

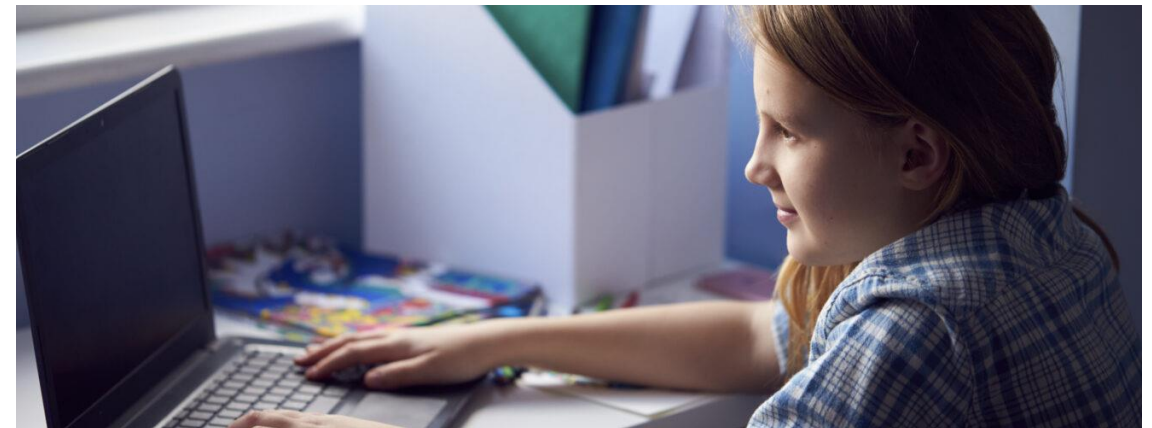
UK parents' perceptions of engagement through digital technology during the COVID-19 pandemic: A preliminary analysis

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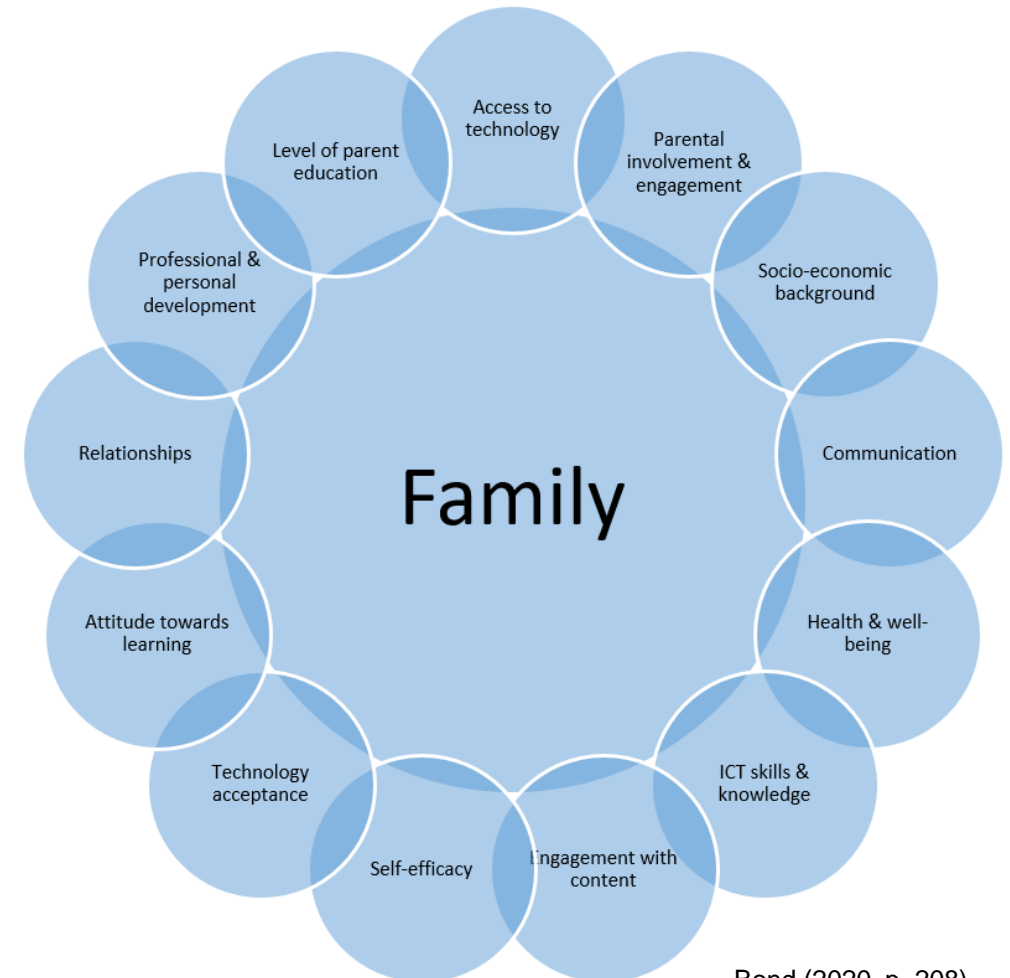
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Parent involvement & engagement

- Shown to strongly influence engagement, motivation, achievement, and school completion.
- Multiple influential familial factors.
- Digital technology has been shown to have potential to enhance parent and student engagement.
 - > Flipped learning
 - > Involvement



Schools & emergency remote education during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Abrupt switch to emergency remote teaching.
- New ways of teaching and learning.
- Digital inequality.
- Communication difficulties.
- Paucity of research, exploring parent perceptions.

Covid: Teaching in Wales 'must reinvent itself in a day again'

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Covid: 'Xbox and PlayStation home-learning' for some pupils

By Jordan Davies
BBC News

© 7 December 2020

Covid: Laptop allocation for deprived pupils cut at some schools

© 24 October 2020



Research Questions

1. What devices did school children in the UK have access to at home during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What digital technologies do parents report schools used before and during the pandemic?
3. What are parents' perceptions of the digital technologies used by their children for learning during the pandemic?
4. How did digital technologies affect parent engagement in their children's schoolwork?

Methodology

- Part of a larger mixed methods study.
- Ethical approval granted by UCL IOE.
- Online survey using a social media snowballing strategy.
 - > June-August 2020
 - > Demographic, 5-point Likert and open-ended questions
 - > Previously validated instruments
- Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis.

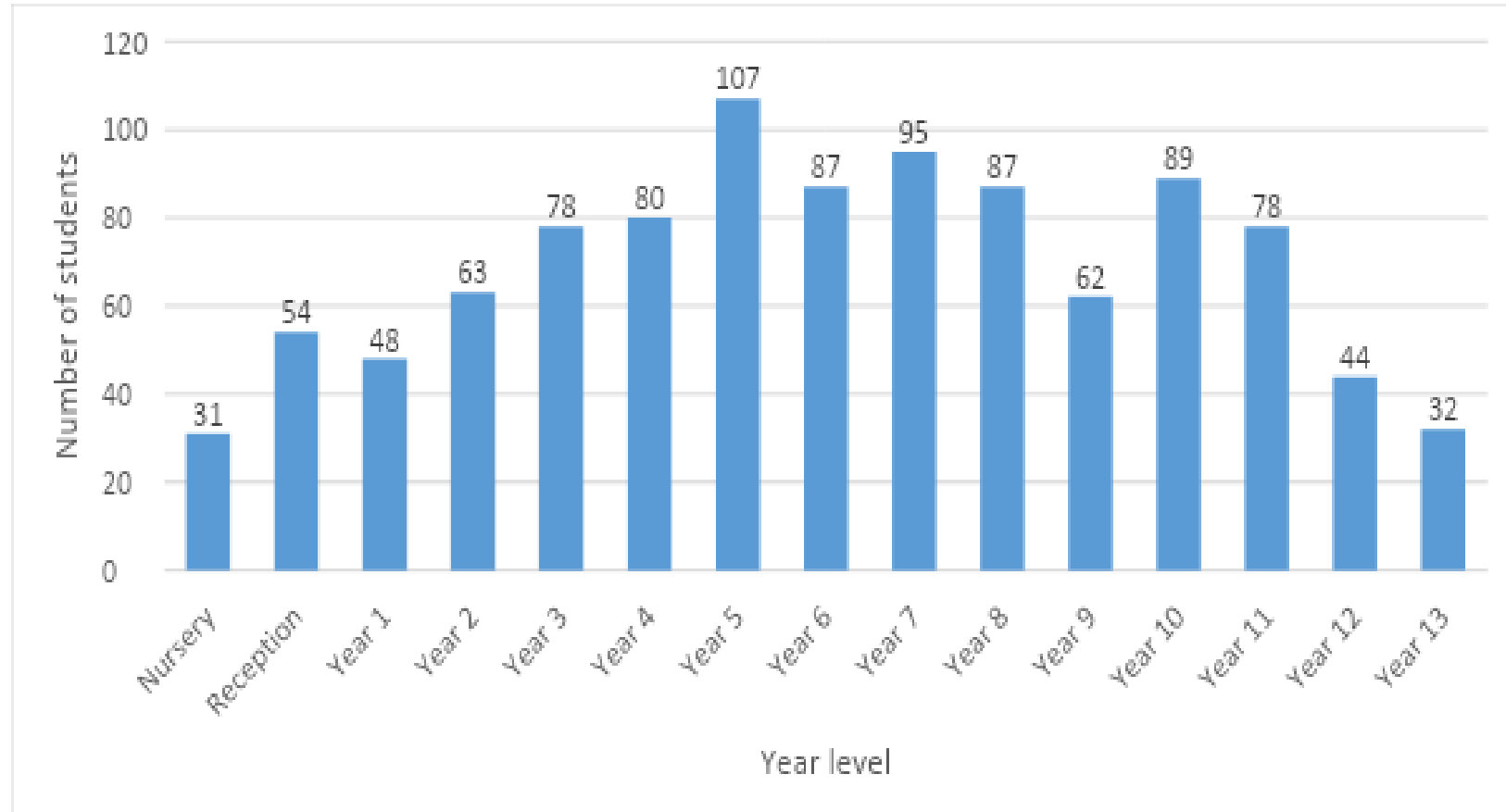
Participants

- 552 parents of children in primary and secondary school in the UK.

- > 40% primary only
- > 28.6% secondary only
- > 31.3% primary and secondary

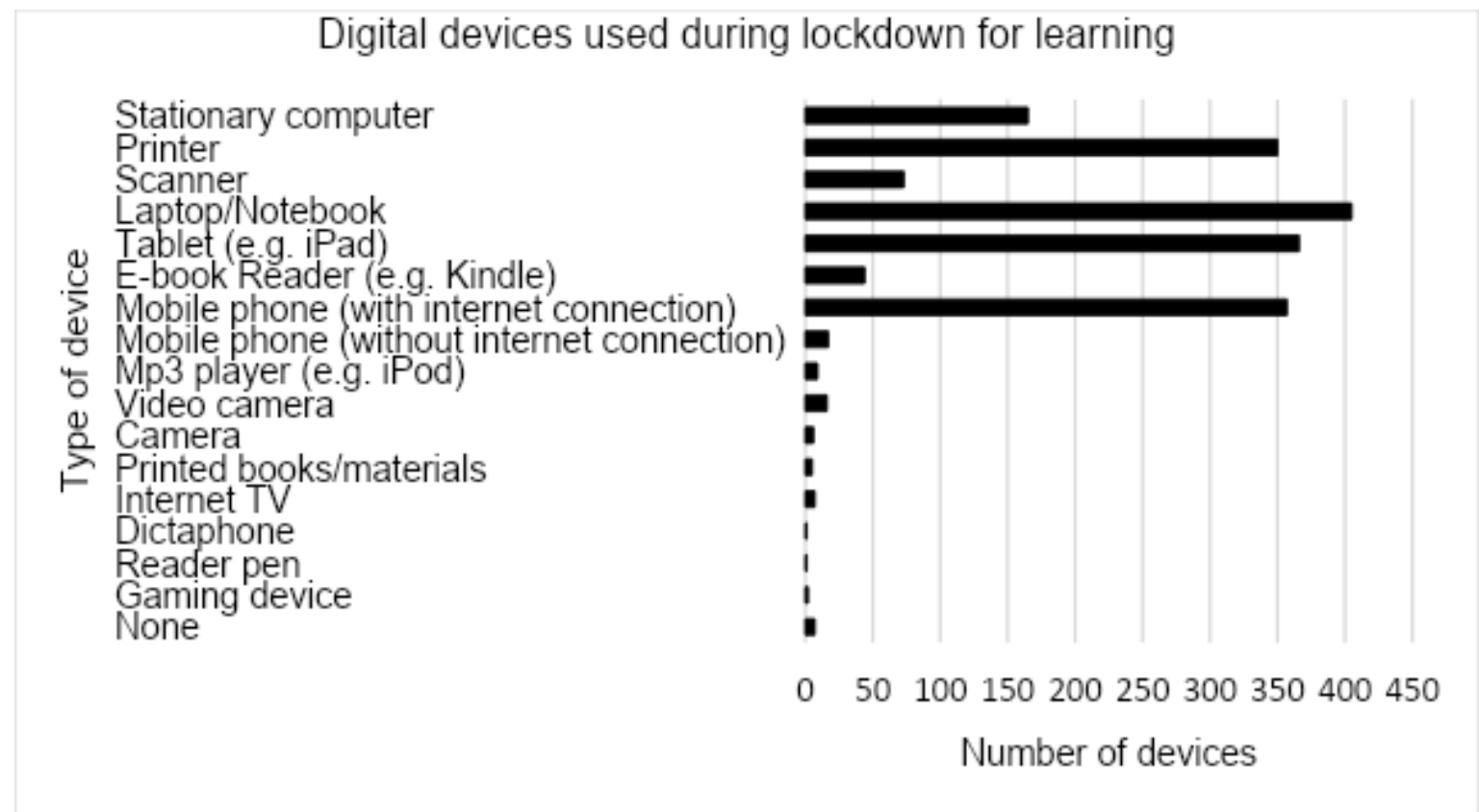
- Majority profile:

- > 85.9% from England
- > 92% government school
- > 49.6% with two children



Device access during lockdown

- Most popular devices:
 1. Notebook/laptop 74%
 2. Tablet/iPad 67%
 3. Smartphone 65%
- Reasonable internet connection quality.
 - > 57% 'very good' or 'excellent'
 - > 7% 'slow'
 - > 1% 'terrible'



Digital technology used for learning

- Top 5 most frequently used technology before and during the pandemic:

Rank	Before COVID-19	%	During lockdown	%
1	School email	67%	School email	44%
2	Search engines	49%	Group/class conference calls	42%
3	School LMS	37%	School LMS	36%
4	Videos on YouTube	27%	Videos on YouTube	29%
5	Social networks	23%	Google Classroom	27%

- Email use dropped by 23% (secondary only – 36% decrease)
- Class calls for primary only (27% increase) – secondary only (52% increase)
- Rise in tools that promote collaboration and interaction.

Digital technology usefulness

- Top 10 most useful tools for learning during the pandemic, according to parents:

Rank	Tool	M	SD
1	Search engines	4.26	1.06
2	Online classroom communities (e.g. Google Classroom)	3.87	1.43
3	Videos on YouTube	3.83	1.09
4	Group/class conference calls	3.74	1.37
5	Videos on school LMS	3.68	1.22
6	School LMS	3.58	1.36
7	Presentation sharing	3.53	1.38
8	School email	3.45	1.40
9	Chat/instant messaging	3.41	1.31
10	Cloud storage (e.g. Dropbox)	3.34	1.35

Technology and engagement

- 381 parents identified 145 unique engaging tools and devices:

Rank	Tool	%	N
1	Google Classroom	20.73%	79
2	YouTube videos	16.54%	63
3	BBC Bitesize	13.12%	50
4	Google	12.34%	47
5	MS Teams	11.55%	44
6	Zoom	11.29%	43
7	School email	7.09%	27
8	Twinkl	5.25%	20
9	School website	4.47%	18
10	Teacher videos / Timetable Rockstars	4.46%	17

Technology and student engagement

Engagement statement	M	SD
My children feel more engaged with learning as a result of using educational technology during lockdown.	2.34	1.19
Recorded lectures/explanations help my children because they can rewatch portions of lessons that they do not understand.	3.03	1.25
My children have been learning better since using online tools during lockdown.	2.29	1.21
Since lockdown, my children have a sense of responsibility for their learning.	2.77	1.32

Technology and parent engagement

Engagement statement	M	SD
I watch/see some of my children's learning activities of videos at least once a day.	3.64	1.27
I am more aware of the work that my children do for school as a result of using educational technology during lockdown.	3.42	1.30
I am having more discussions with my children's teacher(s) as a result of using educational technology during lockdown.	2.34	1.28
I feel more connected to the school community as a result of the lockdown.	2.27	1.24

Conclusion

- Digital technology use and perceived usefulness has changed.
- Synchronous tools facilitating interaction and collaboration replaced previously used asynchronous tools.
- Recorded videos assisted students.
- Reduced email use by schools affected home/school connection.
- Slight increase in parent involvement and engagement in child learning.

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