

## *The Child and the Digital Space: A Study on the Challenges of Socialization from Parents' Perspective*

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### **Abstract:**

*This study aims to identify the main difficulties in the socialization of children amid the increasing use of social media platforms from the perspective of parents. It adopts a descriptive survey method, employing a structured questionnaire as a data collection tool administered to a purposive sample of 81 parents in the city of Biskra. The findings reveal multidimensional challenges, including the difficulty of convincing children to reduce their usage (36.8%), negative impacts on cognitive abilities—particularly memory and recall (85.2%), and a decline in family interaction (27.8%). The study also uncovers ethical and moral effects, such as imitating influencers (27.3%) and the use of inappropriate language (21.8%). It recommends strengthening family dialogue, enhancing the role of schools in media literacy education, and providing realistic alternatives to digital activities. This study contributes to understanding the contemporary challenges of socialization and offers practical guidance for families and educational institutions.*

**Keywords:** Socialization, Social Media, Child, Parents, Educational Challenges.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary world has witnessed rapid digital transformations that have reshaped the contours of social life. Social media platforms have become an integral part of individuals' daily routines, including those of children. Within this new reality, socialization remains one of the most crucial processes shaping an individual's personality from early childhood, enabling interaction with the surrounding environment and the acquisition of social norms and values.

However, the emergence and widespread use of social media—particularly among children—have produced a new reality that redefined the relationship between the individual and their environment. From an early age, children are exposed to diverse content, ideas, and behaviors through these platforms, which are not always subject to parental supervision or guidance. This exposure has led to the emergence of new communication patterns that may conflict with the values and practices that traditional socialization institutions strive to instill.

This study derives its significance from several considerations. First, it sheds light on a contemporary phenomenon that has not yet received sufficient attention within the Algerian context. Second, it provides parents with insight into the challenges they face in the process of child socialization. Third, it helps fill a knowledge gap by offering empirical data on the impact of social media on various dimensions of socialization—cognitive, psychological, behavioral, and moral.

### 1.1. Research Problem and Questions

#### Main Research Question:

What are the main challenges of child socialization in light of the increasing use of social media from the perspective of parents in the City of Biskra?

#### Sub-questions:

\_What are the difficulties related to children's habits and patterns of social media use from the parents' perspective?

\_What are parents' attitudes toward the cognitive challenges of child socialization associated with social media use?

\_What are parents' attitudes toward the emotional and psychological challenges of child socialization in the digital context?

\_What are parents' attitudes toward the moral and ethical challenges of child socialization in light of social media use?

\_What are parents' opinions regarding the proposed recommendations and solutions to address the challenges of child socialization amid social media use?

### 1.2. Research Objectives

- ✓ To analyze the difficulties related to children's habits and patterns of social media use from the parents' perspective.
- ✓ To explore parents' attitudes toward the cognitive effects of social media use on children.

- ✓ To identify parents' views on the psychological and emotional challenges faced by children.
- ✓ To analyze parents' perceptions of the moral implications of social media use.
- ✓ To propose practical recommendations to address the challenges of socialization in the digital era.

## **2. Study Concepts:**

### **2.1. Social Socialization:**

**Terminologically:** Talcott Parsons defined social socialization as "a learning process based on indoctrination, imitation, and identification with the emotional, mental, and moral patterns of the mature child. It is a process aimed at integrating cultural elements into the personality system, and it is a continuous process that begins at birth within the family and continues in school" (Rashwan, 2012, p. 79). This means it is a process of imitating the mental, emotional, and moral patterns in children with the aim of acquiring culture that continues throughout their lifetime.

**Operationally:** The continuous process through which a child acquires the values, beliefs, social norms, and acceptable behaviors in their society through interaction with family, school, peers, and media.

### **2.2. Child:**

**Terminologically:** A person ranging in age from 18 months to 14 years. Childhood is one of the fundamental stages in human development. When a child reaches 18 months, they begin to abandon everything related to infancy. They begin to develop sexually and show signs of adolescence, and changes occur in their behavior, thinking processes, emotions, and attitudes. These psychological changes determine the quality of the mature person. A child is a person who has not reached the age of maturity; therefore, childhood extends from birth until after twenty, which is the age at which the child matures physically. This stage is considered shorter than other stages (Sayid, 2023/2024, p. 13).

**Operationally:** A child is an individual in the stage of physical, mental, and emotional development who has not exceeded 18 years of age and who is subject to social socialization processes that help them integrate and form their identity through interaction with family, school, and social institutions.

### **2.3. Social Media Platforms:**

**Terminologically:** "Social media platforms refer to a system of electronic networks that allow subscribers to create their own accounts and then connect them through an electronic social system with other members who have the same interests and hobbies" (Al-Hilali, 2013, p. 88). They are "social gatherings through the Internet where users

can conduct discussions during an open time period, united by positive human feelings, within a defined framework" (Al-Bayoumi, 2023, p. 11).

**Operationally:** Interactive electronic platforms that enable individuals and groups to create, share, and interact with content through various forms such as texts, images, videos, and live streaming. Their main functions include facilitating communication, building social relationships, exchanging information, and influencing public opinion. In the context of this study, the impact of social media platforms is measured through the extent of their use, patterns of interaction on them, and their effect on children's social socialization processes.

### 3. Previous Studies

#### 3.1 Al-Hashimi et al. (2020)

A study titled "The Impact of Social Media Use on Child Socialization in Omani Society" was conducted in collaboration between the Omani Sociologists Association and the Ministry of Social Development. The study employed a descriptive-analytical approach with a sample of 33 parents. It concluded that educational effects ranked first, followed by social and psychological effects, then health effects.

#### 3.2 Mahmoudi et al. (2023)

A study titled "Child Socialization Between the Reality of Social Interaction and Social Media Platforms" was published in the Ibrahim Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities. It was conducted on a purposive sample of 24 children in the city of Hammam Dalaa. The study found that family interaction maintains the foundations of social socialization, while intensive interaction with social media platforms leads to the acquisition of divergent values.

#### 3.3 Saghir and Aerab (2017)

A study titled "Social Media Platforms and Their Implications on Social Socialization Among Youth" was conducted on a sample of 200 Algerian youth. The study found that positive implications included scientific and cultural exchange, while negative implications included identity theft and the adoption of ideas contrary to societal values.

## II. Methods and Materials:

### 1. Type and Methodology of the Study

This study belongs to descriptive research that involves examining current facts related to the nature of a phenomenon, a group of people, a set of events, or a set of conditions. It adopted the social survey method, which Al-Mashhadani (2019) describes as a research approach concerned with surveying the phenomenon under study to identify it and understand its reality in a scientific and objective manner, allowing the researcher to reach scientific conclusions about its causes and make comparisons and evaluations based on the obtained results. This enables us to collect, analyze, and interpret data related to the difficulties parents face in the social socialization of their children in light of the increasing use of social media platforms.

### 2 .Data Collection Tool

The study utilized an electronic questionnaire distributed via parent groups of students from some primary and middle schools in Biskra province through WhatsApp and Facebook.

### 3 .Research Population and Sample

The research population consisted of all parents of primary and middle school students in Biskra province. A purposive sample of 81 parents with children aged 6-16 years was used. Data were collected during the period from May 1 to May 10, 2025.

**Sample Characteristics:** Unified Table of Sample Characteristics (N = 81)

**Table (1) : Sample Characteristics**

| Variable                 | Category           | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Interpretive Notes                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>            | Female             | 57        | 70.4           | Females represent the majority, reflecting mothers' greater involvement in social socialization issues and child monitoring. |
|                          | Male               | 24        | 29.6           | Lower representation of fathers, which may influence results toward a female perspective.                                    |
| <b>Age</b>               | Under 30 years     | 32        | 39.5           | The most represented young group, tends toward high digital awareness.                                                       |
|                          | 30-39 years        | 27        | 33.3           | Combined with the previous group, represents 72.8% of the sample.                                                            |
|                          | 40-49 years        | 16        | 19.8           | Moderate representation of the middle-age group.                                                                             |
|                          | 50 years and above | 6         | 7.4            | Limited participation group, generally less technology use.                                                                  |
| <b>Educational Level</b> | Primary            | 1         | 1.2            | Weak representation of lower educational categories.                                                                         |
|                          | Middle school      | 11        | 13.6           | Limited participation group.                                                                                                 |
|                          | High school        | 10        | 12.3           | Moderate representation.                                                                                                     |
|                          | University         | 53        | 65.4           | The majority with university education, enhancing sample awareness of the topic.                                             |
|                          | Graduate           | 6         | 7.4            | Limited percentage representing the educational                                                                              |

|                                        | studies       |    |      | elite.                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------|---------------|----|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Number of Children (6-16 years)</b> | One child     | 36 | 44.4 | Represents the largest percentage, reflecting single-child families' experiences with greater reliance on online interaction. |
|                                        | Two children  | 25 | 30.9 | Medium family size category.                                                                                                  |
|                                        | Three or more | 20 | 24.7 | Fewer in number but more diverse in socialization experiences.                                                                |
| <b>Social Status</b>                   | Good          | 21 | 25.9 | Represents a relatively affluent category.                                                                                    |
|                                        | Average       | 60 | 74.1 | The vast majority, representing the prevailing middle class in society.                                                       |
|                                        | Poor          | 0  | 0.0  | Complete absence of poor status, reflecting general living standard improvement.                                              |

*The source: Developed by the researcher using SPSS data*

### III. Results And Discussion :

#### 1 .Difficulties in Socialization Related to Social Media Usage Patterns

**Table 2: Difficulties Parents Face in Regulating Children's Social Media Use**

| Difficulties                                           | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>Difficulty convincing the child to reduce usage</b> | 46        | 36.8%      |
| <b>Difficulty determining appropriate time</b>         | 28        | 22.4%      |
| <b>Child's resistance to parental intervention</b>     | 22        | 17.6%      |
| <b>Lack of knowledge about content nature</b>          | 16        | 12.8%      |
| <b>I do not face difficulties</b>                      | 13        | 10.4%      |

*Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data*

The table shows that the greatest difficulty parents face is convincing children to reduce usage (36.8%), reflecting weak dialogue and persuasion tools or children's heavy dependence on these platforms. Additionally, 22.4% find it difficult to determine appropriate time, indicating the absence of clear household rules.

These percentages reflect several important indicators: such as the weakness of traditional parental authority and behavioral addiction, where the high percentage confirms what psychological studies have indicated regarding "digital addiction," where the child becomes psychologically dependent on the continuous stimulation these platforms provide through "dopamine" mechanisms and immediate reward. Furthermore, there is an absence of effective educational dialogue, as the difficulty in persuasion reflects a communication gap between parents and children, and perhaps the absence of constructive dialogue tools within the Algerian family, which still often relies on an authoritarian pattern.

What draws attention: The relatively low percentage (10.4%) of those who do not face difficulties indicates the generality of the problem. Likewise, 12.8% of parents do not know the nature of the content to which the child is exposed, which is a dangerous indicator of the "digital generational gap" (Prensky, 2001).

**Table 3: Platforms That Are Difficult to Monitor**

| Platform            | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>YouTube</b>      | 36        | 31.58%     |
| <b>TikTok</b>       | 28        | 24.56%     |
| <b>All are easy</b> | 19        | 16.67%     |
| <b>Facebook</b>     | 11        | 9.65%      |
| <b>Instagram</b>    | 10        | 8.77%      |
| <b>Snapchat</b>     | 10        | 8.77%      |

*Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data*

The above results reveal a clear hierarchy in monitoring difficulty, with YouTube (31.58%) and TikTok (24.56%) topping the list. This distribution has profound implications: YouTube and TikTok rely on sophisticated artificial intelligence algorithms that deliver "infinite scroll" and "personalized" content, making it nearly impossible for parents to predict what the child will watch. This characteristic renders traditional parental monitoring virtually ineffective. Moreover, the nature of visual content (video) on these platforms is the most time-consuming and least amenable to monitoring compared to text-based platforms. Additionally, short-form video on TikTok creates a state of "compulsive scrolling," which is the most difficult to control.

**Table 4: Ranking of Difficulties According to Their Impact on Socialization**

| Rank          | 3.1 Child's Constant Preoccupation with Digital Content | 3.2 Child's Influence by Influencers | 3.3 Reduced Family Communication | 3.4 Weak Adherence to Household Rules | 3.5 Ambiguity in Content the Child Follows |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
|               | F                                                       | %                                    | F                                | %                                     | F                                          |
| <b>First</b>  | 42                                                      | 51.9                                 | 20                               | 24.7                                  | 28                                         |
| <b>Second</b> | 14                                                      | 17.3                                 | 26                               | 32.1                                  | 14                                         |
| <b>Third</b>  | 13                                                      | 16.0                                 | 10                               | 12.3                                  | 16                                         |
| <b>Fourth</b> | 7                                                       | 8.6                                  | 19                               | 23.5                                  | 15                                         |
| <b>Fifth</b>  | 5                                                       | 6.2                                  | 6                                | 7.4                                   | 8                                          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>81</b>                                               | <b>100</b>                           | <b>81</b>                        | <b>100</b>                            | <b>81</b>                                  |

*Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data*

The above table shows the hierarchy in parents' perception of difficulties, where the child's constant preoccupation with digital content ranked first at 51.9%, reflecting the disintegration of traditional family bonds due to the weakening of "family rituals" such as eating together, along with the loss of natural social learning opportunities through imitation and observation. Similarly, ambiguity in the content children receive (29.6% ranked first) reveals deep parental anxiety, a sense of losing educational control, and children's exposure to virtual symbolic worlds that could create value contamination for the child.

The second rank went to the child's influence by influencers at 32.1%, an important indicator of parents' awareness of the phenomenon of "alternative role

models" (Martínez, C., & Olsson, T. 2021) . Digital influencers have become a source of values and behaviors that compete with, and sometimes surpass, the role of family and school. Moreover, influencers often present consumerist, materialistic, and individualistic values that conflict with the traditional values of Algerian society.

## 2 .Cognitive and Behavioral Difficulties

**Table 5: Cognitive and Behavioral Difficulties**

| Statements                                                                                                                      | Strongly Disagree | Disagree          | Neutral           | Agree             | Strongly Agree    | Mean  | Standard Deviation | Tendency |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|--------------------|----------|
| I find it difficult to make my child focus on their studies due to their attachment to social media platforms.                  | F: 3.0 / %: 3.7   | F: 7.0 / %: 8.6   | F: 8.0 / %: 9.9   | F: 35.0 / %: 43.2 | F: 28.0 / %: 34.6 | 3.96  | 1.066              | High     |
| The child faces difficulty in memorization and retrieval as a result of using social media platforms                            | F: 4.0 / %: 4.9   | F: 4.0 / %: 4.9   | F: 4.0 / %: 4.9   | F: 40.0 / %: 49.4 | F: 29.0 / %: 35.8 | 4.06  | 1.029              | High     |
| It is difficult to convince the child to distinguish between real-world behavior and digital content                            | F: 2.0 / %: 2.5   | F: 11.0 / %: 13.6 | F: 11.0 / %: 13.6 | F: 37.0 / %: 45.7 | F: 20.0 / %: 24.7 | 3.77  | 1.052              | High     |
| My child often rejects family intervention in how they use social media platforms                                               | F: 2.0 / %: 2.5   | F: 15.0 / %: 18.5 | F: 9.0 / %: 11.1  | F: 38.0 / %: 46.9 | F: 17.0 / %: 21.0 | 3.65  | 1.086              | High     |
| My child's awareness of their surroundings declines as their use of social media platforms increases                            | F: 0.0 / %: 0.0   | F: 10.0 / %: 12.3 | F: 5.0 / %: 6.2   | F: 42.0 / %: 51.9 | F: 24.0 / %: 29.6 | 3.99  | 0.929              | High     |
| I face difficulty correcting misconceptions my child receives from social media platforms                                       | F: 2.0 / %: 2.5   | F: 17.0 / %: 21.0 | F: 6.0 / %: 7.4   | F: 41.0 / %: 50.6 | F: 15.0 / %: 18.5 | 3.62  | 1.091              | High     |
| It is difficult to control what my child wants to wear or eat due to their following of social media platforms                  | F: 6.0 / %: 7.4   | F: 17.0 / %: 21.0 | F: 15.0 / %: 18.5 | F: 27.0 / %: 33.3 | F: 16.0 / %: 19.8 | 3.37  | 1.229              | Moderate |
| Extent of agreement with the following statements describing difficulties in the child's cognitive and behavioral socialization |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   | 3.722 | 0.627              | High     |

*Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data*

The results demonstrate broad consensus among parents (85.2%) ( $M = 4.06$ , the highest mean) that the use of social media platforms negatively affects memorization and retrieval capacities. This value indicates that it is not merely a passing observation, but rather a generalized phenomenon noticed by most parents. Additionally, 81.5% ( $M = 3.99$ ) agree that the child's perception of their environment declines with increased usage.

The high mean reflects what psychologists term "inattentional blindness" (Mack & Rock, 1998) resulting from digital immersion. The child becomes: less attentive to direct environmental stimuli, exhibits weak mindfulness, and demonstrates limited capacity for social reading of contexts.

**Table 6: Observed Behaviors in Children**

| Behaviors                                 | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Imitating influencers and celebrities     | 35        | 27.34%     |
| Using inappropriate language              | 28        | 21.88%     |
| Reduced play with family or peers         | 28        | 21.88%     |
| Diminished respect for parental authority | 23        | 17.97%     |
| No noticeable changes                     | 14        | 10.94%     |

*Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data*

The most prominent behavioral changes are the imitation of influencers (27.34%), which reflects direct influence from behavioral models that are not subject to educational controls. Additionally, the use of inappropriate language (21.88%) confirms the erosion of traditional linguistic norms resulting from digital communication (Crystal, 2006). The same percentage applies to reduced play with family/peers, which represents a serious consequence as it affects the child's socio-emotional development. Real-world play is essential for : developing social negotiation skills and building emotional intelligence.

### 3. Emotional and Psychological Difficulties

**Table 7: Major Obstacles Faced by Parents in Providing Psychological and Emotional Support to the Child Due to Exposure to Social Media**

| Obstacles                                   | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Reduced interaction with family members     | 42        | 27.81%     |
| Tendency toward isolation and withdrawal    | 37        | 24.50%     |
| Child being affected by social comparisons  | 28        | 18.54%     |
| Difficulty discussing feelings              | 22        | 14.57%     |
| Emotional dependence on digital interaction | 22        | 14.57%     |

*Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data*

The results indicate that *reduced interaction with family members* ranked first with 27.81%, suggesting a decline in emotional communication within the family as children become increasingly absorbed in the digital world. This is followed by *a tendency toward isolation and withdrawal* (24.50%), which signals a disturbance in real-life

social relationships. Meanwhile, *the child's exposure to social comparisons (18.54%)* reflects the rise of digital social pressure driven by idealized imagery and lifestyles on social platforms. *Difficulty in discussing emotions and emotional dependence on digital interaction (14.57%)* both reveal a communicative gap between parents and children. These findings confirm that social media weakens traditional familial and emotional bonds, shifting part of affective fulfillment toward the virtual sphere, thereby calling for strengthened family dialogue as a compensatory mechanism.

**Table 8: Difficulties in Building a Strong Relationship Based on Mutual Trust with the Child Regarding Social Media Use**

| Responses                                  | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Sometimes                                  | 52        | 64.2%      |
| I find no difficulty                       | 20        | 24.7%      |
| Constant difficulty                        | 8         | 9.9%       |
| I do not attempt to build the relationship | 1         | 1.2%       |
| Total                                      | 81        | 100%       |

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data

The findings show that **64.2%** of parents *sometimes* experience difficulties in establishing a trust-based relationship with their children, while **9.9%** face such challenges *permanently*. Meanwhile, **24.7%** reported no *difficulty*, and **1.2%** admitted not attempting to build this relationship at all. It can be inferred that most parents recognize the importance of communication and trust, yet they encounter situational barriers linked to changing patterns of digital interaction among younger generations. These proportions reflect a gap between parental awareness and practical engagement, highlighting the need to equip parents with dialogic and adaptive communication strategies suited to the digital transformations shaping children's socialization.

**Table 9: Difficulties in Reinforcing Psychological Values Amid Children's Use of Social Media**

| Statements                                                                                                                                    | Strongly Disagree | Disagree          | Neutral           | Agree             | Strongly Agree   | Mean | Standard Deviation | Tendency |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------|--------------------|----------|
| I face difficulty protecting my child from morally inappropriate content.                                                                     | F: 10.0 / %: 12.3 | F: 23.0 / %: 28.4 | F: 9.0 / %: 11.1  | F: 30.0 / %: 37.0 | F: 9.0 / %: 11.1 | 3.06 | 1.268              | Moderate |
| There is recurring conflict between what my child acquires from social media platforms and the family values we try to instill.               | F: 7.0 / %: 8.6   | F: 20.0 / %: 24.7 | F: 14.0 / %: 17.3 | F: 36.0 / %: 44.4 | F: 4.0 / %: 4.9  | 3.12 | 1.111              | Moderate |
| My child imitates behaviors and uses morally unacceptable terms acquired from social media platforms without awareness of their consequences. | F: 10.0 / %: 12.3 | F: 21.0 / %: 25.9 | F: 12.0 / %: 14.8 | F: 37.0 / %: 45.7 | F: 1.0 / %: 1.2  | 2.98 | 1.129              | Moderate |
| Materialistic values (expensive requests)                                                                                                     | F: 10.0 / %: 12.3 | F: 21.0 / %: 25.9 | F: 6.0 / %: 7.4   | F: 36.0 / %: 44.4 | F: 8.0 / %: 9.9  | 3.14 | 1.262              | Moderate |

|                                                                                                                                                      |                   |                   |                   |                   |                 |       |       |          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|----------|
| increase in my child as their attachment to social media platforms grows.                                                                            |                   |                   |                   | 44.4              |                 |       |       |          |
| It is difficult for me to instill values of honesty and respect as a result of what they see on platforms.                                           | F: 12.0 / %: 14.8 | F: 25.0 / %: 30.9 | F: 14.0 / %: 17.3 | F: 29.0 / %: 35.8 | F: 1.0 / %: 1.2 | 2.78  | 1.129 | Moderate |
| Extent of agreement with the following statements expressing moral difficulties in child-rearing in light of increased use of social media platforms |                   |                   |                   |                   |                 | 3.015 | 0.825 | Moderate |

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data

A total of 33.3% of parents observed a lack of *self-confidence* in their children—the highest indicator in this table—followed by difficulties in *expressing emotions* (16%) and *feeling family security* (12.3%). Conversely, 30.9% noticed no such difficulties, and only 7.4% reported low *self-esteem*. This indicates that the predominant psychological impact of social media lies in the erosion of children's self-confidence, resulting from social comparisons, cyberbullying, and symbolic pressure to meet digital standards of beauty and success. Moreover, weakened emotional expression reflects the absence of real-world interactional alternatives, emphasizing the urgent need for educational interventions that promote emotional intelligence and balance between virtual and physical interactions.

#### 4. Recommendations and Proposed Solutions from Parents' Perspective

Table 10: Required Support Areas

| Support Areas                                      | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Providing play and recreational spaces             | 50        | 23.36%     |
| Awareness training courses for parents             | 40        | 18.69%     |
| Psychological and educational support for children | 40        | 18.69%     |
| Collaboration between family and school            | 38        | 17.76%     |
| Parental control tools                             | 30        | 14.02%     |
| Legal and legislative support                      | 16        | 7.48%      |

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data

The table above shows that the most important support area is *providing play, sports, and recreational spaces* at 23.36%, indicating parents' recognition of the importance of real-world alternatives in reducing dependence on the virtual world. Awareness training courses for parents and *psychological-educational support* for children ranked second at 18.69% each, reflecting a strong desire to enhance *educational and psychological awareness to address digital challenges*. *Family-school collaboration* received 17.76%, confirming the need for integration between both institutions in protecting children.

**Table 11: The Most Influential Family Role in Reducing Difficulties**

| Role                          | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Dialogue and guidance         | 29        | 35.8%      |
| Monitoring                    | 17        | 21.0%      |
| Sharing the child's interests | 15        | 18.5%      |
| Positive role modeling        | 13        | 16.0%      |
| Setting strict guidelines     | 7         | 8.6%       |

*Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data*

*Dialogue and guidance* ranked first at 35.8%, highlighting awareness of the importance of open communication as a foundation for sound digital parenting. This was followed by *parental monitoring* (21%) and *sharing the child's interests* (18.5%), both of which reflect the desire to combine *supervision with accompaniment*. Positive role modeling (16%) ranked at a moderate level, indicating moderate recognition of the impact of exemplary parental behavior.

**Table 12: The Most Influential School Role in Reducing Difficulties**

| Role                     | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Media literacy education | 33        | 40.7%      |
| Monitoring               | 21        | 25.9%      |
| Reporting                | 14        | 17.3%      |
| Establishing guidelines  | 13        | 16.0%      |

*Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS data*

*Media education* (40.7%) ranked first, followed by *school monitoring* (25.9%), *reporting mechanisms* (17.3%), and *guideline implementation* (16%). These results highlight the growing recognition of media literacy as a preventive tool that enables children to develop critical thinking and responsible digital behavior. The findings further underscore that schools must play a complementary role alongside families—not merely as supervisory institutions but as active partners in awareness and guidance.

## 5. Results Discussion

### 5.1. Difficulties in Control and Monitoring

The study revealed that parents face significant challenges in controlling their children's use of social media platforms. The most prominent of these difficulties lies in convincing children to reduce usage, which reflects several factors: weak educational dialogue tools, children's heavy reliance on these platforms for psychological and social purposes (escapism, entertainment, belonging), and the absence of clear household rules.

Furthermore, the difficulty in knowing the nature of content to which children are exposed (12.8%) indicates deficiencies in parents' digital literacy and the absence of technical monitoring tools. These findings are consistent with the study by Al-Hashimi et al. (2020), which indicated that children resort to numerous tactics to use the internet during unauthorized times.

## **5.2. Cognitive and Behavioral Challenges**

The results revealed broad consensus among parents (85.2%) that social media usage negatively affects children's memory and retrieval capabilities. This aligns with recent studies (Dubicka, Martin & Firth, 2019) indicating that internet searching does not adequately activate brain regions responsible for long-term storage.

Additionally, the decline in children's awareness of their surroundings (81.5%) and difficulty concentrating on studies (77.8%) point to profound effects on cognitive performance. As for observed behaviors such as imitating influencers (27.34%) and using inappropriate language (21.88%), these reflect direct influence by behavioral models not subject to educational controls.

## **5.3. Psychological and Emotional Challenges**

The results demonstrated a decline in family interaction (27.81%) and tendency toward isolation and introversion (24.50%), indicating impacts on children's mental health. These findings are consistent with the study by Mahmoudi et al. (2023), which indicated that intensive interaction with social media leads to decreased family engagement.

Moreover, the difficulty in building trust relationships (64.2% face intermittent difficulties) reflects the growing gap between parents and children in the digital age, which complicates the provision of effective psychological support.

## **5.4. Ethical and Value-Based Challenges**

Although ethical difficulties recorded a moderate mean (3.015), the details reveal real challenges: increasing materialistic values (44.4%), conflict between acquired values and family values (44.4%), and difficulty protecting children from inappropriate content (37.0%).

These results are consistent with the study by Saghir and A'rab (2017), which indicated that social media platforms lead to the adoption of ideas and behaviors contrary to societal values and customs.

## **5.5. Recommendations and Proposed Solutions**

The results reveal growing awareness among parents of the importance of real-world alternatives, with providing play and entertainment spaces receiving the highest percentage (23.36%). This reflects recognition that the solution does not lie in absolute

prohibition, but in providing attractive alternatives that reduce dependence on digital media.

Furthermore, the prominence of dialogue and guidance (35.8%) as the most influential family role, and media literacy education (40.7%) as the school's primary role, reflect an orientation toward a comprehensive educational approach based on awareness and empowerment rather than strict supervision alone.

## 5.6. Results by Demographic Variables

The analysis showed that perception of difficulties varies according to demographic characteristics:

\_Number of children: Parents with more than one child (55.6%) face greater monitoring difficulties, reflecting a challenge in distributing time and supervisory effort.

\_Educational level: University degree holders (65.4%) demonstrated higher awareness of cognitive and behavioral impacts, reflecting greater capacity to assess children's cognitive changes.

\_Gender: Mothers (70.4%) showed greater sensitivity to psychological and emotional changes, reflecting their central role in emotional socialization.

\_Age and living standard: The younger age group (under 40 years: 72.8%) and the middle economic class (74.1%) showed greater awareness of value and ethical changes, but with weakness in digital monitoring mechanisms (30.1% are unaware of bullying or harassment incidents).

## IV. Conclusion and Recommendations:

In conclusion, it is clear that child socialization in the digital age faces unprecedented challenges requiring a comprehensive and integrated approach. Social media platforms, despite the opportunities they provide for learning and communication, impose real challenges on cognitive, psychological, behavioral, and ethical levels.

The results confirmed that confronting these challenges is not achieved through prohibiting technology or absolute surveillance, but through rationalizing its use and employing it to serve the balanced psychological and social development of children. This requires concerted efforts from all concerned parties: the family as the primary socialization institution, the school as a space for education and guidance, society with its various institutions, and the state through legislation and public policies.

Moreover, the challenges posed require various actors in the educational and social field to redouble efforts and intensify awareness of the necessity of rationalizing digital usage and effectively accompanying children. Today's child lives in an open digital world that is difficult to close; therefore, the real challenge lies in empowering them with critical thinking tools and conscious, responsible usage.

Accordingly, this study remains a modest contribution to the scientific debate on the future of socialization in the era of digitization, hoping to open the field for other research to enrich the topic and keep pace with its developments, and to contribute to directing educational and social policies toward protecting childhood and ensuring its balanced development in the digital environment.

Based on the results, the study presents the following recommendations:

\_Enhance constructive family communication by allocating daily time for open dialogue with children about their digital experiences.

\_Organize social media usage by establishing clear and flexible household rules that define times and places of use, with designated screen-free periods for family activities.

\_Adopt flexible supervision based on conscious monitoring without violating privacy, and guide children toward positive platform usage.

\_Encourage parents to participate in training courses on digital safety, parental control tools, and cyber protection mechanisms.

\_Integrate media and digital literacy into curricula to equip students with critical thinking skills and safe internet usage.

\_Continuous awareness: Organize awareness campaigns for students about the risks of excessive usage, cyberbullying, personal data protection, and dealing with inappropriate content

\_Provide alternative spaces: Establish and develop play areas, sports clubs, public libraries, and cultural centers to offer attractive alternatives for children.

\_National awareness campaigns: Launch national media campaigns directed at families about safe and responsible social media usage.

\_Legal regulation: Establish clear legislation and laws to protect children from harmful content, cyberbullying, and digital violations, with activation of monitoring and follow-up mechanisms

\_Support scientific research: Encourage more field studies on the impacts of social media on various aspects of child development, focusing on local and cultural contexts.

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