myself playing song and I posted it. my mum saw it and told me not to make such posts that I am a*

pastor's son and such posts can send wrong messages, that kind of thing… and to me it's just normal thing for people my age to post, I'm just catching cruise.'

On enquiry, the post contained snapchat filters which according to the parent looked scary and felt that it could pass a wrong message about him to those who view his post and that was why she told him to take it down. This is similar to what Inf. T5 said '*There are times when I share memes or jokes that my mum perceives as sensitive. But to me and my own Gen Z generation, it's just a cruise. But I have to take them down because she was uncomfortable with it'* (Inf. T5).

On further inquiry on what teenagers mean by 'cruise', they expressed unanimity in the fact that 'cruise' to them means 'catching fun'. In the words of some of the respondents, '*when Gen Z say they are catching cruise it means they are just joking or having fun or pulling your legs, depending on the context. But most times it just means they are having fun and there's nothing serious even though some people may take it seriously'* (Inf. T11).

Their response shows the difference in perception between parents and teenagers regarding acceptable and unacceptable content on social media. Teenagers who refer to themselves as Gen Z, that is those born around the early 2000s see things differently from the way their parents see it when it comes to social media content, memes or posts, so it is not uncommon to see parents' frown at the content they post or share on social media because it doesn't go in line with what they perceive as reasonable and acceptable. But among the Gen Z cohorts, it is the norm for them. One of the respondents explained this generational difference in this way,

'My generation is more carefree and at times parents read wrong meaning to some things. I think it is because they didn't have access that technology has brought in this generation in their own time. But they take things too seriously. For example, my sister once used a famous American singer Billie Eilish as her profile picture and my parents started giving a lecture on it. Maybe because of how Billie Eilish dresses, you know how American pop stars can dress. She was forced to change it' (Inf T11).

On enquiry from the respondent, she confirmed that Billie Eilish is an American singer who appeals to young audience demography. Youngsters follow some of the personalities they are captivated by on social media, posting, liking or sharing their pictures on their platforms. These personalities appeal to their demography whereas; they may not be appealing to their parents who are of older ages due to reasons such as difference in cultural inclination in areas such as dressing and appearance.

Also, there are trends common with social media users especially youngsters such as the use of filters, sharing of memes including videos, images or pieces of text with humorous communication. The responses show that parents sometimes perceive these trends with dissatisfaction, while teenagers see them are just merely trends they hop on.

Discussion of Findings

The subthemes that emerged from this theme include positive and negative reactions from the teenagers such as proactiveness to perceived risks, dislike for restriction, self-regulation, difference in content perception. Throughout the study, teens confirm that they receive instructions from parents on how to use social media appropriately (active mediation), which is in line with Tokovska et al. (2022), their parents at times restrict the time they spend on social media, as well as what they post online (restrictive mediation) and monitor the content they post.

However, teenagers in this study did not report receiving caution from school teachers and nurses, which is in contrast with Tokovska et al. (2022). Teens in this study affirmed that though they do not find it pleasant when their parents interfere with their time of use of social media and restrictions, they confirm

that the instructions parents have given them has been helpful to them in knowing how to navigate their way on social media when they come across risky situations. This is consistent with the parental mediation theory which states that parents mediate and mitigate the detrimental impacts of the media on their children's lives by using a variety of interpersonal communication strategies (Clark, 2011).

The study revealed that restrictive mediation engenders self-regulation of social media usage among teenagers in Lokoja and helped them not to spend too much time on social media or be addicted to it, but also focus on other important offline activities such as family time and studies. This finding is consistent with Chen and Chng (2016) that restrictive and active mediation are associated with increased online self-regulation among teens. It is also in line with Adorjan et al. (2022) which found that teens experience addiction to technology and therefore understand their parents' drive for restraining their screen time. Some teenagers in this study also affirmed that their parents monitoring their activities and what they post is beneficial for them, as it serves as a guide for them on what is acceptable.

This is consistent with Chen, Liu and Tang (2023) that teenagers' ability to resist temptation and refrain from indulging in prohibited behaviours is improved when they perceive their parents' presence on social media. Parents browsing their teenage children's profile on social media and viewing their comments or posts is termed non-intrusive inspection which is a form of psychological presence that allows parents monitor their children's adherence to their advice and recommendation, strengthening the bond between parental expectation and children's actual behaviour, potentially lowering risky online practices among teenager.

Teenagers in this study affirmed that while their parents give them instructions on appropriate social media usage, they also place restriction on the time they spend on social media and the kind of content they post i.e. a combination of active, restrictive mediation strategies as well as monitoring. The study gives an insight to how effective these combinations of strategies are. Chen et al. (2023) submitted that in combining giving instructions and caution (active mediation) and non-intrusive inspection (monitoring) mediation strategies, active mediation can transfer parent's expectation from teenagers on social media use and assist teenagers in forming their views of subjective norms while non-intrusive inspection gives teenagers a sense of psychological presence of their parents on social media.

It assists teens comprehend the importance of social media etiquette which will help them understand why parents employ restrictive strategies and lessen their opposition to parental authority. This can be attributed to the reason why a number of teenagers in this study asserted that they perceive the parental mediation to be necessary and why they respond (even though unwillingly at times), when their parents restrict usage of social media at particular times and restrict the kind of content they post online in the process of monitoring them.

Findings of this study also showed that at times, teenagers portray resistant response to restrictions and when parents are too strict in their approach. Due to this, some mentioned that they block their parent from viewing what they post, especially on Whatsapp. This finding is similar to Valkenburg et al. (2013), who opined that parents who apply authoritarian surveillance which involves using social media account to keep tabs on their teens online activity in real time, makes teens feel their privacy and personal space is being invaded which makes them act in resistant ways.

The finding of this study shows that some of the memes and filters used by teenagers on social media are frowned at or disapproved by parents, where as teenagers see them as hip trend among Gen Zs for amusement and entertainment. Gen Zs are digital natives shaped by technology and social media, born between 1997 and 2012 (Ita & Osoba, 2025). To better understand how different generations perceive some aspects of social media, more research may be useful.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, this study shows that parental mediation has yielded both positive and negative reaction from teenagers. Even though teenagers express displeasure on the restraints by their parents and over-monitoring, they generally have a favourable perception of parental mediation; it has engendered self-regulation of the time they spend on social media and helps them focus on their offline activities. Teenagers in the study advocated for more open communication and friendly approach in counselling. In essence, parental mediation has been beneficial to the teenagers and play a role in familiarising teenagers with online risks and how to conduct themselves appropriately and should continue to be encouraged.

The researcher recommends that parents should maintain open communication with their wards so that communication can flow freely between them especially when they have questions or concerns since this improves parent-child relationship and fosters positive response to parental mediation strategies. Teenage children should be responsive to parental mediation strategies as the study has shown that it has been indeed beneficial in serving as a guide to them as they navigate the digital world, reducing addiction to social media and engendering self-regulation by teenagers.

References

Adigwe, I. & Van der Walt, T. (2020). Parental mediation of online media activities of children in Nigeria: A parent-child approach. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports, 2*(100041).

Adigwe, I. (2024). Adolescents' online risks and parental mediation in Nigerian families: Gender in focus. *Sage Open, 14*(3).

Adorjan, M., Ricciardelli, R. & Saleh, T. (2022). Parental technology governance: Teenagers' understandings and responses to parental digital mediation. *Qualitative Sociology Review 18*(2), 112-130.

Ashiekpe, J. A. & Mojaye, E. M. (2017). Influence of social media use on the social development of Nigerian adolescents and youths. *Journal of Social and Management Sciences, 12*(1), 91-100.

Amobi, T. I, Sunday, O. & Obia, V. (2020). Parental Mediation of Mobile and Social Media Engagement of Select Teens in Lagos State, Nigeria. *SAU Journal of Management and Social Sciences 5*(2), 19-35.

Bernard, H. (2013). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Sage Publications, Inc.

Chen, V. H. & Chng, G. S. (2016). Active and restrictive parental mediation over time: Effects

on youths' self-regulatory competencies and impulsivity. *Computers & Education,98*,206-212.

Chen, L., Liu, X & Tang, H. (2023). The interactive effects of parental mediation strategies in preventing cyberbullying on social media. *Psychology Research and Behaviour Management* (16), 1009-1022.

Clark, L.S. (2011). Parental mediation theory for the digital age. *Communication Theory, 21*(4), 323-43.

Comms Week. (2023). *Is your child old enough to be on social media?* Retrieved March 24th, 2023, from https://www.nigeriacommunicationsweek.com.ng/is-your-child-old-enough-to-be-on-social-media/

Douglas, K. D., Smith, K. K., Stewart, M. W., Walker, J. Mena, L. & Zhang, L. (2020). Exploring parents' intentions to monitor and mediate adolescent social media use and implications for school nurses. *The Journal of School Nursing, 39*(3), 248-261.

Ita, D. & Osoba, S. (2025). Generation Z: Definition, birth years and demographics. https://www.investopedia.com/generation-z-gen-z-definition-5218554

Koronczai, B., Urbán, R., & Demetrovics, Z. (2020). Parental bonding and problematic internet or social media use among adolescents. *PsychiatriaHungarica : A Magyar PszichiatriaiTarsasagtudomanyosfolyoirata*, *35*(1), 73–80.

Livingstone, S., Kirwil, L., Ponte, C. & Staksrud, E. (2014). In their own words: What bothers children online? *European Journal of Communication 29*(3), 271-288.

Lutkevich, B. & Wigmore, I. (2024). What is social media? https://www.techtarget.com/whatis/definition/social-media

Macaulay, U.S., Etumnu, E.W. & Akwari, C.O. (2021). Perception on the use of social media in propagating security issues in the post COVID-19 era: A study of Owerri residents, Imo State. *ANSU Journal of Arts and Social Sciences, 8* (2), 113-126

Mathias, P. M. & Singh, K. (2023). Evolution in the role of parental mediation from traditional media to digital media usage in children: A review paper. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, *7*(1), 989-997.

Nwosu, C.J., Okeke, A. O. & Lukan, N.R. (2022). New media and parental mediation: Accessing Awka Urban parents' awareness and attitude to adolescents' use of Facebook. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Review (12)*1, 134-146.

Tokovska, M., Eg, R., Bell, A. R. & Tennfjord, M. K. (2022). 'Just be careful, since social media is really not as safe as its being portrayed': Adolescent views on adult support for safer social media use. *Social Sciences, 11*(492), 1-13.

Uzuegbunam, C. (2020). Why it's time for adults to accept that Nigerian teenagers have digital life. Retrieved March 24, 2023, from https://independent.ng/why-its-time-for-adults-to-accept-that-nigerian-teenagers-have-digital-life/

Uzuegbunam, C. E. (2024). Children and young people's digital life worlds. Springer Nature Switzerland.

Valkenburg, P. M, Piotrowski, J. T, Hermanns, J. & De Leeuw, R. (2013). Developing and validating the perceived parental media mediation scale: A self-determination perspective. *Hum Commun Res. 39*(4), 445–469.