



Empowering Children through Smartphone Use: A Scoping Review in Social Construction Theory Perspective

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This scoping review delves into the complex dynamics of children's empowerment through smartphone usage within the context of social construction theory. The study synthesizes findings from diverse literature, focusing on children's roles as Advantaged, Contenders, and Deviants in democratic societies. The review identifies key themes such as extensive Internet use, parental mediation, risky online behavior, and family dynamics influencing children's digital experiences. Notably, the review underscores the paradigm shift from viewing children solely as Dependents to recognizing their agency and empowerment, particularly in smartphone usage. It highlights how children's extensive Internet use is influenced by factors like family cohesion, parental warmth, and authoritative parenting styles. The impact of parental mental health, relational dynamics, and socioeconomic status on children's digital behaviors is also explored. Furthermore, the review addresses the limited research on children as Deviants within social construction theory, emphasizing the need for further exploration. It discusses the complexities of children's empowerment about disruptive and deceitful behaviors, highlighting gaps in understanding and opportunities for future research. The study concludes by advocating for a nuanced approach that promotes children's empowerment while addressing concerns about smartphone addiction and digital risks. Overall, this scoping review contributes to the evolving discourse on children's empowerment in digital environments, urging for a deeper understanding of their roles as agents of change within societal frameworks.

Keywords: Mental Health, Extensive Internet Use, Digital Experiences, Smartphone Addiction.

Introduction:

Children nowadays engage with digital technology from a very early age, and the use of Information And Communication Technology (ICT) within families significantly influences family dynamics and daily routines. This review delves into the vulnerabilities of children and young individuals concerning digital technology, focusing particularly on various aspects within the family context. The project, as described by [1], adopts a vulnerability and autonomy framework developed by [2]. Vulnerability is regarded as an inherent and enduring aspect of human existence, tied to our fundamental reliance on others and the emotional and social dimensions of human life. Children and young people, due to their age and developmental stage, are considered a vulnerable demographic, with vulnerabilities evolving over time and in response to specific contexts, be they temporary or long-lasting, stemming from personal, social, economic, or environmental circumstances. Vulnerability can also arise from unmanaged or poorly managed critical situations, which may erode agency and contribute to feelings of powerlessness. Similarly, autonomy is viewed as a socially constructed concept, coexisting with vulnerability within individuals. Experiences that foster autonomy, such as friendships, social support, education, and personal growth, can enhance an individual's resilience to the inherent

vulnerabilities of human existence and societal interactions. Additionally, this study seeks to explore the circumstances under which ICT use among children and young people leads to either harmful or beneficial outcomes [3].

Family is defined as a social and relational structure comprising two or more individuals who share common goals and values, exhibit long-term commitment, and often cohabit within the same household. Within the realm of daily family practices, an essential aspect of family dynamics revolves around various caregiving functions. These include 'caring for,' 'caregiving,' 'care receiving,' and 'caring with' family members, all of which significantly influence the well-being of children and young individuals within the family unit. The dynamics and formation of personal relationships among family members during their daily interactions profoundly impact the overall well-being of family members and their engagement with digital technologies. The use of ICT by children is frequently a subject of negotiation or contention and may be managed differently across different family settings. Parental strategies for mediating digital usage tend to be most stringent for younger children and tend to evolve as children grow older. Regarding the impact of digital technology usage, research indicates that adolescents' attachment to their parents notably influences their Internet usage patterns, and the nature of relationships that children and young individuals develop through online interactions is heavily influenced by family structures [4].

Individuals utilize their wealth, connections, experience, or a mix of these elements to acquire influence by taking advantage of legal loopholes. However, the democratic community views this as an unwarranted rise to power, despite the significant benefits it offers. Lastly, we have individuals who oppose the social construction theory. Despite possessing much less authority and resources compared to Dependents, they persist in refusing to acknowledge their own vulnerability [5].

In the context of this study, Deviants can be categorized into three distinct groups based on their reactions to laws. However, it is worth noting that Schneider and Ingram do not make any distinctions between these Deviants. One potential avenue for their ascent to prominence lies in their capacity as innovative thinkers capable of presenting persuasive arguments on the imperative nature of novel regulations through the development of groundbreaking technological innovations. Conversely, the behaviors of deviants may lack sufficient persuasiveness to modify the standards, if they provide implausible arguments. The growth of false or exaggerated news on social media poses a significant threat to humanity, with individuals known as Deviants assuming the responsibility of disseminating such information. Ultimately, individuals who deviate from cultural standards may exhibit antisocial conduct as a result of their diminished inclination to conform. By participating in such conduct, individuals face the possibility of leading an atypical existence, perpetrating acts of hostility towards themselves or others, or indulging in theft or property damage. Society thinks it intolerable if Deviants of any kind are able to achieve power using these means. Instead of reevaluating structural inequities, authoritarian tactics are utilized to try to transform Deviants, but at most, they are allowed to remain free [6].

It was with the writings that the theory of social construction was first elaborated. An early articulation of the theory stated that "primary socialization", the presentation of "this is how things are done" by the main caregiver, shapes reality beginning at birth. This theory states that early socialization is the mechanism by which individuals become fully integrated members of society [7]. However, secondary socialization is a unique process that occurs after primary socialization and introduces individuals "into new sections of the objective world". This is how

initial socialization frames all later socializing. This notion, which arose in the middle of the twentieth century, asserts that a peaceful society is one in which individuals are content with their first socialization and in which any further socialization serves to retain the values instilled in their original socialization. If members are drawn to the values of secondary socialization that conflicts with primary socialization, those who have successfully completed primary socialization may feel guilty and accept society's "therapy" as a means to gain "insight" into rejecting the secondary socialization and re-establishing their connection to primary socialization. "Unsuccessful socialization," according to Berger and Luckman, happens when an individual is viewed as a "traitor" to their main socialization when they choose to self-direct as an individual. "Individualism," or the potential for an individual to choose between competing realities and identities, is negatively connected to this likelihood [8].

Objectives:

The objective of this study is to conduct a scoping review exploring the relationship between children, empowerment, and smartphone usage within the framework of social construction theory. The study aims to examine existing research to understand how children's widespread use of smartphones contributes to their empowerment, categorizing children as Advantaged, Contenders, and Deviants based on their smartphone utilization. The goal is to identify gaps in current literature, particularly in understanding and empowering children classified as Deviants, and to propose avenues for further research in this area.

Literature Review:

With the medicalization of childhood, children are increasingly immersed in mobile media, especially with the advent of interactive technologies like smartphones. This trend has become more pronounced since the introduction of the iPhone in 2007, leading to what is termed the Digitods generation. Surveys in the United States show a high prevalence of mobile device ownership among children, with significant daily usage. Children are drawn to mobile devices due to their ease of use and the ability to engage independently with apps and content, fostering a sense of control and achievement [9]. Studies indicate that children's use of mobile media varies with age, from basic interactions in early years to more complex engagements in later childhood. Positive outcomes such as enhanced literacy skills and creativity have been linked to educational apps and creative tools. However, concerns arise regarding excessive screen time, parental use of devices as distractions or rewards, and the potential displacement of traditional interactions with caregivers and peers.

While much research focuses on device use within homes, there is a gap in understanding how mobile media influences children's behavior in public settings. Studies highlight instances where parental device use in public spaces detracts from parent-child interactions. Further exploration is needed to understand the nuanced effects of mobile media on children's socialization and development outside the home environment [10]. Media consumption outside the home is not a recent phenomenon. [11] discussed the impact of collective newspaper reading in French cafés during the 19th century on democratic processes. However, it wasn't until electronic media became prevalent in public spaces that researchers started examining the social dynamics around public media consumption. [12] studied television viewing behaviors in various settings like department stores, pubs, waiting areas, and student lounges. She observed that shared viewing created social bonds among viewers, leading to conversations and adaptive behaviors to suit the environment. This social aspect of public television viewing was also studied cross-culturally in Germany and the US, highlighting shared social norms during joint media engagements.

Research on laptop use in public spaces showed a similar trend, where individuals formed connections while working in proximity. Despite the assumption that individual media use isolates people, shared interest in technology-facilitated spontaneous interactions. As media became more mobile, studies expanded to include mobile phone usage in public spaces. Some studies suggested that heavy mobile phone use reinforced existing social ties but limited new connections in shared physical spaces. This phenomenon was termed Tele-Cocooning by [13], indicating a reduced need for new social connections due to constant virtual connectivity.

The widespread adoption of smartphones with Internet access, gaming, news apps, and social media further blurs the line between physical and virtual spaces. Constant access to the Internet diminishes the necessity for face-to-face interactions, creating a personal mobile domain where individuals navigate various social realms seamlessly. The phenomenon of "phubbing," where individuals prioritize their smartphones over face-to-face interactions, has notable effects on interpersonal relationships, especially parent-child dynamics.

On the contrary, research suggests that mobile devices can contribute to, rather than diminish, social connections in public settings. They are not just cocoons fostering isolation but can also serve as tools to build relationships and foster social bonds, strengthening connections both in virtual and face-to-face interactions. This extends to parent-child relationships when smartphones facilitate shared use and various forms of digital and physical interactions [14]. Additionally, smartphones can enhance people's engagement with physical spaces through visual, informational, and gamified digital content tailored to different geographical locations. Considering the significance of public spaces in children's development and socialization into societal norms, it is crucial to investigate children's media use in public spaces. This study aims to explore children's behaviors related to mobile phones in public places, building upon previous research that primarily focused on adult mobile phone behaviors in public. Furthermore, we aim to examine children's behaviors across different locations with distinct behavioral contexts, such as eateries, airports, and laundromats, to understand child-device, child-parent, and child-environment interactions in various settings.

Evolution of Social Construction Theory:

Research on self-directed learning, which began in the 1970s, put doubt on this notion of social constructionism as a fight between formal education and informal learning for the allegiance of citizens. Adult education was found to be routinely connected with the capacity for independent learning, which was subsequently described as self-directed learning. The efficiency of self-directed learning depends on the learner's motivation to commence the process based on their own values and ideals, not on societal conventions. Thus, self-direction was judged to be adults' ultimate purpose and, when performed, was related to increased health, establishing it as the pillar of democracy. In contrast to Berger and Luckman's belief that individuals who act autonomously are "traitors" to their early socialization, this study portrayed a totally different picture of the self-directed individual. Young individuals may not completely comprehend the advantages of self-sufficiency while they are dependents. Maybe it's because the Advantaged frowns upon such initiative [15].

An essay released in 1993 marked the theory's evolution from its initial iteration in 1966 [15]. This social constructionist framework embodies the four key theoretical frameworks from 1993: Advantaged, Contender, Dependent, and Deviant. These words were employed in this research to stress their significance. Theoretical work by these writers happened amid an era of ample evidence regarding the benefits of self-directed learning for adult mental health and the preservation of democracies. The writers said that there should be more focus on the social

construction of target demographics because it is a significant but sometimes disregarded topic. They attempted to strengthen democratic political and policy decisions, especially in the US, where adults benefit from self-direction as a learning approach. These ideological constructions serve as rationales for policy decisions and affect policy aims.

Many felt that Schneider and Ingram did an excellent job of responding to the difficulties presented by this hypothesis. Their research was based on the book *Policy Design for Democracy*, which was published in 1997 [16]. Recent studies have argued that social construction theory shouldn't be considered as a framework, which has diminished its attractiveness, even though some articles have used it in the way that [13]intended. Recent years have seen the theory, rather than the framework, of Schneider and Ingram's work, applied to children. Here, the social construction theory of 1993 is considered a relevant framework for examining smartphones, empowerment, and children.

An individual can rise in social status by becoming self-aware and exercising agency over his or her own personal, sociological, political, and economic situations. Empowerment explains this process. Without depending on traditional concepts of political power to decide who gets what when, the social construction theory from 1993 explains why certain groups have greater benefits than others, making it an important theoretical framework when discussing empowerment. Kids may be dependent on adults, but they've always had agency as an individual, whether that be a Deviant, Contender, or Advantaged [17]. As a young, rebellious disruptor, Philo Taylor Farnsworth became regarded as the first person to create a television. Farnsworth, who was just 14 years old when he dreamed of the idea for television in the summer of 1921, was inspired by the repeated motion required to plow a field. By the time he was 21 years old, he had shown the first working prototype. The purpose of the climate crisis protests begun in 2018 by Greta Thunberg, a Swedish climate activist who is fifteen years old, was to bring attention to the issue. After that, she became the 2019 Person of the Year after sailing across the Atlantic. By endearingly portraying middle-class American democratic principles in her many films and her yearly birthday parties, Shirley Temple became the most adored and famous celebrity of the Depression era, despite the fact that child labor laws forbade children from working for pay outside of acting. She was considered to be one of the Advantages since she had the ability to mimic the qualities that were highly regarded in American society.

The social construction theory from 1993 is consistent with the hierarchical portrayal of power structures and the acceptance of social norms by members of society. As may be observed, the decision-making power over social norms constitutes the first tier of the power hierarchy. Whether you're answering "yes" or "no," the act of making a decision shows that you have equal control in either scenario. What follows is an examination of the decision-making procedure as it relates to the social construction theory proposed in 1993. As the theory states, all constructions are equivalent in the types of variables considered, which means that power as a social construction is also equal. The next level discusses the pros and pitfalls of these social constructions. Each building has the same amount of power from the representative variables in this sense because there are advantages and disadvantages to following society's laws. Several more categories can be used to classify deviants based on their persuasiveness in suggesting changes to societal norms and their responses to legislation that benefit them. This reading of Deviants is not part of Schneider and Ingram's social construction theory. Instead, it is informed by Cohen's thesis on juvenile delinquents. Despite being developed in 1955, this idea continues to hold relevance in the present day. When looking at how deviance came from the subculture's

assessment of middle-class standards, this delinquent theory is particularly relevant to the social construction theory from 1993 [18].

This study classifies deviants as disruptors, deceivers, and antisocial individuals (not capitalized because these categories are not included in the social construction theory from 1993). Among the Deviants, there are disruptors who still believe in regulations—just not the ones society considers proper. Their ability to persuade others that the prevailing social norms are flawed and offer what are perceived as beneficial instances of rule modifications could grant them influence. Deviants try to gain authority within the contract by arguing irrationally and trying to convince others of their viewpoint. They may, for example, adopt the persona of a social media manipulator and actively disseminate misinformation or deliberately misreport events. Lastly, there are the Deviants, who clearly do not care about societal standards, therefore they refuse to explain the necessity of new legislation. In regards to the usage of smartphones by children, it is interesting to note that 95% of 13 to 17-year-olds in the US own one, according to a 2020 worldwide study. This suggests that smartphone use is commonplace. Smartphones are portable computer-mediated communication devices, which include hardware and relevant software applications. Individuals have the opportunity to possess a personal computer of their own choosing, contingent upon a recurring monthly telecommunications fee and proximity to a transmission tower operated by a satellite dedicated to the server. However, determining the age of a smartphone user is unattainable without obtaining personal information about them [19].

Research indicates that children have a heightened susceptibility to developing cellphone addiction, and medical professionals highly recommend that parents refrain from allowing their children to use social media until they reach the age of fourteen. This restricts the opportunities for children to engage in various aspects of social life, which is a challenge for a democratic society that regards children as reliant. Based on the 1993 social construction theory, it is necessary to limit children's access to smartphone technology due to society's perception of them as dependents, maybe for their own benefit. Perceiving children as dependents offers adults a rationale for restricting their smartphone usage. However, this approach also diminishes children's autonomy and curtails caregivers' autonomy, as caregivers are expected to closely monitor children to the extent that they are unable to allocate time for their own self-direction. The restriction of personal autonomy among adults has negative consequences, particularly in democratic societies, since it leads to parental weariness and has a negative impact on their mental well-being. Furthermore, it adversely affects youngsters who lack the ability to exert autonomy. Given the objective of fostering self-direction, devising strategies to grant children increased autonomy in decision-making will have long-term advantages for both individuals and society at large. Additionally, it will benefit parents and other caregivers, allowing them to allocate more time to their own lives rather than being burdened by the responsibility of managing children.

The inquiry pertains to the conditions under which young individuals can utilize smartphone technology as a means of self-empowerment, transitioning from a state of dependency to that of competitors, beneficiaries, or deviants. This scoping study aims to investigate the impact of children's smartphone technology usage on their capacity to assume responsibility for their own learning, as outlined by the 1993 social construction theory. The project will explore how children's use of smartphone technology can be reframed as Deviants, Contenders, or Advantaged. The premise of this scoping study is that the bulk of research on the three keywords "children, empowerment, smartphones" will primarily examine children as

Dependents. If this is not the case, they are more likely to be categorized as Deviants, followed by Contenders. It is presumed that the limited number of studies that include children as Advantaged is due to the perception that a defining feature of a democratic society is to view them as less socially capable and need protection. The findings of the scoping review reveal that the theory is not substantiated due to the scarcity of studies on Deviants, although there is an equal number of reports on youths who are shown as advantaged as there are on Contenders. This study is significant because it is the first to do a comprehensive evaluation of studies published in the past five years on the topic of "children, empowerment, smartphones" in the context of democracies, during a period when children are using smartphones extensively [20].



Figure 1: General Aspects of Utilizing Smartphones

Methodology:

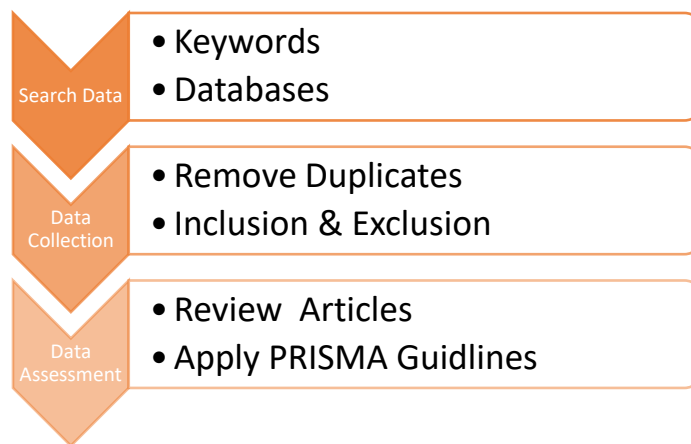


Figure 2: The Methodology Utilized for this Review

Introduction to Data Gathering Methods:

The methodology employed in this study adhered to the PRISMA criteria, which are established guidelines for documenting information flow in systematic reviews and meta-analytic studies. A scoping review diagram was specifically designed for this purpose, following the latest PRISMA template from February 02 to February 08, 2024.

Search Strategy and Inclusion Criteria:

The study focused on the topics of "children, empowerment, and smartphones," with a timeframe from 2019 to the present to ensure the inclusion of recent research. Searches were conducted across multiple databases, including Web of Science, JSTOR, OVID, ProQuest, PubMed, and Scopus.

Data Collection and Screening Process:

After combining records from each database, duplicate records were removed, and the remaining data were screened based on inclusion criteria. The PRISMA flow diagram was used to track the screening process and identify relevant studies.

Study Selection and Eligibility Assessment:

A total of 100 studies were reviewed, with a focus on identifying studies related to children's smartphone usage and empowerment. The research papers were categorized based on their relevance to the study objectives, including topics such as parents/caregivers, education, migrants/refugees, technology, demographics, and abuse.

Distribution of Research Papers Among different Databases

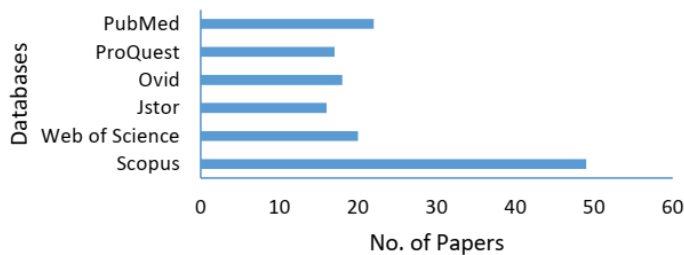


Figure 3: Distribution of Research Articles across various databases.

Exclusion Criteria and Data Analysis

Records that did not meet the eligibility criteria, such as non-English studies or those not peer-reviewed, were excluded from the analysis. The remaining studies were thoroughly examined to assess their relevance and contribution to the research objectives.

Final Study Selection and Reporting

After applying exclusion criteria and refining the search parameters, a final set of studies was selected for analysis. The methodology followed the PRISMA reporting guidelines to ensure transparency and accuracy in reporting the study selection process.

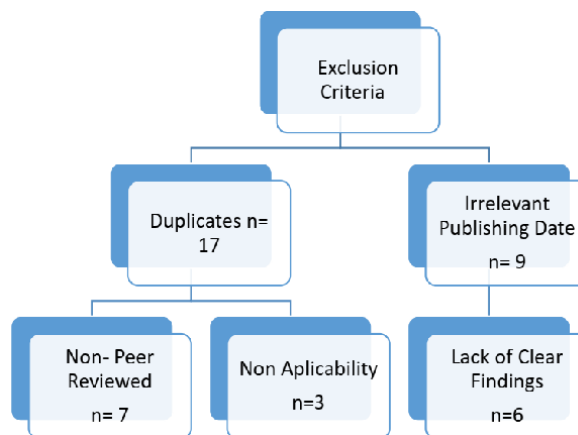


Figure 4: Exclusion Criteria Opted for Current Review.

Supplementary File and Additional Information:

Detailed information about the methodology, including the PRISMA scoping review checklist and supplementary data, can be found in the Supplementary File accompanying this study.

Result:

Organizing the articles thematically, we identified key factors that contribute to the resilience and well-being of children and young people, as well as factors that make them vulnerable. These include (1) extensive Internet use, (2) age and gender, (3) risky online behavior, (4) social networking as a social facilitator, (5) parental mediation and care, and (6) gaps in current research. These themes will serve as the headings for the results section.

Extensive Internet Use: A Well-Explored Area:

Globally, there is significant research focus on the relationship between parental mediation and concepts like Internet addiction, extensive Internet use, or problematic Internet use. Although this thematic emphasis is less pronounced in Europe, our scoping review identified 50 studies discussing these terms. There is strong evidence indicating the impact of family dynamics on young people's Internet usage and addiction. Optimal parenting, characterized by emotional warmth and protection, coupled with adolescent autonomy, reduces the risk of excessive Internet use (EIU). Conversely, interparental conflicts can increase the risk of Internet addiction by weakening the parent-adolescent attachment pathway. [21] highlight that a high level of enmeshed cohesion among Slovak adolescents, marked by strong emotional bonds within the family and mutual dependence, can lead to problematic Internet use. Family affective involvement moderates the relationship between temperamental lack of control and Internet salience, with higher family involvement linked to lower Internet salience. [22] find that adolescents spending time with their mothers experience higher perceived social support and lower levels of Internet addiction. Emotional warmth and protection from parents are considered the most potent protective factors against EIU. Conversely, risk factors such as lower family socioeconomic status and increased time at home have minimal impact. Parental responsiveness and care from both mothers and fathers correlate with lower gambling outcomes, while overprotection is associated with higher scores. Additionally, research indicates that boys, particularly those in urban areas, spend more time gaming online and show more symptoms of online gaming addiction.

[23] noted that Internet addiction often manifests as social isolation and withdrawal, which aligns with their findings of a positive association with callousness, indicating a lack of empathy. Studies also indicate that boys in early adolescence tend to become more engrossed in Internet use, and children with positive relationships with their parents are less likely to exhibit compulsive Internet use. A longitudinal study by [24] aimed at understanding the Internet's impact on emotional and social development found that students with significant real-life problems were more inclined to seek solace in virtual environments, potentially exacerbating existing issues. This pattern suggests that escaping offline problems by immersing in virtual life can reinforce real-life challenges. Interparental conflict increases the risk of Internet addiction for adolescents with low to medium self-control.

Specific studies delve into how children with certain disabilities are vulnerable to Internet overuse. For instance, among adolescents with Asperger Syndrome, depressive symptoms were linked to higher Young Internet Addiction Scale (YIAS) scores, while parental control showed protective effects. Research focusing on children with autism spectrum disorder indicates they may be more prone to problematic digital device use, longer screen time, and earlier device use initiation compared to their peers. A study exploring risk factors of problematic Internet use highlighted the mediating role of inconsistent parenting between hyperactivity ratings and maladaptive cognitions in adolescents. However, families with children in the autism spectrum disorder group often report negative impacts of ICT use, particularly in social/emotional contexts, communication, behavioral issues, and motor activity.

Furthermore, inadequate parental control correlates with higher problematic Internet use among adolescents, emphasizing the importance of empowering parents to monitor their children's online activities. Higher parental care and monitoring predict lower excessive Internet use (EIU) in adolescents, while overprotection and lower socioeconomic status predict higher EIU rates. Perceived behavioral control significantly influences adolescents' risk perceptions of Internet use. Studies suggest that high parental responsiveness (warmth) plays a protective role, with authoritative parenting styles (combining responsiveness and rule enforcement) being the most effective. Consistent rule enforcement by parents is seen as a protective factor against extensive Internet use.

Several studies explore the impact of parental mental health and relational dynamics on children's Internet use. Poor maternal mental health correlates with reduced life satisfaction, whereas paternal mental health affects stability versus fluctuation. Research on Internet addiction and emotional bonding with parents suggests that lower emotional quality in maternal relationships is linked to higher addiction levels. Moreover, parents' engagement and preparedness for parenting are crucial in mitigating Internet addiction risks. Despite concerns about digital media's influence, children tend to use the Internet more for communication and entertainment when they have multiple digital devices. The availability of personal digital devices doesn't necessarily depend on parents' socioeconomic status [25].

For early adolescents and younger children, online activities often substitute for absent parental interactions. In cases where the Internet serves as the primary communication channel for children separated from parents working abroad, constant online access can reinforce Internet addiction and gaming habits. Permissive parenting styles may elevate the risk of Internet gaming disorder in early adolescence due to less oversight and communication about online risks. Balancing parental monitoring with children's privacy rights is crucial, as respecting privacy fosters autonomy and healthy relationships.

Regarding extensive Internet use in children and young adolescents, family communication climates play a pivotal role. Inconsistent parenting, interparental conflicts, and lack of control negatively impact Internet use, whereas warm relationships and authoritative parenting styles regulate Internet use positively. Factors like socioeconomic background, disabilities, limited friendships, and fear of real-life isolation contribute to higher Internet use risks.

Surprisingly, ten of the evaluated publications treat youngsters as though they are among the Advantaged. They are therefore portrayed as having a right to the same benefits and obligations as middle-class adult taxpayers. Children's perspectives on social decision-making are similar to but slightly different from those of adults. The usage of cell phones that can empower children based on these disparities is offered, along with an explanation of how they differ. To safeguard their privacy, kids should be aware of how they use smartphones, as discussed in the first of these articles. Children in the second study are comparable to adults when it comes to analyzing the characteristics of a digital self since they are considered to be "digitable selves." According to the third report, as kids are more likely than adults to use smartphones to record activities in their surroundings, they may be more crucial in the development of photovoice techniques for risks and disasters. Similar to this study, a paper on enhancing adolescent oral hygiene concluded that because teens use smartphone apps to assist with oral hygiene, they are likely more likely than adults in comparable situations to take care of their oral hygiene. One distinction is that the teenagers asked for reminders to stick with the program, in contrast to the adults. Children were deemed to be on par with adults in terms of

using smartphone technology to manage their post-transplant care, according to an article on the efficacy of a mobile health-based self-management program. Since practically every child has access to a smartphone, these authors believe that using smartphones to "reduce psychosocial consequences and improve self-management skills" is appropriate. It is thought that children with type 1 diabetes are excellent candidates to use smartphone apps that assist with all aspects of managing their disease since they have to learn how to manage their self-care from an early age. In this sense, smartphones have substantially empowered kids to successfully handle the specific repercussions of their diabetes on their own, just like adults do [26].

At a certain point in the reports where children are shown as Contenders, the writers define that children should be protected in a manner that corresponds to classifying them as Dependents according to social construction theory. However, the authors of each paper make a case for why kids should get the same treatment as adults under the unique conditions that each study presents. The first paper argues, in light of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, that children have a legal right to privacy with regard to the use of smartphones. Although this is the writers' opinion, they acknowledge that society views children as dependent on them and are therefore regretful about endorsing this viewpoint. The writers provide a thorough explanation of why children should be allowed their privacy under this alleged restriction. The second report starts out by acknowledging and supporting the idea that kids are dependent on their parents. However after researching how children use smartphones in relation to their outdoor experiences, these authors changed course. They contend that since smartphones are not "all bad," children should be "left to their own devices" when it comes to using them and that in fact, using smartphones strengthens and empowers children's outdoor sociality. The next report back shows that although initially labeled as belonging to "vulnerable groups," teenagers were greatly and favorably impacted by a mHealth intervention (Teen Power), which improved their lifestyle in a number of areas. The authors of this study provide a number of arguments for the usefulness of this intervention in empowering adolescents in ways that they would not consider necessary if they were testing an adult population, feeling the need to present an efficient open-access, online single intervention platform for adolescent mental health for its acceptability. According to a study, children with sickle cell disease are considered susceptible due to the severe discomfort they experience. However, these same kids are shown to be capable of taking charge of their suffering through a variety of strategies, such as the use of smartphone apps. The last paper which portrays kids in a manner akin to Contenders focuses on how transnational children from Filipino and Indonesian families are empowered to take charge of their own lives with the help of their smartphones, rather than being dependent on them as these writers had anticipated.

Interestingly, there are only two publications that classify children as Deviants within the framework of social construction theory and children's empowerment through smartphone use. What's more, the more comprehensive categorization of Deviants suggests that the type of Deviant they represent is antisocial rather than disruptive or dishonest. The first paper examines the formation of identities among 3665 youth identifying as sexual and gender minorities in both Canada and the US. It centers on the role of smartphone technologies in allowing these youths to communicate safely and anonymously according to their culture. The second piece delves into the ways that young people with opioid use disorders could self-direct [27].

Discussion:

Children who are treated as dependents have a number of major issues, chief among them being their inability to perceive how their interests relate to essential societal objectives.

Rather, kids are pushed to think that the only ways to tackle their problems are individually and in private. They might consent to wait in line until they obtain what others have because they believe that the demands of others, especially those of influential, advantaged people are more valid than their own. Their social engagement is modest and traditional. In this sense, children, their parents/caregivers, and society at large must break free from the belief that children must be Dependents if they are to adopt a different stance in social construction theory, bettering their own and their parents/caregivers' self-direction. When people turn into Deviants, they stop believing that they should be helpless and stand in line to have what others already have. If they change to Contenders, they still need to be seen as powerful, but their power has to be exceptional for them to keep it. A youthful age would no longer be seen as important to the advantages and liabilities that are socially allocated, allowing one to reinvent themselves as a member of the Advantaged.

While it was hypothesized that when researchers saw children as something other than Dependents, the most common way they would be viewed as as Deviants, this was not the case, especially when it came to seeing them as disruptors or deceivers, for which there was no payoff. However, it was also unexpected that just as many reports would identify youngsters as Contenders as they would identify them as Advantaged. It was not thought that children would be seen favorably because of their typical role as dependents in society, which leaves them overworked and with few incentives. Therefore, it was assumed that academics would be more inclined to look into giving kids fewer incentives for using smartphones. The focus on smartphone addiction in kids, which is considered a kind of deviance, is the reason behind this. This opinion is still held, despite solid arguments that haven't been disproved as of yet from 2018 suggesting that kids' smartphone use isn't addiction but rather problematic use related to what society expects of them [28].

However, based on the surprise scoping review results, it's possible that researchers have mostly heeded the 2018 article's suggestion and have concentrated on the advantages of smartphone use for kids during the past five years. Therefore, in terms of social construction theory, the focus shifts to the benefits that kids are thought to be entitled to when using smartphones, treating kids as either advantaged or Contenders in this regard. The fact that youngsters were acknowledged as Advantaged to Contenders in an identical proportion of the results indicates that kids are starting to be accepted as regular adult smartphone users. As a matter of fact, when it comes to the scoping review results, researchers are only shown as Contenders, as opposed to Advantaged, if they subscribe to the theory that children should legitimately be dependents. The results of this scoping review that show kids as Contenders make this clear. It is evident from research on the subject why kids are so adept at using smartphones that kids pick up the skills they need to utilize them without adult assistance. Additionally, a decrease in certain children's gaming addictions is shown when youngsters are encouraged to become proficient with smartphone technology. To put it another way, kids who are able to control how they use their smartphones have authority similar to that of adults and are not seen as smartphone addicts. An added societal benefit of being more self-directed is that it frees up time and attention from parents and other caregivers to allow these adults to lead more independent lives.

Research Gap:

The effects of ICT use, whether positive or negative, encompass various aspects such as adaptation pressure, cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content, problematic Internet usage, reliance on social media, familial conflicts, parental intervention, and the risk of online

abuse. Children's engagement with online activities can sometimes lead to challenges or conflicts within their families, particularly putting vulnerable children at risk. Muniz illustrates that instances of teens exhibiting aggression towards their partners in online environments are associated with heightened levels of family discord, particularly among girls. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the online socialization context in conjunction with family and school dynamics, given their significant impact on the daily lives of contemporary teenage boys and girls.

In terms of protective factors, several studies emphasize the importance of social support, social connections, and the family environment. Additionally, parents play a pivotal role as primary facilitators of young children's interaction with ICT, and the impact of digital media is influenced by parents' selection of appropriate media and their support for their children. However, the effects of ICT and social media usage vary from individual to individual and depend on how individuals interpret and process their digital experiences. In specific contexts, the influence of technology usage can be shaped by a complex interplay of usage intentions and the participants involved, all of which mutually influence one another.

The main drawback of this scoping study is that there were no results found for the keywords "children, empowerment, smartphones" in relation to Deviants and social construction theory, neither in terms of disruptors nor deceivers nor antisocial individuals. There might not be any such research as one explanation. This possibility was tested using the next method. To find as much information as possible about "deviant crimes against the middle-class using smartphones," a restricted Google Scholar search was conducted on February 4, 2024. Because Google Scholar is a crawler-based web search engine, the most pertinent articles are returned first. As a result, of the 8610 returns, just the top 40 results—that is, the first four pages of returns, were examined. It is a drawback, though, that not all 8610 findings were assessed for relevance, even though these 40 were the ones that were found to be the most pertinent. Of the forty outcomes, eleven were about children's smartphone use deviance in democratic cultures and were published in peer-reviewed journals [29].

Upon examining the 12 outcomes of the limited Google Scholar search for "deviant crimes against the middle-class using smartphones," three notable observations emerge. Out of the 11 results, five are to South Korea, while one pertains to Malaysia, all of which are political systems in the Eastern region. There exist a mere three studies pertaining to Western democracies, specifically one concerning Australia, another concerning Austria, and the third concerning the United States. This observation holds significance due to the contrasting cultural orientations observed in Eastern democracies, characterized by a collectivist-hierarchical culture, and Western democracies, characterized by an individualistic-egalitarian culture. In Eastern democracies, children who exhibit disobedience towards their parents or other caretakers are commonly perceived as deviant. Conversely, in Western democracies, children are generally expected and encouraged to have greater freedom of action. This necessitates the exercise of self-restraint, a quality that individuals who are seen as Deviants in Western society are commonly thought to possess, as highlighted in each of the three articles pertaining to Western democracies. The second observation suggests that the predominant manner in which children's utilization of smartphones is considered abnormal can be seen as confrontational. There are just three publications that specifically address deceivers, and in these instances, their deception pertains to cyberbullying, which is spreading false or deceptive content online with the intention of causing harm to someone's mental well-being [30]. Thirdly, it is evident that none of the aforementioned works address the concept of disruptors. The research conducted on the

scrolling behaviors of young individuals in Vienna, however, presents the potential that scrolling extends beyond mere antisocial behavior. As per the ethnologist's analysis in this article, it is posited that youngsters who engage in solitary smartphone browsing without frequent interpersonal interaction may be actively reshaping societal norms pertaining to social interactions during collective gatherings. In this context, the author does not perceive the behavior of the children as a futile expenditure of time. Instead, the ethnographer perceived the behavior as a typical element of society, which has been demonstrated to increasingly attract children. Nevertheless, it is imperative for young individuals to cease experiencing guilt regarding what society presently perceives as their "mindless scrolling" in order to facilitate a transformation in the manner in which individuals interact when they convene using cell phones. Furthermore, it has been found that transitions from Disruption to Advantaged are delicate and can be reversed because of this instability, even when individuals with antisocial Deviant tendencies relocate to join the Advantaged as a consequence of societal changes in attitudes.

In conjunction with the potential constraints arising from the particular keywords employed in the search, an additional constraint of this investigation pertains to the fact that the scoping review was undertaken by a sole researcher, thereby potentially introducing inadvertent cognitive bias into the comparisons drawn among the references. Although the author's primary objective was to maintain neutrality, it is likely that any potential prejudice was not acknowledged. Numerous frameworks have been devised to mitigate bias in reported studies. Nevertheless, there has been a recent surge in research examining the effectiveness of these models, a gap that was notable in 2018. In conclusion, no attempt was made to address this constraint, as none of the aforementioned frameworks could have been employed to mitigate bias in this investigation [31].

Concluding Remarks:

Since the mid-century, social construction theory has evolved into a more advanced framework for comprehending the role of children in democratic societies. This theory suggests that children can only be deemed sufficiently socialized if their socialization aligns with the dominant socialization in their society. This concept acknowledges the prevailing perception in democracies that children are frequently regarded as reliant, burdened with excessive workloads, and undervalued. Consequently, they depend on the oversight and assistance of adults, such as their parents or other caregivers, due to their status as dependents.

The self-direction of its members is crucial for a democratic society, and children who are permitted to use cell phones can develop greater self-direction, both autonomously and in their interactions with parents or caregivers. Simultaneously, the requirement for accountable adults to oversee children diminishes the autonomy of both the children and these adults, so detrimentally impacting democratic society as a whole.

This scoping review, published during the past five years, examines research on the relationship between children, empowerment, and cell phones. It finds that children's widespread use of smartphones has significantly improved their ability to self-direct, comparable to adults in terms of being Advantaged, Contenders, and Deviants. What is particularly astonishing is that young individuals are perceived as privileged when their smartphone usage is assessed without considering their age. Consequently, the utilization of cell phones in the daily lives of youngsters contributes to an increase in their empowerment within society. Furthermore, due to their heightened autonomy, democratic society as a whole reaps advantages since it allows parents and carers to allocate more time and attention to their own self-direction rather than supervision. The findings of this study indicate a need for a shift in attitudes towards children's

smartphone use. Rather than solely focusing on protecting children from smartphone addiction, which is significantly influenced by the addiction of their parents or caregivers, it is more beneficial to promote their empowerment through self-directed smartphone use. This is particularly accurate considering recent research suggesting that concerns around smartphone usage may be a component of a more extensive psychological recovery process associated with this emerging technology.

The dearth of scholarly investigation pertaining to the empowerment of children via smartphone technology presents a substantial domain that warrants further exploration. This phenomenon is especially evident when considering children who fall under the category of Deviants according to the Schneider and Ingram framework of social construction theory. Moreover, in the event that such a study is conducted, it is recommended that Deviants be examined in relation to the aforementioned categorizations of disruptors, deceivers, and antisocial individuals. The primary emphasis should be on conducting research on children who exhibit disruptive and deceitful behavior, as there is presently a dearth of data pertaining to either of these categories of deviants. The significance of pursuing this research lies in the present emphasis on studying adults as disruptors and deceivers in the context of smartphone usage. Therefore, there exists a potential and necessity for the expansion of this study to include children and their capacity to be empowered as Deviants, Contenders, and advantaged through the utilization of smartphone technology.

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