PARENTAL MEDIATION STRATEGY IN THE USE OF DIGITAL MEDIA IN EARLY CHILDREN

Elisha Zakiah Muallimin[1], Lara Fridani[2], Nurjannah[3]
[1,2,3] Jakarta State University, Jl. Rawamangun Muka, Jakarta Timur 13220.
tu.pps@unj.ac.id

Abstract

Digital media are now a part of everyday life thanks to the digital revolution. The use of various digital media in early life is expanding in our increasingly digital culture. Early exposure to digital media is seen to be hazardous and requires rigorous parental regulation and supervision. This study examines parental mediation in young children's use of digital media. Researchers examined domestic parental mediation strategies using the literature review methodology. The findings indicated that there are several forms of parental mediation, including co-viewing, active mediation, and restrictive mediation. According to research, a number of variables, including parents' education level, parent-child relationships, ages, socioeconomic status, digital media competence, and parental attitudes of digital media, affect the kind of mediation that parents use.

Keywords*: digital media, early childhood, parental mediation.*

ICEC
International Conference of Early Childhood
Proceedings

Coresponding Author
Email Address: tu.pps@unj.ac.id
Copyright @2023 Elisha Zakiah Mualimin
Received March 1st, 2023, Accepted April 23rd, 2023, Published December 01, 2023

INTRODUCTION

This review is aimed at researchers and parents who are concerned about digital media use in early childhood. Modern households surround young children with digital media. As they attempt to balance the social and educational benefits of utilizing digital media, parents frequently have discussions with their kids. In an effort to maximize the advantages of a digital media-rich environment while avoiding the drawbacks, parents try to control how much time their kids spend on digital media. Setting norms and boundaries is a sort of mediation that can be used in both positive (explaining and discussing) and negative (imposing) ways (eg criticizing and disagreeing).

Children are directly impacted by their home environment, which is an ecosystem. Digital media is assisting parents in juggling parenting and housework, despite significant dispute. In Indonesia, 70% of parents say they give their kids devices between the ages of 6 months and 4 years so that they can perform housework, and 65% say they do the same to keep their kids from being fussy in public areas (Chusna, 2017). Although they are inconsistent in practice and frequently use digital media as a "nanny" while parents are conducting domestic tasks or as part of a system of incentives and punishments for their child's behavior, parents of young children advocate restricted mediation (restrictive usage of digital media) (Chaudron et.al, 2015). Children under the age of five are nearly always accompanied by an adult, or they visit sites that are appropriate for their age while employing filters to restrict access to and the exchange of information online (Lepicnik & Samec, 2013). However, the majority of kids between the ages of 6 and 9 use the internet unsupervised (Chaudron et.al, 2015). Parents are aware of the advantages and dangers of the internet, while some say they are unsure of how to use parental controls or establish content filters (Pons-Salvador, Zubieta-Mendez, & Frias-Navarro, 2018). In fact, in today's digital world, parents cannot resist the advancement of the times and the advancement of the internet (Salehudin, 2020). Because limiting children's access to digital media may also cause them to have a harder time adjusting to technological advancements than their peers.

Parents have a difficult time limiting their children's use of digital media in their early years. Children and digital media raise two opposing concerns: first, technology use can harm kids, for instance with inappropriate content, and second, kids who don't have the same exposure to technology as other kids will be at a disadvantage socially and academically because they're more likely to struggle than their older peers. regularly in contact with electronic devices.

Parental mediation is a style of parenting that helps shield kids from the drawbacks of utilizing technology. Parental mediation, according to Nikken and Opree (2018), refers to all the methods parents take to control and influence their kids' media usage. Parental mediation, according to Livingstone and Helsper (2008), is the control parents exert over their children's media interactions. Parental mediation is divided into four groups by Clark (2011): active mediation, restrictive mediation, co-viewing, and participatory learning. In contrast to active mediation, which involves a conversation between the child and the parent, mediation during shared viewing entails nonverbal cues and the parent's physical presence. Parents can benefit from their children's learning through participatory education. Conversely, parents who use restrictive mediation establish a number of rules and take action when any of the rules are broken. Parental mediation, according to Dias and Brito (2020), is a dynamic process. Parental mediation is not a permanent habit or management, according to Smahelova et al. (2017), who also noted that several mediation

tactics can be applied concurrently based on various conditions. Researchers have also examined how parents and kids jointly develop mediation methods.

Duerager & Livingstone (2012) analyzes some of the latest parental mediation strategies which include Restrictive Mediation, Active Mediation of Use, Active Mediation of Safety, Monitoring, and Technical Mediation (Technical Mediation). Hwang et.al (2017) stated that restrictive mediation was predicted by the severity felt by parents. The more parents perceive digital media addiction as a serious problem, the more likely children are to engage in restrictive mediation.

Restrictive mediation, active mediation of use, active mediation of safety, monitoring, and technical mediation are some of the most recent parental mediation strategies (Duerager & Livingstone, 2012). According to Hwang et al. (2017), parental severity perceptions predicted the use of restricted mediation. Children are more prone to use restrictive mediation when parents view digital media addiction as a serious issue.

Children's ages (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008), the relationship between parents and children (Mahel & Wright, 2014), parental technology competence (nan Kaya, Mutlu Bayraktar, & Yilmaz, 2018), parents' socioeconomic circumstances, and parents' perceptions of technology are all factors that influence parental mediation strategies (Nikken & Opree, 2018).

The researcher is aware that parents play a significant role in their children's lives and that parental mediation tactics are crucial when it comes to young children's use of digital media. As a result, this study investigates empirical studies on the usage of parental mediation tactics in children's digital media use as well as the variables that affect parental mediation in early childhood.

METHODS

In this study, a method of literature review is combined with a descriptive qualitative approach. Through the use of descriptive analysis techniques, this study attempts to investigate, assess, and interpret the elements that affect parental mediation efforts. Researchers looked examined 19 articles on parental mediation and young children's use of digital media, involving children ages 0 to 8. The data used in this study was gathered by examining a variety of informational sources, including articles, scientific publications, theories from textbooks, reports, and newspapers that are pertinent to the study's subject.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study, which uses a descriptive and narrative technique, identifies two major themes that come out of the analysis, namely parental mediation strategies for children's usage of digital media and factors that influence parental mediation strategies.

Parental mediation in children's use of digital media.

Researchers have discovered research that focuses on parental mediation strategies in children's usage of digital media in a number of studies that have been analyzed. Many parents see digital media as both beneficial and difficult. Adults see digital media as a crucial component of their own lives and for the future of both their children and themselves, but they are concerned about its overuse and feel that it requires regulation and supervision (Chaudron et al., 2015). Parents are concerned that children under the age of eight may be exposed to improper material, which could have negative health, social, and economic consequences.

Many parents have a propensity to put off their concerns about unknown threats in the future (Chaudron et.al, 2015). "The quick accessibility and mobility of mobile devices makes digital media have increased potential to replace human interaction and other enrichment activities," warn Radesky, Schmacher, and Zuckerman (2015). The marketing of the app as instructive without any supporting evidence, according to the researchers, may persuade parents to permit the use of digital media to replace interactions with caregivers, which might be harmful to children's wellbeing and language development. Because of this, some academics believe that more excellent apps should be available for kids and families. According to Lee & Baron (2015), parents and kids require media material that can inspire shared media engagement as well as serve as a starting point for dialogues and activities between them. These kind of contents are seen as essential across all platforms.

Research by Chaudron et al. (2015) demonstrates numerous instances of parents who are frequently unaware of the breadth of their children's online skills and activities. Parents in the studies under consideration exhibited a casual attitude toward this and chose not to supervise their kids, but on the other hand, parents believed they understood their kids' actions and talents, even if they were mistaken. Actually, the evidence is conflicting. There are parental restrictions that the child may disobey, for instance, and there are also instances when parents check a child's gadget to monitor them in ways that the youngster may not be aware of. Tomopoulos et.al (2014) found that many young toddlers under the age of two are exposed to inappropriate TV programming.

Understanding the advantages of digital media for kids is more difficult for parents than predicting the dangers. While some parents support children utilizing digital media, others have "doubts" about the advantages that technology may bring about (Chaudron et.al, 2015). Lee and Baron (2015) discovered that American families that spoke only Spanish or were bilingual claimed that their children learnt English through educational media. The majority of parents concentrate on the incorrect use of digital media that can affect children, such as spending excessive amounts of money, finding unsuitable information, using digital media excessively, damaging children's health, and hindering their ability to socialize.

Previous research have identified a variety of parental mediation tactics. Parental mediation, according to Nikken & Opree (2018), is any method parents take to control and influence their children's media use. Parental mediation is divided into three categories by Valkenburg et al. (1999): co-viewing, restrictive mediation, and active mediation (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008). Parent-child communication is a defining feature of active mediation. Active mediation, or parent-child dialogue, can lessen the risk of undesirable consequences, such as violent conduct or the development of worldviews that need to be corrected, according to researchers who have studied the tradition of parental mediation. Talking about media content while a child is actively consuming it (by watching, reading, or listening) is known as active mediation. Parents can assist kids with research by selecting keywords and how to use them by engaging in active mediation.

Restrictive mediation, as opposed to active mediation, focuses on parent-child dialogue through the establishment of rules, their articulation, and the application of consequences when those rules are broken (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008). Parents typically utilize interaction limitations to stop problematic habits by forbidding email, chat, instant messaging, online gaming, downloading music, movies, and other content (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008). Technical restrictions, such as software installed on

children's laptops to track their Internet usage, are another barrier to access (Kirwil et al., 2009).

Additionally, prior studies have shown that children use the internet less and gain fewer benefits as a result of their parents' restrictive mediation (Garmendia et.al., 2012; Livingstone & Helsper, 2008). According to Kirwil et al. (2009), parents experience "panic attacks" when they learn that their kids have created social media profiles online, but they don't seem to worry about more risky online behaviors like talking to strangers they meet online or disclosing personal information.

Shared use indicates parental presence during children's media use (such as when watching together), allowing for the sharing of experiences without commentary on the medium's impact or content (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008). Parents who use the internet with their children can suggest sites or websites that are age-appropriate. Children use the internet for educational purposes more frequently the more often they use it with their parents. In addition, Lee & Chae (2007) claimed that active sharing is also linked to beneficial internet communication, i.e., the more parents engage their kids in online communication, the more frequently kids engage in it.

It turns out, nevertheless, that more recent discoveries are distinct from earlier ones. Researchers discovered that children used the Internet less positively the more parents employed active mediation jointly. The "individual bedroom access" culture, in which most kids access digital media from their own bedrooms, may be to blame for this scenario, according to Eastin et al. (2006). Children are increasingly using smartphones, which increases their access to the internet on a personal level.

The factors that affect parental mediation strategies

Parent's level of education

Parental mediation strategies are influenced by a number of issues. As their children are exposed to more threats online, parents utilize restrictive mediation, according to Duerager and Livingstone (2012). Furthermore, Duerager and Livingstone emphasized that parents with low socioeconomic status, low education, little online use, and less digital trust tend to utilize restrictive mediation more frequently. These factors are thought to reduce parents' self-assurance when it comes to regulating their kids' active usage of digital media. On the other hand, parents with higher socioeconomic status participate more in active mediation. Parents who utilize digital media more frequently are more self-assured and use many other mediation techniques besides restrictive mediation.

Parent and child relationship

Although Chen et al. (2015) found a negative correlation between parent-child relationships and problematic children's internet use, Smahel & Wright (2014) found that the parent-child relationship is one of the determinants in children's problematic use of digital media. As a result, there will always be disagreements on how to treat parents and children. However, other study demonstrates that communication within the family and the family environment are crucial. In order to maximize the development of cognitive, social, and emotional skills from interactions with digital media, Johnson (2015) asserts that early childhood digital experiences are always enhanced when children share them with friends who explain, expand, ask questions, confirm, monitor, and make adjustments.

Age

Parental access limits are also based on the child's age and the type of digital media. According to Livingstone & Helsper (2008), parents lessen their supervision of their older kids' use of digital media. A survey was done on 116 Singaporean youngsters between the ages of 7 and 8 by Goh et al. in 2015. According to reports, all but one pupil had to obtain permission from their parents before using a computer at home, while far younger kids still required permission before using a cell phone, even if it belonged to their parents. Despite the fact that Lepicnick & Samec (2013) point out that kids as young as 5 are frequently accompanied by an adult or are utilizing filters to restrict online access or information exchange while visiting age-appropriate websites. In contrast, Chaudron et al. (2015)'s research revealed that the majority of kids between the ages of 6 and 9 access the internet on their own. Parents' rules also cover homework, downtime, and the potential for eye pain (eye strain).

Socio-Economic Status

The majority of studies compare low, middle, and high socioeconomic level families. Katz et al. (2018) noted that while parents with low socioeconomic level and little English proficiency are likely to rely on their kids to act as digital media intermediaries, it is at least possible to provide guidance to kids regarding their use of digital media. According to Brito et al. (2017), low-income families have less technology resources and digital devices. There is no doubt that this directly affects how children utilize digital media.

Proficiency with digital media

Katz et al. (2019) discovered that parents who use the internet frequently think it offers opportunities for their kids. According to Nikken and Opree (2018) in a different study, "as we predicted, children who are fluent in using digital media, in line with parents' competency in using mediation in children," parents who are comfortable with digital media have no trouble employing mediation tactics. Along with parental media literacy and high self-efficacy, Nikken & Opree (2018) also noted that because parents are aware of the benefits and drawbacks of the media their children consume, they engage in parental mediation more actively than other parents.

Parent’s perceptions of digital media

According to Van Petegem et al. (2019), parents who have negative opinions of online play are more likely to use restricted mediation techniques when their kids are playing online. Specifically, Brito et al. (2017) noted that moms with minimal digital media use and limited perceptions of digital media likely to demonstrate stronger control over their children. They also noted disparities in attitudes between mothers and fathers. In contrast, men who have a favorable opinion of the use of digital media tend to be less controlling of their kids and to approve of their usage of these tools.

According to the researchers, some parents are eager to supervise their kids' internet use out of concern that they might access objectionable material, which encourages kids to engage in non-electronic activities like playing outside or participating in sports or other outdoor activities rather than using electronics. Parental mediation tactics, according to Smahelova et al. (2017), are more concerned with general guidelines and parental values than with the advantages and disadvantages of digital media. Parents frequently support their child's usage of digital media for longer periods of time without direct supervision when they feel that their child is a proficient user.

CONCLUSION

Parental mediation strategies in the use of digital media need to be understood and practiced by parents, so that the consequences of the risk of using digital media can actually be reduced. Parents also need to be more knowledgeable about filtering/monitoring software options and tools to help protect their children. This study also found several factors that influence parental mediation strategies, including: parental education level, parent-child relationship, age, socio-economic status, competency in using digital media, and parental perceptions of digital media.

Simple ideas like implementing a parental mediation plan will lessen the threats that young children confront online. This study also showed that parents intervene less in their older children's use of digital media as they get older. These findings imply that parental mediation changes as a child develops. Children pick up parenting techniques for conflict resolution through observation and imitation, but parents might not be aware of how much their behavior is reflected in their offspring.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank her two beloved supervisors, Mrs. Lara Fridani and Mrs. Nurjannah Hasan for the guidance and encouragement given.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brito, R., Francisco, R., Dias, P., & Chaudron, S. (2017). Family dynamics in digital homes: The role played by parental mediation in young children's digital practices around 14 European countries. Contemporary Family Therapy, 39(4), 271-280.

Cabello-Hutt, T., Cabello, P., & Claro, M. (2018). Online opportunities and risks for children and adolescents: The role of digital skills, age, gender and parental mediation in Brazil. new media & society, 20(7), 2411-2431.

Chaudron, S., Beutel, M. E., Donoso Navarrete, V., Dreier, M., Fletcher-Watson, B., Heikkilä, A. S., ... & Wölfling, K. (2015). Young children (0-8) and digital technology: A qualitative exploratory study across seven countries. JRC; ISPRA, Italy.

Chusna, a. (2017). Pengaruh beban kerja, konflik keluarga-pekerjaan, stres kerja terhadap produktivitas kerja pegawai wanita di direktorat jenderal pembinaan penempatan *tenaga kerja dan perluasan kesempatan kerja kementerian ketenagakerjaan ri* (doctoral dissertation, universitas pembangunan nasional veteran jakarta)Clark, L. S. (2011). Parental mediation theory for the digital age. Communication Theory, 21(4), 323-343. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2011.01391.x

Clark, L. S. (2011). Parental mediation theory for the digital age. Communication Theory, 21(4), 323-343. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.2011.01391.x

Dias, P., & Brito, R. (2020). How families with young children are solving the dilemma between privacy and protection by building trust-A portrait from Portugal. Journal of Children and Media, 14(1), 56-73. https://doi.org/10.1080/17482798.2019.1694552

Duerager, A. & Livingstone, S. (2012). How can parents support children's internet safety. EU Kids Online, London, UK.

Eastin, M. S. (2006). Video game violence and the female game player: Self-and opponent gender effects on presence and aggressive thoughts. Human Communication Research, 32(3), 351-372.

Hwang, Y., Choi, I., Yum, J. Y., & Jeong, S. H. (2017). Parental mediation regarding children's smartphone use: Role of protection motivation and parenting style. Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking, 20(6), 362-368.

İnan-Kaya, G., Mutlu-Bayraktar, D., & Yılmaz, Ö. (2018). Digital parenting attitude scale: validity and reliability study. Mehmet Akif Ersoy University Faculty of Education Journal, 46, 149-173. https://doi.org/10.21764/maeuefd.390626

Katz, V. S., Moran, M. B., & Gonzalez, C. (2018). Connecting with technology in lower-income US families. New Media & Society, 20(7), 2509-2533.

Kirwil, L. (2009). Parental mediation of children's internet use in different European countries. Journal of Children and Media, 3(4), 394-409.

Lee, S. J., & Chae, Y. G. (2007). Children's Internet use in a family context: Influence on family relationships and parental mediation. Cyberpsychology & behavior, 10(5), 640-644.

Livingstone, S., & Helsper, E. J. (2008). Parental mediation of children's internet use. Journal of broadcasting & electronic media, 52(4), 581-599.

Nikken, P., & Opree, S. J. (2018). Guiding young children's digital media use: SES-differences in mediation concerns and competence. Journal of child and family studies, 27, 1844-1857.

Pons-Salvador, G., Zubieta-Méndez, X., & Frias-Navarro, D. (2018). Internet use by children aged six to nine: Parents' beliefs and knowledge about risk prevention. Child indicators research, 11, 1983-2000.

Radesky, Jenny S., Jayna Schumacher, and Barry Zuckerman. 2015. "Mobile and Interactive Media Use by Young Children: The Good, the Bad, and the Unknown." Pediatrics 135 (1): 1–3. doi:10.1542/peds.2014-2251.

Smahel, D., & Wright, M. F. (2014). The meaning of online problematic situations for children: results of qualitative cross-cultural investigation in nine European countries. London: EU Kids Online, LSE.

Smahelova, M., Juhová, D., Cermak, I., & Smahel, D. (2017). Mediation of young children's digital technology use: The parents' perspective. Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace, 11(3).

Tomopoulos, S., Brockmeyer Cates, C., Dreyer, B. P., Fierman, A. H., Berkule, S. B., & Mendelsohn, A. L. (2014). Children under the age of two are more likely to watch inappropriate background media than older children. Acta Paediatrica, 103(5), 546-552.

Van Petegem, S., de Ferrerre, E., Soenens, B., van Rooij, A. J., & Van Looy, J. (2019). Parents' degree and style of restrictive mediation of young children's digital gaming: Associations with parental attitudes and perceived child adjustment. Journal of Child and Family Studies, 28(5), 1379-1391. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-019-01368-x

Vodopivec, J. L., & Samec, P. (2013). Communication Technology in the Home Environment of Four-year-old Children (Slovenia). Comunicar. Media Education Research Journal, 21(1).