Family Dynamics in Digital Homes: The Role Played by Parental Mediation in Young Children’s Digital Practices Around 14 European Countries

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## Authors

Brito R.;Francisco R.;Dias P.;Chaudron S.

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## Topics

## Sample

Narratives from 140 families from 14 countries: Belgium (BE), Croatia (CR),Cyprus (CY), Denmark (DK), Lithuania (LV), Malta (MT), Netherlands (NL), Norway (NO), Portugal (PT), Romania (RO), Russia (RU), Slovenia (SL), Spain (ES) and Switzerland (CH).

## Implications For Parents About

Parental practices / parental mediation

## Implications For Educators About

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Stepping up awareness and empowerment

## Implications For Stakeholders About

## Other Stakeholder Implication

Therapists

# Abstract

In contemporary society, digital media are fully integrated in our daily lives, indispensable for our routines, always connected and at-hand. Our research thus explores the parental mediation of portable digital devices in families with young children, addressing the following questions: (a) which are the most common parental mediation styles adopted towards young children; and (b) which individual features of the parents or contextual factors influence the parental mediation style adopted. Our methodology is exploratory and qualitative, considering as empirical corpus 14 national reports from the European-scale study “Young Children (0–8) and Digital Technologies” for a comparative thematic analysis. The authoritative style was the most common parental mediation style related to technology use. In general, there are transversal rules to all parental mediation styles (except laissez-faire style), such as withdraw or give devices to children according to their behavior, control (inappropriate) content and control the time of use. Also, parental perceptions and attitudes about the technologies played a heavier weight on the parental mediation style adopted, and consequently influenced the relationship of the children with digital media. Some implications for future studies, preventive actions, and family therapy are discussed.

# Outcome

«In conclusion, we identified very diversified parental mediation styles and practices, but which consistently related to the parents’ perceptions towards digital media and some sociodemographic factors. Parents who are digitally competent may reveal diversified or mixed perceptions and attitudes towards digital media, but are more participative, monitoring, scaffolding and supporting the digital practices of children. They also tend to have higher education and income. On the contrary, parents who are less digitally competent tend to report more negative perceptions about digital technologies, and thus to be more restrictive and less participative; however, because of their lack of information, some are very permissive.» (Brito et al. 2017, p. 278)