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## THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPUTERS IN THE LIFE OF TEENAGERS

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### **Abstract:**

*Thanks to the rapid development of information technology, the computer has become a tool indispensable to any person, an instrument by means of which we gain access to impressive amounts of information sources, due to the large number of existing websites, digital or online libraries. However, one should also bear in mind the fact that excessive technology can be a serious danger to the health and harmonious growth of its users. Moreover, prolonged exposure to various games based on default scenarios may affect their creative and imaginative thinking as well as their social skills.*

**Key Words:** *computer, impact, teenagers*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

For the past several years we have been living times of change, of sustained progress, with giant leaps - as in the fairy tales, we grow in one year as others grow in seven. Information technology is perhaps the indicator which best reflects these changes.

In the Western countries scientists are always developing studies regarding the computer users' profile, their individual interests and problems, according to age, social status and other determinant factors, as well as researches at a corporate and market level, precisely in order to channel technological developments to meet the needs of the individual and of society, which are harmoniously developing together.

In Romania, the lack of information to this respect prevents training providers in the IT sector from making long-term predictions and from developing relevant training programs

both in the education system and in the private training one.

Most experts consider that we should not be asking ourselves whether training is improved through the use of computers, but how their unique qualities, which distinguish them from other media (their interactivity, the precision of the operations performed, the ability of providing multiple and dynamic representations of various phenomena and especially the fact that they can consistently and differently interact with each student separately) can be better used.

If the first achievements in computer assisted instruction focused more on learning by checking the amount of information learnt, complex software which later emerged, which encourages the active building up of knowledge, providing meaningful contexts for learning, promoting reflection, freeing the student of many routine activities and

stimulating intellectual activity similar to that of adults when working.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 . OBJECTIVES

By way of structuring the underlying questionnaire, the study aims to achieve several key points for a complete understanding of the level of culture regarding modern technology of high school pupils and of college students. In order to understand the factors influencing the level of knowledge in the field, and how a high school pupil or a college student uses computers and what are their concerns related to them, several issues were taken into account: whether they have a computer at home or not, whether they use the computer and for how long they have been doing so, their own perception of their level of IT knowledge and computer skills as well as where and from whom did they learn to work with the computer; family environment - whether the parents of the pupil or student work with computers and if they are a factor influencing the decision to gain an internationally recognized attestation certifying knowledge in this area. Very important for student development in general and for computing culture in particular is the educational system - how children perceive the organization of classes, what classes require them to use computers and for what classes would they like to use them and last but not least, the relationship between them and the teacher.

### 2.2 . GROUP OF SUBJECTS

For carrying out this work we have created a stratified sampling by the criterion of environment of origin and level of studies in a population of 200 subjects. The percentages allocated on the basis of sex are 50 % women and 50% men.

Depending on the environment of origin we have selected 50% of subjects from rural areas and 50% from urban areas.

### 2.3 INSTRUMENTS EMPLOYED

For this study we have built a questionnaire consisting of 15 questions. We have used closed questions, both with dichotomous

(Yes/No) answers and with various alternative answers.

## 3.ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

The obtained data was processed quantitatively, based on occurrence frequency, by the individual analysis of each item.

Our study showed that **80%** of the children have a computer at home, while 20% of subjects have replied that they do not have any computer at home.

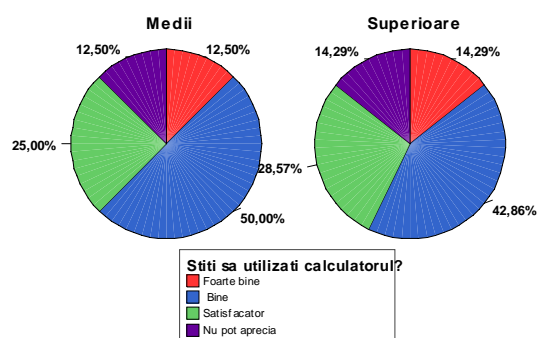


Figure 1. The structure diagram taking into account on the level of studies

Should we compare the subjects based on the level of studies, we may notice that 81,25 % of the highschool pupils have a computer at home, and 18,75 % of them do not have one. (Figure 1)

As far as those with higher education, college students, are concerned, we see that only 78,57 % of them have a computer at home, while 21,43 % of them do not have any.

It is not surprising that 46.7 % of the subjects use the computer well enough, 26.7 % consider that they are satisfied with the knowledge they have in the field. As extended use of the computers will lead to a certain degree of comfort in this respect, most students are confident with their own skills. Very few of the participants to the study (13.3 %) consider that they have a unsatisfactory level of computer knowledge and skills.



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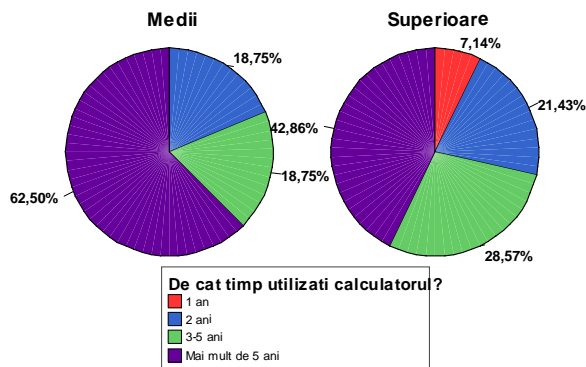


Figure 2. The structure diagram taking into account the level of studies

In figure 2 we can see the distribution of the answers depending on the level of studies. More than half of the subjects have been using the computer for more than 5 years (53,33 %). The other subjects have been using the computer for a shorter period of time. The number of highschool pupils who have been using the computer for more than 5 years (62,50 %) is higher than that of college students (42,86 %).

but even more important is the family, in particular in the situation in which the other family members are also using the computer. (Figure 3).

It is interesting to analyze what each individual understands by knowing to use the computer. If the computer is used at the school for classes and other activities teaching activities, the pupils' spare time best reflects what they understand by knowing to use the computer.

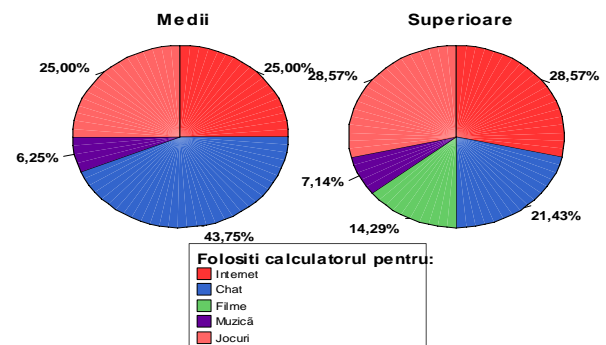


Figure 4. The structure diagram taking into account the level of studies

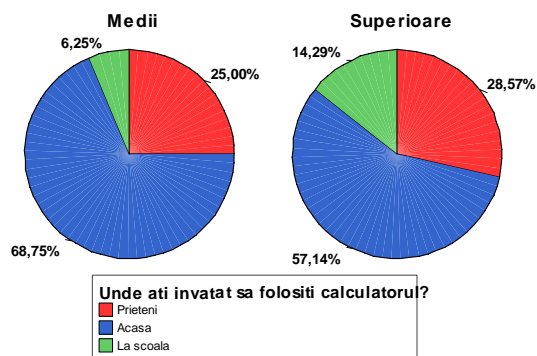


Figure 3. The structure diagram taking into account the level of studies

More Than 50% of the pupils (63,33 %) admit that they have learnt to use the computer at home. The fact that they already have a computer at home is particularly important,

It becomes apparent that highschool students spend a lot of the time on the computer, immersed in the virtual world of computer games, thusly:

- 40% of the subjects spend half of their time in front of the computer playing;
- 26.7 % of the subjects use only a small part of their time for games;
- 20% replied that they do not play on the computer, especially when they have something else to do.

It becomes apparent that our subjects understand "good use of the computer" rather as using computer games (26,7 %), Internet (26,7 %) and chat (33.33 %), movies (6.67 %) and music (6.67 %). Moreover, they spend a large part of the time dedicated to using computers emerged in the virtual world of

computer games.

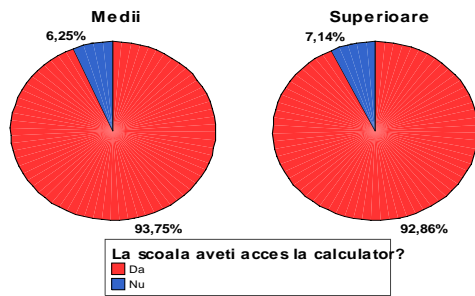


Figure 5. The structure diagram taking into account the level of studies

We may see that both the pupils and the students who were investigated in this study have access to the school computer, in particular during class hours. But they are also pupils who do not have access to the computer (6.25 %) and also students who for various reasons do not have access to computers (7,14 %) . (Figure 5).

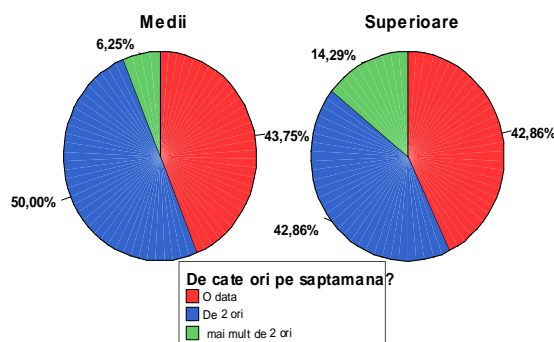


Figure 6. The structure diagram taking into account the level of studies

In view of the above, it is not at all gratifying that all subjects surveyed have at least a class/week of study in the IT laboratory. The replies of the subjects taking into account the level of studies have been:

- 50% of the pupils have access to computers 2 times a week while for students only 42.86% have access to computers 2 times a week;
- 43,75 % of the pupils stated that they use the school computers once a week, while 42,86 % of students confirmed the same frequency. (Figure 6).

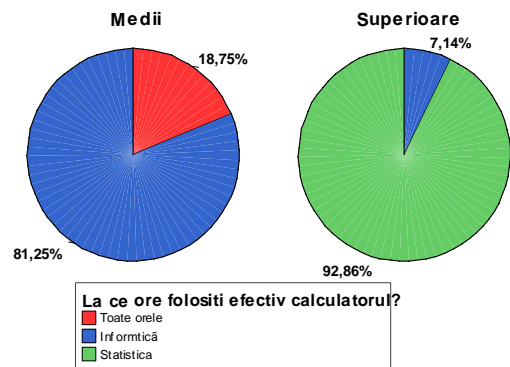


Figure 7. The structure diagram taking into account the level of studies

At present, pupils are using the computer in class to help them in the study of several subjects, namely:

- a part of highschool pupils use the computer for Informatics classes (81,25 %), while students use the computer for Statistics classes (92,96 %) but also for Informatics (7,14 %).
- 18.75 % of highschool students replied that they would want to use the computer for almost all classes (Figure 7).

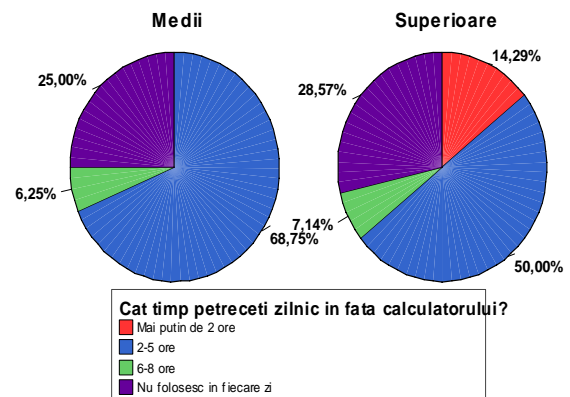


Figure 8. The structure diagram taking into account the level of studies

Most of the surveyed subjects replied that they spend between 2-5 hours/day on the computer (60 % ), 26% of subjects replied that they use the computer between 6-8 hours/day and 26.7 % have replied that they do not use the computer every day (Figure 8.)

We see that pupils are using the computer more than twice a day in a higher percentage (68,75 %) than students do (50 % ).



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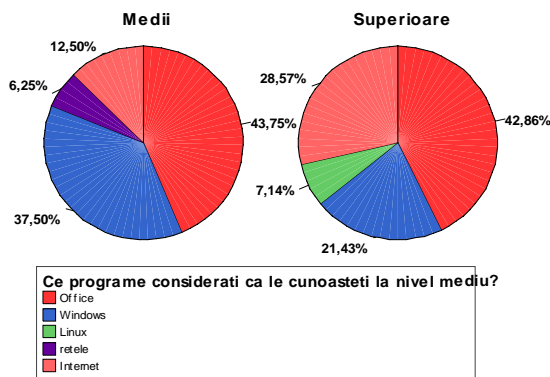


Figure 9. The structure diagram depending on the level of studies

Hours on end spent in front of the computer do not automatically imply a good knowledge of relevant and effective usage thereof.

When asked about how well they know how to use the computer, an overwhelming majority declares that the degree is more than satisfactory. The surprise is revealed when subjects (both pupils and students) are asked what are the programs that they consider they know how to use at a medium level. We find that of all these young fans on the Internet and chat, games and movies, only 30% consider that they know how to work with Windows at medium level, 43,3 % know how to work with Office and 20% know how to well use the Internet. (Figure 9).

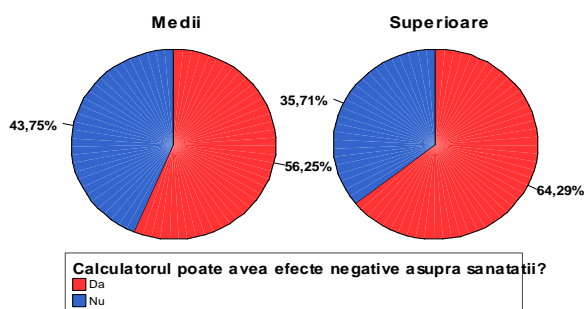


Figure 10. The structure diagram depending on the level of studies

Furthermore, when asked if the prolonged activity in front of the computer may have adverse effects on health, as much as 60% acknowledge it whereas 40% replied that they couldn't be affected in any way by the computer. (Figure 10).

Due to their lack of information, all surveyed subjects have replied that they would want to follow courses in the field, for a better knowledge of the computer.

Computer addiction has determined most of the subjects being investigated to not be able to give up using a computer, as it became a part of their lives (83,33 %). But there have also been subjects who replied that for them computers do not come first and that they could give up using them (16,67 %).

## CONCLUSIONS

Whether fair or not, the family should more carefully follow what is happening to the young person in those many hours spent in front of the computer monitor; to insist more on studying, paying attention to the fact that, at this age, children are still dependent on their parents (both financially and emotionally, the parental guidance and the wishes of the parents always weighing considerably in the choices that teenagers make). It is the responsibility of the parents to steer them towards specialized courses and acknowledged certifications in order to add to their computer knowledge..

It is clear that games and computer activities in general play a very important part in the lives of young people. Their education is thus formed by means of the Internet and chats, almost not at all controlled by parents, school or competent authorities - as in other countries

there are studies and special programs for the monitoring and control of internet and game access for the minors.

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