FIM-Studie 2016: Familie, Interaktion, Medien. Untersuchung zur Kommunikation und Mediennutzung in Familien

Engl. transl.: FIM Study 2016: Family, Interaction, Media. Study on communication and media use in families

# Keywords

* Family
* communication
* digital natives
* interaction
* media
* parents
* children

# Details

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* Other
* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Learning
* Literacy and skills

## Sample

The contents of the study were adapted to the general conditions that have changed since the first FIM study in 2011 in close cooperation between the client and the GfK Media and Communication Research institute. Particular attention was paid to the problem of implementing the content in the "research instruments" according to age. Accordingly, different questionnaires were used for children, adolescents and parents. Information about the media use of the small children was provided by the parents on their behalf. The population of the FIM study 2016 comprises the approx. 18 million German-speaking households with one or more children between the ages of three and 19 in the Federal Republic of Germany. A representative quota sample was created from this population
interviewed by 284 families. The sample was quoted according to the number of children in the household, according to the age of the children, according to the type of family, according to Nielsen areas and according to three local size classes. Slight deviations in the target structure were balanced out by iterative weighting according to the specified quota characteristics, so that the families surveyed reflect the population as accurately as possible.
In the 284 selected families, all family members aged three and over were included in the survey. This resulted in the following sample for the various target groups:
• Households / families: n = 284
• Parents: n = 523
• Children (3-19 years): n = 443
The survey was carried out as part of a two-stage study design that takes different research elements into account:
1. Basic survey: A nationally representative, quantitative face-to-face study (CAPI) that enables statistically reliable statements to be made about basic communication and media use structures in families.
2. Diary survey: An in-depth examination of the daily routine using diaries in order to gain an insight into everyday family communication and behavioral structures.

(FIM Study 2016, p.4)

# Abstract

According to the self-assessment of parents in Germany, fathers are experts in television technology (82%) and in computers and hardware (74%). But fathers are also most trusted when it comes to operating cell phones and smartphones (66%) and handling computer programs (62%). When it comes to television content (74%) and books (64%), on the other hand, mothers know their way around best. Children and adolescents, who are often ascribed a high level of operating competence in the media sector, are from the parents' point of view only experts in the family when it comes to computer games.

If the children are asked who in the family is most familiar with various media topics, the parents' assessment is largely confirmed. Only when it comes to social media are children just ahead of their parents.

In addition to operating skills, the parents were also asked to assess their media education skills. Around one in three parents (31%) consider themselves to be very competent, with 40 percent men ascribing significantly more media education skills than 23 percent women. A good half of the parents (57%) see themselves as "somewhat competent", one in ten thinks they are less well equipped and four percent do not dare to be media educated at all. For most media areas, parents attribute more competence to themselves than their children, the "digital natives".

As part of the FIM study, parents should also provide information on who, in their opinion, has the main responsibility for protecting children from negative media influences. The majority of parents (78%) believe that they are primarily responsible for protecting their children. 13 percent see the media companies as being responsible and eight percent expect the state and authorities to offer protection. Only in second place do parents see companies (46%) and state bodies as being responsible.

(Source: https://www.mpfs.de/studien/fim-studie/2016/)

# Outcome

If one considers topics of conversation in the field of the media, television or television content is clearly in first place, followed by daily newspaper content and the Internet or Internet content in third place. Communication on social media offers such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, or Snapchat, or on contents seen or read on these platforms, also plays a not-insignificant role. Apart from the content, the education aspects of these media are also generally relevant. Discussions about usage duration or times on these media are on the agenda of every third family daily or several times a week.

The most important means of communication between parents and children is still personal direct conversation. 88 per cent often speak to each other in person, while only 13 per cent of parents often speak with their children during telephone calls on the landline, mobile or smartphone. Text message are of similar importance (12%). Seen over the entirety of all parents and children, the technical communication channels in families have not changed fundamentally since 2011. A development can only be seen in the communication between older children and their parents: in 2011, about a third of parents communicated frequentlyor occasionally with their 12 to 19-year-old children via SMS (34%); now almost twice as many parents say they interact with their children by text message at least occasionally (62%).

Television is of particular importance in the shared media use of parents and children. 58 per cent of parents watch TV together with their children regularly, at least several times a week. Almost half of them listen to the radio together, 40 per cent listen to music together (no matter what the distribution channel). One in four parents reads books or comics together with the children or uses social media offers.

Since television still occupies a prominent position in the media ensemble, it should be noted that there are now a variety of ways to use television programs or other moving images. Almost all parents watch television broadcasts in real time, i.e. at the time of broadcast, at least several times a week. One in ten watches delayed or recorded TV shows this frequently in media libraries, or watches videos, films, or series on video portals on the Internet. For seven per cent of parents the use of streaming services such as Amazon or Netflix is part of everyday life, and only four per cent use regularly recorded television programmes. Overall, younger parents not only have a higher affinity for moving image usage, they also make clearly more intensive use of online opportunities. Classic television is also the number one priority in children’s utilisation of moving images, but they (and above all the 12-to-19-year olds) also use other options to view programmes, films, or series more than the parents - especially on video portals like YouTube or myvideo.

When asked about the media experts in the family, the roles are clearly distributed. Fathers
are the specialists in terms of technical aspects. Mothers are the most competent in TV
content and books. Children are the experts on the subject of computer games. From the
point of view of children as well – with the exception of computer games – the adults are
regarded as the media experts.

As far as media education is concerned, one out of every three parents rates him/herself as very competent, with men rating their skills much higher than women (40% and 23%, respectively). A good half of the parents rate themselves as "somewhat competent", one in ten thinks that they are less equipped, and four per cent do not dare to do media education at all. More than half of the parents are ambivalent about the media development of recent years and see both positive and negative aspects for family life. One in four is more positive and fourteen per cent more likely to see negative consequences for family life. Every tenth parent sees no impact on their own family life. Parents who are more confident about media education also have a more positive perception of media development. Most parents (78%) believe that they themselves have the primary responsibility for protecting their children from negative media influences. 13% regard the media companies as primarily responsible, and 8% expect state and government protection. Only in second place do parents see mainly companies (46%), public authorities (37%), and much less themselves (16%) as responsible.

More than half of the parents believe that the current form of age classification of media content is sufficient. Seven per cent say they do not pay attention to the age information and 29 per cent would like content information to justify the age classification. Eight per cent have no opinion on this subject. Overall, according to the information provided by the parents, media use seems to be a source of conflict for only a minority (21%) of families. Ten per cent specifically state the duration of media use as a reason; other topics of conflict are generally media content and in particular the age restriction of media. Considered overall, media and its contents are in many ways part of everyday family life. On the one hand, the media provides topics for conversation and news from the world, the immediate environment, and the circle of friends and acquaintances, and on the other hand shared media use also forms part of family time and creates moments of communion. Last but not least, media itself is a topic in the family and for many a way of exchanging and organising themselves in everyday life. In this regard, as a family, it is important to develop a common understanding of what role is assigned to different media in everyday family life, what rules and agreements apply, and how to communicate with each other.

(FIM Study, p.84-88)