The Impact of Parental Mediation on Children's Digital Content Exposure

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Abstract

Parental involvement plays a crucial role in helping children learn to manage media use while fostering their cognitive, emotional, and social development. This study examines various parental mediation practices including restrictive, active, co-use, creative, and preparative mediation to understand their impact on children aged 6 to 12 years in both urban and rural settings (Yu et al., 2021), (Tan et al., 2025). Data collected through surveys from 200 parents, revealing that creative and restrictive mediation strategies were the most frequently employed. Findings indicate that as children grow older, parents tend to adjust their mediation approaches. Parents who are more knowledgeable about media and engage more actively in mediation are generally more confident in their children's media literacy. The study also identifies strong positive relationships between appropriate media use and improvements in children's cognitive, emotional, and social outcomes. Engaging in media discussions and co-viewing activities enhances children's reasoning and emotional regulation (Taylor et al., 2024); however, adapting mediation strategies to evolving online platforms remains a challenge. A limitation of this study is that most participants were urban residents, and the data relied on self-reported responses. It is recommended that parents enhance their understanding of media, follow age-specific media guidelines, and utilize digital tools that support parents and child interaction. Future research should focus on long-term studies, include more diverse populations, and investigate how emerging technologies shape parental mediation practices. In conclusion, effective parental mediation is essential for nurturing healthy media habits and supporting children's holistic development in the digital age.

Keywords: Parental Mediation, Children, Digital Content Exposure, Media Use.

INTRODUCTION

Parental influence on children's media consumption has become increasingly significant in today's digital era. Through effective mediation, parents help families navigate both the benefits and risks associated with children's use of television, mobile applications, social networks, and streaming or gaming platforms. Parental mediation refers to the strategies parents employ to guide, monitor, and regulate their children's interaction with media (Jiow et al., 2017). Establishing limits on screen time, engaging in discussions about media content, and sharing screen experiences together form an effective framework for parental mediation. Additionally, parents play a vital role in selecting age-appropriate and educational media content for their children (Yu et al., 2021). With the continuous evolution of media environments, parents have been compelled to adjust their mediation strategies an adaptation that has become increasingly critical in the modern digital landscape (Banić & Orehovački, 2024).

The relationship between children and media has evolved dramatically since the early twentieth century. During the initial decades of radio and cinema, parents maintained strong control over their children's media exposure, as access was limited and content options were few. However, the introduction of television in the 1950s and 1960s sparked growing concern about its potential effects on children's behavior and brain development. While television was a recognized as both an educational tool and a potential source of harm, many parents worried about excessive screen time and inappropriate content (Smyrnova-Trybulska, 2019). In the early 2000s, the media landscape became even more complex with the rise of video games, online platforms, and social media, intensifying concerns about the impact of media on child development. As children gained more autonomy in their media use, parents faced new and more difficult challenges. Digital media environments offered countless platforms, each with unique risks and benefits, making supervision increasingly demanding. Consequently, parents were required to adopt new strategies to protect their children while promoting healthy and meaningful digital engagement (Tan et al., 2025). This shift led to the establishment of parental mediation as a structured approach to help caregivers navigate the complex and evolving media environment of modern childhood (Livingstone et al., 2019).

Statement of the Research Problem

The rapid growth of digital media has profoundly transformed modern society, reshaping how children learn, communicate, and engage with the world around them. In the early 21st century, children are constantly exposed to media whether at home, in school, or through mobile devices. Studies show that children and adolescents in developed countries now spend more than six hours a day using digital devices, much of this time on smartphones and social media (Livingstone & Third, 2017). This widespread media exposure has created both opportunities and challenges for families. Parents today face more complex responsibilities than in previous generations (Banić & Orehovački, 2024) , (Zhao et al., 2023). They must not only monitor the amount of time their children spend with media but also oversee their online interactions, manage risks such as cyberbullying, protect their children's privacy, and help them navigate social media pressures (Laczi & Póser, 2024). The ever-evolving digital environment requires parents to develop stronger media literacy and adaptive strategies to guide their children effectively. While digital platforms can support learning, creativity, and social development, they also expose children to harmful or age-inappropriate content and excessive screen use.

Within this context, the issue of parental mediation becomes increasingly critical. Parents are expected to balance the benefits of digital engagement with the need to safeguard their

children from its negative influences. Traditional mediation methods such as restricting television viewing or setting time limits are no longer fully adequate in today's complex, interactive digital landscape (Smahelova et al., 2017). Therefore, understanding how parents can effectively mediate their children's media use has become a key area of concern.

This study aims to explore how different forms of parental mediation restrictive, active, co-use, creative, and preparative affect children's media habits, particularly among those aged 6 to 12 years living in urban areas, with reference to selected rural communities. It also examines how factors such as parents' media literacy, income level, and the surrounding media environment influence these practices. The findings of this research will help identify effective approaches for fostering healthy media habits and minimizing digital risks, enabling parents to guide their children toward responsible and balanced media use in the modern digital age.

Research Objectives

- **To identify and explain** the main types of parental mediation, such as restrictive, active, co-use, creative, and preparative mediation.
- **To study** how parents help their children develop media skills, think critically, manage emotions, and build social relationships.
- **To discover** what factors make parental mediation more or less effective, including a child's age, family income, parents' media knowledge, and parenting style.
- **To explore** how the fast-changing digital world is affecting the way parents, guide their children's media use.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous work studied parental mediation effects on child exposure to media and child development progress. Researchers have studied different methods of mediation including restrictive control as well as active involvement, which are paired with co-use, and creative mediation to determine their impact on child development (Yu et al., 2021) , (Tan et al., 2025). Primarily researchers studied television programming to identify methods parents used when protecting their children from damaging content(Nimrod et al., 2019). The field of scientific study focused on shifting to explore emerging digital media problems by analysing the online world in conjunction with video games and social media networks because their recent appearance generated new challenges for parenting strategies. According to scholarly experts, the success of media mediation approaches depends on three main elements consisting of child age and family economics status together with parental media literacy abilities. The investigation demonstrated that parents need flexible approaches to stay involved with their children interaction with changing media platforms (Nouwen & Zaman, 2018).

Media

Refers to all communication tools or channels used to share information, ideas, or entertainment with the public.

Examples include television, radio, newspapers, video games, and the internet.

Digital Media

Involves all media that use digital technology for creation, storage, and communication.

Examples include smartphones, computers, social media platforms, online videos, and mobile applications.

Parental Mediation

Describes the methods and strategies parents use to manage and guide their children's media use.

The main types include:
- **Restrictive Mediation:** Setting rules or limits on media time and content.
- **Active Mediation:** Talking with children about what they watch or play to build understanding.
- **Co-use Mediation:** Watching or using media together to create shared experiences.
- **Creative Mediation:** Encouraging children to use media for creative and educational purposes.
- **Preparative Mediation:** Teaching children how to handle media wisely and responsibly before exposure.
- **Media Literacy:** The ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media content thoughtfully. Helps both parents and children understand the effects of media and make informed choices about what they consume.
- **Children's Media Habits:** Refer to how children use media, including how much time they spend, what type of content they prefer, and which platforms they use. These habits influence their learning, social interaction, and emotional growth.

Approaches

Cognitive Development Approach

Focuses on how children understand and interpret media content as they grow.

Suggests that children's comprehension and emotional responses depend on their cognitive maturity. Parents are encouraged to guide children according to their developmental stage.

Parental Mediation Theory

Explains the strategies parents use to control or guide children's media use.

Includes restrictive, active, co-use, creative, and preparative mediation, each serving different purposes in shaping behaviour and understanding (Yu et al., 2021).

Uses and Gratifications Approach

Views children as active users of media who select content based on their needs (entertainment, learning, socialization).

Parents play a role in helping children choose appropriate media that satisfy these needs in a healthy way.

Previous Studies

Parental mediation was first introduced in the 1970s and has since been widely explored by researchers to understand how parents manage their children's exposure to media. Early research mainly focused on television, as it was the most dominant medium of that time. According to (Kallio, 2017), three main approaches to parental mediation were identified restrictive mediation, active mediation, and co-viewing.

- **Restrictive mediation** involves parents setting rules about what, when, and how long their children can use media. This approach aims to minimize the potential risks of harmful or age-inappropriate content.
- **Active mediation** occurs when parents discuss media content with their children, share their opinions, and guide them in interpreting messages.
- **Co-viewing** happens when parents and children watch or use media together, allowing opportunities to bond and learn from shared experiences.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the rise of modern technologies such as the internet, video games, and mobile devices made parental monitoring more challenging. Researchers noticed that children were exploring digital platforms independently, requiring parents to move beyond merely restricting access. (Benedetto & Ingrassia, 2021) highlighted that instead of

relying solely on blocking or filtering content, parents needed to promote media literacy helping children think critically, make responsible decisions, and navigate online spaces safely.

Studies from the early 2000s also found that excessive parental control could limit children's exposure to educational media and reduce television time. However, active discussions between parents and children improved comprehension and encouraged critical evaluation of media messages. (Collier et al., 2016) suggested that such engagement helps children question media accuracy, fostering independent thinking and responsible use of media.

Theoretical Background of the Research Frame Work

The theoretical background of this study draws upon several frameworks that explain how parental mediation influences children's media use, learning, and development in both traditional and digital environments. These theories provide conceptual foundations for understanding the different forms of mediation, factors affecting parental strategies, and outcomes for children's cognitive, emotional, and social growth.

Parental Mediation Theory (PMT)

Valkenburg, Krcmar, Peeters, and Marseille (1999) developed the Parental Mediation Theory, which remains the cornerstone for most research on this topic. It identifies three-core mediation strategies restrictive, active, and co-viewing mediation that describe how parents attempt to control or guide their children's media consumption.

o   Restrictive mediation limits access to specific content or screen time.
o   Active mediation involves parents discussing and interpreting media messages with children.
o   Co-viewing mediation means sharing media experiences together.

The theory emphasizes that mediation acts as a moderating mechanism, shaping how children interpret, internalize, and respond to media. It provides the foundation for understanding how different parental approaches can either reduce risks or enhance positive outcomes related to children's media exposure.

Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986)

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) highlights the principle of observational learning, where individuals acquire behaviors, values, and attitudes by observing others. Applied to parental mediation, SCT suggests that parents serve as role models for children's media habits.
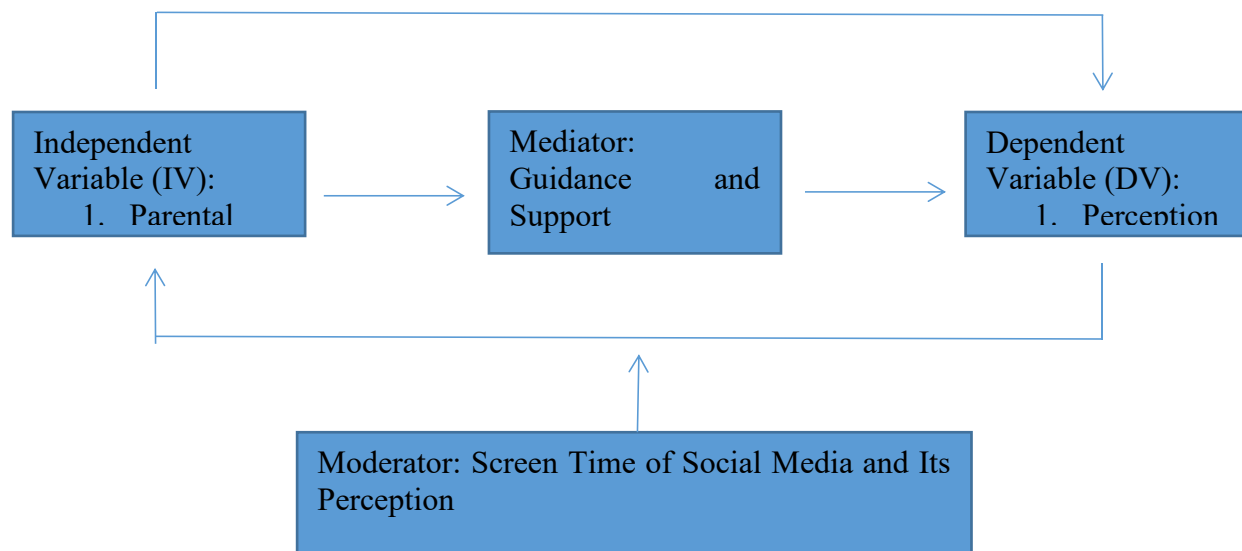
Children observe how their parents use and discuss media, which influences their own media choices, time management, and ethical understanding of online behavior. When parents display healthy media habits and critical engagement, children are more likely to develop balanced and responsible media behaviors (Martín-Cárdaba et al., 2024).

Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974)

The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) explores why individuals use media and what needs they seek to satisfy such as entertainment, information, or social connection. In the context of parental mediation, UGT helps explain how parents direct their children toward constructive media experiences while restricting harmful ones.

Parents encourage media that aligns with educational or moral values and discourage content that may promote aggression or misinformation (Child & Haridakis, 2017). This theory supports the idea that mediation is not merely about control but also about purposeful guidance and value-based media selection.

Research Framework of the Study

Hypothesis

o Parents who regularly talk to their children about what they watch or do online are less likely to have children who post risky or inappropriate content on social media.

o When parents join social media and share activities or content together with their children, the children feel closer to their parents and are more open in sharing their life experiences with them.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research is explanatory and quantitative in nature. It aims to explain how various parental mediation strategies (restrictive, active, co-use, creative, and preparative) influence children's media consumption habits and their cognitive, emotional, and social development. A quantitative approach was selected because it allows the researcher to measure relationships among variables numerically and draw objective conclusions based on statistical analysis.

A cross-sectional survey is used which allows collecting information from a wide range of parents at just one time. To use this approach means looking at the strategies parents apply to media interactions and their effects on children habits, emotional and mental development and social life. Data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire titled "Parental Mediation and Children's Media Consumption Habits Survey." The instrument comprised 23 close-ended questions, divided into five sections:

1. **Demographic Information** – parent's and child's gender, age, and area of residence.
2. **Parental Mediation Strategies** – types and frequency of mediation practices.
3. **Impact on Child Development** – cognitive, emotional, and social aspects.
4. **Factors Influencing Mediation** – parental media literacy and socio-economic background.
5. **Emerging Trends** – adaptation to new media platforms and concerns about digital influence.

Wang & Cao (2025) – Aging in the Digital Tsunami

Variable: Motivational Resilience

1. What motivated you to start creating content on Douyin?

2. How do you manage discouragement or self-doubt as a content creator?
3. What keeps you continuing content creation despite challenges?

Variable: Adaptive Skill Development

4. What technical aspects of content creation do you find most challenging?
5. How did you learn to edit or navigate platform tools?
6. How often do you update or learn new digital skills?

Variable: Algorithmic Navigation

7. How do you understand Douyin's algorithm or recommendation system?
8. What strategies do you use to increase your visibility on the platform?
9. Have you ever changed your content style to match platform trends?

Zhou et al. (2025) – Mediated Peer Interactions among Rural Children

Variable: Children's Agency

10. How do you interact with your friends online and offline?
11. What activities do you enjoy most when using your phone with peers?
12. How do you make decisions about what to post or share online?

Variable: Symbolic Capital

13. How do children use digital tools (like phone brands or gaming skills) to gain popularity?
14. Do you think having a better phone or gaming skills makes you more respected by friends?
15. What do you feel when others show off their devices or online followers?

Variable: Interactional Norms

16. What are the rules or expectations among your online peer group?
17. How do you react when someone breaks those rules?
18. How do you and your friends decide who leads or influences in the group?

Variable: Entity Mentions (NER Coding)

19. Which people, places, or organizations are most often mentioned in the comments?
20. What events or keywords appear repeatedly when users discuss the crisis?

The overall population of this study includes **parents of children aged 6–12 years** who have access to and use digital media platforms such as television, internet, smartphones, and online games.

The study employed a **convenience sampling technique**, selecting participants based on accessibility and willingness to participate due to time and resource limitations.

The sample size is determined based on accessibility and willingness of participants, aiming to ensure sufficient representation for statistical analysis.

Participants were approached through **schools, online parenting groups, and community organizations**. Only parents who had at least one child between 6 and 12 years of age and who allowed their children to use digital media were included in the study.

DATA ANALYSIS

Correlation Analysis

Correlations

		Mean Parental Mediation	Guidance and Support	Perception and Improvement	Screen Time of Social Media and Its Perception
Mean Parental Mediation	Pearson Correlation	1	.733[**]	.632[**]	.607[**]
	Sig. (2-		.000	.000	.000

	tailed)				
	N	178	177	176	177
GuidanceandSupport	Pearson Correlation	.733**	1	.801**	.789**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	177	177	176	177
PerceptionandImprovement	Pearson Correlation	.632**	.801**	1	.815**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	176	176	176	176
ScreenTimeofSocialMediaandItsPerception	Pearson Correlation	.607**	.789**	.815**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	177	177	176	177

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of relationships among the study variables. All correlations were positive and statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicating meaningful associations.

The lowest correlation was observed between Mean Parental Mediation and Screen Time of Social Media and Its Perception (r = .607, p < .01). This represents a moderate positive relationship, suggesting that although parental mediation is related to how screen time is perceived and managed, the relationship is weaker compared to other variables. A strong correlation was found between Mean Parental Mediation and Perception and Improvement (r = .632, p < .01), indicating that higher levels of mediation are associated with better perceived cognitive, emotional, and social outcomes in children.

The relationship between Mean Parental Mediation and Guidance and Support was also strong (r = .733, p < .01), showing that parents who actively mediate media use tend to provide more guidance and emotional support. The highest correlation was found between Perception and Improvement and Screen Time of Social Media and Its Perception (r = .815, p < .01). This reflects a very strong positive relationship, highlighting that effective understanding and regulation of screen time is closely linked with the positive improvements in children's behaviour and development.

Similarly, Guidance and Support showed a strong positive relationship with Screen Time of Social Media and Its Perception (r = .789, p < .01), reinforcing the importance of parental involvement in managing children's screen exposure. Overall, the correlation results confirm that while all variables are significantly related, screen time perception plays a central role in explaining children's improvement.

Regression Analysis

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.856[a]	.733	.728	.46061	.733	157.289	3	172	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), ScreenTimeofSocialMediaandItsPerception, MeanParentalMediation, GuidanceandSupport

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.142	.169		.839	.402
	MeanParentalMediation	.072	.062	.067	1.153	.251
	GuidanceandSupport	.395	.080	.372	4.958	.000
	ScreenTimeofSocialMediaandItsPerception	.529	.071	.481	7.493	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PerceptionandImprovement

Estimated Values

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.632[a]	.399	.395	.68702	.399	115.419	1	174	.000
2	.804[b]	.646	.642	.52896	.247	120.523	1	173	.000
3	.811[c]	.657	.651	.52164	.012	5.894	1	172	.016
4	.869[d]	.755	.748	.44330	.098	34.083	2	170	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), MeanParentalMediation
b. Predictors: (Constant), MeanParentalMediation, GuidanceandSupport
c. Predictors: (Constant), MeanParentalMediation, GuidanceandSupport, interactiontermIVMediator
d. Predictors: (Constant), MeanParentalMediation, GuidanceandSupport, interactiontermIVMediator, ScreenTimeofSocialMediaandItsPerception, interactiontermIVModerator

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.151	.230		4.995	.000
	MeanParentalMediation	.678	.063	.632	10.743	.000
2	(Constant)	.454	.188		2.410	.017
	MeanParentalMediation	.104	.071	.097	1.453	.148
	GuidanceandSupport	.775	.071	.730	10.978	.000
3	(Constant)	-.566	.459		-1.232	.220
	MeanParentalMediation	.468	.166	.436	2.824	.005
	GuidanceandSupport	1.098	.150	1.034	7.315	.000
	interactiontermIVMediator	-.108	.045	-.608	-2.428	.016
4	(Constant)	-1.333	.428		-3.119	.002
	MeanParentalMediation	.585	.146	.546	3.999	.000
	GuidanceandSupport	.784	.237	.739	3.307	.001
	interactiontermIVMediator	-.141	.070	-.791	-2.009	.046
	ScreenTimeofSocialMediaandItsPerception	.611	.258	.556	2.370	.019
	interactiontermIVModerator	-.013	.072	-.071	-.181	.857

a. Dependent Variable: PerceptionandImprovement

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the direct and combined effects of Mean Parental Mediation, Guidance and Support, and Screen Time of Social Media and Its Perception on the dependent variable, Perception and Improvement. The regression model was statistically significant (R = .856, R^2 = .733, Adjusted R^2 = .728, p < .001), indicating that 73.3% of the variance in Perception and Improvement is explained by the independent variables. This shows a strong overall model fit.

Analysis of beta coefficients revealed that Guidance and Support had a significant positive impact on Perception and Improvement (β = .372, t = 4.958, p < .001), indicating that increased parental guidance leads to better child outcomes. Similarly, Screen Time of Social Media and Its Perception showed a strong and significant direct effect (β = .481, t = 7.493, p < .001).

However, the direct impact of Mean Parental Mediation was not statistically significant in this model (β = .067, t = 1.153, p = .251). This indicates that parental mediation alone does not directly predict improvement unless guidance and effective screen time management support it.

Hierarchical Regression and R² Change Interpretation

Hierarchical regression analysis further examined the incremental contribution of variables. In Model 1, Mean Parental Mediation explained 39.9% of the variance (R^2 = .399), showing a strong initial effect. When Guidance and Support was added in Model 2, the explained variance increased to 64.6% (ΔR^2 = .247, p < .001), indicating a substantial and statistically significant improvement in the model. This confirms that guidance and support significantly strengthen the effect of mediation.

In Model 3, the interaction term (mediation × guidance) resulted in a small but significant increase in explained variance (ΔR^2 = .012, p = .016), indicating a partial mediation effect. In Model 4, the inclusion of Screen Time of Social Media and Its Perception further increased the explained variance to 75.5% (ΔR^2 = .098, p < .001), demonstrating its strong direct contribution. However, the moderation interaction term involving screen time was not statistically significant (β = −.071, p = .857), indicating that screen time perception does not moderate the relationship but acts as an independent predictor.

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the direct and combined effects of **Mean** Parental Mediation, Guidance and Support, and Screen Time of Social Media and Its Perception on the dependent variable, Perception and Improvement. The regression model was statistically significant (R = .856, R^2 = .733, Adjusted R^2 = .728, p < .001), indicating that 73.3% of the variance in Perception and Improvement is explained by the independent variables. This shows a strong overall model fit.

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Results/ Findings

The results of correlation and regression analyses confirm that the research objectives were successfully achieved. The findings demonstrate that parental mediation, particularly in the form of guidance and support, significantly improves children's media-related perceptions

and developmental outcomes. The hypothesis stating that active parental involvement reduces risky media behaviour and improves child outcomes is supported.

Hierarchical regression analysis further showed that guidance and support strengthen the relationship between parental mediation and child outcomes. The interaction effects indicate that mediation strategies are more effective when combined with consistent parental guidance. However, the moderating role of screen time perception was not statistically significant in the final interaction model, suggesting that its influence is more direct than interactive.

Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of this study are consistent with earlier research, which emphasizes that active and supportive parental mediation leads to better cognitive, emotional, and social development in children. Similar to previous studies, restrictive mediation alone was found to be less effective. The strong role of guidance and support aligns with international literature, while the Pakistani context highlights the growing importance of managing social media screen time.

Summary of Findings

Mean Parental Mediation	Positively related to child improvement
Guidance and Support	Strongest predictor of positive outcomes
Screen Time Perception	Significant direct effect on improvement
Interaction Effects	Mediation strengthened by guidance

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of this study was to examine how parental mediation strategies influence children's digital content exposure and perceived improvement among children aged 6–12 years. Drawing on Parental Mediation Theory and supported by Social Cognitive Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory, the study explored multiple mediation strategies including restrictive, active, co-use, creative, and preparative mediation.

A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was adopted. Data were collected from 200 parents using a structured questionnaire adapted from validated instruments used in prior studies. Statistical analyses such as descriptive statistics, correlation, multiple regression, and hierarchical regression were applied using SPSS. The study was conducted in Pakistan, primarily focusing on urban parents with limited rural representation. By examining parental mediation, guidance and support, and screen time perception, the study addressed an important research gap related to digital parenting practices in the local context.

Important Findings

The empirical findings of the study clearly indicate which hypotheses were accepted and which were rejected:

- The hypothesis stating that parental mediation has a significant direct impact on children's perception and improvement was rejected, as regression results showed that parental mediation alone did not have a statistically significant direct effect.
- The hypothesis proposing that guidance and support positively influence children's perception and improvement was accepted, as guidance and support emerged as the strongest and most significant predictor.
- The hypothesis suggesting that screen time of social media and its perception significantly affect children's outcomes was accepted, as screen time perception showed a strong and significant direct relationship with children's perceived improvement.

- The moderation hypothesis was rejected, as the interaction effect involving screen time perception was statistically insignificant, indicating that it does not moderate the relationship but acts as an independent predictor.

Contribution to the Body of Knowledge

The empirical findings of the study clearly indicate which hypotheses were accepted and which were rejected:

- The hypothesis stating that **parental mediation has a significant direct impact on children's perception and improvement** was **rejected**, as regression results showed that parental mediation alone did not have a statistically significant direct effect.
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- The hypothesis suggesting that **screen time of social media and its perception significantly affect children's outcomes** was **accepted**, as screen time perception showed a strong and significant direct relationship with children's perceived improvement.
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CONCLUSIONS

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- ✓ The moderation hypothesis was **rejected**, as the interaction effect involving screen time perception was statistically insignificant, indicating that it does not moderate the relationship but acts as an independent predictor.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Future Call

Future studies should include variables that were not examined in this research, such as children's personality traits, peer influence, parental stress, and family communication patterns. These represent important research gaps. Researchers are encouraged to apply probability sampling techniques and include greater rural representation. Longitudinal studies should be conducted to examine long-term effects, and mixed-method approaches may provide deeper insights into parental mediation practices.

Policy Makers (Recommend the steps to be taken at Macro Levels)

At the macro level, PEMRA (Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority) should strengthen child-focused digital content regulations and ensure strict enforcement of age-appropriate standards. The Ministry of Education should integrate digital media literacy and

responsible media use into the national curriculum. Government awareness campaigns should educate parents about effective mediation and screen time management, supporting national child development goals.

Managers (Recommend the steps to be taken at organizational Levels)

Educational managers, school administrators, and media organizations should organize digital parenting workshops for parents. Schools should promote safe and educational digital platforms, while media organizations should develop child-friendly content and user-friendly parental control tools to encourage guided and co-use media engagement.

Target Readers (if any)

This study is particularly beneficial for parents who want to understand and manage their children's digital media use in an informed and effective manner. It is also useful for educators, policymakers, and researchers concerned with child development and digital media regulation.

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