



## Parental Smartphone Addiction and Child Behavioral Problems: The Mediating Role of Parenting Quality


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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In paragraph 1 of the Introduction, you write “Conceptually, problematic smartphone use draws from addiction frameworks that emphasize salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse...”. While this is informative, the link to parenting outcomes is not explicit here. Please revise to better connect these addiction frameworks to parenting quality as the mediating mechanism of interest.

The last sentence of the introduction states: “Accordingly, the present study investigates whether parenting quality mediates the association between parental smartphone addiction and child behavioral problems.” This is clear, but the paragraph would be stronger if you explicitly noted that few studies have tested mediation models in non-Western samples, particularly in Malaysia.

While you note strong Cronbach’s alpha for SDQ, SAS-SV, and PSI-SF in general, please report the internal consistency coefficients ( $\alpha$ ) obtained in your own sample, as these are crucial for readers’ confidence in your findings.

The paragraph starting “Prior to conducting correlation and SEM analyses, statistical assumptions were examined...” is strong, but Levene’s test is not usually appropriate for SEM assumptions. Please clarify its role or replace with a more standard assessment (e.g., Box’s M for homogeneity of covariance matrices).

In reporting Table 1, you state “suggesting moderate levels of smartphone addiction, relatively high parenting quality, and mild to moderate behavioral difficulties in children.” Please provide justification for what constitutes “moderate” or “high” (e.g., reference to scale norms or cutoff scores).

In the section “Cross-cultural evidence provides additional support for these findings...”, you rely heavily on East Asian samples. Please acknowledge whether similar evidence exists (or is lacking) in Western or Middle Eastern contexts, to clarify generalizability.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

### 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The long paragraph starting “Empirical studies increasingly implicate family processes in the etiology...” cites numerous studies in rapid succession. This creates a “list-like” effect. Consider synthesizing themes across studies instead of citing them one by one, to strengthen the narrative flow.

In the section “Internationally, the phenomenon is visible across cultural contexts...”, you mention rural China, Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe. Since your data come from Malaysia, please elaborate why Malaysia is a critical context for this research, and whether unique cultural parenting norms could shape smartphone-related effects.

The figure caption “Model with Beta Coefficients” is minimal. Please expand the caption to describe the mediation model, the meaning of arrows, and clarify whether coefficients are standardized or unstandardized.

In paragraph 1 of Discussion, you state “...highlight the critical role of parenting practices in shaping children’s socioemotional and behavioral outcomes.” This could be more compelling if you linked it explicitly to ecological systems theory or family systems theory, rather than only describing findings.

In the paragraph starting “The significant direct effect of parental smartphone addiction on child behavioral problems suggests that factors beyond parenting quality also play a role...”, please discuss potential third variables (e.g., parental mental health, socioeconomic stress) that might simultaneously predict both smartphone use and parenting quality.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.