



Application of the Internet in Teaching about the Environment

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Abstract: *The usage of the internet is increasing very fast and it is expected that it will continue to grow as it becomes a common means of everyday life.*

This paper deals with questions such as how much time and for what purposes children use the internet and digital technology, as well as how much it is used for educational purposes. It seems that children spend less and less time outside, in parks and playgrounds. There are pros and cons to everything, so using media and the internet in the right way can make our lives a lot easier as there are many good sides to it. Losing control over the internet and media usage can bring us into the vicious circle of negative circumstances of contemporary technology. This is why it is very important to monitor children's activity on the internet but at the same time to keep up with contemporary technology development.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, media has a great influence on entire humanity. Children are especially vulnerable and sensitive to its negative messages and content. The media has a strong influence on children's development, behavior and education. Especially in the modern era, the question of media influence on children's development and behavior is becoming more and more worrying not only to parents but also to psychologists, sociologists and pedagogues. There are, of course, good sides of media that can provide children with a wide range of information valuable to their education and development. Numerous researchers deal with questions such as how good and beneficial the influence of media can be on children's and adolescents' development and health. The importance of mass media for understanding modern, industrially developed societies is evidenced by the fact that mass communications are both the cause and the consequence of these changes. They claim that adequate content and selection of adequate content, and control of that content by parents but also educators and pedagogues, play a crucial role in establishing positive attitudes in education and upbringing. If an adequate program is chosen for the child to watch if adequate content on the Internet is chosen that is available to the child, the child will enjoy the charms of the media, and will receive all the adequate information that was once not so easily available, and will make the process of upbringing and education significantly easier and more interesting. For the fastest communication to take place, the Internet is used, which is a communication system of networks that use standardized protocols (Vlahović, 2012).

Parents must pay attention to what their child is exposed to through the media but also acquire additional knowledge and educate themselves about numerous issues through the media. If used correctly, the media can help parents and be their ally in an adequate upbringing and education, but if they are used negatively, the media can leave significant negative consequences on the process of raising a child.

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2. ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEDIA

Various media are crucial for the progress of modern society as it exists today and therefore for the protection of the entire democracy and its values. The media is essential for the functioning of a large number of social institutions that are responsible for providing public services and maintaining the established social and political order. The media are also important for the proper functioning of modern societies and their most important product - **democracy**. Free media guarantees that every society is heard, that it expresses itself, and that it explains the problems it faces, but also provides the opportunity to get to know one society with another, brings different social groups closer together, and thus provides a valid basis for education in the modern age. Modern means of communication largely stifle human creativity and creative activities, they are suitable for the development of a consumer mentality, passive hedonism and a certain type of conservatism due to uncritical consumption of what is offered – all this favours the development of deviant behaviour in students (Jovanović, 2004).

After the local and national media appeared, global media emerged. The first major mass media were newspapers. The rise of the press and literacy, along with the accompanying development of journalism, were an integral part of the modern understanding of information. That is why telegraphic international news agencies were the first significant form of global media. They produced news and sold it to news outlets. Two new media technologies – moving images and radio – contributed to the development of global media. The film industry was the first media industry to serve a global market. The first radio appeared around the 1920s, and the broadcasting of radio programs had an international character. The shift to digital communication and other technological advances break down barriers between traditional media industries. New universal media appeared. "The speed at which today's news is transmitted and changes occur exceeds the historical experience that points to the accumulation of influence and evolution. It is about a revolution in mass communication and a revolution in culture" (Zindović-Vukadinović, 1994). Based on the consumption of media content, traditional media - television, radio and press, differ according to the place of consumption of the content, the time or the moment of consumption, but also the content itself that is consumed. The consumption of media content largely depends on the very characteristics and means of expression of each media. The content in the media depends on the way of financing, laws, customs, and cultural standards in the area where the media houses operate. The content of traditional media has undergone significant changes and adapted to the new digital environment, especially the Internet. Television, radio and press today and their content, have adapted and changed under the influence of digitization.

3. INTERNET

The Internet was created in the 1960s as a way for government researchers to share information. Computers in the 1960s were huge and couldn't be moved, and to use the information stored in any computer, it was very important to either travel to the computer site or have magnetic computer sticks sent through the conventional postal system. Another important segment in the creation of the Internet was the warming of the Cold War. The launch of the Sputnik satellite by the Soviet Union prompted the US Department of Defence to consider ways in which information could be shared even after a nuclear attack. This led to the creation of the ARPANET network, which is at the very end of growing into what we now know as the Internet (Kastels, 2009, p. 12). ARPANET was a huge success, but participation was limited to a few academic and research researchers who held contracts with the Department of Defence. In response to

this, other communication networks were formed. January 1, 1983, is considered the birthday of the Internet. Besides, the complicated computer networks had no normal way of communication. A new communication protocol was created, Transfer Control Protocol/Internet Work Protocol (TCP/IP). It allowed all kinds of computers on opposite networks to "communicate" with each other (Kastels, 2009).

During the 80s, this protocol was fully tested and accepted by a large number of networks. The Internet has spread in all directions at an enormous speed. At the global level, a connected global network has finally come into use. It continued to be used extensively by researchers, scientists and programmers to share messages and information. It came about thanks to Tim Berners-Lee who introduced the Web - as the Internet is now known and used today (WWW-World Wide Web). The Internet has grown from simply exchanging messages from one computer to another to form an accessible and intuitive way for people to explore what was initially a collection of interconnected websites.

Modern parents may feel completely in control of the computer and internet capabilities of children; a large number of parents cannot understand that these new media are a key component of modern literacy. This is a new era and the Internet represents a very powerful tool in the education of a child, but also a dire need of a child to master the world in which they live. Parents should not hold them back from exploring the possibilities of the Internet, but they must be vigilant when children use the Internet to explore the world around them. The threats of this relatively uncontrolled "wireless" world are large and varied, but largely undetectable. These threats should be recognized and smart parents will learn how to keep their children safe by controlling the media and using advice from the many resources that are designed to keep children safe while allowing them to use the wide range of amenities in a safe environment. The educator has wide opportunities to give parents and children support and advice on how to use the Internet and how to use it wisely in the process of upbringing and education. The Internet has important opportunities to allow children and young people access to educational information and can be considered as a large library located at home. The Internet represents a universal sea of useful information that can help parents with their child's upbringing and education, during the child's progress and development. On the other hand, there are also negative aspects of such a developed uncontrolled system. Nevertheless, parents are in a position to use technology that prevents children from accessing illegal and inappropriate content on the Internet, but they need to know that this technology cannot be a substitute for their control or guidance. The Internet can be a useful tool for educating parents on how and in what way they can best act in the upbringing and education of a child, but also to open up a world of possibilities outside the home and classroom to the child himself.

4. THE TASK OF THE MEDIA DURING CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

The influence of the media on children, and therefore the task of the media in their development, is constantly growing to create new and more sophisticated types of media that could be used by all people. The media enabled freer access and therefore a special influence on the process of raising and educating children. The benefits of media in the upbringing of children include early preparation for learning, educational diversity and the acquisition of diverse and broad educational opportunities, the ability to watch or be part of the communication about specific tasks regarding the world they are surrounded by, getting acquainted with art, music, etc. Bad effects can be the result of the promotion of examples of aggressive actions, showing subtle or

inappropriate sexual content, showing wrong body images, showing bad health habits, as well as numerous other negative effects that the media can have on the child and his upbringing and education process. These messages can create negative images in the process of raising a child and can be deeply rooted in the early development of the child. „The educational process has two functions: to transfer the culture, values and knowledge of previous generations to the present and to prepare children for the world in which they will live“ (Ristanović, 2002).

Media that promote family discussions about news and events can be helpful to parents in the process of education and upbringing. Games with the appropriate content that promotes physical activity and social interaction in real life are also excellent for children, for their overall physical and psychological development. These kinds of games have a positive effect on cognitive abilities and motor skills, and they have a positive effect on the overall growth and development of the child. Parents must always be careful with programs and content on the Internet that are too fast, violent, or mature for children of a certain age because they harm their health and development, and therefore their education.

5. THE RESEARCH APPROACH TO GETTING TO KNOW THE ENVIRONMENT

The research approach to the study of teaching content is based on a constructive educational paradigm based on the attitude that learning is an independent activity of an individual. The essence of cognitive development is the action of the organism on the environment and vice versa. The factors that influence the cognitive development of a person are: biological maturation (age), experience, social transmission and balance. The maturation of an organism is a natural process of development that is genetically determined and we cannot influence it. A child's cognitive development is conditioned by his maturity, and the product of maturation is "knowledge about the world into which the child comes spontaneously". Another factor of cognitive development is the activity of the individual. By observing objects, the child checks his thoughts and ideas, notices change, establishes some laws and organizes his knowledge of information from the outside world (environment) passively, but actively tries to understand things, structure his experience and introduce stability (balance) into the world around him. The new educational paradigm implies a different partnership between child and teacher in work, where the teacher plans, designs, initiates and supports students' independent learning. Having this in mind, the primary goal of learning is not "acquiring knowledge" but the skills, and habits needed for permanent and independent construction.

The primary goal of education according to Piaget is to form people who can create new objects, and not just restore what generations before them did - imaginative people who come up with discoveries and ideas. Another goal is to form critical brains, that can examine and not just accept everything that is offered to them without thinking and checking. Children's innate curiosity and need for research and study of their immediate natural and social environment should be nurtured, and they are supposed to be encouraged for intellectual efforts and commitments.

6. CONTRIBUTIONS OF MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES TO CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

Children who use computers and the Internet from an early age, with minimal involvement of adults, master its use very easily. Bearing in mind the characteristics of preschool children, their curiosity, and their openness to new knowledge, the preschool period can be considered particularly sensitive when it comes to new media. Educational software that allows a child to draw,

colour, design different things, learn letters, numbers and different concepts and think logically is most often recommended for children up to 6 years of age. Colbert believes that information and communication technologies stimulate children to write or tell stories that are richer in the choice of theme, content and characters.

The media activates all children's senses, which is particularly specific for audio-visual media where besides content that children can see on the screen, they can also hear text that follows. This intensifies impressions and helps children visualize specific images of the world that surrounds them.

Mass media have enslaved the free time of modern man. As some mass media appeared, it suppressed the popularity of its predecessor. The development and ubiquity of mass communication have become characteristic features of modern society. Mass media are characteristic of modern society, and their development follows various social changes. The importance of mass media for understanding modern, industrially developed societies is evidenced by the fact that mass communications are both the cause and the consequence of these changes. Media are typically used at the primary group level: among families, among peers, among friends, and so on. That is why they act on human consciousness and produce cumulative effects. Young people are therefore the most receptive audience of mass media - they are very sensitive, susceptible and sometimes just socially protected (Radojković, 1993).

The most frequently cited consequences that the mass media have on modern man is represented by the fact that these media emphasize the individual but at the same time reduce his contact with reality. Recognizing and understanding these consequences, as well as understanding the connected actions of the media, communication, man and the world, is one of the first steps that heralds the possibility of media education.

The computer as a medium, among other things, encourages greater engagement and motivation of children, contributes to more immediate clarity, and better organization of various exercises, continuously provides feedback and direct communication between the teacher and the child, contributes to the development and formation of critical thinking according to the content being studied: it directly activates and engages children in work and ultimately enables effective control and a more objective evaluation of accomplished educational achievements.

It is important to mention that from an early age, it is necessary to work on raising the awareness of children but also parents about safety on the Internet. It is also necessary to educate them about the correct use, about which there are adequate materials on the websites of competent ministries, organizations of the non-governmental sectors, etc.

7. INTERNET AS A MEANS OF FAST AND EFFICIENT INFORMATION

In our life, the Internet has become an everyday thing. Correct use of the Internet makes our lives easier, faster and simpler. There are many ways to use the Internet, however, the use of the Internet in everyday life depends on the needs and tasks of each person. The Internet represents a certain means of providing and exchanging information between parents and numerous institutions, primarily preschool and school institutions. In addition, the internet in homes provides parents with the opportunity for a more adequate upbringing and education of their children (Alić, 2010).

In a short period, the Internet has become one of the most important tools for storing, searching and utilizing various information. Schools are gradually providing the conditions for building a comprehensive system of resources for learning and teaching. In this way, the school can change in the direction of a "virtual school", which is freed from all paradigms of learning and teaching, able to meet the needs of the learning society, enabling individuals to realistically understand and reasonably accept changes, to act creatively and adapt.

The Internet is an effective tool in providing certain information, especially to new parents. If we look throughout history, by custom, women asked their mothers for help with the role of parents in the new family, but the movement of people made it difficult to implement such a support system. Mothers became isolated and remained without the constant support they previously had from their families and other close relatives. A large number of women mention another type of problem related to the constant pace of changes in modern society, namely the information they receive from their mothers or older relatives is "outdated". Their knowledge and skills are no longer valid in the modern world, and the time-honored sequence of education passed from generation to generation is interrupted. In addition, families are forced to believe the information they gather from all the theorists, in literature, in parenting newspapers, on television, and most of all on the Internet (Radojković & Miletić, 2005).

At the same time, modern parents are no longer satisfied with simple descriptions of parenting, but they need more information based on experience and learning gained from the experiences of others in the same situations as them. At the same time as this development, a large number of family sociology researchers consider the fact that "family" as a way of life and as a collective noun also changes with age. The postmodern family can no longer be presented as a closed social unit but as a group of close ties. Globalization, the increased rate of divorces and the increasingly complicated number of reconciled families have led to a trend of increasing the number of family members and the geographical spread of immediate family members. Here, modern information technology plays an increasingly important role in the sense that it can preserve emotional connections and communication that are so important in the daily relationships and lives of every child.

The Internet provides parents with adequate and instant information related to the entire process of raising and educating a child. The digital age will have a significant impact on education and will radically change the existing learning and teaching process, and in this way, teaching will be even more adapted to the interests, needs and capabilities of students. The development of the global network, the Internet, led to the creation of a new way of learning.

This type of communication allows parents to create adequate conditions for home education and upbringing of the child, to create adequate ways of interacting with the child and to understand the problems of their child in just two clicks. In addition, the Internet provides certain information and education to parents about parenting itself, exchanges experiences between parents, and thus creates a global network in which every parent in every location can get involved in a specific issue in which they are interested.

The mass use of computer technology, as an indispensable part of modern times, has brought many changes in the daily lives of most people on the planet. These changes concern almost all aspects of life (work, family, travel, free time), and as a result, they had a change in all spheres of communication, communication in every possible form, interpersonal and global level. The

Internet is something without which life cannot be imagined nowadays. Everyone uses it, only for different purposes. A variety of its usage goes from business to entertainment purposes. Every day more and more people of different ages use the Internet, and consequently, it is used more and more by children. Its popularity, as a new and increasingly accessible media, is growing due to the opportunities it provides in the fields of entertainment and socialization. The illusion of anonymity and protection on the one hand, and great freedom on the other, which are the characteristics of the Internet, make it very attractive for young people. As can be seen from the numerous types of research carried out on the subject, only a small number of young people see the possibilities of education and information that the Internet offers and they mostly use it exclusively for entertainment, playing games, or downloading various entertainment content. In addition to the numerous advantages of the Internet, there are also disadvantages, such as abuse due to content inappropriate for young people or people's false introduction, encouragement of peer violence, theft, extortion, human trafficking, etc. Today, questions like the right to freedom of speech and thinking are very popular in the world. It is precisely such rights that have enabled the existence of incorrect content on the Internet, especially on WEB portals. WEB portals with illegal content such as Nazi, sectarian and pornographic content operate illegally but also publicly and offer various forms of mental abuse. Legal norms become ineffective here, and due to the right to freedom of thought and speech, these types of abuses are not prevented. Parents become powerless in the face of this type of content. Authors of WEB portals do not bear any responsibility because they do not force others to visit their portals or read illegal content, which automatically removes responsibility from the author. Considering all these facts, it is obvious that the Internet has become a significant factor in the free time of young people and therefore deserves a deeper study. It greatly influenced the changing of traditional media. Today, every television and radio station as well as newspaper and advertising media have its website, Facebook page and Twitter account. Very often, when Internet magazines achieve success, they also introduce a printed edition, although the reverse situation is more common.

Communication is at the heart of the relationship between the family and the school, especially the preschool institution. Constant, two-way communication is connected with the upbringing of the child and lays the foundation for the overall progress and development of each child. In the computer era, the internet means a chance for better communication between family and school. Research conducted so far shows that a large number of families and educators are interested in using e-mail and websites to communicate. In addition, it is increasingly recognized that preschool and school websites, blogs, and e-mail are becoming increasingly popular Internet-based forms of communication; modern social networking technologies, such as blogs, include modern capabilities for communication between parents and educators. Such technologies can reduce organizational disruptions caused by old forms of communication between family and preschool, can transfer data to multiple families simultaneously, and can usefully share and store information about child improvement, preschool policies and goals, tips for family integration and other numerous topics. In this way, parents can be adequately informed in just two clicks about the activities of preschool and school institutions, get to know what curriculum of the school, and be involved in interaction with other parents. The Internet provides all these to parents from their homes, while they are on the job, that is, they can have access to all the necessary information regarding their child, his upbringing and education from any location.

Namely, Internet-based communication can also be a challenge. Websites and email communication can be complicated for school and preschool institutions to maintain, they can pose certain obstacles to some parents who prefer to talk face-to-face, and most importantly, many

families still do not have access to Internet technology, or do not know how to use it. Virtually all families least likely to be part of education will also be least likely to be able to use the Internet, and thus take advantage of some of the full benefits that the Internet has to offer. The Internet is a very useful social media, it represents an inexhaustible source of information for parents, for children, but also for all other persons who directly take care of the upbringing and education of a child.

8. CONCLUSION

The research that was carried out within this work aimed to bring us closer to the idea of using the Internet in learning about the environment and to explain one part of the phenomenon of free time of young people, namely the one related to the use of the Internet as a way of spending that time. Free time activities can have different functions, from rest, leisure, recreation, personality development and so on, and for that very reason, it is important to register those activities that are frequent in the daily life of young people, to establish their relationship with numerous segments of the institutional upbringing and education. Thanks to technological progress and the advantages offered by the Internet, students can improve their knowledge, to research information on practically all topics. It should be remembered that the use of the Internet provides access to databases, the use of various software, the transfer of information and the exchange of data.

The media, but primarily television and the Internet, thanks to which the global world comes into people's lives, have become very important for almost every individual. This comes from the assertion that these media groups include a large number of territories, that is, the whole world. Television shows particularly interesting content and affects a large number of senses at the same time, which means that they completely move the viewer. The Internet now tends to compete with TV which gives us a chance to watch different television content. It is also widely used for listening to music, playing games, chatting with others and meeting people. Using media takes up a large amount of time and neglects other, more important ways of using free time. A large number of authors believe that big media, where they single out television and the Internet, can have a double effect on children, and therefore can influence the process of raising and educating a child. They can positively influence the child by expanding knowledge and showing appropriate, acceptable, patterns of behaviour.

Numerous studies, as well as psychologists, pedagogues and sociologists, are trying to educate the general public about the harmful effects that inadequate media content can have on children. This type of problem is particularly visible in traditional countries and less developed countries, which is also the case with Serbia, where media content is often uncensored for the younger population, certain inappropriate content is within reach of every child, and parents must make an extra effort to protect their children from such content and preserve certain values that they consider crucial in the process of raising their children.

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