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Connecting Schools and Parents: The Trust-Building Role of Digital Educational Resources

Ekaterina Enchikova

Elena Nekhorosheva

Daria Kasatkina

Research Institute of Urban Studies and Global Education

University of Porto, Portugal

Parental trust in education

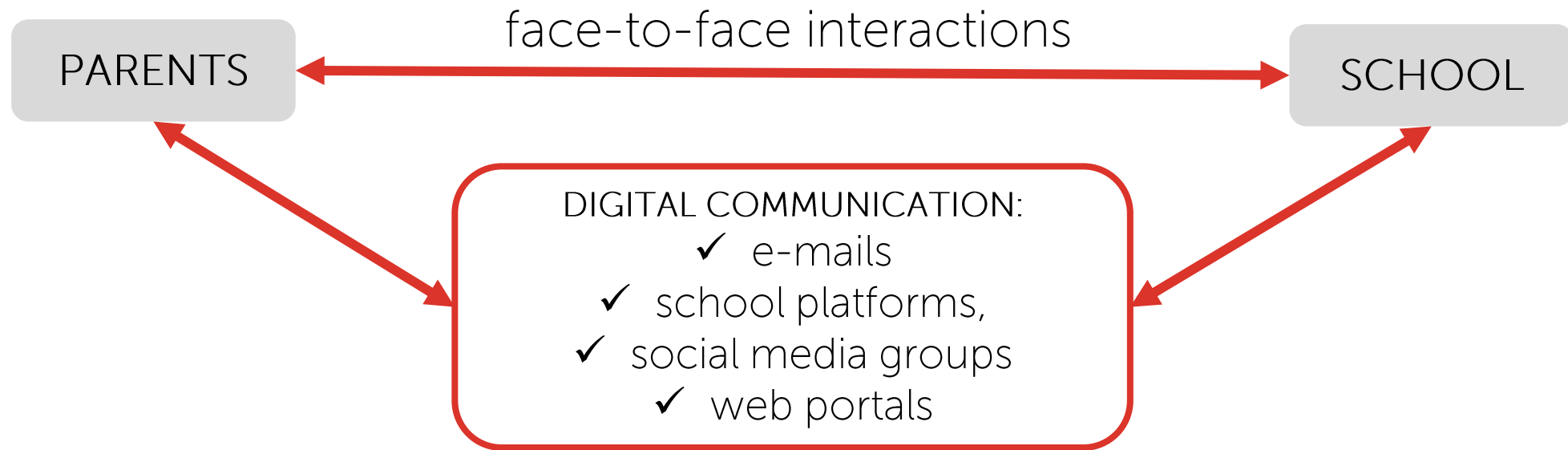


- Trust is a **key element** for effective educational processes (Spiecker, 1990; Penttinen et al., 2020; Niedlich et al., 2021)
- Parent trust is a significant predictor of:
 - Improved **communication** and **collaboration** (Schweizer et al., 2017; Neuenschwander, 2020; Bormann et al., 2021; Matthiesen et al., 2022)
 - Parental **engagement** (Penttinen et al., 2020; Bormann et al., 2021; Matthiesen et al., 2022)
 - Students' **academic achievement** (Spiecker, 1990; Wilkins & Bachelor, 2006; Penttinen et al., 2020; Niedlich et al., 2021)
- Trust is both a relational and institutional phenomenon, shaped by social and organizational contexts (Matthiesen et al., 2022)
- Effective communication is crucial for establishing and maintaining trust in parent-school relationships. The quality and frequency of information shared between parents and schools significantly impact trust levels (Neuenschwander, 2020)
- Their previous experiences and expectations shape parents' trust. Situational factors, such as the tone of communication and the perceived openness of the school, play a significant role in trust dynamics (Bormann et al., 2021)
- Schools need to find a balance between maintaining authority and respecting parent autonomy (Schweizer et al., 2017)

Connecting Schools and Parents



Connecting Schools and Parents

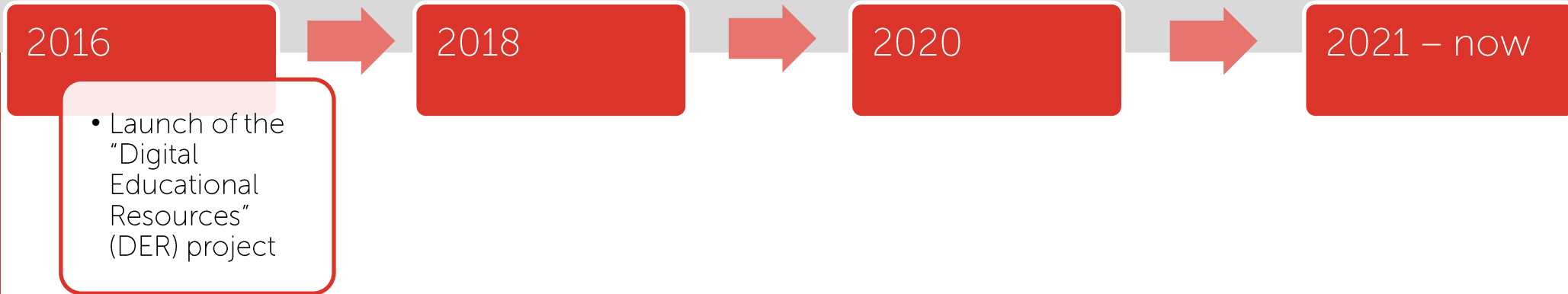


As digital communication becomes more prevalent in the educational landscape, it is crucial to investigate how these digital tools can replicate or enhance the trust established through face-to-face interactions.

The study explores the potential of digital resources to support and sustain trusting relationships between parents and schools.

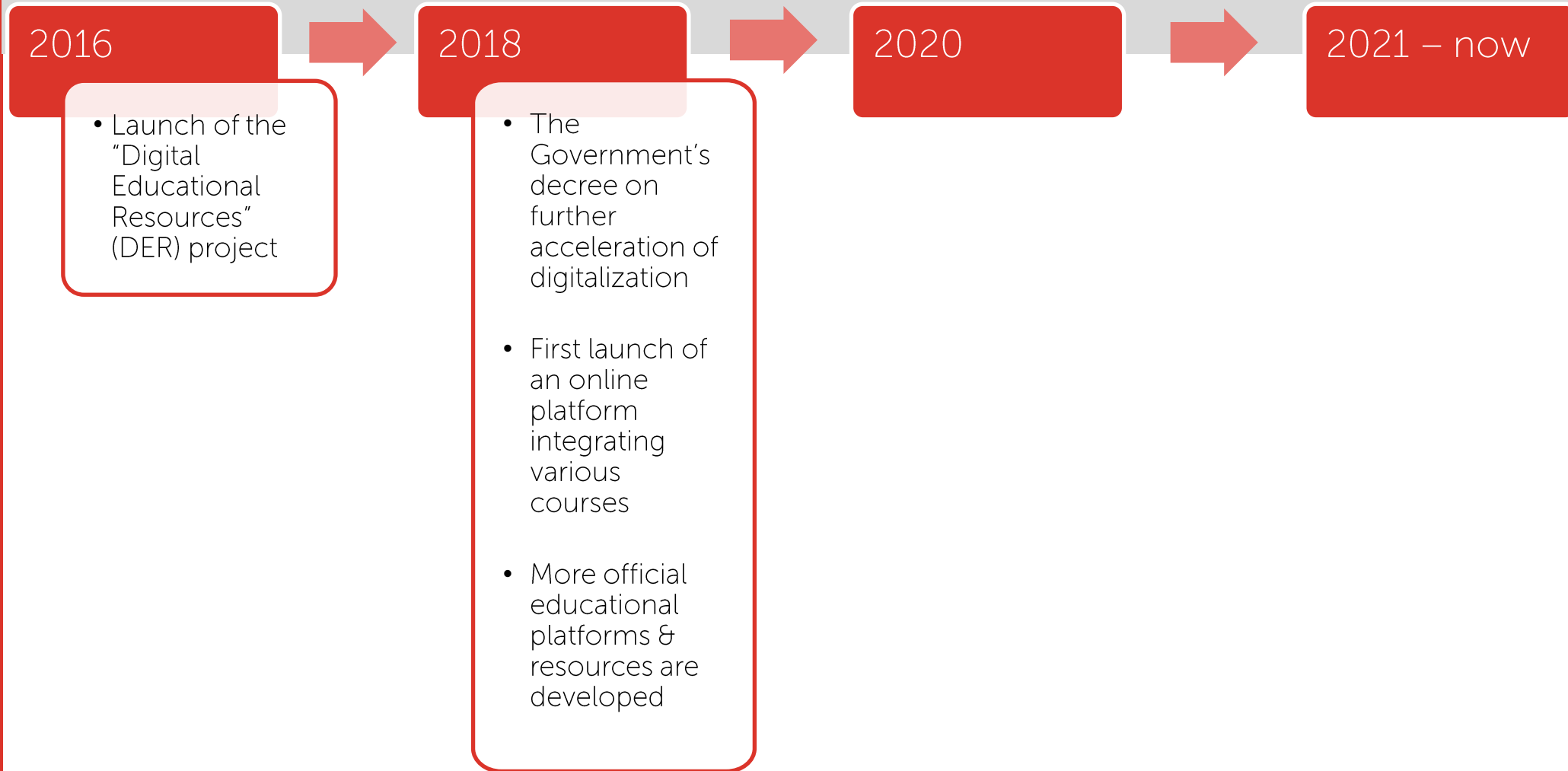
Background:

Digitalization of Moscow education system



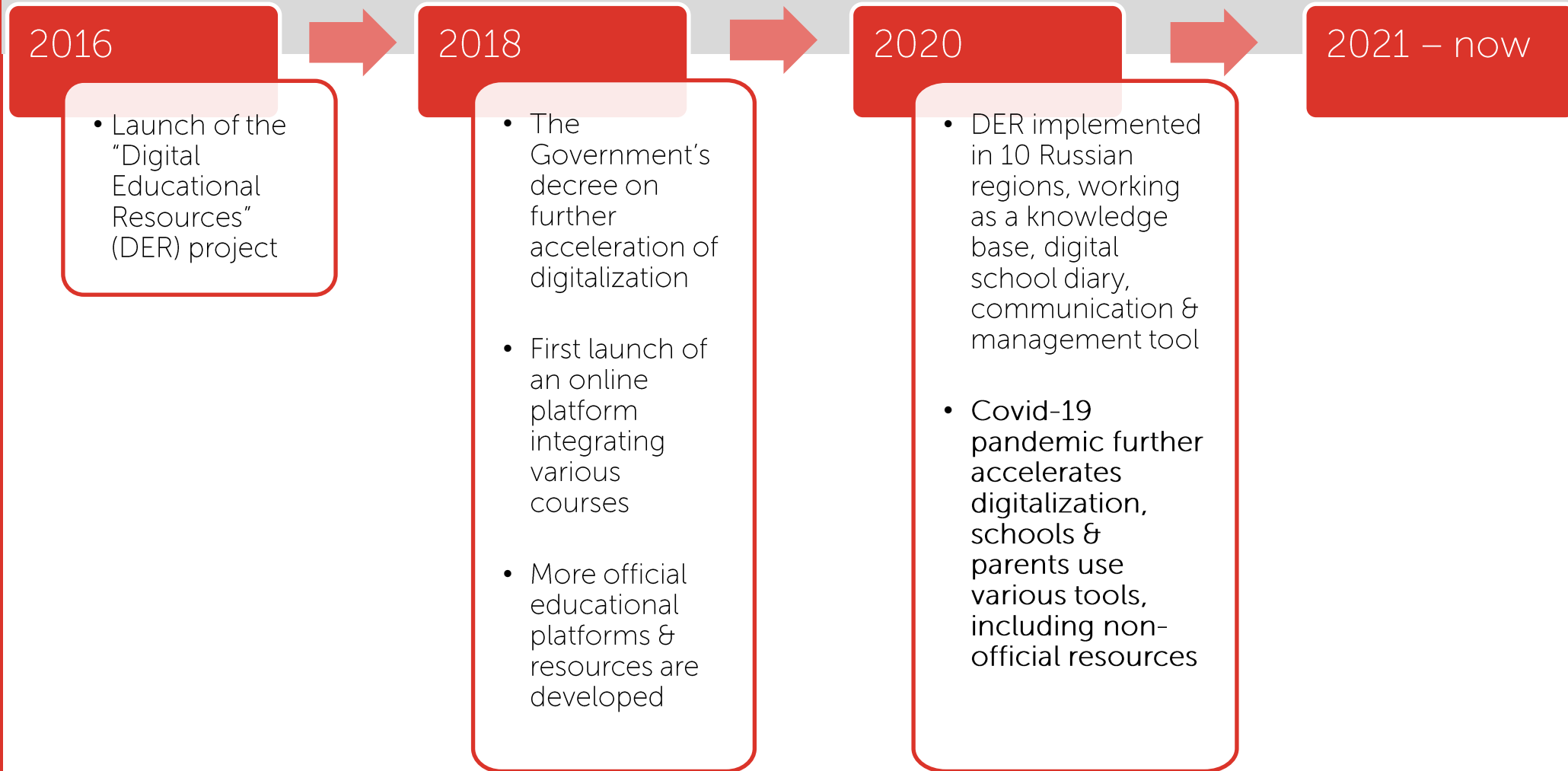
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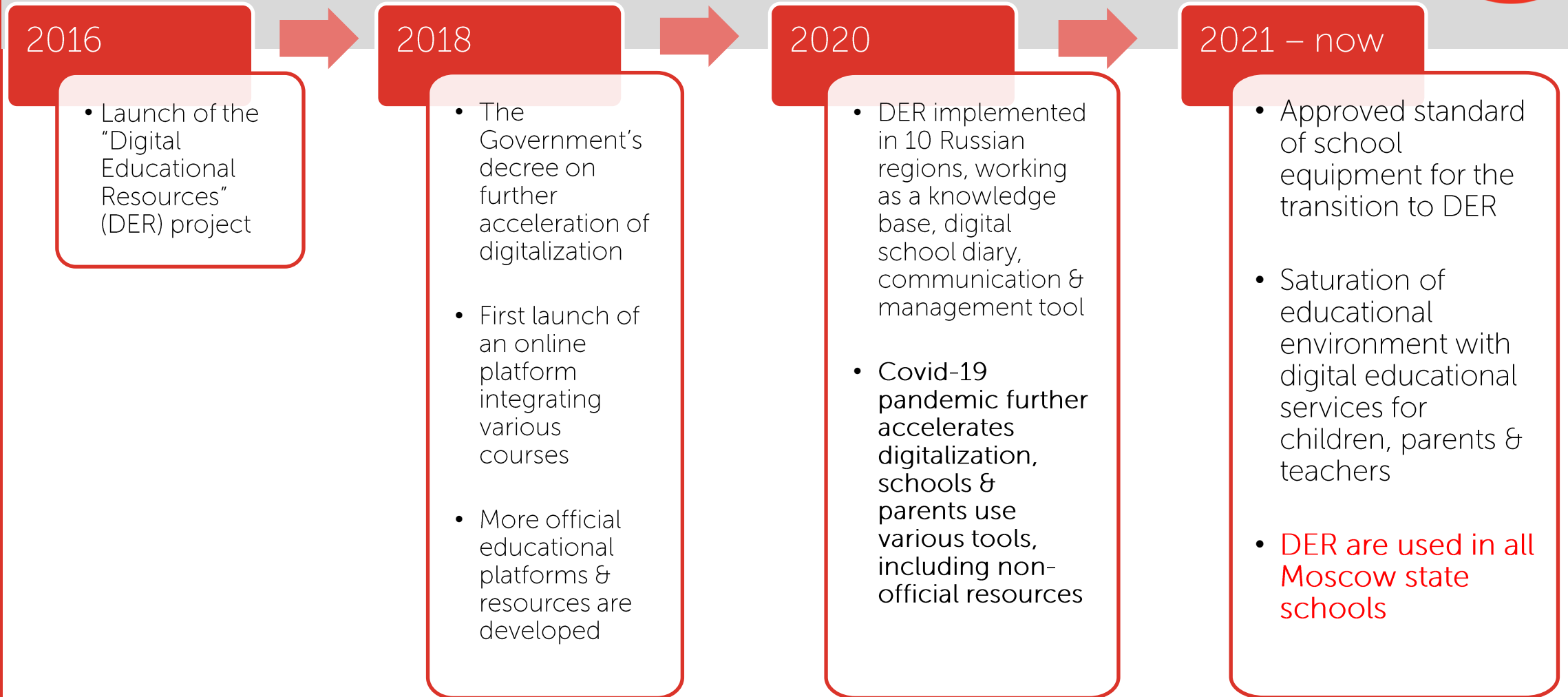
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Research design



- **Difficulties at school**, such as poor communication, unresolved conflicts, or unmet expectations, can erode trust. When parents perceive that their concerns are not being addressed or that the school is not supportive of their child's needs, their trust in the school and teachers may decline (Penttinen et al., 2020; Bormann et al., 2021; Matthiesen et al., 2022)
- **Communication is crucial** – When schools fail to provide clear and timely information, it can lead to a breakdown in trust. Parents may feel that the school is not being transparent or that their child's well-being is not being prioritized (Neuenschwander, 2020)

Research hypothesis:

The use of **digital resources** in school-parent communication **can mitigate the adverse effects of negative experiences in school** by fostering greater transparency, timeliness, and accessibility of information.

The quantitative study: Sample & method*

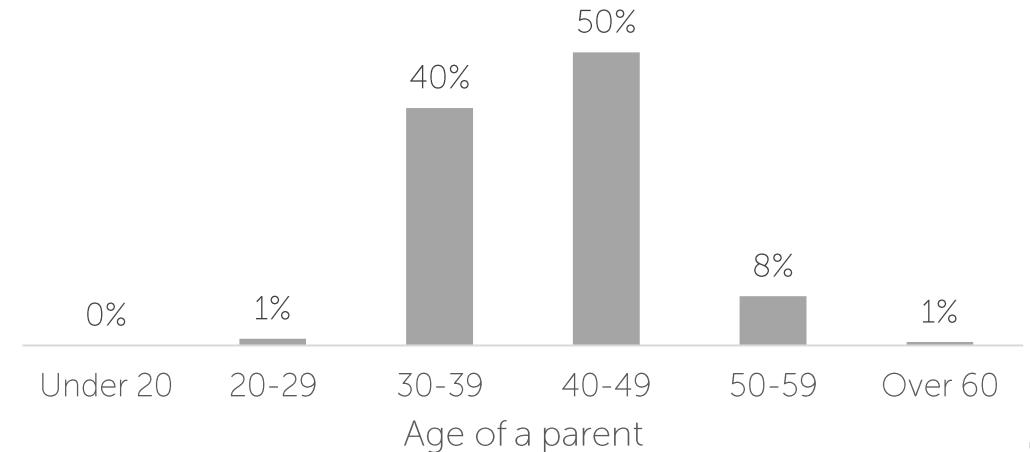


Method: online sociological survey

Research period: 3 - 14 march, 2023

Sample size: more than 16.000 parents

* Organizational and methodological work
«Development and testing of a model of
communication between the parent community
and the Moscow city education system in the
context of the city information policy»



Dependent variable: Trust in the school system

TRUST IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

I believe that in any difficult situation, the first step should be to contact the school's representatives.

The problems that arose during my child's education and time at school were successfully resolved at the school level.

I believe that the school is open to parents, and its representatives are willing to engage in dialogue with me.

I can rely on the Moscow education system for the education and upbringing of my child (children).

I understand how the Moscow education system, in which my child (children) is included, is structured and functions.

	Fully disagree	Disagree	Agree	Fully agree
I believe that in any difficult situation, the first step should be to contact the school's representatives.	8%	1%	19%	72%
The problems that arose during my child's education and time at school were successfully resolved at the school level.	4%	4%	27%	65%
I believe that the school is open to parents, and its representatives are willing to engage in dialogue with me.	3%	6%	35%	56%
I can rely on the Moscow education system for the education and upbringing of my child (children).	5%	13%	47%	34%
I understand how the Moscow education system, in which my child (children) is included, is structured and functions.	3%	10%	50%	37%

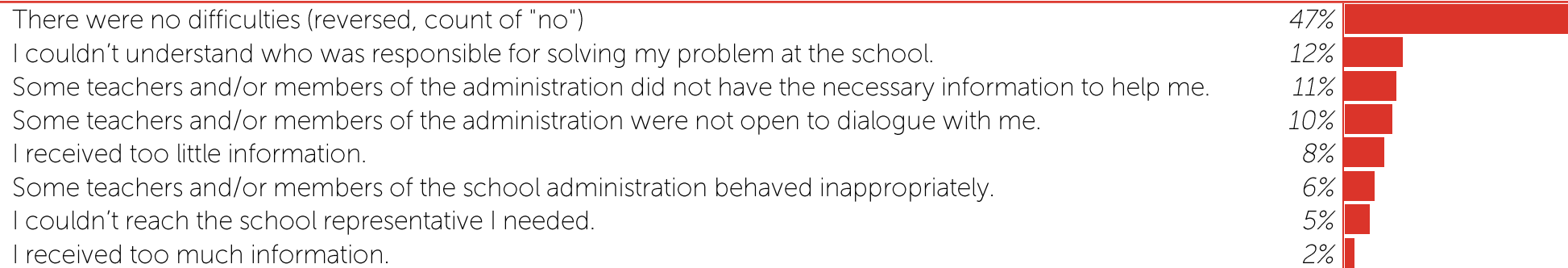
Scale is the average of answers:

TRUST

Mean: 3.36
SD: 0.584
N of items: 5
Minimum: 1
Maximum: 4
Cronbach's Alpha: .767

Independent variable: Difficulties experienced at school

When communicating with the administration and/or teachers of the school, I encountered the following...:



Scale is the sum of all the difficulties:

Difficulties at school

Mean: 0.61
SD: 1.17
N of items: 8
Minimum: 0
Maximum: 7
Skewness: 2.35
Cronbach's Alpha: .722

Mediation variable: Face-to-face interactions with the school

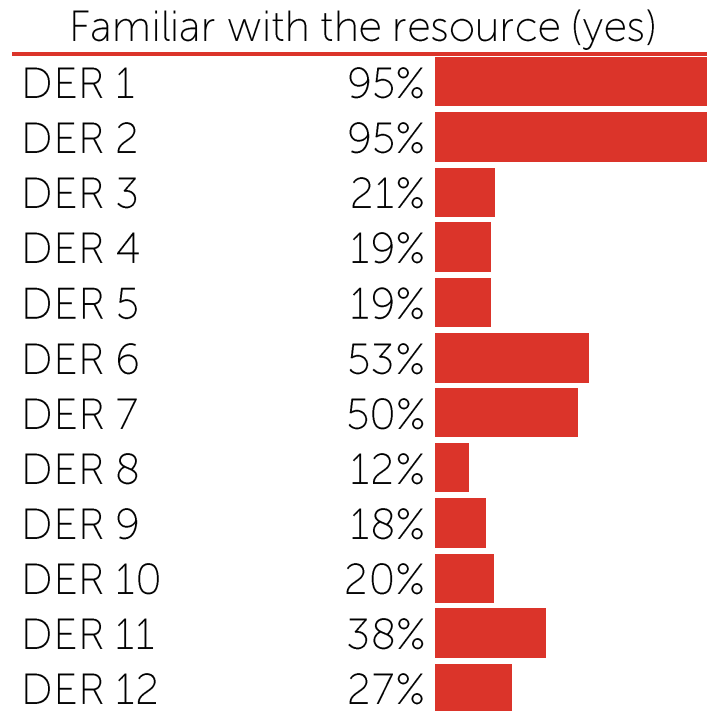
How often do you contact...		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	All the time
your child's teacher to get additional information about the educational content and/or learning conditions?		3%	26%	47%	16%	8%
the administration of the school where your child studies?		32%	49%	16%	2%	1%

Scale is the sum of answers:

Face-to-face contact

Mean: 4.9
SD: 1.46
N of items: 2
Minimum: 2
Maximum: 10
Cronbach's Alpha: .598

Mediation variable: Familiarity with digital educational resources



Scale is the sum of positive answers:

Familiarity with DER

Mean: 4.68
SD: 2.86
N of items: 12
Minimum: 0
Maximum: 12
Cronbach's Alpha: .858

Mediation variable: Frequency of use

					Don't use	Rarely	Sometime	Often	All the time
DER 1					1%	7%	29%	35%	28%
DER 2					3%	8%	17%	29%	43%
DER 3					7%	19%	46%	21%	7%
DER 4					9%	20%	46%	20%	6%
DER 5					9%	24%	45%	17%	5%
DER 6					4%	25%	45%	17%	9%
DER 7					19%	34%	34%	9%	3%
DER 8					10%	24%	42%	19%	6%
DER 9					16%	28%	36%	14%	5%
DER 10					7%	21%	43%	21%	9%
DER 11					10%	29%	41%	15%	5%
DER 12					12%	37%	38%	10%	3%
Social 1					19%	10%	16%	36%	19%
Social 2					1%	8%	34%	32%	26%
Social 3					1%	12%	44%	31%	12%
Social 4					1%	10%	36%	41%	13%
Social 5					1%	12%	40%	34%	13%
Social 6					1%	10%	35%	38%	15%
Social 7					1%	9%	39%	35%	16%

Scale is the average of answers:

Frequency of use

Mean: 3.3
SD: 0.66
N of items: 19
Minimum: 1
Maximum: 5
Cronbach's Alpha: .943

Mediation variable: Satisfaction with digital resources

	Satisfaction:	1	2	3	4	5
DER 1		1%	2%	10%	31%	56%
DER 2		3%	3%	13%	29%	52%
DER 3		3%	1%	9%	23%	64%
DER 4		3%	2%	8%	22%	65%
DER 5		3%	2%	8%	24%	63%
DER 6		2%	3%	12%	28%	56%
DER 7		4%	2%	13%	27%	54%
DER 8		2%	1%	7%	21%	69%
DER 9		3%	1%	8%	24%	63%
DER 10		2%	1%	8%	24%	66%
DER 11		2%	2%	11%	27%	58%
DER 12		2%	2%	9%	26%	61%
Social 1		7%	2%	9%	16%	67%
Social 2		1%	1%	8%	23%	67%
Social 3		0%	1%	6%	20%	73%
Social 4		0%	1%	3%	11%	86%
Social 5		0%	1%	3%	13%	83%
Social 6		0%	0%	4%	13%	82%
Social 7		0%	0%	4%	14%	81%

Scale is the average of answers:

Satisfaction with DER

Mean: 4.25

SD: 0.8

N of items: 19

Minimum: 1

Maximum: 5

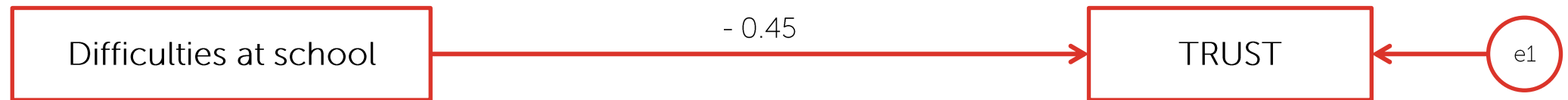
Cronbach's Alpha: .970



RESULTS

MODEL 1 - base model

A simple linear regression was conducted to examine the relationship between difficulties in school and trust in the school system.



The results indicate that difficulties in school significantly predict trust:

$R^2 = 0.202$, $F(1, 16351) = 4137.107$, $p < 0.001$

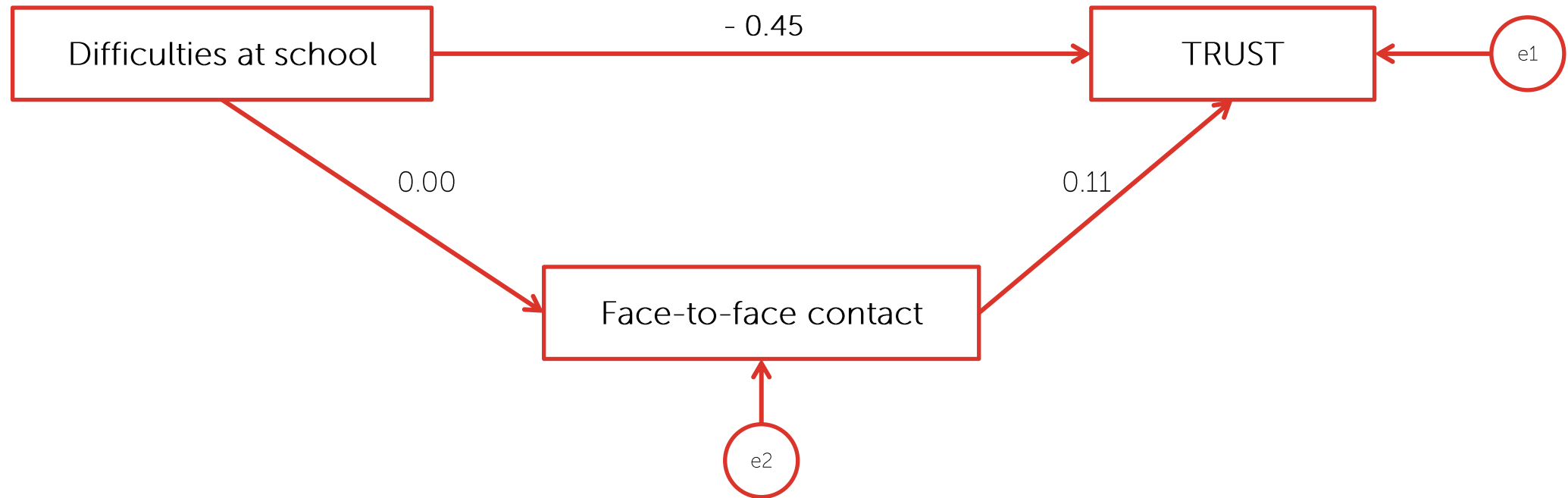
$B = -0.222$, $SE = 0.003$, $p < 0.001$

The standardised $\beta = -0.449$

When difficulties at school increase, trust in the school system decreases.

Can communication mitigate this effect?

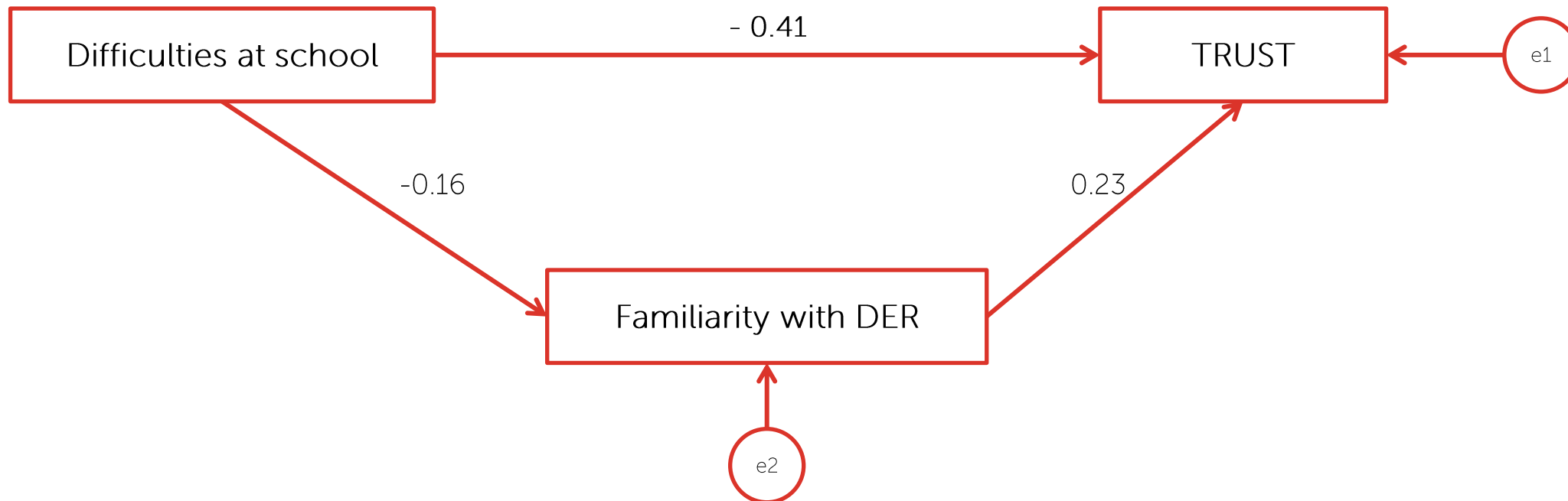
MODEL 2 – face-to-face communication



		B	S.E.	Stand.B	P Value	Indirect Effects	Total Effect
Face-to face contact	← Difficulties at school	.005	.010	.00	.604		
TRUST	← Difficulties at school	-.222	.003	-.45	>.001	.000	-.449
TRUST	← Face-to face contact	.043	.003	.11	>.001		

Face-to-face contact does not have an effect on mitigating the adverse effects of difficulties

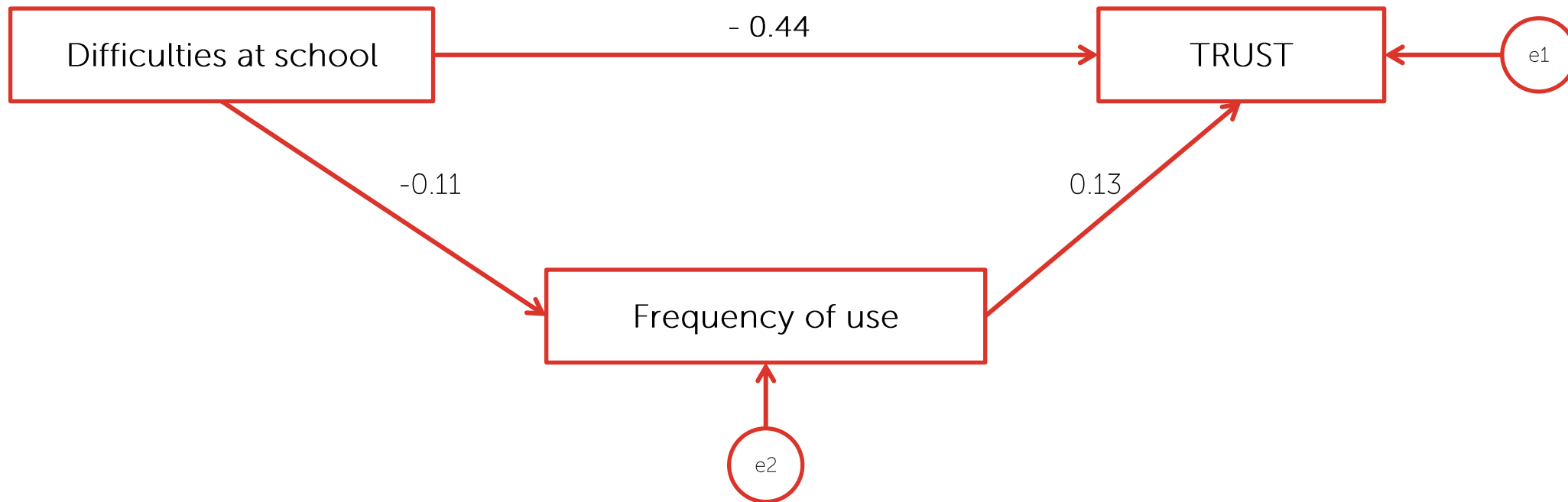
MODEL 3 – Familiarity with digital resources



		B	S.E.	Stand. B	P Value	Indirect Effects	Total Effect
Familiarity with DER	← Difficulties at school	-.382	.019	-.158	<.001		
TRUST	← Difficulties at school	-.204	.003	-.412	<.001	-.037	-.449
TRUST	← Familiarity with DER	.048	.001	.234	<.001		

Familiarity with DER has a small significant effect on mitigating the adverse effects of difficulties

MODEL 4 – Frequency of use of digital resources



		B	S.E.	Stand. B	P Value	Indirect Effects	Total Effect
Frequency of use	← Difficulties at school	-.060	.004	-.107	<.001		
TRUST	← Difficulties at school	-.215	.003	-.435	<.001	-.014	-.449
TRUST	← Frequency of use	.115	.006	.131	<.001		

Frequency of use has a small significant effect on mitigating the adverse effects of difficulties

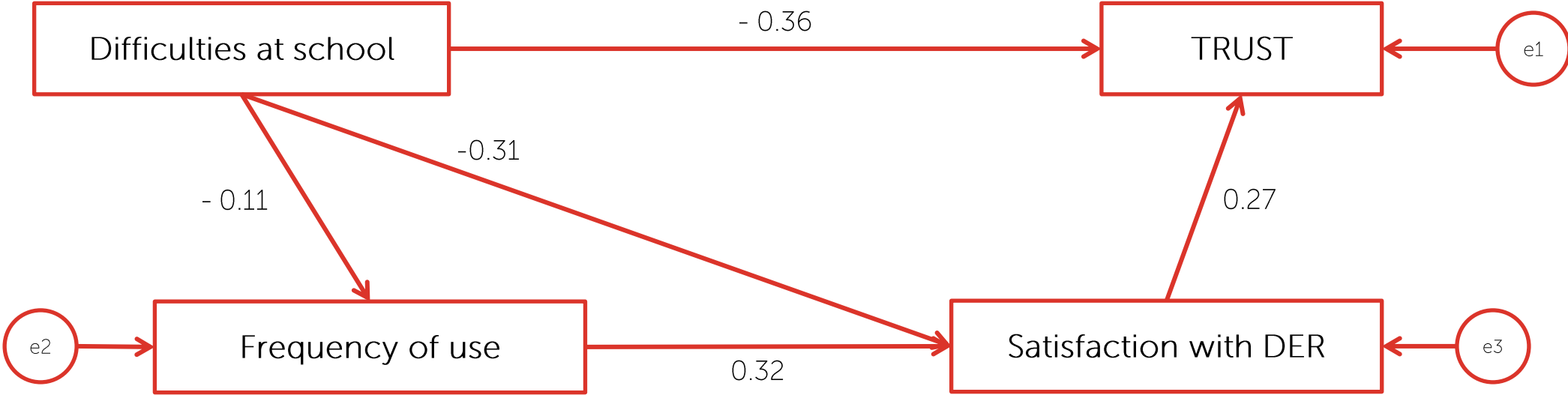
MODEL 5 – Satisfaction with digital resources



		B	S.E.	Stand. B	P Value	Indirect Effects	Total Effect
Satisfaction with DER	← Difficulties at school	-.231	.005	-.340	<.001		
TRUST	← Difficulties at school	-.117	.004	-.359	<.001	-.091	-.449
TRUST	← Satisfaction with DER	.194	.005	.267	<.001		

Satisfaction has the strongest significant effect on mitigating the adverse effects of difficulties

MODEL 6 – Frequency and satisfaction



		B	S.E.	Stand. B	P Value	Indirect Effects	Total Effect
Frequency of use	← Difficulties at school	-.060	.004	-.107	<.001		
Satisfaction with DER	← Frequency of use	.389	.008	.322	<.001		
Satisfaction with DER	← Difficulties at school	-.208	.005	-.306	<.001	-.034	.340
TRUST	← Satisfaction with DER	.194	.005	.267	<.001		
TRUST	← Difficulties at school	-.117	.004	-.359	<.001	-.091	-.449
TRUST	← Frequency of use					.086	.086

Model fit: DF = 1, Chi-square = 50.520, Probability level = .000, CFI = .995 RMSEA = .055

The use of DER and satisfaction with it helps to mitigate the adverse effects of difficulties at school

Conclusions

- ✓ Trust between parents and schools plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of the educational system.
- ✓ Trust is dynamic and can either strengthen or weaken based on parents' experiences with the school. Negative experiences, such as unresolved issues or poor communication, can significantly reduce parents' trust.
- ✓ While face-to-face communication is often seen as vital, our findings suggest that it does not significantly mitigate the adverse effects of negative experiences.
- ✓ Instead, the use of digital resources has emerged as a more effective tool for maintaining and even improving trust. These digital platforms provide timely and accessible communication, allowing schools to address parents' concerns more efficiently.
- ✓ Integrating digital resources into school communication strategies can help to build and sustain trust between parents and schools, ultimately contributing to a more supportive and effective educational environment.

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4 Vtoroy Selskohoziastvenny proezd, Moscow,
129226, Russia
+7 (495) 607-14-36
www.mgpu.ru

Thank you!

Elena Nekhorosheva
Ekaterina Enchikova
Daria Kasatkina