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Digital Parenting in the Global South: Integrating Digital Media into Everyday Toddler Care and Family Life

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Abstract

Parents in high-income countries benefit from extensive research and professional guidance on digital parenting, screen time and children's media use. Families in the Global South face rapid digital changes but have little local guidance on managing them. This imbalance risks reinforcing one-sided debates, privileging Western experiences while overlooking cultural contexts in which extended family networks, collectivist values and resource constraints shape parenting decisions in distinctive ways. This study addresses this limitation by examining how South Asian parents adopt and manage digital tools in toddler care. Drawing on 26 in-depth interviews, we employed a hybrid thematic analysis guided by the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and extended perspectives on parental mediation. Alongside established constructions such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions, we identify three additional dimensions: Digital Influence on Family Relationships (DIFR), Parental Control Expectancy (PCE), and Perceived Development Impact (PDI). These findings enhance global scholarship by integrating cultural and developmental considerations into models of digital parenting, providing practical insights for parents, educators and designers seeking balanced, culturally sensitive approaches to toddler media use.

1. Introduction

Digital technologies are now part of daily family life, even in the earliest stages of childhood. Toddlers regularly engage with smartphones, tablets and online video platforms as parents use these tools to support daily routines, such as feeding, calming and entertainment. While digital media can provide convenience and early learning opportunities, scholars and health organizations have also warned about risks including dependency, disrupted sleep and reduced face to face interaction (Radesky et al., 2020; World Health Organization, 2019). As a result digital parenting on how parents guide, restrict, or share media use with young children has become an important area of research.

Much of what we know about digital parenting comes from high-income Western contexts, where studies have focused on parental mediation strategies, screen time rules and the effects of technoference on family relationships (Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020; McDaniel & Radesky, 2018). However families in the Global South remain underrepresented in this literature. This is problematic because cultural norms, extended family structures and resource constraints may lead to very different parental choices. In Sri Lanka, for example, smartphones are widely used in toddler care, yet concerns about speech delays, dependency, and the erosion of traditional family routines are common in public debate (Rohanachandra, 2022). Without locally grounded evidence, international discussions risk being determined only by Western experiences, leaving other parenting contexts invisible.

This study addresses that gap by asking: RQ1: How do South Asian parents use digital tools in toddler care?, RQ2: What benefits and risks do they perceive in digital parenting practices?, RQ3: How do these perceptions extend or challenge existing models of technology adoption and parental mediation?

To explore these questions, we conducted 26 in-depth interviews with South Asian parents of children aged one to four. Using a hybrid thematic analysis, we examined how digital technologies were integrated into daily care routines and how parents balanced perceived advantages with developmental and cultural concerns.

The interviews revealed that parents welcomed digital tools because they made daily care easier and sometimes supported learning. At the same time they worried deeply about the negative effects. Three themes stood out. First parents discussed how screens impacted family life, sometimes helping them share enjoyable activities with their toddlers, but also creating distance when devices interrupt face to face interactions. Second they described the constant effort to set rules and limits, such as when and where screens could be used and what content was acceptable. Third they judge digital media by how it might determine their child's development, expressing concerns about speech delays, dependency and less physical play.

This study makes several contributions to the literature on children and media. Prior research on parental mediation has largely focused on older children and adolescents, emphasising rules, co-viewing and discussions about online risks (Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020; Valkenburg et al., 2013). Technology adoption studies, often guided by UTAUT, have explained parents' choices in terms of usefulness, ease of use and social influence (Eutsler, 2018; So et al., 2021). However these approaches overlook toddlers, whose developmental stage presents unique challenges, and they underrepresent families in the Global South, where cultural norms and collective caregiving significantly influence parenting practices. Our study addresses these gaps by examining how parents of toddlers in South Asia manage digital media in their everyday care. Beyond confirming known factors such as convenience and social influence, we identify three overlooked dimensions: how screens reshape family relationships (both bonding and disruption), how parents struggle with control and rule-setting, and how they evaluate media through its developmental impacts (e.g., speech, play, and dependency). These insights extend both the parental mediation and technology adoption frameworks by adding relational and developmental concerns that have largely been invisible in prior work. The study shifts the debate beyond the dominant focus on 'screen-time risk' toward an understanding of technology acceptance, relational dynamics and cultural values in toddler care.

The study also contributes to ongoing policy discussions on children's screen time, including those led by organisations such as the World Health Organization (World Health Organization, 2019). While existing policies emphasise limits on screen exposure, our findings extend this discussion by showing that parents also consider family relationships, control practices and developmental impacts when managing digital media use. This suggests that policy discussions can be strengthened by incorporating these broader relational and developmental dimensions. The next section discusses the theory and prior literature.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Digital Parenting and Toddlers

Digital technologies are becoming a regular part of young children's lives, often used daily even before they start school. Toddlers are exposed to screens through smartphones, tablets and streaming platforms, which parents use to manage feeding, calming and entertaining (McDaniel & Radesky, 2018; Chassiakos & Stager, 2020). On one hand, such practices provide parents practical support: interactive apps and videos can keep children engaged during mealtimes, and digital tools are often seen as effective in soothing children during tantrums or bedtimes (Holloway et al., 2014; Li, 2023). Digital platforms can also provide educational opportunities, encouraging early literacy and cognitive stimulation (Kabali et al., 2015; Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020).

Research highlights risks associated with overuse in early childhood. Studies link excessive screen time with reduced physical activity, delayed social skill development, sleep disruption and potential speech delays (WHO, 2019; Radesky et al., 2020; Arundell et al., 2022). Dependency is another concern: children quickly come to expect digital devices as a constant feature of daily life, which can reduce their engagement in traditional play and limit face to face interaction (Chen & Adler, 2019; Swider-Cios et al., 2023). Parents are therefore caught between the convenience and learning potential of digital tools and the developmental and relational risks of overuse.

While these debates are well-established, most research has focused on older children and adolescents, who can articulate their preferences and engage more independently with media. Parental mediation theory has examined restrictive mediation, co-viewing and active discussion strategies (Valkenburg et al., 2013), but these categories assume children's greater autonomy. With toddlers, however, parents make nearly all decisions about media use, and concerns are more directly tied to development and family routines. Despite toddlers' increasing exposure to digital devices, there is limited scholarship that examines parental practices at this early stage. This represents a critical gap in our understanding of digital parenting.

2.2 Cultural Context: Parenting in the Global South

Parenting practices are also strongly determined by cultural values, which influence how technologies are adopted and regulated. In Western contexts child-rearing is often informed by individualistic values that emphasize independence, self-expression and autonomy. Parents permit greater use of digital tools for entertainment and allow children more agency in media choices (Lewis et al., 2024). In South Asian and other collectivist societies, parents prioritize interdependence, family harmony and respect for authority (Breiner et al., 2024; Lu et al., 2024). These values typically translate into stricter parental control over children's media use and a preference for educational over purely recreational applications (Lim & Wang, 2024).

Research confirms that Asian parents are generally more cautious about children's screen use than their Western counterparts, reflecting concerns about preserving traditional play and avoiding overreliance on technology (Elwakeel, 2024; Gorla et al., 2024). Yet even within Asia local norms differ. In Sri Lanka

cultural and religious expectations emphasize obedience, strong family ties and deference to elders (Perera, 2024). Parenting decisions are often collective, involving extended families, and children's activities are judged against cultural expectations of discipline and respect (Krishnapradeep et al., 2024).

Empirical studies from Sri Lanka indicate that technology use among preschoolers is widespread. Jayakody (2023) and Rathnasiri et al. (2022) found that most young children exceeded the World Health Organization's recommended one hour of daily screen time, with patterns of use linked to parental education, maternal employment, and sibling dynamics. Parents expressed concerns about negative impacts but often relied on screens during mealtimes and other challenging routines. While such findings highlight local tensions, systematic qualitative research exploring parents' voices and decision-making is rare.

This underrepresentation creates a significant imbalance. International debates on digital parenting are dominated by Western perspectives, where resources, guidance and professional advice are abundant. Global South families confront the same technological pressures but with less evidence-based support. Without locally grounded studies, the risk is that policy and practice recommendations remain one-sided and fail to capture the realities of diverse cultural contexts. South Asia thus provides an important setting to explore how parents navigate digital parenting at the toddler stage while balancing cultural values, developmental concerns and everyday demands.

2.3 Theoretical Framing: Parental Mediation and Technology Use Models

Two strands of theory provide helpful starting points for understanding parents' use of digital tools with toddlers. The first is parental mediation theory, which explains how parents regulate and share media experiences with their children through restrictive rules, co-viewing, or active discussion (Nathanson, 1999; Valkenburg et al., 2013). While widely applied to adolescents and school-aged children, this framework is less developed for toddlers, who are less autonomous and whose media use is tightly integrated into routines such as eating, sleeping, and calming. In this age group, parental mediation is not only about managing risks but also about navigating cultural expectations and child development concerns.

The second is the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT; Venkatesh et al., 2003), which has been widely used to explain technology adoption in contexts ranging from business to education and healthcare. UTAUT emphasizes four constructs: performance expectancy (perceived usefulness), effort expectancy (perceived ease of use), social influence (perceived encouragement from others), and facilitating conditions (supporting infrastructure). In the context of parenting, these constructs help explain why parents adopt apps and devices for educational purposes, health monitoring, or childcare routines (Eutsler, 2018; So et al., 2021). However UTAUT treats parents primarily as individual users of technology and overlooks the relational, cultural and developmental concerns that dominate family decision-making in early childhood.

This study brings the two perspectives together. It uses UTAUT to show parents' motivations for adoption but extends the analysis through a parental mediation lens, which foregrounds family interactions and cultural values. In doing so, the study identifies three overlooked dimensions that are missing from current models: (1) the influence of screens on family relationships, both bonding and disruption; (2) parents' ongoing struggle for control and rule-setting in managing devices; and (3) parents' judgments of developmental impacts, including concerns about speech, play, and dependency. These findings extend existing theories by integrating relational and developmental concerns, offering a more culturally sensitive understanding of toddler digital parenting in the Global South. This section outlines the research design, sample selection, data collection, and data analysis methods used in the study.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

This study explored how parents in South Asia adopt and evaluate digital tools in toddler care. A qualitative, exploratory design was selected because it allows for rich, contextualised accounts of parental experiences and cultural meanings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Semi-structured interviews were guided by the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT; Venkatesh et al., 2003) while remaining open to emergent themes. This design was suitable for identifying how both global technology trends and local cultural contexts determine digital parenting practices.

3.2 Participants

Twenty Six parents of children aged one to four years participated in the study, including Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. A detailed participant profile is provided in Appendix I. Purposive sampling ensured that participants were primary caregivers with experience using digital tools to manage routines such as feeding, calming, entertaining, and early learning. The sample included both working and stay-at-home parents and reflected diversity in education, gender, and urban–rural residence. Recruitment was conducted through childcare centers, parenting networks, and online community groups. Data saturation was reached within each country sample, with additional interviews conducted until no new insights emerged.

3.3 Data Collection

Semi structured interviews were conducted between March 2024 and July 2025, either face to face or online (e.g., Zoom), depending on participant preference. Interviews lasted between 45 and 70 minutes and were conducted in participants' preferred language (Sinhala, Tamil, or English), with translation support as required. The interview guide focused on three areas:

1. How parents use digital tools in daily toddler care;
2. Perceived benefits and risks of these practices;

3. Cultural and family factors influencing decisions about screen use.

All interviews were audio recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim. Ethical approval was obtained from the host university's Human Research Ethics Committee (ERC/2026/02).

The following section presents the findings of the analysis and discusses them in relation to prior research and the study's theoretical framework.

3.4 Data Analysis

A hybrid thematic analysis was applied, combining deductive and inductive approaches (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Deductively, the four UTAUT constructs, performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions, were used as the initial coding frame. Inductively, additional codes were developed to capture new issues arising from the data. Through iterative coding and discussion, overlapping codes were consolidated into broader themes. This process confirmed the relevance of UTAUT while also identifying three new themes: the influence of screens on family relationships, parents' ongoing struggles with control and rule-setting, and parents' evaluations of developmental impacts. NVivo software supported the coding process. To ensure reliability two researchers independently coded a subset of transcripts and discrepancies were resolved through discussion.

3.5 Trustworthiness and Ethics

Trustworthiness was established through several strategies. Credibility was supported by member checking, where participants reviewed summaries of their interviews. Dependability and confirmability were strengthened through independent coding checks and by maintaining an audit trail of decisions. Transferability was enhanced by providing thick descriptions of cultural contexts. From an ethical perspective, participants were fully informed of the study aims, data use and their rights to withdraw. Anonymity was preserved using pseudonyms and all recordings and transcripts were securely stored and accessible only to the research team.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Everyday Technologies in Toddler Care

Parents across Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan consistently described using smartphones, tablets and television as central tools for managing daily routines, though the emphasis varied by context. YouTube emerged as the most widely used platform, valued for its free access, multilingual content, and adaptability to low-cost devices. In Sri Lanka parents also relied heavily on television channels such as BabyTV, reflecting the strong role of broadcast media in multi-generational households. Indian parents, particularly in urban areas, reported experimenting with educational apps alongside YouTube, viewing them as tools to give children a head start in English and numeracy. Bangladeshi parents described greater reliance on YouTube because it was accessible and engaging in

local languages, while Pakistani parents emphasised shared viewing of cartoons and religious songs as family bonding activities, though some also downloaded content offline to limit exposure to inappropriate content. These practices show how digital technologies are woven into everyday childcare routines, from calming children during mealtimes to entertaining them while parents complete household tasks and supporting early learning. As one Bangladeshi mother explained: *"He learns songs and new words faster with videos."* A Sri Lankan father noted: *"When we go to a party, I give my son my phone to calm him, otherwise he becomes restless."* An Indian mother added: *"Educational apps help her learn counting and letters; it feels like extra kindergarten at home."* A Pakistani father described the relational aspect: *"We sit together and watch cartoons; she laughs and we laugh too for more than an hour."* Taken together, these accounts highlight how parents turn to screens as both a coping resource and an educational supplement. Unlike findings from high-income contexts, where curated apps and guided co-use dominate parental strategies (Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020; Radesky et al., 2020), South Asian parents described a heavier reliance on YouTube and television. This reflects how structural constraints (affordability, digital literacy, internet costs) and platform affordances (free access, local languages, offline downloads) determine toddler media diets in ways that diverge from Western contexts.

4.2 Established Adoption Factors (UTAUT Constructs)

The deductive analysis confirmed the relevance of the UTAUT constructs performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions in explaining parents' adoption of digital tools. Parents frequently emphasized educational benefits and time-saving potential, consistent with prior studies (Eutsler, 2018; So et al., 2021). For instance, an Indian mother remarked: "I do not need to teach her; she quickly learns to use the phone by herself." Parents also pointed to convenience, noting that mobile devices allowed them to integrate media use into diverse routines.

Yet, social influence revealed significant tensions. While some parents embraced technology for its developmental promise, others faced resistance from extended family and teachers. A Sri Lankan mother recounted: "Their grandparents always say not to use technologies; we raised you without devices." Such accounts illustrate how intergenerational expectations complicate adoption, reflecting a hybrid digital ecology where global discourses of early learning coexist with local cultural skepticism (Rohanachandra, 2022). Facilitating conditions were equally uneven: although widespread smartphone access supported adoption, concerns about data costs and parental digital literacy highlighted the persistence of a digital divide (Raihan et al., 2024).

These findings demonstrate that while UTAUT explains important adoption drivers, it does not fully capture the relational and cultural complexities of parenting in South Asia.

4.3 Emerging Concerns Beyond UTAUT

While the UTAUT framework identified important drivers of technology adoption, inductive analysis revealed three additional concerns that shaped parents' decisions: Digital Influence on Family Relationships (DIFR), Parental Control Expectancy (PCE) and Perceived Developmental Impact (PDI). The

themes and representative participant quotes are summarized in Appendix II. These themes were shared across countries but varied in emphasis, reflecting cultural norms and parental priorities in different contexts.

Digital Influence on Family Relationships (DIFR): Parents described digital tools as both sources of bonding and sources of disruption. In Pakistan, shared viewing of cartoons and religious songs was often framed as positive family time: *"We watch cartoons and sing religious songs together; it makes us closer as a family"* (Pakistani mother). Parents in Sri Lanka and India more often described disruption, where screens displaced family conversations: *"Sometimes, when we talk, my child is more focused on the screen than on family discussions"* (Sri Lankan mother); *"At dinner, she refuses to eat without watching something on the phone, so we all end up silent around the table"* (Indian father). In Bangladesh, some parents emphasised shared enjoyment: *"He shows me the videos he likes, and then we laugh together"* (Bangladeshi mother). These variations demonstrate how digital media influences family dynamics in various ways, depending on household norms and expectations. Others noted that digital devices became a coping mechanism during stressful moments: *"When we are having a problem, we give the phone to the kid to settle down our mind"* (Bangladeshi father). A similar sentiment emerged during travel: *"I give the phone while driving, otherwise chatting makes me stressed to drive"* (Bangladeshi mother).

Parental Control Expectancy (PCE): Parents across the region described ongoing struggles to regulate screen use, but their strategies differed. In India, many parents highlighted structured rules: *"I limit screen time to three times per day, only for short durations"* (Indian mother).Sri Lankan parents emphasized constant monitoring: *"I always check the content before giving the phone, because sometimes bad videos come up"* (Sri Lankan mother).In Pakistan, strict household rules were common: *"We never allow the mobile before bedtime; it is a house rule"* (Pakistani father). By contrast, Bangladeshi parents described greater difficulty in enforcement: *"Even if I take the phone away, he cries until I give it back. It is hard to manage. I don't know the limit, but I give a minimum of two hours so I can do my work with a relaxed mind"* (Bangladeshi mother).

Perceived Developmental Impact (PDI): Parents actively weighed technology's benefits against potential harms. Bangladeshi parents often emphasized cognitive gains: *"My child knows many English words because of YouTube"* (Bangladeshi father). Sri Lankan parents were more likely to voice developmental concerns, especially around speech: *"My son faced a speech delay two years ago; we stopped devices and he gradually improved"* (Sri Lankan mother). Indian parents focused on reduced physical activity: *"Too much screen time makes them less interested in playing outside"* (Indian mother). Pakistani parents highlighted dependency: *"She cries and insists on watching YouTube at home and even in other people's houses"* (Pakistani mother). These differences underscore the profound connection between parents' evaluations of technology and their developmental priorities within their respective cultural and socioeconomic contexts. Taken together, these themes show that South Asian parents' acceptance of technology extends beyond usefulness and ease. Their decisions are influenced by concerns about family relationships, the stress of maintaining control, and assessments of the developmental impact.

These findings enrich existing models by revealing how cultural context and parental values infuse digital parenting with relational and moral dimensions.

4.4 Integrating Findings with Prior Research

Global research indicates that digital media can both support and disrupt family life (Radesky et al., 2020; McDaniel et al., 2025). However the findings presented here highlight how cultural expectations, intergenerational roles and household constraints in South Asia determine these dynamics. Parents described technoference during meals and family interactions, consistent with studies showing that excessive media use interrupts communication (McDaniel & Radesky, 2018). At the same time, co-viewing was often framed as a positive form of family bonding, echoing the literature that highlights how digital media can strengthen togetherness (Yuan et al., 2024).

Control practices further illustrate this complexity. While some parents adopted restrictive rules and time limits in line with research on parental mediation (Valkenburg et al., 2013), others emphasised constant monitoring and many reported difficulties enforcing restrictions in resource-constrained households. These variations extend mediation theory by showing that discipline, negotiation and monitoring are not uniform strategies but contextually inflected practices.

Developmental concerns also diverged from global patterns. Whereas Western research often emphasises risks such as reduced physical activity and social interaction (WHO, 2019; Nikken & Schols, 2015), South Asian parents linked screens to a broader set of outcomes, including speech delay, cognitive gains, diminished outdoor play and dependency that disrupted participation in family or community settings. These findings demonstrate that while frameworks such as UTAUT and parental mediation theory identify broad drivers of adoption, they overlook the relational, cultural and developmental logics that underpin digital parenting in South Asia.

4.5 Toward an Expanded Model of Digital Parenting

The findings suggest that while the UTAUT constructs of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions remain central to understanding parental adoption of technology, they are insufficient for capturing the relational and developmental concerns voiced by parents. The inductive themes of Digital Influence on Family Relationships (DIFR), Parental Control Expectancy (PCE) and Perceived Developmental Impact (PDI) extend the framework by situating adoption within the context of family life and cultural values.

The salience of these themes varied, with some parents emphasising bonding and shared enjoyment, demonstrating how digital parenting can function as a resource for family cohesion. In contrast, others stressed “technoference” and rule enforcement, reflecting anxieties about screens displacing routines and values. Developmental concerns also diverged, ranging from perceived cognitive benefits to worries over speech delay, reduced outdoor play, and dependency. These differences suggest that digital

parenting is not a uniform practice but rather determined by relational expectations, resource constraints, and developmental priorities.

Figure 1 illustrates the proposed expanded model. The four original UTAUT constructs capture pragmatic motivations for adoption, while DIFR, PCE and PDI represent relational and developmental dimensions that redefine what “acceptance” means in the parenting context. Together, these constructs explain why parents simultaneously embrace and resist digital tools, weighing convenience and educational benefits against relational strain and developmental risks. By integrating these new dimensions, the model bridges the theory of technology adoption with research on parental mediation, embedding both within the cultural realities of the Global South. This expansion refines the theoretical understanding of digital parenting. It provides a globally relevant framework, emphasising that adoption decisions are not purely technical but are negotiated in relation to family relationships, cultural obligations and developmental futures.

This section discusses the implications of the study.

5. Implications

5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study extends both parental mediation theory and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology. While prior research has emphasized how parents regulate or adopt media for older children (Valkenburg et al., 2013; Eutsler, 2018), this study highlights the unique dynamics of toddler care in South Asia. The integration of three new dimensions of digital influence on family relationships, parental control expectancy and perceived developmental impact demonstrates that technology use in early childhood cannot be explained solely by perceptions of usefulness or ease. Parents evaluate media in terms of its relational, cultural and developmental impact. This refinement positions digital parenting as a multidimensional construct, linking technology adoption models with family-based perspectives.

5.2 Practical Implications for Parents and Educators

The findings provide actionable insights for parents and educators navigating toddlers’ media use. Parents in South Asia actively balance the convenience of learning with concerns about control and development. Guidance should therefore move beyond simple screen-time limits to emphasise structured co-use, content monitoring and active mediation strategies. Early childhood educators can incorporate digital tools in ways that encourage joint activities and minimize technoference, reinforcing family bonding while supporting learning. Practical resources such as checklists, age-appropriate app recommendations, and culturally relevant parental guides could empower caregivers to manage digital exposure more effectively.

5.3 Policy and Design Implications

At the policy level, governments and child-health agencies in the Global South need to develop locally grounded guidelines on toddler media use, rather than relying solely on Western benchmarks. Clear recommendations on appropriate screen-time duration and quality are essential, and these should reflect the realities of extended families, resource constraints, and cultural values. Public health campaigns could raise awareness about balancing digital and offline play, while also promoting parental digital literacy. For technology designers, the findings suggest opportunities to build tools that align with parents' developmental and relational concerns. Features such as customisable screen-time limits, integrated parent–child interaction prompts, and localised educational content could enhance trust and adoption. In South Asia, where many parents' face affordability and literacy barriers, the development of low-cost, language-adapted platforms will be particularly important. This section outlines the limitations of the study and suggests directions for future research

6. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First although the sample included parents from Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan the total number of participants was modest. While qualitative interviews provided rich, contextual insights, the findings cannot be generalized to all South Asian parents. Larger mixed-methods or survey-based studies would allow for broader validation of the identified themes.

Second the reliance on self-reported data may have introduced social desirability bias, particularly regarding sensitive issues such as screen-time regulation or developmental concerns. Observational studies of family routines or child parent interactions with media could provide complementary evidence. Third, the study focused on parents of toddlers aged one to four years. As children grow older, their agency in media use increases, and parental strategies may evolve. Future research could track families longitudinally to capture how digital parenting practices change over time. Finally, the study was limited to four South Asian countries. Comparative studies across cultural regions, including both the Global South and the Global North, could test the cross-cultural applicability of the expanded model. Such work would deepen understanding of how cultural values, economic constraints, and policy environments intersect to shape digital parenting.

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Figures

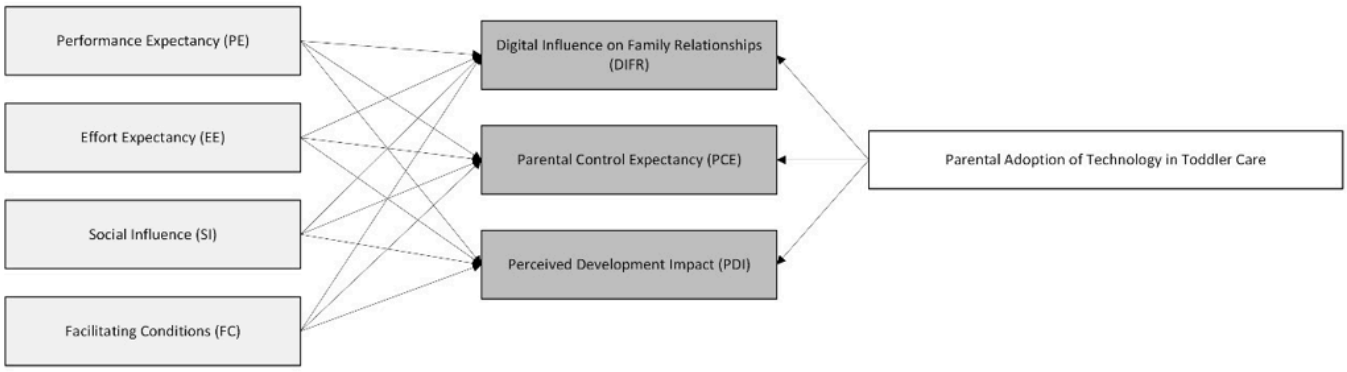


Figure 1

Expanded model of Digital Parenting in South Asia

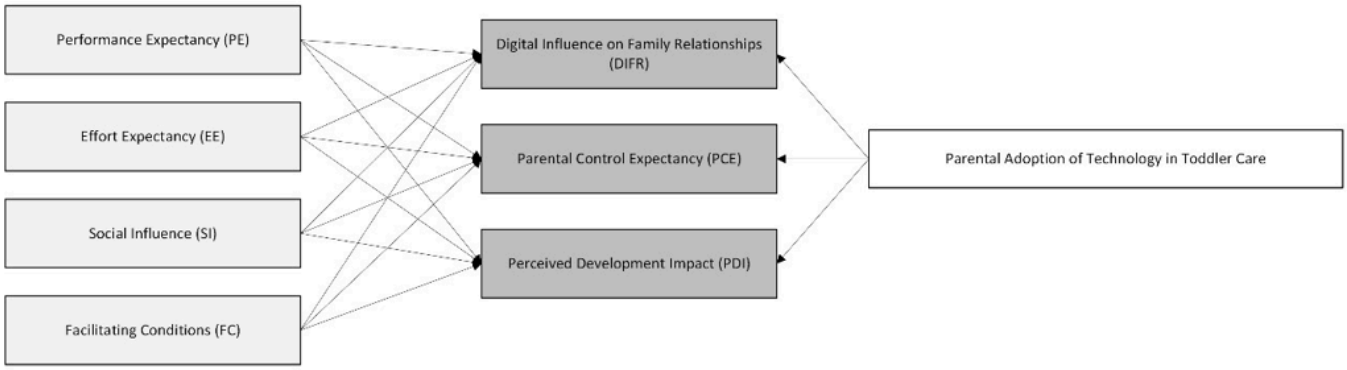


Figure 1

Expanded model of Digital Parenting in South Asia

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