Uso infantil de dispositivos móviles: Influencia del nivel socioeducativo materno

Engl. transl.: Childhood use of mobile devices: Influence of mothers’ socio-educational level

# Keywords

* Mobile devices
* children
* social level
* parental intervention
* opportunities

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## Authors

Jiménez-Morales M.;Montaña M.;Medina-Bravo P.

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## Topics

* Social mediation
* Other
* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Access, inequalities and vulnerabilities
* Literacy and skills

## Sample

A convenience sample of 792 primary school students from 15 schools (five publics, nine subsidized and one private) in three Spanish cities was used (196 students in Barcelona, 320 in Madrid and 276 in Seville). Convenience sampling was applied by prioritizing the ecological validity of the study, i.e. the external validity of the situation, and not the random representativeness of the sample (external population validity). Therefore, those centers that provided better accessibility conditions were selected. Of the 792 participating schoolchildren, 429 were girls (54.2%) and 363 were boys (45.8%). The average age was 7.23 years and the median age was 7. The minimum and maximum correspond to 5 and 9 years, respectively.

## Implications For Parents About

* Parental digital literacy
* Parenting guidance / support
* Other

## Other Parent Implication

The importance of mother´s educational and professional level in the process of parental mediation

## Implications For Educators About

## Implications For Policy Makers About

* Stepping up awareness and empowerment
* Creating a safe environment for children online
* High-quality content online for children and young people

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

The presence and variety of mobile devices in Spanish homes, regardless of the social and economic context, has been widespread for years. Several studies focus on parental mediation in children's consumption of smart devices, however, there is a lack of scientific evidence about how the educational level and the professional profile of parents affect children’s digital media consumption. This study analyzes the influence of the socio-educational level of families on the consumption of digital screens. The study deepens the understanding on the educational level of parents, as well as their professional category. A quantitative methodology was applied on a sample of 792 primary school children, between 5 and 9 years of age, in three Spanish cities. The consumption of television, smartphones, tablets, computers and videogames was analyzed. Results indicate that, the lower the level of education and professional category of the mother, the greater the consumption of content through smart devices by children. The study demonstrates, there-fore, the importance of considering the educational and professional levels of mothers and fathers for a better understanding of the consumption of digital screens and, at the same time, as an opportunity for designing family strategies that encourage critical thinking and digital media education.

# Outcome

Results show the importance of considering the socio-educational level of parents when understanding the type of use and consumption of digital screens by children, especially in the case of videogames, mobile phones and television. More specifically, the two mediating variables are related to the educational and professional level of the mother. Jiménez-Morales et al. (2020) remark that these results confirm a higher involvement in parenting tasks by mothers compared with fathers. Regarding the differences obtained in the amount of digital screen consumption by children based on the educational and professional level of their mothers Jiménez et al. (2020: 26) point out that: "a higher educational and professional level among mothers also increases the income level of the family as a whole, which gives access to a wider variety of extracurricular and recreational activities that families with fewer economic resources can hardly afford". On the other hand, the authors also point out that it could be that those mothers that mothers with a higher level of education are also more attentive to research on children’s issues including those that warn of the risks of failing to set limits on screen consumption. Nonetheless, Jiménez-Morales et al. (2020: 24) warn that: "It is necessary to reflect on the results from this structural perspective in order to avoid making the mistake of blaming mothers with lower educational and professional levels".
The authors advice the need to design family plans for media use, considering the mother´s characteristics as well as children's needs. These plans "should present an appropriate balance between screen time and other offline activities, set limits on access to content, guide the viewing of personal information, encourage critical thinking and age-appropriate digital literacy, and support family communication and the implementation of consistent rules on media use" (Jiménez-Morales et al., 2020: 24).