

Exploring Digital Parenting: A Systematic Review of Approaches, Challenges, and Outcomes

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Digital Parenting is a parenting style that provides clear boundaries to children about what they can and cannot do when using digital devices. These methods include teaching children about digital risks and ethics, maintaining balanced supervision of their online activities, and encouraging open communication about their online experiences. The terms used in the data search are digital parenting child, parental mediation of internet use, and social media parenting child. These terms are used to search for articles in the Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald, and Google Scholar databases. From the search results, 112 journal articles were found in the period 2014-2024, then the author excluded journals that used Watase Uake. Systematic review analyzed 12 international journals (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4). The results of this systematic observation obtained digital parenting patterns in children. Social media allows children to express themselves creatively, gives children access to information and opportunities to participate in online communities that support their interests, helps children build self-identity based on instilled values.

Keywords: *digital parenting, parental mediation of internet use, parent, social media parenting child*

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INTRODUCTION

Technology has become an important part of the daily lives of children and adolescents in the modern technological era. Unlimited access to information, global communication, and interaction with various communities are made possible by digital platforms such as the internet, social media, and other mobile devices. Although digital technology has many advantages, it also brings some problems. One of them is the problem of the socio-psychological development of children and adolescents. Indonesia itself is one of the countries with the most internet users, especially in using social media. From data from Badan Pusat Statistik (2023), the majority of children aged 5 years and over in Indonesia have accessed the internet for social media, reaching

88.99%. In fact, as many as 92% of children from low-income households are familiar with social media early.

One of the most widely used applications in Indonesia in January 2024 was WhatsApp. Of all internet users in Indonesia aged 16-64 years, the majority or 90.9% were recorded as using the WhatsApp application. In addition, the most frequently used social media in Indonesia is Instagram in second place with 85.3% of the total population, Facebook 81.6% of the total population, TikTok 73.5% of the total population, Telegram 61.3% of the total population, and X (formerly Twitter) 57.5% of the total population (Annur, 2024). Based on a report by Media Indonesia (2021), the average Indonesian child is familiar with social media at the age of 7 years. Of the 92% of children who come from families with low housing, 54% of them started entering social media before they were 6 years old. This figure is significant when compared to households with high housing where only 34% use social media before they reach that age. For your information, giant social media such as YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook, enforce a minimum user age limit of 13 years.

The use of digital devices can have positive and negative impacts on children. The positive impacts include increased access to online education, resources, and opportunities to communicate with friends (Lubis et al., 2019). On the other hand, the results of Karinta, (2022) showed that excessive use of social media is associated with increased mental health problems in children, including anxiety and depression. The result of this digital impact is that children find it difficult to separate from digital devices and the internet. Risnawaty and Monika (2022) revealed that the impacts of the development of the digital era are quite diverse, including: a) children's eye health due to continuous exposure to gadgets, b) sleep disorders due to watching digital screens for too long, c) difficulty concentrating due to being distracted by digital media, d) excessive use of digital media can result in decreased learning achievement in children, e) physical development is disrupted because children tend to be less motoric, f) obstacles in social development due to difficulty understanding various feelings, g) unbalanced brain development due to lack of playing in the real world, h) children's language development is delayed because children access too much digital media. However, through supervision from parents and the surrounding environment, children can be directed towards positive things and the negative impacts can be minimized.

According to Sebre dan Miltuze (2021) children who do not receive proper supervision or guidance on how to use social media can experience identity confusion, leading to social anxiety and poor adaptive behavior. Parents who use digital parenting can help their children understand how to form a healthy identity by guiding them in managing digital interactions and limiting the negative influences of cyberspace. In addition, children who do not get attention from their parents regarding the use of technology are also at risk of being exposed to various online dangers, such as cyberbullying, online fraud, and sexual exploitation. According to Patchin and Hinduja (2024) around 37% of children reported that they had been victims of online bullying. Therefore, parents need to understand and supervise their children's digital activities to

prevent these detrimental things from happening. Conditions that can occur in children if they use cellphones for too long, children will experience Screen Dependency Disorder (Stevanus & Anindyta, 2022). Meanwhile, parents are advised to be actively involved in providing advice on how to manage their children's screen time, as well as ensuring that their children access age-appropriate and useful content (Hill et al., 2016). Effective digital parenting can help reduce these risks and enable children to develop digital skills that are useful for their future.

Therefore, extra guidance from the family is needed or what is also known as parenting, which is a concept used by parents in educating children which aims to help them find and shape their identity in the current digital era (Silitonga, 2019). The importance of finding the right parenting pattern to shape a good adolescent identity, one of which is digital parenting. Digital Parenting is a parenting pattern by providing clear boundaries to children about things that can and cannot be done when using digital devices (Sofiana et al., 2021). Digital parenting is a form of family parenting in the use of digital media in the family and environment (Wulandari & Dewi, 2024). According to Stevanus and Anindyta (2022) digital parenting refers to the way parents supervise and accompany children in using digital technology wisely and responsibly. These methods include teaching children about digital risks and ethics, maintaining balanced supervision of their online activities, and encouraging open communication about their online experiences (Livingstone & Smith, 2014). In writing this literature study, the aim is to find out how much influence digital parenting has on children.

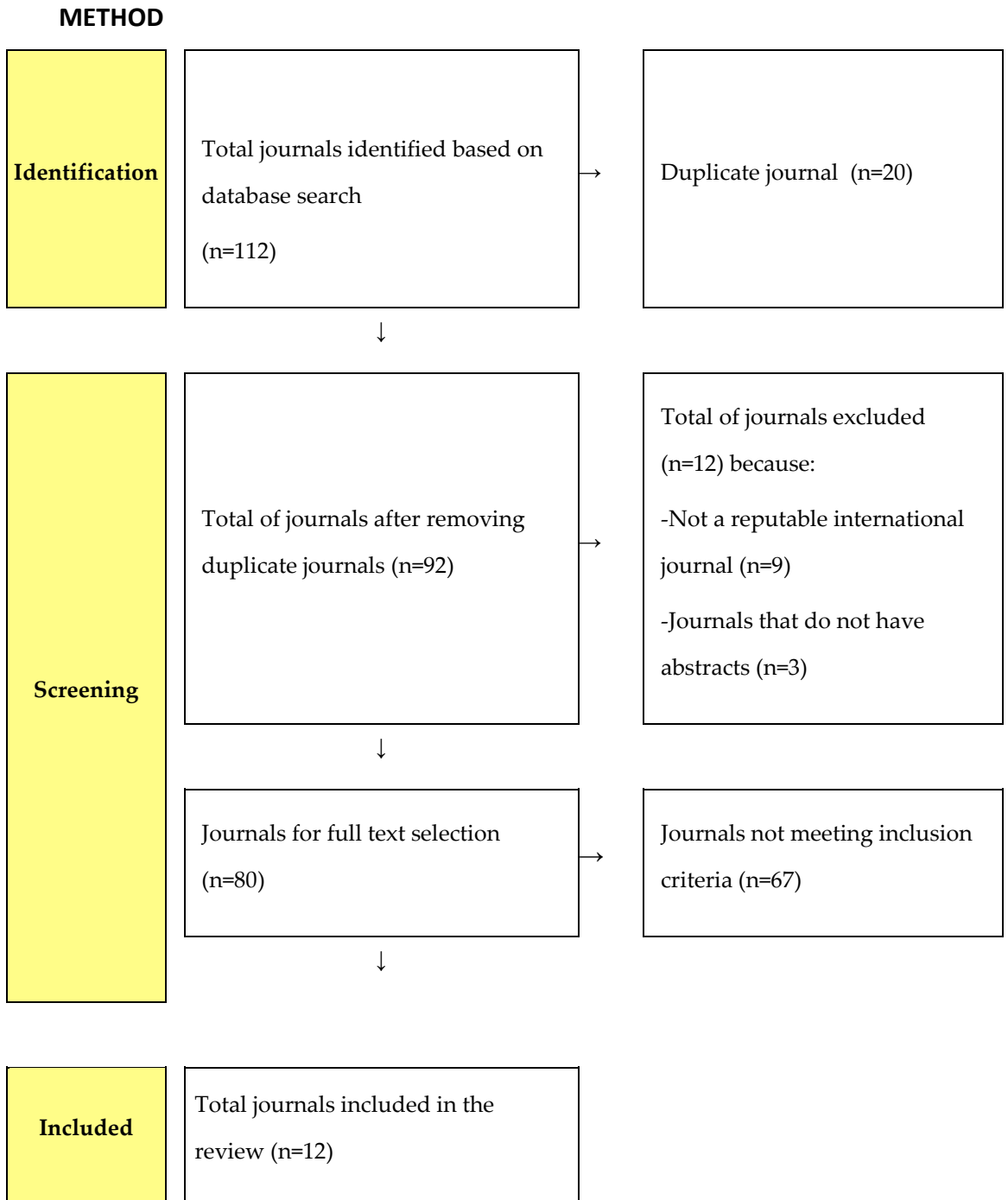


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram

The method used in writing this article is a systematic literature review (SLR) that follows the PRISMA 2020 flow diagram, namely a research method that aims to find, evaluate, and understand research results that are relevant to certain research questions, topics, or phenomena (Paul et al., 2021). In the study process, the first thing the author does is create a research question with the SPIDER formulation (Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research Type). The research question in this study is, what is the digital parenting pattern for children? The terms used in data searches are digital parenting child, parental mediation of internet use, and social media parenting child. These terms are used to search for articles in the Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald, and Google Scholar databases. From this search 112 journal articles in the period of 2014-2024 were found then the author excluded journals that used Watase Uake.

To include a study, the following criteria must be met: (1) full access to the article must be provided; (2) the article must be written in English; (3) Is a reputable international journal (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4); (4) Quantitative or qualitative research type; (5) Journal published in the last 10 years (2014-2024). The literature search found 112 articles in the database. After removing 20 duplicate journals, 92 references remained. We excluded 9 non-reputable international journals and 3 without abstracts, 80 references remained. Of these, after full-text selection, the final result was 12 journals that met the criteria. Systematic reviews and meta-analyses were not included.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

Table 1: . Characteristics of the reviewed studies

No	Authors	Year	Title	Country
1	Akman et al.,	2023	An Investigation into the Levels of Digital Parenting, Digital Literacy, and Digital Data Security Awareness among Parents and Teachers in Early Childhood Education	Türkiye
2	Page Jeffery,	2021	“It’s really difficult. We’ve only got each other to talk to.” Monitoring, mediation and good parenting in Australia in the digital age	Australia
3	Harris & Jacobs,	2023	Emerging Ideas. Digital parenting advice: Online guidance regarding children’s use of the Internet and social media	Pennsylvania
4	Tosun & Mihci,	2020	An Examination of Digital Parenting Behavior in Parents with Preschool	Türkiye

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5	Rahayu & Haningsih	2021	Digital parenting competence of mother as informal educator is not inline with internet access	Indonesia
6	Racz et al	2017	Parenting in the digital age: urban black youth's perceptions about technology-based communication with parents	American
7	Kostyrka-Allchorne et al.,	2021	Supporting Parents & Kids Through Lockdown Experiences (SPARKLE): A digital parenting support app implemented in an ongoing general population cohort study during the COVID-19 pandemic: A structured summary of a study protocol for a randomised controlled trial	UK
8	Skeen et al.,	2023	Using WhatsApp support groups to promote responsive caregiving, caregiver mental health and child development in the COVID-19 era: A randomised controlled trial of a fully digital parenting intervention	Tanzania and Zambia
9	Konok et al.,	2020	Associations between child mobile use and digital parenting style in Hungarian families	Hungary
10	Willett	2015	The discursive construction of 'good parenting' and digital media – the case of children's virtual world games	United States of America
11	Zhao et al.	2023	Digital parenting divides the role of parental capital and digital parenting readiness in parental digital mediation	United States of America

12	Zulkefly et al.,	2024	A pilot randomized control trial on the feasibility, acceptability, and initial effects of a digital-assisted parenting intervention for promoting mental health in Malaysian adolescents	Malaysia
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Several articles show that digital parenting patterns carried out by parents have an impact on children. Digital parenting patterns are the attitudes and behaviors of parents in managing children's use of digital technology. There is a variety of advice available to parents regarding children's use of the Internet and social media.

1. The first scholarly publication titled *An Investigation into the Levels of Digital Parenting, Digital Literacy, and Digital Data Security Awareness among Parents and Teachers in Early Childhood Education*. The findings of this research suggest that Digital parenting among parents of preschool children has a significant relationship with digital literacy levels and digital data security awareness.
2. The second journal paper titled *"It's really difficult. We've only got each other to talk to." Monitoring, mediation and good parenting in Australia in the digital age*. Studies have shown that parents face various challenges in monitoring and mediating their children's digital activities.
3. The third journal article titled *Emerging Ideas. Digital parenting advice: Online guidance regarding children's use of the Internet and social media*. Studies have shown there is a range of digital parenting advice for parents regarding children's use of the Internet and social media.
4. The fourth article titled *An Examination of Digital Parenting Behavior in Parents with Preschool Children in the Context of Lifelong Learning*. Researchers found that the Parental attitudes towards digital parenting among Turkish parents with preschool children are relatively low.
5. The fifth article titled *Digital parenting competence of mother as informal educator is not inline with internet access*. Researchers found Mothers' digital parenting competencies are not in line with the internet access they have.
6. The sixth article titled *Parenting in the digital age: urban black youth's perceptions about technology-based communication with parents*. Parents using digital parenting can improve parent-child communication.
7. The seventh journal article titled *Supporting Parents & Kids Through Lockdown Experiences (SPARKLE): A digital parenting support app implemented in an ongoing general population cohort study during the COVID-19 pandemic: A structured summary of a study protocol for a randomised controlled trial*. The findings indicate that Digital parenting intervention through the Parent Positive application can help parents manage children's behavior and reduce family conflicts that have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. The eight journal publications titled Using WhatsApp support groups to promote responsive caregiving, caregiver mental health and child development in the COVID-19 era: A randomised controlled trial of a fully digital parenting intervention. Researchers found Digital parenting interventions using WhatsApp can effectively increase parental involvement in child care.
9. The ninth journal article titled Associations between child mobile use and digital parenting style in Hungarian families. Researchers revealed Digital parenting can influence children's use of mobile touch devices (MTSD).
10. The tenth journal titled titled The discursive construction of 'good parenting' and digital media – the case of children's virtual world games. Discursive on digital parenting is often dominated by concerns about risks, such as pornographic content, bullying, and interactions with strangers online.
11. The eleventh journal article titled Digital parenting divides the role of parental capital and digital parenting readiness in parental digital mediation. Researchers revealed Digital parenting readiness has emerged as an underlying mechanism explaining the relationship between parental resources and parental mediation strategies. The existence of a digital parenting gap highlights the need for tailored interventions to support parents in using digital mediation strategies effectively based on their family circumstances.
10. The latest journal titled titled A pilot randomized control trial on the feasibility, acceptability, and initial effects of a digital-assisted parenting intervention for promoting mental health in Malaysian adolescents. Studies have shown Digitally assisted parenting of adolescents (DaPI) can improve parental self-efficacy.

DISCUSSION

Digital parenting patterns include parents' understanding of the risks and benefits of using technology, as well as how to educate and guide children in interacting with the digital world. (Akman et al., 2023; Harris & Jacobs, 2023; Page Jeffery, 2021; Willett, 2015). In the research of Rahayu and Haningsih, (2021) Digital parenting patterns can help protect them from online risks such as cyberbullying and inappropriate content, help parents teach children how to use technology effectively, encourage healthy communication between parents and children, help children understand the consequences of their actions in the digital world.

However, many parents feel they do not have enough knowledge about their children's use of digital media, which causes anxiety because they feel unable to meet expectations as good parents in the digital era, so they seek other advice. One of the parental strategies, namely trust-based strategies and discussions, is the main approach, although this approach does not always provide comprehensive knowledge about children's online activities (Page Jeffery, 2021). According to research by Harris and Jacobs (2023) shows that parents often seek online advice to help them balance child protection with digital skill development to be more effective in teaching their children to use the internet and social media wisely.

Parental characteristics such as education level and attitudes towards the use of digital devices also contribute to digital parenting. The digital parenting competence of mothers as informal educators is not in line with the internet access they have. There are differences in digital parenting competence based on socio-demographic factors, namely the mother's education and occupation, such as in Indonesia, many mothers still lack the skills and knowledge needed to support the effective use of digital media in the context of childcare, so training and support are needed for mothers to improve their digital competence in accompanying their children in the use of digital technology (Rahayu & Haningsih, 2021). Research by Tosun and Mihci, (2020) shows that digital parenting attitudes among parents with preschool children are relatively low, many parents are unwilling to participate in digital parenting education programs, and those who are unwilling tend to have poor digital parenting attitudes. However, research by Akman et al., (2023) explains that parents who are more digitally literate tend to have better attitudes in managing their children's use of technology. In addition, the digital parenting style applied by parents influences the use of technology in children. Permissive, authoritative, and less authoritarian parenting styles are associated with longer MTSD usage time, while authoritarian styles tend to limit such usage (Konok et al., 2020). Zhao et al., (2023) explained that parents who have strong educational and family values can use technology to teach positive values and help children build self-identity based on the values instilled in them.

Although technology can be a promising tool to enhance communication between parents and children, there are challenges and barriers faced including limited access and varying use of technology among individuals. Racz et al., (2017) suggested that excessive communication through technology can potentially lead to problems such as over-attachment or over-controlling parenting. The discourse on digital parenting is often dominated by concerns about risks, such as pornographic content, bullying, and interacting with strangers online. On the other hand, digital media provides children with opportunities for creativity, learning, and self-expression because they access information and participate in online communities that support their interests (Willett, 2015).

There are various suggestions available for parents regarding children's use of the Internet and social media. Most of the websites analyzed emphasize protection strategies, such as limiting and monitoring usage (Harris & Jacobs, 2023). Tosun and Mihci, (2020) research revealed that parents can provide digital parenting education programs for preschool children covering topics such as digital literacy, cybersecurity (internet safety, email safety, social media safety, device safety, personal data protection, cyberbullying, fraud, and phishing), use of software for safe internet use. To overcome these challenges, parents can implement digital parenting interventions through applications. One of them is a digital parenting intervention through the Parent Positive application which can help parents by providing relevant information and support to overcome common parenting challenges, such as difficult child behavior. This application offers Parenting Boosters, a communication platform

between parents, and access to evidence-based parenting resources, all of which are designed to improve parenting skills and reduce stress. In this way, parents can be more effective in managing children's behavior and reducing conflict in the family, especially in stressful situations such as during the pandemic (Kostyrka-Allchorne et al., 2021). In addition, digital parenting interventions using WhatsApp can effectively increase parental involvement in childcare, especially in communities with limited resources, help parents become more responsive, improve their mental health by reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety (Skeen et al., 2023). Research conducted by Zulkefly et al., (2024) revealed that the DaPI digital parenting intervention was designed to provide parents with better knowledge and skills in interacting with their children intellectually and emotionally so that it can increase parents' confidence in their parenting practices.

CONCLUSION

Digital parenting refers to how parents monitor, support, and guide their children in using digital technology, including monitoring their online activities, providing guidance on the content they view, and helping them learn healthy digital skills. Digital parenting can also help protect their children from online risks such as cyberbullying and inappropriate content, and teach them how to use technology safely. Digital media, provides children with access to information and opportunities to participate in online communities that support their interests, allowing them to experiment, learn, and express themselves. Therefore, parental control over their children's online activities is needed to minimize the negative impacts of technology use.

The results of this literature review are expected to be a foundation for researchers who are interested in researching digital parenting in children. This review can provide a foundation for future researchers to not only understand digital parenting in relation to adolescent identity formation but also to continue research efforts in the specified domain. For other researchers, more concrete factors can be factors that contribute to digital parenting in children in the digital era.

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