

Digital Media and Transformations in Family Structure in Algeria

A Field Study of a Sample of Families in the City of Laghouat.

Review Article¹

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the transformations associated with digital mediation within the Algerian family by investigating the impact of digital media use on certain aspects of family structure, particularly family interaction and dialogue, the distribution of roles and sources of influence, and the boundaries of family privacy. The study adopted a descriptive approach and used a questionnaire to collect data from a sample of members of Algerian families. The data were processed using a set of appropriate statistical techniques, including Pearson's correlation coefficient. The results showed a statistically significant relationship between frequent checking of the phone and declining family dialogue. They also revealed a relationship between parents' reliance on their children to solve technical problems and the redistribution of certain roles and sources of influence within the family. The results further indicated a statistically significant relationship between posting family photographs and occasions on digital platforms and certain transformations associated with family privacy. The study concludes that digital mediation has become part of the everyday practices of the Algerian family and that its impact is not unidirectional; rather, it depends on the manner and context of use, making it a contributing factor in the reordering of certain patterns of interaction, roles, and privacy boundaries within the family.

Keywords: digital mediation, digital media, family structure, family interaction, family authority and roles, family privacy, Algerian family.

Introduction

Over the past decades, contemporary societies have undergone extensive changes associated with the spread of digital media and the expansion of its use in everyday life. Its presence has gone beyond the function of transmitting information and facilitating communication to become part of the practices underlying communication, interaction, and social relationships. Digital media are no longer merely technical tools used when needed; they have become embedded in the details of everyday life, in the ways individuals communicate and exchange information, and in how they organize their relationships and activities. This has made digital media intertwined with various domains of social life and influential in the patterns of interaction and practices characteristic of contemporary society.

The presence of digital media has also become so intertwined with social life that many aspects of social reality are difficult to understand apart from processes of digital mediation. Media and communication technologies no longer operate in a sphere separate from everyday life; rather, they have become part of the social practices through which individuals build relationships, exchange meanings, and organize their interactions. Accordingly, digital transformation is not limited to changes in communication tools; it extends to the ways in which social relationships

¹ Received: March 05, 2026; Accepted: August 04, 2026; Published: September 02, 2026

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are practiced and the details of everyday life are managed, including relationships formed within the family. This transformation has extended to the family as a fundamental domain of social interaction. Smartphones, social networking sites, and digital platforms have become part of family members' everyday lives and are present in how they communicate, organize their time, and participate in activities. Studies indicate that the relationship between digital media and family life is not unidirectional: such media may help sustain communication and strengthen bonds when distance separates family members, but they may also be associated with declines in some forms of direct dialogue and shared attention, depending on the nature and context of use.

These transformations have particular significance in Algerian society given the position occupied by the family within the social structure and the roles it performs in socialization, solidarity, and the organization of relations between generations. Consequently, the presence of digital media within the family goes beyond a change in the means of communication to affect certain patterns of interaction, sources of knowledge and influence, the distribution of roles, and the boundaries separating private family life from the digital sphere. This constitutes the starting point of the present study, which treats digital mediation as an element involved in reordering certain aspects of family structure without assuming that it necessarily leads either to disintegration or cohesion. These transformations encourage attention to what takes place within family relationships themselves rather than merely measuring the spread or volume of digital media use. Recent literature has shown that the effect of social media on family connectedness varies according to patterns of use.

Accordingly, the study investigates empirically the transformations associated with digital mediation within the Algerian family through three main dimensions: family interaction and dialogue; the redistribution of certain roles and sources of influence; and transformations in family privacy. The study therefore approaches digitalization as a social practice embedded in family everyday life and affecting some of the relationships and practices through which it is organized, rather than as a technological phenomenon detached from the social structure.

On this basis, the research problem is formulated through the following question:

What is the nature of the relationship between the use of digital media and the transformations experienced by family structure among Algerian families?

Research Hypotheses

General Hypothesis:

The intensity of digital media use is associated with transformations in Algerian family structure.

Specific Hypotheses

- 1- The intensity of digital media use is associated with a decline in dialogue within the Algerian family.
- 2- Reliance on children to solve technical problems is associated with the redistribution of certain roles and sources of influence within the Algerian family.
- 3- Digital media are associated with transformations in family privacy among Algerian families.

Objectives and Significance of the Study

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to examine the nature of the transformations brought about by digital media in family structure within Algerian society through the following objectives:

1. 1. To identify the extent to which digital use is associated with changes in patterns of dialogue and direct interaction among family members.
2. 2. To examine the effect of digital knowledge and skills on the redistribution of certain roles and sources of influence within the family.
3. 3. To analyze the implications of digital use for family privacy and certain traditional roles.
4. 4. To provide a sociological reading of the transformations experienced by Algerian family structure in the context of the increasing spread of digital media.

Significance of the Study

The scientific significance of the study derives from its treatment of digitalization as a social transformation that extends beyond the technical dimension to affect relationships, roles, authority, and privacy within the family. It also seeks to contribute to the sociological debate on the relationship between digital transformation and family structure in the Algerian context. Its practical significance lies in the possibility of using the findings to understand the challenges facing the Algerian family in a changing digital environment, thereby promoting conscious use of digital media and preserving the quality of family interaction and communication.

1. 1. Conceptual Definitions

1.1 Digital Mediation

Digital mediation is defined as an approach or mechanism that seeks to exploit technical and interactive devices in order to enhance access to and dissemination of content, thereby ensuring the availability and wide dissemination of knowledge. Digital mediation is not limited to communication and marketing; it also constitutes an essential element in information documentation practices by linking documentary research support, management, and the dissemination of digital content, in addition to leading development efforts in society (Mouffok, 2022, p. 247).

The concept of digital mediation is associated with the way in which media have become part of the processes through which the social world is constructed and communication takes place within it, so that mediation is no longer separate from everyday life but is intertwined with the formation of social relationships and practices (Couldry & Hepp, 2017, p. 14).

Operationally, digital mediation in this study refers to the presence and use of digital technologies and platforms in family life and the changes associated with such use in patterns of communication and interaction, the distribution of certain roles and sources of influence, and the boundaries of privacy within the family.

1.2 Digital Media

Digital media are defined as any visual, audio, textual, or graphic content created using technology and disseminated through social media and website applications. Creators use electronic devices and technology to design, update, and transmit digital media (Price, 2015).

Digital media refers to content that exists in digital form and is distributed through computing and networks, as well as new types of institutions, platforms, and media activities associated with the digital environment. Thus, digital media encompass a range of tools and platforms that enable content to be produced, circulated, and accessed through digital technologies and networks (Flew, 2021). In everyday life, this includes smartphones, social networking sites, and various digital platforms.

Operationally, digital media in this study refers to the digital tools and platforms used by family members, particularly smartphones, social networking sites, and digital platforms, with emphasis on the intensity of use and certain patterns of use in the family's everyday life.

1.3 Family Structure

Family structure refers to the composition of the family and the individuals who constitute its unit, together with the bonds connecting them, whether based on marriage or kinship. Forms of family structure have diversified to include two-parent families, single-parent families, extended families, multigenerational families, and other family forms (Pasley, 2016, pp. 1–4).

In this study, the concept of family structure is not limited to family form and composition; rather, it is viewed as a social structure within which relationships, roles, sources of influence, and interaction among family members are organized. It may be affected by the social and technological transformations taking place in society.

Operationally, family structure in this study refers to the set of relationships and practices organized within the family, with emphasis on three main dimensions: family interaction and dialogue; the redistribution of certain roles and sources of influence; and transformations in family privacy.

1.4 Family Interaction

Family interaction is an ongoing process associated with temporal and spatial reality. As researchers emphasize, this psychosocial phenomenon refers to the relationship between stimulus and response in the behavior of two or more actors. Organization, continuity, and regularity in action make the relationship possible through eliciting a specific reaction from the other party, such as the father, mother, sibling, or relative in family interaction (Dlaci, 2015, p. 193).

Operationally, family interaction in this study refers to the level of dialogue, direct communication, and participation among family members, and the extent to which members perceive changes in this interaction in the context of increasing digital media use, particularly smartphone use.

1.5 Authority and Roles within the Family

Family authority refers to the ability to influence decisions and direct certain family choices and behaviors, whereas family roles refer to the set of tasks, responsibilities, and expectations associated with family members' positions and relationships. Authority and roles are fundamental elements through which relationships within the family are organized; however, they are not absolutely fixed and may change as a result of social, cultural, and technological transformations.

With the increasing spread of digital media, transformations may emerge in sources of knowledge and influence within the family, particularly when some members possess digital skills that exceed those of others. This may lead to new forms of dependence, influence, and participation in certain family domains (Aliouat, 2018).

Operationally, authority and roles within the family in this study refer to changes that may occur in the distribution of certain responsibilities and sources of knowledge and influence as a result of differences in digital skill levels among family members, with emphasis on parents' reliance on children in certain technical matters, the influence of children's digital knowledge on some family decisions, and the extent to which this is associated with the redistribution of certain roles.

1.6 Family Privacy

Family privacy refers to the domain in which the family keeps details of its life, relationships, and information away from the view of others, as well as its ability to control the amount and type of information disclosed to others and to determine when, to whom, and under what conditions it is disclosed. Berardo views family privacy in relation to the family's ability to control information concerning its internal life and the boundaries of its disclosure to others (Berardo, 1998, pp. 4–19).

Operationally, family privacy in this study refers to family members' perceptions of the effects of intensive digital media use and the posting of photographs, occasions, and family details on the boundaries of private life, and the extent to which these practices are associated with a decline in or redefinition of family privacy.

2. 2. Previous Studies

2.1 Arabic Studies

- Salami, Radawi, and Fiqiri (2019), entitled "Social Interaction in Cyberspace and Its Reflection on Family Values and Relationships: An Exploratory Study of a Sample of Families in M'Sila, Algeria."

The study aimed to identify changes in family values and relationships in the context of the spread of cyberspace. It used a survey of a sample of families in M'Sila and concluded that digital media contributed to the production of new patterns of relationships and interactions within the family. Their use was also associated with certain manifestations of isolation and changes in family values and relationships. This study is useful for framing the relationship between digitalization and transformations affecting family interaction in the Algerian context; however, it did not directly address the redistribution of roles, sources of authority, and family privacy as interconnected dimensions of digital transformation (Salami, 2019).

- Salhi and Sebti (2024), entitled "Family Relationships in the Context of the Growing Use of Social Networking Sites: A Field Study of a Sample of Families in Sétif."

The study aimed to identify the state of family relationships amid the growing use of social networking sites. It adopted a sample survey approach using a questionnaire administered to 100 families in Sétif. The findings showed that frequent and intensive use of social networking sites was associated with deterioration in family relationships, emotional coldness and estrangement, and reduced dialogue among family members. This study is close to the first hypothesis of the present research; however, the present study goes beyond measuring the effect of use on family relationships by statistically testing the relationship between repeated phone checking and declining direct dialogue within a broader conception of family transformations associated with digitalization (Salhi, 2024).

- Ben Lahbib and Zoubiri (2024), entitled "The Effect of Social Networking Sites on Relationships among Family Members: A Field Study of a Sample of Families in Laghouat."

The study examined the effect of social networking sites on the nature of relationships among family members, using a descriptive approach and a questionnaire. Its findings indicated a relationship between social networking use and changes in family relationships, and showed that persistent use of these sites affected the privacy of relationships within the family. This study is particularly important for the present research because of its proximity to the same geographical setting and its intersection with the dimension of family privacy. However, the present study expands this dimension within a broader conception of transformations affecting interaction, roles, authority, and privacy (Ben Lahbib, 2024).

2.2 Foreign Studies

- Tadpatrikar et al. (2021), entitled "Influence of Technology Usage on Family Communication Patterns and Functioning: A Systematic Review."

The study provided a systematic review of research published between 1990 and 2020 on the effect of technology use on family communication and relationships and included 20 studies. Its findings showed that technology use is

associated with changes in communication patterns and family connectedness. It also addressed technology-use rules and the boundaries established by families concerning such use. This study supports the dimension of family interaction and provides the present research with a comparative basis for understanding the relationship between digital use and direct communication within the family (Tadpatrikar, 2021).

- Tariq et al. (2022), entitled “Social Media Use and Family Connectedness: A Systematic Review of Quantitative Literature.”

This systematic review aimed to analyze quantitative evidence concerning the relationship between social media use and family connectedness and included 14 quantitative studies. The findings showed that the relationship is not unidirectional: some patterns of use may strengthen family communication, whereas other patterns may negatively affect meaningful interactions within the family. This finding helps avoid a deterministic interpretation of digitalization and supports the present study's orientation toward testing the relationship empirically rather than assuming that technology necessarily leads to family disintegration (Tariq, 2022).

- Tammissalo and Rotkirch (2022), entitled “Effects of Information and Communication Technology on the Quality of Family Relationships: A Systematic Review.”

The study was based on a systematic review of 70 peer-reviewed articles comprising 73 studies and focused on the effects of information and communication technology on the quality of family relationships. The findings indicated that personal technology use and technological interference with family interaction were generally associated with negative outcomes, such as distraction and conflict, whereas shared digital communication and participatory use were associated with more positive outcomes. This study helps explain the relationship between digital use and family interaction and supports viewing the effects of technology as dependent on the pattern and context of use rather than merely on the presence of digital media within the family (Tammissalo, 2022).

2.3 Commentary on Previous Studies

The previous Arabic and foreign studies reveal general agreement on the importance of digital media in reshaping certain patterns of relationships and interaction within the family, while their findings vary according to the nature and context of use. Algerian studies have focused more strongly on family relationships, dialogue, and privacy, whereas recent foreign studies have provided broader evidence concerning patterns of use, communication, and family connectedness. Despite the importance of these studies, the links between intensity of digital use and declining direct interaction, between digital knowledge and skills and the redistribution of roles and sources of authority, and between digital use and the redrawing of privacy boundaries have not been integrated comprehensively in a single study, particularly in the Algerian context. The contribution of the present study therefore lies in attempting to analyze these three dimensions in an interconnected manner using field data and statistical tests, thereby providing a sociological reading of the transformations that digital mediation may produce within Algerian family structure.

3. 3. Theoretical Framework of the Study

3.1 Network Society and the Digitalization of Family Life

Understanding the transformations produced by digital media is linked to the broader shift experienced by contemporary societies toward a social pattern in which networks and information flows have become part of the organization of relationships, communication, and everyday practices. In this context, Manuel Castells introduced the concept of the “network society” to understand the transformations brought about by information and communication technologies. These technologies are no longer separate from social life; rather, they are present in the organization of different domains and have reshaped certain patterns of communication and individuals' relationships with time and space (Castells, 2010).

This transformation has extended to family life. Family members now communicate through instant messages, calls, and digital platforms alongside face-to-face encounters. Qian and Hu indicate that the digitalization of family life represents one aspect of contemporary family change because of its relationship to everyday practices and communication patterns and to the organization of time and space within the family (Qian & Hu, 2024). Thus, the family sphere has become more closely intertwined with the digital space, and individuals can participate in family interaction while simultaneously following interactions and networks beyond their immediate surroundings.

The effect of this overlap appears in the way family members are present and distribute their attention and time. An individual may be physically present with the family in the same place while simultaneously engaged in another digital interaction, introducing a new form of presence into family interaction that combines direct presence with networked communication. Yet this overlap does not operate in the same direction in all cases. Digital media may facilitate communication among family members and preserve bonds when direct meetings are difficult, but they may also become a source of distraction from family interaction.

Digitalization of family life therefore appears to be associated with the way digital media enter the family's everyday practices. The Algerian family is not experiencing a complete transition from a traditional pattern to a digital one; rather, face-to-face communication coexists with new forms of presence and interaction through networks. This overlap appears in dialogue among family members, in their modes of communication, and in their relationship with the social environment outside the home. It may also extend to certain boundaries governing what remains within the family sphere and what moves into the digital space.

The concept of the network society helps interpret these transformations as changes in the way certain family practices and relationships are organized. Digital mediation has become part of the environment in which the family operates and contributes to organizing interaction among its members and with their surroundings, consistent with Qian and Hu's view of the relationship between digitalization and changes in practices and communication in family life (Qian & Hu, 2024). The network society thus provides an entry point for understanding family digitalization as a process that intersects with the existing family structure and reorders certain patterns of interaction within it while preserving the values and relationships that characterize family specificity.

3.2 Digital Capital and the Redistribution of Roles and Sources of Influence within the Family

The concept of digital capital helps explain differences in the resources and skills possessed by family members and how these resources may confer value and status within family relationships. This perspective draws on Bourdieu's theory, which views resources as elements that can give individuals different positions within the social field. With digital transformation, knowledge and skills related to technology have become part of these resources, particularly when they are transformed into an actual capacity to use digital media and benefit from them. In this context, Ragnedda and Ruiu introduced the concept of digital capital from a Bourdieusian perspective and linked it to the resources individuals possess to access and use technology and derive benefits from it. Digital capital is therefore associated with competencies and experiences that enable individuals to deal effectively with the digital environment, rather than merely possessing devices or an Internet connection (Ragnedda & Ruiu, 2020). Ragnedda's study supported this perspective by developing an index to measure digital capital based on the accumulation of digital resources and competencies, confirming that it can be treated as a social resource capable of producing inequalities in the ability to benefit from the digital environment (Ragnedda et al., 2020).

This idea becomes important within the family when digital experiences differ across generations. Children may possess greater knowledge of applications, devices, and digital platforms, whereas parents possess accumulated experience related to social and family life. As technology becomes increasingly present in everyday life, digital competence acquires practical value in dealing with technologies and information, communicating, and making decisions. A study by Abdelmoumen and Hadou points to the importance of digital competencies in using modern technologies, enhancing interaction and communication, handling information, and making decisions (Abdelmoumen & Hadou, 2024, p. 11).

Within the family, the effects of these differences may appear in the distribution of roles related to technical knowledge. Parents may retain their status and family responsibilities but may need their children in specific digital domains, such as dealing with applications, devices, or certain electronic services. This creates a form of intergenerational mutual dependence: the technical knowledge possessed by a child becomes valuable in a particular situation, while the parents' experience and status remain valuable in other domains. This allows for discussion of a relative change in sources of influence within the family. Knowledge associated with age and life experience remains present alongside new knowledge derived from digital competence, and this situation may give children greater capacity to assist and guide others in technical matters without implying a transfer of family authority to them. Influence here is linked to a specific domain in which the need for digital knowledge produces a temporary or partial reordering of individuals' positions.

This issue becomes increasingly important as technology becomes part of the family's everyday practices. Digital skill gradually becomes a resource on which the family can rely, and those who possess it become more capable of performing tasks that were not previously associated with them. The entry of digital competence into family relationships therefore adds a new dimension to the distribution of roles, especially in parent-child relationships. The concept of digital capital consequently provides an appropriate entry point for understanding the relationship between technical competence and the redistribution of certain roles and sources of influence within the Algerian family. The transformation produced by digitalization does not concern the family authority structure as a whole, but rather certain domains in which digital knowledge has acquired value, making the distribution of knowledge within the family more diverse and giving some members new sources of influence.

3.3 Family Privacy in the Digital Environment

The transfer of part of family life into the digital space represents a change in the way information, photographs, and practices associated with private life are handled. The study draws on Communication Privacy Management theory, developed by Sandra Petronio, which views privacy as a process through which individuals organize their private information and establish rules governing its disclosure and sharing. Petronio and Child emphasized that these rules

change according to context and the nature of social relationships (Petronio & Child, 2020). The theory assumes that individuals determine what may be disclosed, to whom, and how information should be handled after it has been shared. When private information is transferred to other people, regulating its circulation also becomes associated with the party that has acquired the information. This is particularly important within the family, where members may have different perceptions of what should be shared and what should remain private.

The issue becomes more important with the use of digital platforms because family photographs and information can reach a wider circle of people. Posting family photographs and occasions therefore involves decisions about what may be displayed, who can access it, and what should remain within the family sphere. The digital environment has made these boundaries more open to redefinition, particularly because content can be shared easily and transferred among users.

This idea is consistent with Qian and Hu's discussion of the digitalization of family life, in which digitalization affects the ways family life is displayed and interacted with in digital space and becomes involved in organizing certain everyday family practices (Qian & Hu, 2024). Recent literature on digital privacy also indicates that the multiplicity of actors and platforms may make maintaining privacy rules more complex, especially when the boundaries governing the circulation of information are not agreed upon by all parties.

In the Algerian context, the issue is particularly significant given the position of the family and the associated values of intimacy, kinship ties, and preservation of the private sphere. Recent Algerian studies have addressed family privacy on social networks and pointed to increasing overlap between private and public spheres as the sharing of family photographs and information in digital space has spread (Kobchi & Noui, 2025). Communication Privacy Management theory thus provides an appropriate basis for understanding the relationship between digital posting and the boundaries of the family's private sphere, where privacy becomes associated with how information is selected and shared and with determining who can access it. This does not mean that family privacy disappears, but rather that the way its boundaries are managed changes in the digital environment.

3.4 Theoretical Approach

The study adopts a synthetic sociological approach that combines three theoretical and conceptual perspectives because the transformations examined within the Algerian family extend beyond a single dimension. Manuel Castells's network society perspective provides a framework for understanding changes in patterns of communication and interaction and the movement of part of social life into networked spaces (Castells, 2010). The concept of digital capital, grounded in the Bourdieusian perspective, helps explain how technical knowledge and skills may become valuable resources within the family, affecting certain roles and sources of influence (Ragnedda & Rui, 2020). Sandra Petronio's Communication Privacy Management theory helps explain how family members organize their private information and determine what can be disclosed and shared and who can access it in the digital environment (Petronio, 2010). Combining these perspectives follows from the nature of the phenomenon under study: digital mediation is connected to dialogue and interaction within the family, affects the distribution of knowledge, roles, and sources of influence, and extends to the boundaries separating private life from the external sphere. This approach therefore enables these dimensions to be read as interconnected while preserving the specificity of each perspective and avoiding a one-directional interpretation of the relationship between digitalization and family.

4. 4. Methodological Procedures

4.1 Research Method

This study adopted the descriptive-analytical method because it is appropriate to the nature of the phenomenon under investigation. It enables the presence of digital media in family life to be described as reflected in the everyday practices and perceptions of family members and then allows the relationships between media use and certain dimensions of family structure to be analyzed. The method was employed in two complementary stages. The first described patterns of digital media use and certain characteristics of the sample, while the second analyzed relationships among variables related to the study hypotheses, particularly family interaction, the distribution of roles and sources of influence, and family privacy boundaries. This was accomplished by collecting field data through a questionnaire and statistically processing them in order to test the hypotheses and interpret the findings in light of the study's theoretical framework.

4.2 Study Population and Sample

The study population consisted of individuals belonging to families in Laghouat Province, as they constitute a source of data concerning digital practices and changes affecting certain aspects of family life. The study relied on a non-probability convenience sample of 145 respondents, reached according to the researchers' ability to contact members of the target population and their willingness to respond to the questionnaire.

The choice of this type of sampling is justified by the nature of the study and the procedures used to reach respondents, while recognizing that a convenience sample does not permit statistical generalization of the findings to all families; rather, it permits examination of trends and relationships among the variables studied within the sample.

4.3 Data Collection Instrument

The study used a questionnaire as the instrument for collecting field data. It was developed in accordance with the research problem and hypotheses so that the main concepts could be converted into measurable indicators. The questionnaire comprised four sections containing 24 questions addressing digital media use, family interaction, roles and sources of influence, and family privacy. Care was taken to ensure that the questions were directly related to the study variables and hypotheses. The questionnaire was also presented to professors specializing in sociology to assess the suitability, clarity, and coherence of its items with the topic of the study. The reliability of the instrument was verified using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

4.4 Statistical Data Processing

After the questionnaires were collected, the data were entered, coded, and processed using SPSS. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe sample characteristics and the distribution of responses, while Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to test relationships among variables related to the study hypotheses. Correlation coefficients were interpreted in terms of the direction and strength of the relationship and its level of statistical significance. The quantitative findings were then linked to the sociological significance of the phenomenon, allowing an understanding of how digital mediation is associated with transformations in interaction, roles, sources of influence, and privacy within the Algerian family.

5. 5. Presentation and Analysis of Results

5.1 Characteristics of the Study Sample

Table 1: Personal characteristics of the study sample (prepared by the researcher based on study data using SPSS 26).

Total percentage		33.1%	48	Male	Gender
100%	145				
100%	145	66.9%	97	Female	Age
		1.4%	2	Under 20 years	
100%	145	11.0%	16	21–30 years	Educational level
		87.6%	127	Over 31 years	
		6.9%	10	Primary	
100%	145	39.3%	57	Secondary	Marital status
		53.8%	78	University	
		22.8%	33	Single	
100%	145	72.4%	105	Married	Occupational status
		4.8%	7	Divorced	
		5.5%	8	Unemployed	

100%	145	60.7%	88	Employed	Occupational status
		29.0%	42	Self-employed	
		4.8%	7	Retired	
		%4.8	7	مستأجر/ة	

Table 1 shows the personal characteristics of the study sample in terms of age, gender, educational level, marital status, and occupational status. It reveals relative diversity in social, educational, and occupational situations, with one age group clearly predominant. The group aged over 31 years represents the largest proportion of the sample, and married respondents constitute the majority, which gives the study a direct connection to the family context under investigation. The sample also shows diversity in occupational and educational situations.

These characteristics indicate that the study of digital mediation takes place within a social context in which different age, educational, and occupational situations intersect. This is important for understanding how digital media are present in family life. The high proportion of married respondents clearly connects the sample to the family domain addressed by the study, while occupational and educational diversity makes it possible to view digital mediation as a social practice intertwined with different patterns of everyday life.

5.2 Analysis and Interpretation of the First Hypothesis

Table 2: Relationship between checking the phone and the decline of direct dialogue within the family (from SPSS 26 statistical output).

Decline in \ Phone checking	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
Always	52.6%	15.8%	21.1%	10.5%	/	100%
Often	33.3%	20.0%	40.0%	6.7%	/	100%
Sometimes	13.3%	31.1%	40.0%	8.9%	6.7%	100%
Rarely	8.7%	30.4%	41.3%	19.6%	/	100%
Never	15.0%	20.0%	30.0%	15.0%	20.0%	100%
Total	19.3%	26.2%	36.6%	13.1%	4.8%	100%

**PEARSON
CORRELATION
COEFFICIENT**

**SIGNIFICANCE
LEVEL**

**TYPE
CORRELATION**

OF

0.300

0.001

Weak positive

The table shows variation in the perception of declining direct dialogue within the family according to the frequency of phone checking. Among respondents who always check their phones, the highest proportion reported always noticing a decline in direct dialogue, at 52.6%, followed by those reporting that they sometimes noticed a decline, at 21.1%, and those reporting it often, at 15.8%. Among those who often check their phones, the highest proportion was in the “sometimes” category, at 40.0%, followed by “always” at 33.3%. Among those who sometimes check their phones, the highest proportion also reported “sometimes” declining dialogue, at 40.0%, compared with 31.1% reporting “often” and 13.3% reporting “always.” Among those who rarely check their phones, the highest proportion was 41.3% in the “sometimes” category, compared with 30.4% in “often” and 19.6% in “rarely.” Among those who never check their phones, the highest proportion was likewise in the “sometimes” category, at 30.0%, while “often” and “never” each accounted for 20.0%. Overall, the data reveal a tendency for the perception of declining dialogue to become more prevalent as the frequency of phone checking increases. This is particularly clear among respondents who always check their phones, where the proportion noticing a decline in dialogue always exceeded half of the group, reaching 52.6%.

These findings are supported by the correlation test, with Pearson's correlation coefficient equal to 0.300 at a significance level of 0.001, a statistically significant value. This result indicates a weak positive statistically significant relationship between the frequency of phone checking and declining direct dialogue within the family; that is, as the frequency of phone checking increases, the perceived level of decline in direct family dialogue increases, and vice versa.

In light of the transformation introduced by digital media into the organization of interaction within the family sphere, the smartphone has become a frequent presence in everyday life and integrated into family members' practices and patterns of attention. The significance of the finding therefore lies not merely in the presence of the phone within the family but in the transformation of checking it into a repeated practice that can compete with direct dialogue for an individual's attention and time during family interaction. Family dialogue requires mutual presence, attention, and continuity of interaction. With repeated engagement with the phone, an individual may be physically present within the family while dividing attention between family members and interactions enabled by the digital space. The family relationship does not disappear; rather, the mode of presence within it changes.

This can be understood through the overlap between the family sphere and spaces of digital interaction. Individuals are simultaneously connected to people, information, and interactions beyond the family, making family interaction part of a broader space in which face-to-face and networked relationships intersect. Digital mediation thus becomes present in organizing communication, attention, and everyday practices within the family. The relationship between repeated phone checking and perceived decline in dialogue should not be interpreted as evidence that the phone alone causes weak communication; rather, it is an indicator that a particular pattern of digital use is associated with a transformation in the conditions of family interaction. The issue concerns not the device itself but the way its use has become part of the organization of time and attention within the family. Digital media may support communication and preserve bonds, but they may also compete with face-to-face communication when personal use becomes a source of distraction during family situations.

This finding indicates that the transfer of part of attention and communication into the digital sphere does not necessarily mean family disintegration or the collapse of its bonds. Rather, it reflects a gradual reorganization of interaction mechanisms within the family. Direct dialogue now coexists with digital communication within an interactive structure that combines face-to-face and networked presence. The relationship identified by the findings can therefore be regarded as one manifestation of the reorganization of family interaction under digital mediation, whereby frequent return to the phone may reduce the space available for direct dialogue without necessarily weakening the family, but rather changing the form of interaction and the conditions of presence within it.

5.3 Analysis and Interpretation of the Second Hypothesis

Table 3: Relationship between parents' reliance on children to solve technical problems and the redistribution of roles and authority within the family (from SPSS 26 statistical output).

Role redistribution \ Reliance on children	Yes	To some extent	No	Total
Always	58.6%	37.9%	3.4%	100%
Often	43.6%	41.0%	15.4%	100%
Sometimes	28.9%	36.8%	34.2%	100%
Total	42.8%	39.3%	17.9%	100%

PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENT	SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL	TYPE OF CORRELATION
0.279	0.001	Weak positive

Table 3 indicates a descriptive tendency linking reliance on children to solve technical problems with perceptions of a redistribution of certain roles and authority within the family. Among respondents whose parents always rely on them to solve technical problems, 58.6% answered “yes” when asked whether technical skills had contributed to redistributing roles and authority, compared with 37.9% who answered “to some extent” and only 3.4% who reported no such change. Among those whose parents often rely on them, 43.6% perceived a redistribution of roles and authority, compared with 41.0% who perceived it to some extent and 15.4% who did not perceive such a change. In the “sometimes” reliance category, the “yes” response fell to 28.9%, compared with 36.8% who perceived redistribution to some extent and 34.2% who rejected the existence of such a change. Comparison across the categories reveals a clear descriptive tendency: as the frequency of parents’ reliance on children to solve technical problems increases, the proportion perceiving a redistribution of roles and authority also increases. This is particularly clear when moving from “sometimes” to “always,” where the “yes” response rises from 28.9% to 58.6%. Overall, 42.8% of the sample believed that technical skills had contributed to redistributing roles and authority, compared with 39.3% who believed this to some extent and 17.9% who did not perceive such a change. This indicates that perceptions of role redistribution are appreciable, although they are not absolute within the family.

The correlation test confirms a weak positive statistically significant relationship between the two variables, with Pearson’s correlation coefficient equal to 0.279 at a significance level of 0.001. This means that greater reliance on children to solve technical problems is accompanied by greater perception of a redistribution of certain roles and sources of influence within the family.

The technical knowledge and skills possessed by children acquire value within the family when parents need them to deal with devices, platforms, and digital services. This reliance strengthens children’s presence in particular situations, especially those related to the technical domain. It reveals a relative change in sources of influence within the family, as technical competence has become an influential factor alongside age, experience, and family status. Parents possess experience associated with family and social life, whereas children in some cases possess more recent technical knowledge, creating a form of intergenerational mutual dependence. This can be linked to Bourdieu’s conception of capital, in which knowledge becomes more valuable when it gives its holder the capacity to exercise influence within the field in which it operates. As technology becomes increasingly present in everyday life, digital skills become a resource that can provide children with a degree of recognition and reliance, particularly in situations requiring technical expertise.

The relationship between knowledge and authority within the family appears more flexible. A parent may need knowledge possessed by a child, making the younger family member an expert in a specific domain. This does not mean that family hierarchy disappears; rather, it opens space for a more diversified distribution of knowledge and roles, with each generation retaining different sources of influence.

This interpretation confirms that the transformation associated with digitalization is partial and domain-specific. A child may exercise greater influence in technical matters, while parental authority continues in other domains related to responsibility, experience, and family status. Redistribution of roles and authority can therefore be understood here as a reordering of certain sources of influence within the family associated with the emergence of digital

competence as a new resource of influence, without producing a comprehensive change in the family authority structure.

5.4 Analysis and Interpretation of the Third Hypothesis

Table 4: Relationship between posting family photographs and occasions and exposure of family-life details to others (from SPSS 26 statistical output).

Exposure of details \ Posting photographs	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
Always	83.3%	16.7%	/	/	/	100%
Often	75.0%	25.0%	/	/	/	100%
Sometimes	47.6%	42.9%	4.8%	4.8%	/	100%
Rarely	44.4%	48.1%	3.7%	3.7%	/	100%
Never	56.6%	12.0%	22.9%	3.6%	4.8%	100%
Total	55.2%	24.1%	14.5%	3.4%	2.8%	100%

PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENT	SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL	TYPE OF CORRELATION
0.189	0.023	Weak positive

Table 4 shows a descriptive tendency toward greater perception that details of family life are exposed to others as the level of posting family photographs and occasions on digital platforms increases. Among those who always post family photographs and occasions, 83.3% confirmed that their family-life details had become always exposed to others, compared with 75.0% among those who post them often, 47.6% among those who post them sometimes, and 44.4% among those who post them rarely. These data reveal a clear descriptive progression: the proportion perceiving constant exposure increases with the frequency of posting. The differences are particularly evident between the “always” posting category and the “sometimes” or “rarely” categories. Among those who never post family photographs and occasions, perceptions of exposure nevertheless vary: 56.6% reported constant exposure, compared with 12.0% reporting frequent exposure and 22.9% reporting occasional exposure. This indicates that exposure is not associated solely with direct posting but may also be related to other forms of digital presence and use.

Pearson’s correlation test confirms a weak positive statistically significant relationship between posting family photographs and occasions and perceiving exposure of family-life details to others. The correlation coefficient was 0.189 at a significance level of 0.023. Accordingly, the results indicate an association between posting family photographs and occasions on digital platforms and the perception that details of family life are exposed to others.

The findings reveal a relationship between posting family photographs and occasions on digital platforms and the perception that family-life details are exposed to others. This can be understood in terms of the reorganization of boundaries between the private and public spheres under digital mediation. A family photograph that was previously circulated mostly within limited social circles can become accessible to a wider audience once posted, making the circulation of family information less tied to the family’s spatial boundaries. The issue concerns a change in how privacy is managed within the family, as members face repeated choices concerning what can be shared, who can view it, and the context in which it is posted. As digital interaction expands, the boundaries between private life and

the external environment become more flexible and open to redefinition. The movement of a family photograph or occasion into digital space also expands the circle of interaction around it, taking it beyond its immediate social context and making it part of a wider network of relationships. This makes certain details of family life more likely to appear before an audience extending beyond the family's close circle.

However, the weakness of the correlation coefficient calls for avoiding a decisive interpretation of the relationship. Digital posting is one factor associated with the perception of changing privacy rather than a comprehensive explanation of it. This perception may also be affected by practices of other family members or by different forms of digital interaction, making privacy a collective matter involving the practices of more than one individual. The specificity of this issue within the Algerian family emerges from the overlap between values of intimacy, discretion, and preservation of private life and new patterns of communication and displaying family occasions. The transformation therefore appears closer to an ongoing negotiation over the boundaries between private and public spheres, in which the choice of what is posted and what is retained remains linked to family values and members' perceptions of privacy.

The finding highlights that digital mediation reshapes the symbolic boundaries between the private and public spheres within the family. Some matters previously confined to the family sphere have become capable of circulating in a wider networked space, while privacy remains connected to posting decisions, audience selection, and ways of handling circulated content. The change does not mean the disappearance of privacy; rather, it means a change in how privacy and its boundaries are managed within the digital environment.

6. Conclusion

This study reveals that digital mediation has become present in the details of everyday life of the Algerian family and has begun to affect how its members communicate, the distribution of certain roles and sources of knowledge and influence, and the boundaries separating private life from its surroundings. The findings show that the entry of digital media into the family sphere has not eliminated traditional forms of relationships; rather, it has introduced gradual changes affecting different aspects of family life. Repeated phone use was associated with perceived decline in direct dialogue among family members, reflecting changes in the distribution of attention and time during interaction. Individuals have become able to combine their presence within the family sphere with continuous connection to digital spaces outside it, making family presence more complex in terms of attention and participation. A new form of family interaction therefore emerges in which direct communication coexists with digital communication and circles of presence and engagement overlap within everyday life.

The findings also show that digital knowledge has acquired value within family relationships, particularly when parents need their children to deal with devices or solve technical problems. This has produced a relative change in the relationship between age and knowledge, as a child may become, in certain situations, the holder of expertise needed by a parent. This opens space for new forms of intergenerational mutual dependence in which parents retain their status and family responsibilities while children gain a degree of influence in areas associated with their technical competence.

With regard to family privacy, the findings show that posting family photographs and occasions on digital platforms is associated with changes in certain boundaries between private life and the external sphere. Content that previously remained within limited social circles can now reach a wider audience, making decisions about what should be shared and what should remain within the family more closely tied to members' decisions and digital practices. Privacy in this case is associated with how family content is managed and the audience selected, while family values that define what constitutes a private matter remain present.

These findings converge around a central point: digital transformation affects multiple dimensions of family structure in Algeria. It appears in dialogue and interaction, in the distribution of knowledge and roles, in sources of influence, and in the management of privacy and its boundaries. Nevertheless, these changes do not occur to the same degree in all family relationships and situations, nor do they necessarily weaken family bonds. The family engages with digital media according to its needs, values, and internal organization, accepting some patterns of use and regulating others.

The Algerian family thus takes on a more complex form that combines kinship ties and direct interaction on the one hand with digital presence and networked communication on the other. This overlap appears in everyday life: the phone may serve as a means of communication among family members while simultaneously being a source of distraction from one another. Digital knowledge may also strengthen one child's capacity to assist and influence without comprehensively changing that child's position within the family hierarchy. These cases show that digitalization enters existing relationships and reorders some of their aspects according to need and context. Treating digital mediation as a direct cause of family disintegration therefore does not reflect the nature of the relationship identified by the study, while treating it as a neutral tool does not explain the changes observed. Digital media have become part of family practices themselves, influencing the organization of time and attention, the distribution of

certain forms of knowledge and roles, and the handling of private-life details. Digital transformation thus appears as a social process with which the family interacts, adapts, and regulates its use according to its circumstances and values.

These findings place sociological research before an issue that goes beyond measuring the extent of technology use within the family toward understanding how families rebuild their balances in an ever-changing digital environment. A key concern for future research is whether families will develop new rules for organizing the presence of phones in everyday life, clearer mechanisms for exchanging knowledge between generations, and more precise boundaries for protecting privacy, while maintaining family cohesion and benefiting from the opportunities offered by the digital environment.

The study therefore opens new sociological questions concerning the future of the Algerian family, particularly as reliance on technology expands and its presence increases in different details of everyday life. The question for future research is: To what extent will the Algerian family be able to develop new forms of organizing interaction, distributing roles, and managing privacy that enable adaptation to the digital society while preserving its cohesion and the continuity of its bonds?

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