Jurnal PG-PAUD TRUNOJOYO
Volume 13, Nomor 1, Tahun 2026, pp. 59-73
P-ISSN: 2528-3553, E-ISSN: 2613-9650
Open Access: https://doi.org/10.21107/pgpaudtrunojoyo.v13i1



From Viral to Protection: Do Parents Take Action?

Muqimah Surganingsih[1]✉, Fitriani Dzulfadhilah[2], Hasmawaty[3], Bonita Mahmud[4]

[1,2,3]Programstudi PG-PAUD, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Makassar, Indonesia
[4]Programstudi PIAUD, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Bone, Bone, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received August 3, 2025
Revised November 11, 2025
Accepted February 27, 2026
Available online April 1, 2026

Kata Kunci:
Literasi digital, perlindungan anak, orang tua, perilaku protektif, fantasi sedarah

Keywords:
Digital literacy, child protection, parents, protective behavior, incest fantacy



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Copyright © 2026 by Author. Published by Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura.

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan teknologi digital yang begitu pesat telah memperluas akses anak usia dini terhadap informasi, sekaligus meningkatkan risiko paparan konten daring yang tidak pantas, sebagaimana ditunjukkan dalam kasus viral "Incest Fantasy". Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengukur tingkat kesadaran orang tua terhadap kasus tersebut, mengeksplorasi respons emosional dan psikologis mereka, menganalisis perubahan perilaku protektif, serta mengidentifikasi tindakan pencegahan tambahan dalam konteks perlindungan anak di era digital. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuantitatif deskriptif dengan melibatkan 37 orang tua anak taman kanak-kanak (n=37) yang dipilih melalui teknik *purposive sampling*. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner skala Likert yang telah divalidasi untuk mengukur kesadaran orang tua, respons emosional dan psikologis, perubahan perilaku protektif, serta tindakan pencegahan. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan korelasi Pearson. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun tingkat kesadaran orang tua relatif tinggi, kesadaran tersebut tidak berhubungan secara signifikan dengan perubahan perilaku protektif maupun tindakan pencegahan. Sebaliknya, respons emosional dan psikologis menunjukkan korelasi positif yang sangat kuat dengan perubahan perilaku protektif ($r = 0{,}814$; $p < 0{,}01$) serta korelasi signifikan tingkat sedang dengan tindakan pencegahan tambahan ($r = 0{,}542$; $p < 0{,}01$). Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa keterlibatan emosional memainkan peran yang lebih menentukan dibandingkan kesadaran kognitif dalam membentuk perilaku protektif orang tua terhadap anak. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya integrasi dimensi kognitif, afektif, dan humanistik dalam perancangan program perlindungan anak di era digital guna memperkuat keterlibatan dan responsivitas orang tua.

ABSTRACT

The rapid advancement of digital technology has expanded young children's access to information while simultaneously increasing the risk of exposure to inappropriate online content, as illustrated by the viral "Incest Fantasy" case. This study aims to measure parents' awareness of the case, explore their emotional and psychological responses, analyze changes in protective behavior, and identify additional preventive actions in the context of child protection in the digital era. Employing a descriptive quantitative design, the study involved 37 parents of kindergarten children (n=37) selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire measuring parental awareness, emotional and psychological responses, protective behavior changes, and preventive actions, and analyzed through descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation. The findings indicate that although parents demonstrated relatively high levels of awareness, awareness was not significantly associated with changes in protective behavior or preventive actions. In contrast, emotional and psychological responses exhibited a very strong positive correlation with changes in protective behavior ($r = 0.814$, $p < 0.01$) and a moderate, significant correlation with additional preventive actions ($r = 0.542$, $p < 0.01$). These results suggest that emotional engagement plays a more decisive role than cognitive awareness in shaping parents' protective behaviors toward their children. This study underscores the importance of integrating cognitive, affective, and humanistic dimensions in the design of digital child protection programs to strengthen parental involvement and responsiveness.

To cite: Surganingsih, M., Dzulfadhilah, F., Hasmawaty,. & Mahmud, B. (2026). From Viral to Protection: Do Parents Take Action? *Jurnal PG-PAUD Trunojoyo: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Anak Usia Dini, 13*(1), 59-73. https://doi.org/10.21107/pgpaudtrunojoyo.v13i1.31326

✉Corresponding author:
E-mail addresses: muqimah.surganingsih@unm.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes to children's lives and to the ways they interact with their social, cultural, and educational environments (Nichols & Selim, 2022). The use of digital devices such as smartphones, tablets, and computers has now become an inseparable part of early childhood routines, whether for learning, playing, or communicating (Lindeman et al., 2021; Marsh, 2020). This transformation positions children not only as passive consumers but as active participants in a globally interconnected digital ecosystem (Säljö, 2022). Previous studies have shown that early digital engagement has the potential to develop digital literacy, information-filtering abilities, and problem-solving skills competencies that are highly relevant to the demands of the 21st century (Munisa et al., 2024). Nevertheless, these benefits are accompanied by risks that cannot be overlooked. Exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, online predators, and distorted social norms has been identified as a serious threat to children's moral, emotional, and cognitive development (Aqdassi et al., 2021; Livingstone & Third, 2017; Park et al., 2025). Among young children, these threats become more complex due to their limited ability to understand communicative intent and the consequences of digital behavior (Lamb et al., 2020; Livingstone & Helsper, 2008).

In the Indonesian context, this issue becomes increasingly important as rapid internet penetration is not always matched by adequate levels of digital literacy within families (Putri Sovia & Silvio, 2024). Many children are introduced to digital devices from a very young age, particularly in urban and semi-urban areas, while parents' understanding of digital risks varies widely (Fendel et al., 2025). Indonesian socio-cultural norms rooted in modesty, moral values, and high sensitivity toward sexual content make exposure to inappropriate digital material an even greater psychosocial threat. This indicates that digital protection for Indonesian children cannot be separated from cultural context, local values, and the unique parenting practices of Indonesian society.

To understand how parents can play a key role in mitigating such risks, the Parental Mediation Theory serves as the primary framework of this study (Goodall & Montgomery, 2023). This theory explains that parental mediation of children's digital media use is carried out through several strategies: active communication about content, the enforcement of rules and restrictions on device use, and direct involvement through co-use or co-viewing (Grané I Oró, 2021). Previous research indicates that a combination of active mediation and co-viewing tends to be more effective for young children compared to strict restrictions, which often trigger resistance or secretive behavior. Establishing this theoretical foundation early is crucial to forming a conceptual understanding of how parents respond to sudden and widespread digital threats. Therefore, parental mediation theory provides not only a descriptive framework but also an analytical lens to explain how parents cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally respond to digital threats faced by young children.

One digital phenomenon that has triggered widespread concern among Indonesian parents is the viral distribution of the "Incest Fantasy" content on social media. This content not only violates moral and cultural norms but also evokes deep anxiety among parents, even when children do not directly access the material. Exposure to sexual or violent content, whether direct or indirect, has been linked to the development of distorted perceptions of bodily boundaries, interpersonal relationships, and ethical values (Doty et al., 2025). Furthermore, suboptimal algorithmic filtering on digital platforms intensifies these risks, particularly for parents with limited digital literacy (Youssef et al., 2025). Thus, examining parents' responses to this phenomenon becomes critical both in terms of emotional reactions and the emergence of protective behaviors in response to perceived digital threats.

To analyze parental responses, this study operationalizes two core concepts. Protective behavior refers to concrete actions taken by parents to restrict or control children's exposure to

harmful digital content, including increased device supervision, reduced screen time, the use of parental control features, and enhanced communication about digital safety. Meanwhile, additional preventive actions refer to long-term anticipatory efforts, such as attending digital literacy seminars, adopting new family media policies, and collaborating with schools to reinforce digital literacy education. Differentiating these concepts is essential to understanding parental responses both in terms of short-term behavior and long-term strategies.

Although research on digital risks is increasing, empirical studies focusing on the emotional and behavioral responses of parents to harmful digital content, particularly in the context of early childhood in Indonesia, remain limited. Most studies focus on adolescents or school-aged children, leaving the dynamics of parenting for children aged 4–6 relatively understudied. Moreover, quantitative studies that link parental knowledge, emotional responses, and changes in protective behavior in response to viral digital cases remain scarce. This gap highlights the need for empirical evidence that explains not only what parents know but also how their emotions influence their protective decisions.

Based on this gap, the present study aims to examine how parents of kindergarten-age children respond to the "Incest Fantasy" phenomenon by assessing (1) parents' level of awareness of the case, (2) their emotional and psychological responses, (3) changes in protective behavior toward their children, and (4) additional preventive actions taken in the digital context. Through this approach, the study seeks to clarify the extent to which cognitive awareness and emotional engagement shape parental protective behavior in the digital era.

By integrating parental mediation theory, the Indonesian cultural context, and empirical findings on parental responses, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to strengthening child protection policies and practices in the digital era. A more holistic approach one that not only emphasizes the cognitive dimension through the provision of information, but also considers emotional factors and parenting values, is needed to build a digital environment that is safe, supportive, and developmentally relevant for Indonesian children.

2. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive quantitative approach to identify and describe parents' responses to the viral "Incest Fantasy" case and its implications for child protection in the digital era. The primary aim of this research was to gain a deeper understanding of parents' perceptions, emotional responses, and protective actions taken after receiving information about the case through digital media. The study population consisted of parents with children of kindergarten age who were enrolled in early childhood education (ECE) institutions. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, with the following criteria: (1) having an early childhood-aged child currently attending kindergarten/ECE, (2) actively using social media or having access to digital information, and (3) willingness to participate by completing the questionnaire. The sample for this study consisted of 37 participants, in total, 55 parents were invited to participate, of whom 37 completed the questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 71.15%.

The research instrument was a closed-ended instrument developed independently by the researcher based on relevant literature and theoretical constructs related to parental mediation and digital child protection. Before full deployment, the instrument underwent expert validation by two specialists in early childhood education and digital parenting to assess its content validity, clarity, and relevance. The questionnaire was also pilot-tested on a small group of parents with similar characteristics to ensure item comprehension and to refine ambiguous statements. The final instrument used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) and consisted of five main sections: (1) Respondent Profile, (2) Knowledge of the "Incest Fantasy" Case, (3) Emotional and Psychological Responses, (4) Changes in Protective

Behavior, and (5) Additional Preventive Measures. Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the institutional ethics committee, and all participants provided informed consent prior to participation. Participants were assured of anonymity, confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of their involvement.

The instrument was distributed online via Google Forms. The collected data were exported into Microsoft Excel and subsequently analyzed using SPSS version 25. The data analysis procedures included instrument validity testing using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation for each item ($r > 0.30$ as the acceptance threshold). Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach's Alpha to evaluate internal consistency, with values ≥ 0.70 considered acceptable, ≥ 0.80 good, and ≥ 0.90 excellent (Creswell, 2022).

The study employed Spearman's Rho correlation, a non-parametric statistical technique appropriate for ordinal data and non-normal distributions. Spearman's Rho assesses the strength and direction of monotonic relationships between variables by ranking scores rather than using raw values. This approach is particularly suitable for Likert-scale data and provides robust correlation coefficients even when assumptions of normality and linearity are violated. Correlation coefficients (ρ) were interpreted using the following thresholds: 0.00–0.19 = very weak, 0.20–0.39 = weak, 0.40–0.59 = moderate, 0.60–0.79 = strong, and 0.80–1.00 = very strong.

Descriptive statistics, including medians, interquartile ranges (IQR), minimum and maximum values, and frequency distributions, were used to illustrate general trends in parents' responses. The use of SPSS ensured analytical accuracy and objectivity, contributing to the reliability of the research findings. Through descriptive and non-parametric inferential techniques, this study offers foundational empirical insights into parents' awareness, emotional reactions, and protective measures regarding the exposure of digital sexual risks to young children. (Fraenkel et al., 2023; Hair et al., 2022).

The use of SPSS in this research aimed to ensure the accuracy and objectivity of the data analysis and to enhance the credibility of the research findings. Through systematic descriptive analysis, the study is expected to provide an initial overview of parents' level of awareness and the types of preventive actions they take against the threat of digital sexual violence toward children.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

This study aims to understand the extent to which parents are aware of the viral "Incest Fantasy" case, as well as their emotional and psychological responses, changes in protective behavior, and additional preventive measures taken in the context of early childhood protection in the digital era. The analysis involved 37 respondents, all of whom were parents of kindergarten children, using a descriptive quantitative approach with a Likert-scale instrument.

The demographic profile of the respondents is summarized in Table 1, outlining key characteristics such as gender, education level, number of children, and age of the youngest child.

Table 1. The demographic profile

Category	Subcategory	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	5	13.5
	Female	32	86.5
Age Range of Respondents	25–41 years	37	100
Educational Background	Senior High School (SMA)	6	16.2
	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	24	64.9
	Master's Degree (S2)	6	16.2
	Doctoral Degree (S3)	1	2.7
Number of Children	One child	14	37.8
	Two children	14	37.8
	More than two children	9	24.3
Age of Youngest Child	1–2 years	16	43.2
	3–6 years	14	37.8
	7–12 years	7	18.9

The demographic information presented in Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents were mothers with relatively high educational backgrounds, indicating that most participants possessed sufficient literacy to understand issues related to digital parenting. The distribution of family size and the age range of the youngest children also reflects diverse parenting contexts, from families with infants and toddlers to those with school-aged children. This diversity is important because it may influence parents' levels of awareness, emotional reactions, and protective behaviors toward digital risks. Overall, the respondent profile provides a strong foundation for interpreting the subsequent findings related to parental knowledge, emotional-psychological responses, and preventive actions in the digital environment.

After presenting the characteristics of the respondents, the next step is to evaluate the quality of the research instrument through a validity test. The subsequent analysis focuses on the instrument validity test to assess whether all items meet the required measurement standards.

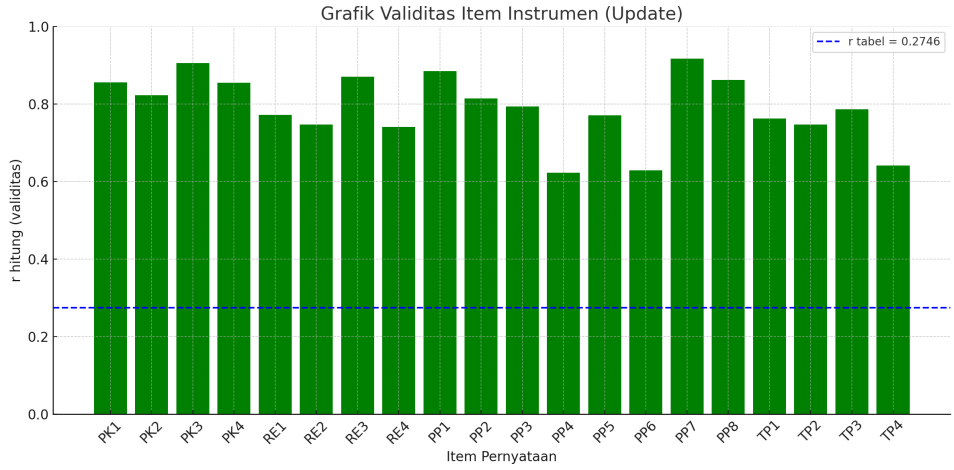


Figure 1. Instrument's Validity

A validity test was carried out to determine the extent to which each item in the research instrument could accurately measure the intended construct. With a total of 37 respondents participating in the study, the degrees of freedom (df) were calculated to be 35. At the 5%

significance level, the r table value was established as 0.2746, serving as the minimum benchmark for item validity. The analysis revealed that the calculated r values (r count) for the items ranged between 0.622 and 0.916, all of which were well above the r table threshold. This means that every single item included in the questionnaire demonstrated statistically significant validity. The validity graph further illustrated this outcome, with all items represented in green bars, visually confirming their compliance with the validity requirements. This visual representation reinforces the quantitative findings by providing an intuitive understanding of how all items surpassed the set benchmark.

When examined in detail, the Knowledge of Case variable (PK1–PK4) displayed particularly strong validity results. All four items had r values exceeding 0.82, with PK3 recording the highest value at r = 0.9052. This suggests that the questions designed under this variable were highly effective in capturing respondents' awareness and understanding of the "Incest Fantasy" case. Such high validity is crucial in ensuring that the responses collected from these items genuinely reflect the construct of knowledge rather than extraneous factors.

Similarly, the Emotional and Psychological Response variable (RE1–RE4) also showed consistently high validity, with r values ranging from 0.7406 to 0.8700. These results indicate that the items effectively measured parents' emotional reactions—such as shock, anger, anxiety, and concern towards the viral case. Strong item validity in this domain ensures that the analysis of emotional and psychological responses is based on robust and accurate data, which is particularly important when examining the link between emotional states and subsequent protective behaviors.

The Protective Behavior Change variable (PP1–PP8) demonstrated valid results for all eight items, though the range of r values was slightly broader. The highest validity was observed in PP7 (r = 0.9163), while PP6 had the lowest (r = 0.6223). Despite this variation, all items still comfortably exceeded the validity threshold. These findings suggest that the instrument effectively captured the behavioral changes parents implemented after learning about the case, such as increased supervision of children's online activities and the imposition of stricter digital boundaries.

Lastly, the Additional Preventive Actions variable (TP1–TP4) yielded r values between 0.6411 and 0.7863, indicating adequate validity across all items. These questions focused on identifying further steps parents took beyond their immediate protective behaviors, such as seeking additional information, participating in parenting webinars, and advocating for digital protection programs in schools. The confirmation of validity for these items ensures that the study's conclusions regarding extended preventive measures are based on reliable and valid data. Overall, the validation process confirms that the entire instrument is suitable for data collection, thereby enhancing the credibility of the analysis and supporting the strength of the conclusions derived from the research findings.

Table 2. Reliability Statistics

Section	Description	Value
Case Processing Summary	Number of Valid Cases (N)	37
	Percentage of Valid Cases	100.0
	Excluded Cases	0
	Percentage of Excluded Cases	0.0
	Total Cases (N)	37
Reliability Statistics	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	668
	Number of Items (N)	4

The results in Table 2 indicate that the instrument demonstrates acceptable internal consistency, with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.668 for the four items. According to established guidelines, values above 0.60 are considered acceptable for exploratory research, while values approaching 0.70 indicate adequate reliability. This suggests that the items within

the construct measure the intended concept consistently across respondents. In addition, the Case Processing Summary shows that all 37 cases were valid and included in the analysis, with no missing data, ensuring that the reliability estimate is based on complete information. Overall, the reliability results confirm that the instrument is sufficiently stable and appropriate for use in further statistical analysis.

After establishing that the instrument was both valid and reliable, a normality test was carried out to ensure that the data fulfilled the assumptions required for subsequent analyses.

Table 3. Test of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			**Shapiro-Wilk**		
	Statistic	**df**	**Sig.**	**Statistic**	**df**	**Sig.**
Knowledge of Case	.125	37	.150	.914	37	
Emotional and Psychological Responses	.257	37	.000	.708	37	.000
Protective Behavior	.267	37	.000	.648	37	.000
Additional Preventive Measures	.146	37	.044	.918	37	.010

The normality of the data was examined using both the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests, with the significance value (Sig.) used as the primary indicator. A variable is considered normally distributed if the Sig. value exceeds 0.05. As shown in the results, the variable Parental Knowledge of the Case obtained a Kolmogorov–Smirnov significance value of 0.150, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that this variable meets the assumption of normality. However, the Shapiro–Wilk value for the same variable was 0.007, suggesting non-normality based on this stricter test. For the remaining three variables, Emotional and Psychological Responses, Protective Behavior, and Additional Preventive Measures, both tests produced significance values below 0.05, indicating that these variables are not normally distributed. Overall, the results show that only the Knowledge variable approaches normality under the Kolmogorov–Smirnov criterion, while all other constructs fail to meet normality assumptions.

Since the majority of the variables violated the assumption of normality, non-parametric procedures were deemed more appropriate; therefore, Spearman's Rho was employed to examine the associations between the variables. The results of the frequency distribution analysis for each variable are presented below.

Table 4. Frequency Distribution Table Knowledge of Case variable

Variables Study	**Score (Valid Value)**	**Frequency (n)**	**Percentage (%)**	**Percentage Cumulative (%)**
Knowledge of Case	4	3	8.1	8.1
	8	1	2.7	10.8
	9	1	2.7	13.5
	10	4	10.8	24.3
	11	2	5.4	29.7
	12	1	2.7	32.4
	13	3	8.1	40.5
	14	4	10.8	51.4
	15	3	8.1	59.5
	16	2	5.4	64.9
	17	1	2.7	67.6
	18	2	5.4	73
	19	1	2.7	75.7
	20	9	24.3	100
	Total	37	100	

For the knowledge variable, the distribution of scores ranges from 4 to 20, with the highest proportion of parents (24.3%) achieving the maximum score of 20. A considerable cluster of respondents scored between 14 and 16, reflecting generally adequate knowledge about the case and its associated risks. Only a small portion of parents scored below 10, indicating that low awareness was uncommon within the sample. These findings suggest that most parents possessed moderate to high levels of understanding, likely due to widespread media coverage and the perceived severity of the issue.

Table 5. Frequency Distribution Table Response Emotion Psychic variable

Variables Study	Score (Valid Value)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Percentage Cumulative (%)
Response Emotion Psychic	4	1	2.7	2.7
	10	1	2.7	5.4
	11	1	2.7	8.1
	12	2	5.4	13.5
	14	1	2.7	16.2
	16	5	13.5	29.7
	18	4	10.8	40.5
	19	4	10.8	51.4
	20	18	48.6	100
Total		37	100	

Similar patterns were observed for the emotional and psychological response variable, where scores also ranged from 4 to 20. Nearly half of the respondents (48.6%) recorded the highest score of 20, demonstrating a very strong emotional impact upon learning about the case.

Table 6. Change Behavior Protective variable

Variables Study	Score (Valid Value)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Percentage Cumulative (%)
Change Behavior Protective	8	1	2.7	2.7
	12	1	2.7	5.4
	22	1	2.7	8.1
	24	1	2.7	10.8
	31	1	2.7	13.5
	32	1	2.7	16.2
	33	1	2.7	18.9
	34	2	5.4	24.3
	35	3	8.1	32.4
	36	4	10.8	43.2
	37	2	5.4	48.6
	38	7	18.9	67.6
	39	6	16.2	83.8
	40	6	16.2	100
Total		37	100	

The protective behavioral change variable exhibited an even broader score range (8 to 40), indicating varying degrees of behavioral adjustments among parents. However, the most frequent scores were concentrated at the upper end of the scale, with 18.9% at score 38, and 16.2% each at scores 39 and 40.

Table 7. Preventive Measures Addition variable

Variables Study	Score (Valid Value)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Percentage Cumulative (%)
Preventive Measures Addition	8	2	5.4	5.4
	9	1	2.7	8.1
	10	1	2.7	10.8
	12	3	8.1	18.9
	13	2	5.4	24.3
	14	2	5.4	29.7
	15	3	8.1	37.8
	16	6	16.2	54.1
	17	5	13.5	67.6
	18	2	5.4	73
	19	3	8.1	81.1
	20	7	18.9	100
	Total	37	100	

Finally, for the additional preventive measures variable, scores ranged from 8 to 20, with the highest frequency observed at the maximum score of 20 (18.9%), followed by scores of 16 (16.2%) and 17 (13.5%).

Presented below are the descriptive statistics that summarize the overall distribution and characteristics of the data. Based on descriptive statistical results, parents' knowledge level regarding the "Incest Fantasy" case was found to be relatively high.

Table 8. Descriptive Statistic

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Knowledge of the Case	37	4	20	14.24	4.856
Emotional & Psychological Response	37	4	20	17.59	3.678
Protective Behavior Change	37	8	40	34.95	7.265
Additional Preventive Actions	37	8	20	15.78	3.497

The mean score for the knowledge variable was 14.24 out of a maximum of 20, with a standard deviation of 4.856. This indicates that most respondents had been exposed to information about the case through social media, online news, or public discussions. However, there was variation in understanding among respondents, as shown by a wide score range (range = 16), suggesting differences in depth of knowledge and level of information engagement.

Based on the non-parametric analytical approach, the outcomes of the Spearman's Rho correlation test are presented below.

Table 9. Spearman's rho

Correlations

			Knowledge on the case	Emotional & Psychological Response
Spearman's rho	**Knowledge of the Case**	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,304
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,067
		N	37	37
	Emotional & Psychological Response	Correlation Coefficient	,304	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,067	.
		N	37	37
	Protective Behavior Change	Correlation Coefficient	,194	,483**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,250	,002
		N	37	37
	Additional Preventive Actions	Correlation Coefficient	,139	,354*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,410	,032
		N	37	37

The Spearman's Rho correlation analysis was conducted to examine the associations among the four main variables: parental knowledge of the case, emotional–psychological responses, protective behavioral changes, and additional preventive actions. The results reveal several important patterns.

First, parental knowledge of the "Incest Fantasy" case did not show significant correlations with any of the other variables. The correlations between knowledge and emotional–psychological responses ($\rho = 0.304$, $p = 0.067$), protective behavior ($\rho = 0.194$, $p = 0.250$), and preventive actions ($\rho = 0.139$, $p = 0.410$) were all weak and statistically non-significant. Emotional response showed a moderate and statistically significant correlation with protective behavioral change ($\rho = 0.483$, $p = 0.002$). This suggests that parents who experienced stronger emotional reactions—such as fear, anxiety, shock, or worry—were more likely to increase protective behaviors toward their children. Additionally, emotional response was weakly but significantly correlated with additional preventive actions ($\rho = 0.354$, $p = 0.032$). Overall, the results show that emotional and psychological reactions play a more influential role in shaping parents' protective and preventive behaviors than knowledge alone. These findings highlight the importance of emotional engagement and awareness in parental decision-making when responding to digital threats involving young children.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study affirm that information alone, without emotional awareness, is insufficient to drive behavioral change. It is, in fact, the emotional aspect that serves as a strong catalyst in prompting parents to act more proactively in protecting their children in the digital era. Therefore, interventions such as educational campaigns or parenting training should be designed not only to be informative but also to touch the affective and empathetic dimensions of parents. Another important finding relates to the psychological and behavioral dynamics of parents in responding to viral cases of sexual violence, particularly in the context of child protection in the digital era. Although most respondents demonstrated a high level of knowledge about the "Incest Fantasy" case, empirical data showed that such knowledge had no significant relationship with changes in protective behavior or additional preventive actions. This indicates that cognitive knowledge alone is not a sufficient foundation for actual behavioral change, especially in the context of digital parenting.

This phenomenon is consistent with behavioral theories that emphasize knowledge as not being the sole determinant in decision-making or behavior change. In many cases, protective behavior toward children is more strongly driven by affective factors such as anxiety, fear, and concern. In other words, an individual may have a good understanding of an issue but will not necessarily be motivated to act, particularly if there is no strong emotional involvement. In this

context, the significant findings regarding the emotional response variable become highly important. Data show that parents' emotional and psychological responses have a very strong correlation with changes in protective behavior toward children. This means that the anxiety and fear experienced by parents are the main drivers for taking concrete actions to monitor and protect children from similar risks. Emotion becomes a more effective internal trigger compared to passive information.

The relationship between emotion and behavior is consistent with previous findings in social psychology, which state that negative emotions such as fear or anger can increase vigilance and the drive to act (Izard, 2009). In this case, parents' fear of potential dangers to their children has driven actions such as restricting gadget access, checking children's digital activities, and discussing digital safety. The findings of this study align with recent research highlighting that emotion-based active mediation has a greater influence on parents' protective behavior compared to knowledge-based mediation alone. Wilson et al. (2025) and Doty et al. (2025) demonstrated that active mediation strategies involving open discussion and empathy enhance children's digital well-being and mental health. This is reinforced by Bayar et al., (2026), who found that parents' emotional responses moderate the relationship between digital awareness and the quality of the parent–child relationship, while Chen et al. (2025) emphasized that active mediation can reduce the risk of smartphone addiction, in contrast to restrictive mediation, which tends to be counterproductive. On the other hand, Maier et al. (2025) cautioned that the use of parental control applications without accompanying education can lead to privacy risks and family tension, making it essential for digital parenting interventions to incorporate both emotional and technical literacy. Studies by Liu et al., (2025) and Cerniglia et al., (2021) highlight the negative effects of phubbing and the use of devices as a "digital pacifier" on children's emotional regulation, consistent with Furthermore, Livingstone & Helsper, (2008) and Scott, (2022) confirmed that parents' risk perception and emotional engagement are strong predictors of effective mediation strategies. Similar findings were reported by Linder et al. (2021) and Busse & Gathmann (2020), showing that school–parent collaboration expands the reach of child protection in the digital sphere. Moreover, Misirli et al. (2025) warned about the risks of early smartphone exposure contributing to children's mental health issues, while Nurhidayah et al. (2026) and Alhidayatillah (2025) stressed the importance of screen-free conversation moments at home to build trust and strengthen emotional bonds. The integration of these findings underscores that the effectiveness of child protection strategies in the digital era lies in the synergy between knowledge, technical skills, and emotional engagement, realized through empathetic communication and cross-environment collaboration in children's lives.

It is important to note that the behavioral changes made by parents are not merely technical or control-oriented but also include educational approaches that are mediative and supportive. Parents not only impose restrictions but also engage in more frequent discussions, explain potential dangers, and educate children about body boundaries and digital privacy (Organization & ..., 2023). This indicates a tendency toward active mediation strategies, which, in the parental mediation literature, are more effective than purely restrictive mediation based solely on prohibitions (Flay et al., 2023). Furthermore, additional preventive actions such as attending webinars, seeking information on signs of sexual abuse, and encouraging schools to provide related education also indicate broader initiatives by parents in responding to this information crisis. This suggests that parents are not only focused on the family sphere but also recognize the importance of educational institutions in the child protection ecosystem. The moderate to strong correlation between emotional responses and additional preventive actions further supports the conclusion that emotion is the driving force behind parental engagement. In this regard, emotional involvement not only shapes change at the micro level interactions with children but also at the macro level involvement with communities, schools, and child

protection systems. This underlines the importance of an emotional-awareness-based approach in digital parenting education programs.

These findings also provide a critical note on approaches that have so far focused solely on increasing knowledge-based digital literacy. Without addressing psychological and affective aspects, educational efforts may lose their effectiveness in changing behavior. Therefore, outreach programs and parenting training should be designed not only to deliver information but also to evoke empathy, concern, and a sense of responsibility in parents regarding child protection. In addition, the results of this study signal that parents in the digital era need more than just technical tools such as parental controls. They require a comprehensive understanding, empathetic communication strategies, and skills to build open relationships with their children. This way, they can become the primary protectors of children in both online and offline environments, without creating distance or tension in the parenting relationship. Interestingly, while the majority of parents demonstrated positive behavioral changes, a small proportion showed low levels of emotional response and engagement, both in emotional and action-based terms. This indicates the need for further mapping of other factors, such as educational background, past experiences, or the presence of social support, which may influence how parents react to threatening digital information.

In the context of policy and educational practice, these findings reinforce the urgency of integrating child protection education and digital literacy from the early childhood education (ECE) level, not only at the elementary or adolescent levels. Early childhood is a critical phase in building body awareness, personal safety, and an understanding of privacy. ECE should serve as a strategic foundation involving teachers, parents, and communities in building a value- and technology-based child protection system. Overall, this study demonstrates that effective child protection strategies must combine knowledge, emotion, and action. These three components are interconnected and form the foundation for holistic parental engagement. Therefore, a collaborative approach between the home, school, and public policy is necessary to build a resilient, responsive, and child-centered digital parenting culture.

4. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the extent of parental awareness regarding the viral “Incest Fantasy” case, their emotional and psychological responses, subsequent protective behavioral changes, and additional preventive measures in the context of early childhood protection in the digital era. The findings reveal that while parental knowledge of the case was relatively high, it did not significantly correlate with changes in protective behavior or preventive actions. Instead, emotional engagement emerged as the key driver, strongly influencing both the adoption of protective measures and the implementation of broader preventive strategies. These results underscore that knowledge alone is insufficient to motivate behavioral change in digital parenting; affective factors such as fear, concern, and empathy play a more decisive role. This insight contributes to the understanding that effective child protection in digital contexts requires the integration of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components. The essence of these findings points toward a solution: digital parenting interventions should not only convey factual information but must also intentionally evoke emotional awareness and empathy, fostering a proactive and collaborative approach among parents, educators, and communities to safeguard children both online and offline.

5. REFERENCES

Alhidayatillah, N. (2025). Edukasi internet ramah anak dalam menanggulangu kontan eslagate ibu-ibu PKK Desa Tarai Bangun. *Community Service Journal of Economic Education* (Vol. 4).

Aqdassi, L., Sadeghi, S., Pouretemad, H. R., & Fathabadi, J. (2021). A Family-based Telerehabilitation Program for Improving Gross Motor Skills in Children With High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Journal of Modern Rehabilitation*. https://doi.org/10.18502/jmr.v15i3.7738

Bayar, M. E., Kulaksiz, T., & Toran, M. (2026). How does Parental Media Mediation Regulate the Association between Digital Parental Awareness and the Parent-Child Relationship? *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *54*(2), 773–787. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-025-01879-x

Busse, A., & Gathmann, C. (2020). Free daycare policies, family choices and child development. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, *179*, 240–260. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2020.08.015

Cerniglia, L., Cimino, S., & ... (2021). What are the effects of screen time on emotion regulation and academic achievements? A three-wave longitudinal study on children from 4 to 8 years of age. *Journal of Early Childhood …*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1476718X20969846

Chen, Y., Gu, Q., Xu, Y., Liang, J., & Ni, C. (2025). A chain mediation model reveals the association between parental mediation and smartphone addiction of Chinese adolescents. *Scientific Reports 2025 15:1*, *15*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-00876-9

Creswell, J. W. (2022). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed.). Melbourne: SAGE Publications.

Doty, J. L., Ma, X., Gabrielli, J., Pierre, B. F., Nesbit, T. S., LaMontagne, L. G., & Rabideau, C. R. (2025). Longitudinal Associations of Perceived Media Parenting with Adolescent Mental Health: Mediation by Social Efficacy and Online Risk. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1007/S10826-025-03075-2/FIGURES/2

Fendel, A., Fuschlberger, T., Friedmann, A., Nehring, I., Krüger, M., Mall, V., & Kraus, V. (2025). Psychosocial stress factors in families with preterm infants during the Covid-19 pandemic: a cross-sectional study. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health*, *19*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s13034-025-00890-9

Flay, B. R., Allred, C. G., Lewis, K. M., Bavarian, N., & ... (2023). The positive action program: Improving academics, behavior, and character by teaching comprehensive skills for successful learning and living. … *Research Handbook on …*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-24420-9_17

Fraenkel, J. R. ., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2023). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. New York: McGraw Hill LLC.

Goodall, J., & Montgomery, C. (2023). Parental involvement to parental engagement: a continuum. *Mapping the Field*, 158–169. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003403722-13

Grané I Oró, M. (2021). Mediación digital parental. ¿Es necesaria una educación digital en la primera infancia? *Edutec. Revista Electrónica de Tecnología Educativa*, (76), 7–21. https://doi.org/10.21556/edutec.2021.76.2037

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2022). *Multivariate Data Analysis Eight Edition (8th ed.).* UK: Cengage Learning. www.cengage.com/highered

Lamb, K., Humphreys, C., & Hegarty, K. (2020). Research Ethics in Practice: Challenges of Using Digital Technology to Embed the Voices of Children and Young People Within Programs for Fathers Who Use Domestic Violence. *Research Ethics*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1747016120936324

Lindeman, S., Svensson, M., & Enochsson, A. B. (2021). Digitalisation in early childhood education: a domestication theoretical perspective on teachers' experiences. *Education and Information …*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10501-7

Linder, L. K., McDaniel, B. T., Stockdale, L., & Coyne, S. M. (2021). The impact of parent and child media use on early parent–infant attachment. *Infancy*. https://doi.org/10.1111/infa.12400

Liu, J., Zhu, A., Shi, H., & Liu, H. (2025). Temperament and early childhood cognitive development among China's middle class: direct effects and the moderation of parenting styles. *Journal of Chinese Sociology*, *12*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40711-025-00239-x

Livingstone, S., & Helsper, E. J. (2008). Parental Mediation of Children's Internet Use. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *52*(4), 581–599. https://doi.org/10.1080/08838150802437396

Livingstone, S., & Third, A. (2017). Children and young people's rights in the digital age: An emerging agenda. *New Media & Society*, *19*(5), 657–670. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816686318

Maier, E.-M., Tanczer, L. M., & Klausner, L. D. (2025). Surveillance Disguised as Protection: A Comparative Analysis of Sideloaded and In-Store Parental Control Apps. *Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies*, *2025*(2), 107–124. https://doi.org/10.56553/popets-2025-0052

Marsh, J. (2020). Young Children's Digital Literacy: Learning in a Digital World. *Routledge*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429328996

Misirli, A., Fotakopoulou, O., Dardanou, M., & Komis, V. (2025). The impact of touchscreen digital exposure on children's social development and communication: a systematic review. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *16*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1613625

Munisa, M., Putri, U. N., Sari, W. V., & Fitri, N. A. (2024). Digital Literacy Based on Local Wisdom in Inclusive Education. *Pionir Jurnal Pendidikan*. https://doi.org/10.22373/pjp.v13i1.22058

Nichols, S., & Selim, N. (2022). Digitally Mediated Parenting: A Review of the Literature. *Societies*, *12*(2), 60. https://doi.org/10.3390/soc12020060

Nurhidayah, I., Salsabilla, T., & Hastuti, E. A. (2026). Screen Time Matters: The Impact of Screen Time on the Risk of Personal–Social Development Outcomes Among Preschool Children in Indonesia: A Cross-Sectional Study. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare*, *Volume 19*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.2147/JMDH.S582301

Organization, W. H., & ... (2023). *Nurturing care handbook. Strategic action 5: scale up and innovate. How to expand programmes, engage with the private sector and use digital solutions*. books.google.com. https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=CHwOEQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR4&dq=parenting+digital+in+early+childhood&ots=GWUkffHAlA&sig=BjF9ykd2VHDk9ZsBjAoIVP-GeFI

Park, H., McCormick, M., & Park, J. H. (2025). Using a social-ecological framework to examine the cognitive development of elementary school children in the U.S. *BMC Psychology*, *13*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-025-02416-6

Putri Sovia, S. I., & Silvio, S. W. (2024). Analysis of Digital Media Usage in Promoting Communication Skills in Early Childhood. *Fijc*. https://doi.org/10.62569/fijc.v1i1.12

Säljö, R. (2022). Child development in a digital age. *Nordic Childhoods in the Digital Age* (pp. 11–20). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003145257-3

Scott, F. L. (2022). Family mediation of preschool children's digital media practices at home. *Learning, Media and Technology*. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2021.1960859

Wilson, S., Murcia, K., & Leaver, T. (2025). 'Switch that off!': the influence of digital parenting and mediation practices on young children's engagement with digital technologies in the home. *Early Child Development and Care*. https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2025.2518300

Youssef, E., Ali, S., Al Malek, M., & Riaz, S. (2025). Online risks and parental mediation in social media usage among kids: a quantitative study in Rawalpindi City. *Frontiers in Communication*, *9*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1521814