



Digitalization and changing family relationships: Communication, emotional connections, and care in contemporary society

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Abstract

Digitalization is changing the ways in which family members communicate, maintain emotional connections and provide care. Smartphones, social media, instant messaging and video-calling platforms have made it easier for family members to remain connected across physical distance and different daily routines. At the same time, greater reliance on digital technologies has raised concerns about reduced face-to-face interaction, divided attention, changing communication habits and differences in technology use across generations. This study provides a descriptive account of these changes by examining existing scholarly literature on digital family relationships. The review focuses on five areas: changing patterns of family communication, the use of digital technologies for maintaining emotional connections, changing practices of family care and support, the opportunities and challenges associated with digital family relationships, and differences in digital interactions across generations. The study finds that digital technologies have added new ways of staying connected, expressing care and providing emotional and practical support. However, their growing presence in family life can also create tensions when digital engagement reduces direct interaction or when family members have different communication preferences and levels of digital familiarity. The findings suggest that digitalization is not simply replacing traditional family interaction. Rather, it is adding new forms of communication, support and care to everyday family life. The way these technologies are used, particularly within different generational and family contexts, remains important in shaping the quality of family relationships.

Keywords: Digitalization, Family relationships, Digital communication, Emotional connections, Family care, Intergenerational interaction, Digital technology

1. Introduction

Digitalization has become an important force shaping contemporary social life. The widespread use of smartphones, social media, instant messaging applications, video-calling platforms, and other digital technologies has transformed everyday patterns of interaction. Family life is particularly affected by these changes because communication and interaction are central to maintaining family relationships. Technologies that were initially designed to facilitate information exchange are now embedded in routine family practices, influencing how relatives remain connected, respond to one another, and participate in each other's lives.

One of the most visible changes concerns the way family members communicate across physical and geographical boundaries. Digital platforms allow individuals to exchange messages, photographs, voice notes, and video calls almost instantly. This has particular significance for families whose members live apart because of employment, education, migration, or other circumstances. Digital communication can help maintain regular contact and enable family members to participate in important moments despite physical separation. However, greater frequency of communication does not necessarily correspond to deeper interaction. Short and

continuous digital exchanges may sometimes replace longer face-to-face conversations, while divided attention and misunderstandings can affect the quality of interpersonal interaction. The issue, therefore, extends beyond technological access to the ways digital communication is incorporated into everyday family life.

Digital technologies are also influencing the expression and maintenance of emotional bonds. Family members increasingly use digital platforms to express affection, share personal experiences, offer encouragement, and provide emotional support. These practices have created additional ways of remaining emotionally connected when physical interaction is limited. At the same time, digital communication can make emotional expression more dependent on brief messages, images, emojis, or mediated conversations, where tone and non-verbal cues may be difficult to interpret. Generational differences in digital practices can further shape how family members understand and respond to these forms of interaction. Consequently, the meaning of emotional connection within families is increasingly influenced by both technological possibilities and interpersonal expectations.

Care represents another area in which digitalization is producing significant changes. Family care traditionally

involves physical presence, emotional support, practical assistance, and the sharing of responsibilities. Digital technologies have expanded the ways in which some of these activities can be coordinated from a distance. Family members can check on relatives through video calls, organize responsibilities through messaging platforms, share information about everyday needs, and remain involved in situations that would previously have required physical presence. Nevertheless, digitally mediated involvement cannot always replace direct interaction. This raises important questions about how technological connectivity affects the distribution, experience, and meaning of care within contemporary families.

These developments are sociologically significant because family relationships are shaped by wider social transformations rather than existing independently of them. Changes in employment patterns, migration, mobility, household structures, and generational relations increasingly intersect with technological development. Digitalization operates within this broader context, influencing everyday practices at the level of individual interaction while also reflecting larger changes in social organization. Examining family life through this lens can therefore provide insight into how technological change becomes embedded in ordinary relationships and contributes to the reconfiguration of established social practices.

The relationship between technology and family life, however, cannot be understood through a simple positive-versus-negative framework. Digital technologies may facilitate connection and support while simultaneously creating challenges related to attention, privacy, expectations of constant availability, and reduced physical interaction. Their effects may also differ according to age, gender, family structure, digital literacy, geographical circumstances, and patterns of use. Recognizing these differences is essential for developing a more nuanced understanding of the social consequences of digitalization.

Against this background, the present study examines the transformation of family relationships in the context of increasing digitalization, focusing on three interconnected dimensions: communication, emotional bonds, and care. It explores how digital technologies influence everyday interaction, reshape the ways family members maintain emotional connections, and alter practices of providing and coordinating care. Rather than assuming that technology either strengthens or weakens family relationships, the study views digitalization as a social process whose outcomes are shaped by the ways individuals and families adopt, negotiate, and integrate digital technologies into their everyday lives.

By bringing these dimensions together, the study contributes to contemporary sociological discussions on technological change and family life. It moves beyond the narrow question of whether digital technologies bring family members closer or create greater distance and instead examines how the nature of family relationships is being reconfigured through digitally mediated interaction. Such an approach is particularly relevant in contemporary society, where online and offline forms of family engagement increasingly overlap and where

maintaining relationships may involve both physical presence and continuous digital connectivity.

2. Objectives of the study

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To describe the changing patterns of communication among family members in the context of digitalization.
- To understand how family members use digital technologies to maintain emotional connections and relationships.
- To describe the changing practices of family care and support in digitally connected households.
- To identify the key opportunities and challenges arising from the use of digital technologies in family relationships.
- To describe how digitalization is shaping family relationships across different generations and patterns of technology use.

3. Literature review

3.1 Digitalization and family communication

Digitalization has become an important part of everyday family communication. The increasing use of smartphones, messaging applications, social media and other digital platforms has changed how family members communicate with one another. Communication is no longer limited to face-to-face interaction within the household. Family members can remain connected across physical distances and exchange information through digital channels throughout the day. This has introduced greater flexibility into family communication, while also changing the frequency and form of everyday interaction.

Anisti *et al.* (2023) ^[1] observed that digital technologies have brought noticeable changes in family communication patterns. Their qualitative study shows that digital platforms make communication easier, particularly when family members are geographically separated. Digital communication also allows family members to exchange information quickly and facilitates parental monitoring of children. At the same time, the constant availability of digital communication can create a tendency to remain continuously connected through messages and online platforms. The authors therefore point to the need to maintain a balance between technology-mediated communication and direct family interaction.

The relationship between digital media and family communication, however, cannot be understood simply in terms of the amount of technology used. Lahikainen (2017) ^[6] places new media within the broader process of family interaction and socialization. From this perspective, digital media become part of ordinary family routines rather than remaining separate from family life. The use of media can influence how family members organise their time, interact with one another and participate in everyday activities. The edited volume by Lahikainen, Mälkiä, and Repo (2017) ^[7] similarly highlights the close relationship between media use, family routines and parent–child interaction. It also draws attention to the increasingly blurred boundary between face-to-face and digitally mediated interaction.

Digital communication also takes different forms at different stages of family life. LeBouef and Dworkin (2023) ^[8], examining emerging adults, found that the frequency of digital communication with parents was related to family identity. Their study of 355 emerging adults considered communication with mothers, fathers and siblings and showed that digital communication remains relevant to family identity even when young adults experience greater independence in work and education. This suggests that digital communication can support continuing family connections during periods when family members are increasingly separated by changes in residence, education or employment.

More recent developments further expand the meaning of digital family communication. Mascheroni (2024) ^[10], in a longitudinal qualitative study of 20 families with young children, examined the use of smart speakers within family life. The study shows that communication can now involve not only human-to-human interaction through digital devices but also interaction with voice-based technologies. Parents and children may attribute human-like or machine-like qualities to smart speakers, and these technologies can become embedded in everyday family practices. Such developments indicate that digitalization is not merely providing new channels for existing forms of communication; it is also introducing new actors and new forms of interaction into the family environment.

Taken together, the literature indicates that digitalization is reshaping family communication in several interconnected ways. It has expanded opportunities for maintaining contact, particularly across physical distance, while making communication more immediate and continuous. At the same time, digital media have become embedded in everyday family routines and may influence how family members allocate attention and interact with one another. The literature also suggests that patterns of digital communication may differ according to life stage and technological context. However, existing studies have often focused on particular groups, technologies or dimensions of family interaction. A broader descriptive understanding of how family communication patterns are changing across family members and generations remains important. This provides a basis for examining the changing nature of family communication as part of the wider transformation of family relationships in a digitally connected society.

3.2 Digital technologies and emotional connections

Digital technologies have become closely linked with the emotional side of family and social relationships. People use digital platforms not only to exchange information but also to express feelings, seek reassurance and maintain a sense of connection. Messages, social media interactions and other digital forms of contact can therefore carry emotional meaning. Tettegah (2016) ^[15] notes that emotions are an important part of technology-mediated communication. Digital environments provide new spaces for expressing, interpreting and responding to emotions. The emotional experience of communication may therefore extend beyond physical interaction.

Ellis and Tucker (2020) ^[2] place these changes within the wider transformation of psychosocial life in the digital age. They argue that technologies and digital data are increasingly involved in how emotions are experienced, expressed and understood. Digital communication can make emotional experiences more visible and easier to share. At the same time, it can alter the ways in which individuals experience relationships and respond to the emotions of others. This is particularly relevant to family relationships, where emotional support may increasingly take place through mediated forms of interaction.

The role of technology in emotional connection is also evident among younger users. Scott *et al.* (2024) ^[11] examined adolescents' daily use of digital technologies for emotion regulation. Their findings indicate that adolescents may use digital technologies to manage their emotional states and to feel better during periods of emotional difficulty. Digital use was also examined in relation to loneliness and emotional recovery. The study highlights that technology can become part of everyday strategies through which young people respond to and manage their emotions. This suggests that digital engagement may have an emotional function in addition to its communicative role.

The use of technology for managing emotions became particularly visible during periods of social disruption. Tag *et al.* (2022) ^[14] examined how young people used technology for emotion regulation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their findings show that digital technologies provided important means of managing emotional experiences when opportunities for direct social contact were restricted. Young people used technology in different ways to cope with changes in their social environment and emotional experiences. The study demonstrates how digital communication can acquire greater emotional importance when face-to-face interaction becomes difficult.

Technology may also contribute to the development of social and emotional skills. Slovák and Fitzpatrick (2015) ^[12] reviewed research on the use of technology for teaching and developing social and emotional skills. They emphasised that technology can provide opportunities for users to reflect on emotions, understand social situations and practise appropriate responses. Such applications indicate that digital environments can support aspects of emotional and interpersonal development rather than simply replacing conventional forms of communication.

Overall, the literature shows that digital technologies have become part of the ways in which people experience, express and manage emotions. Their role extends from everyday emotional communication to coping and emotion regulation. However, emotional connection through technology does not necessarily represent a complete substitute for direct interpersonal contact. Its meaning depends on the users, the nature of the relationship and the context in which technology is used. For family relationships, this raises an important descriptive question concerning how digital technologies are being used to maintain emotional bonds in everyday life. Understanding these practices is therefore important for

examining the changing emotional dimension of family relationships in an increasingly digitally connected society.

3.3 Opportunities and challenges of digital family relationships

Digitalization has created new possibilities for maintaining family relationships. It has made communication more accessible and has reduced the effect of physical distance on family contact. Family members can remain involved in each other's lives even when they live in different places. Digital platforms can also support the sharing of information, emotional support and everyday experiences. These changes have given family relationships greater flexibility in contemporary life.

Syukur *et al.* (2024) ^[13] highlight the opportunities created by digital technologies for family well-being, particularly through digital parenting. Parents can use online resources to access information, communicate with children and support their development. Digital tools can also help parents remain informed about children's activities and concerns. However, their effective use requires awareness of children's online experiences and appropriate parental involvement. The authors therefore present digital parenting as a process that involves both the benefits of technology and the responsibilities that accompany its use.

Social media has further expanded the ways in which families maintain contact and participate in shared activities. Khalili *et al.* (2024) ^[5] note that social media networks can facilitate communication among family members and provide opportunities for interaction and mutual support. These platforms may help family members stay connected despite differences in location and daily routines. At the same time, excessive or inappropriate use can interfere with direct interaction within the household. The nature of family dynamics can therefore be influenced by how digital platforms are incorporated into everyday family life.

The challenges become more complex when digital use affects the quality of family interaction. Ghasemi and Zakaei (2025) ^[3] discuss several challenges faced by families in the digital age, including reduced direct interaction, difficulties in managing technology use and concerns related to children's exposure to digital environments. These issues may create tensions between individual digital activities and shared family time. The authors also emphasise that families need to adapt their practices to the changing technological environment rather than simply rejecting digital technologies.

Another concern relates to the effect of social media on family cohesion. Maihasni *et al.* (2025) ^[9] examine the relationship between social cohesion and social media-related threats to families. Their discussion indicates that digital platforms can create opportunities for connection while also introducing risks that may affect trust, privacy and interpersonal relationships. Continuous online engagement can sometimes compete with family interaction and create new forms of tension within households. These concerns show that the consequences of digitalization are not uniform and may depend on patterns of use and the quality of existing family relationships.

The experiences of young people provide another important perspective. Johnson and Francis (2022) ^[4] explored positive family relationships in the digital age by focusing on young people's views. Their findings show that young people do not necessarily perceive technology as harmful to family relationships. Digital communication can help them remain connected with parents and other family members and can provide convenient ways of sharing everyday experiences. Their perspectives suggest that the role of technology should be understood from the lived experiences of family members rather than through assumptions about its effects.

The literature therefore presents digital family relationships as a combination of opportunities and challenges. Digital technologies can support continued contact, parental involvement, information sharing and relationship maintenance. At the same time, they may create concerns related to excessive use, reduced face-to-face interaction, privacy, social media pressures and family cohesion. These outcomes are shaped by the manner in which technology is used within the family. A descriptive understanding of these experiences is therefore important for identifying how families are adapting their relationships and everyday practices to an increasingly digital environment.

3.4 Generational differences in digital family interactions

Digitalization has not affected all generations in the same way. Family members may differ in how they access digital technologies, communicate through them and incorporate them into everyday relationships. These differences are particularly visible when parents, children and grandparents use different digital platforms or have different levels of familiarity with technology. As a result, digitalization can influence not only the frequency of family communication but also the ways in which different generations remain connected.

Taipale (2019) ^[16] examines intergenerational connections within digitally connected families and highlights the role of digital media in maintaining relationships across generations. Digital technologies can help family members remain in contact despite differences in age and physical location. They may also support the exchange of information and everyday experiences between younger and older family members. In this sense, digital media can contribute to continuity in intergenerational relationships while introducing new forms of interaction.

Differences in digital communication patterns are also shaped by generational background and social context. Deák *et al.* (2024) ^[17] show that family communication patterns vary across generations and countries of origin. Their work indicates that age-related differences in technology use should not be considered in isolation. Cultural and social contexts can also influence how family members communicate digitally. This suggests that generational differences are embedded within broader patterns of family and social life.

Recent evidence from WhatsApp use further illustrates these differences. Yusoff and Abdullahi (2026) ^[18] examined family interactions among Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z in urban Southwest Nigeria. Their study draws attention to

differences in the ways these generations use WhatsApp for family communication and interaction. The findings indicate that a common digital platform does not necessarily result in identical communication practices. Different generations may use the same technology according to their own preferences, routines and communication needs.

The distinction between older and younger generations is also evident in comparative research. Jimenez *et al.* (2026) ^[19] compared intergenerational communication between Generation X and Generation Z in Mexico. Their study highlights differences in communication patterns between the two generations. Such differences are relevant for understanding how digitalization is influencing family communication across age groups. They also suggest that digital technologies can create both opportunities for connection and differences in communication expectations between generations.

Marzo (2024) ^[20] considers intergenerational communication as an important issue in the digital age. The work emphasises the need to understand differences between generations while creating opportunities for meaningful interaction. Digital technologies can help bridge generational distance when family members develop shared ways of communicating. However, differences in technological familiarity and communication preferences may also create barriers. Intergenerational connection therefore depends not only on access to technology but also on the ability of family members to adapt to different communication practices.

Overall, the literature indicates that digital family interaction is shaped by generational differences in technology use, communication preferences and social contexts. Younger and older family members may use the same digital platforms differently and attach different meanings to digital communication. At the same time, digital technologies can provide a common space for maintaining intergenerational contact. These contrasting possibilities make generational patterns an important dimension of contemporary family relationships. Examining such differences can provide a clearer descriptive picture of how digitalization is reshaping communication among family members across generations.

3.5 Research gap

Digital technologies have become closely woven into everyday family life. Previous studies have shown that they are changing the way family members communicate, remain in contact and participate in each other's lives (Anisti *et al.*, 2023; Lahikainen, 2017) ^[1, 6]. Digital communication has made it easier to stay connected when family members live apart. However, much of the existing research has examined particular forms of communication or specific groups of family members. There is still limited descriptive work that looks at the broader changes taking place in everyday family communication.

The emotional side of digital family interaction also deserves greater attention. Research has examined how people use digital technologies to express emotions, manage emotional experiences and maintain social connections (Ellis & Tucker, 2020; Tettegah, 2016; Scott *et al.*, 2024) ^[2, 15, 11]. Much of this

work, however, focuses on individual emotional experiences or wider social interaction. Less attention has been given to the everyday use of digital technologies for maintaining emotional connections within families. This is important because emotional closeness is a central part of family relationships.

Digitalization is also changing the way family members provide care and support. Digital tools can help parents remain involved in children's lives, access useful information and maintain contact with family members who live elsewhere (Syukur *et al.*, 2024) ^[13]. At the same time, greater dependence on digital technologies can create concerns about excessive use, reduced direct interaction and family cohesion (Ghasemi & Zakaei, 2025; Maihasni *et al.*, 2025) ^[3, 9]. Existing studies provide useful evidence on these issues, but there is relatively less attention to how such changes are reflected in the everyday practices of family care and support.

The benefits and difficulties associated with digital family relationships have also been discussed in previous research. Digital platforms can make communication convenient and help families maintain contact across distance. They can also create problems related to privacy, excessive use, reduced face-to-face interaction and tensions within the household (Khalili *et al.*, 2024; Maihasni *et al.*, 2025) ^[5, 9]. These findings show that digitalization does not have a single effect on family relationships. Its role can be both supportive and challenging. A descriptive account that considers these two sides together can therefore provide a more balanced understanding of digitally connected families.

Generational differences add another important dimension. Family members do not necessarily use digital technologies in the same way. Their communication practices may differ according to age, technological familiarity and social context (Taipale, 2019; Deák *et al.*, 2024) ^[16, 17]. Recent studies have also reported differences in digital communication among Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z (Yusoff & Abdullahi, 2026; Jimenez *et al.*, 2026) ^[18, 19]. However, research on these differences is often restricted to particular generations, technologies or geographical settings. More descriptive attention is needed to understand how digital family interaction varies across generations and patterns of technology use.

Overall, earlier research has provided important insights into different aspects of digital family life. Yet communication, emotional connection, family care, opportunities and challenges, and generational differences have often been studied as separate issues. What remains less visible is how these aspects come together in the everyday experience of digitally connected families. The present study therefore brings these dimensions together in a descriptive examination of contemporary family relationships. It focuses on changing communication patterns, emotional connections, family care and support, the opportunities and challenges created by digital technologies, and differences across generations and patterns of technology use. This approach provides a broader view of how digitalization is becoming part of family relationships and everyday family life.

4. Research methodology

4.1 Research design

The study adopts a descriptive research design based on secondary data. It examines how digitalization is shaping family relationships, with particular attention to communication, emotional connections, family care and support, opportunities and challenges, and differences across generations. The descriptive approach is appropriate because the study seeks to present and interpret patterns reported in existing research rather than establish cause-and-effect relationships.

4.2 Sources of data

The study relies entirely on secondary data drawn from peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, edited volumes and other relevant scholarly publications. The selected literature covers digitalization, family communication, emotional connections, family interaction, digital parenting, social media, family care and intergenerational relationships. Both conceptual and empirical studies were considered. Recent studies were given particular attention, while earlier influential works were also included where they provided important conceptual foundations for the study.

4.3 Quality of the sources

Priority was given to credible and relevant academic sources with a clear research focus and adequate presentation of findings. Findings from different studies were compared to identify common patterns and differences. This provided a more balanced understanding of how digital technologies are shaping family relationships, rather than relying on the findings of any single study.

4.4 Ethical considerations

As the study is based entirely on previously published secondary sources, no primary data were collected from individuals. All sources have been appropriately acknowledged, and their findings have been presented accurately and in context. Care was taken to distinguish between evidence reported in earlier studies and the interpretation offered in the present study.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Changing patterns of family communication

The review shows that digitalization has changed everyday family communication. Messaging applications, social media and other digital platforms allow family members to stay connected even when they live apart. Communication has therefore become more immediate and flexible and is now part of many routine family activities.

Digital platforms also help family members share information, discuss everyday matters and remain involved in each other's lives. However, greater digital connectivity does not always lead to stronger family interaction. Excessive use of digital devices may reduce opportunities for direct conversation and shared family time. Overall, digitalization has expanded the

ways in which family members communicate while also highlighting the importance of maintaining meaningful face-to-face interaction.

5.2 Digital technologies and emotional connections

The review shows that digital technologies have become an important means of maintaining emotional connections within families. Messages, calls and online platforms allow family members to express affection, offer reassurance and stay emotionally connected, particularly when physical distance limits face-to-face contact.

Digital technologies may also help young people manage difficult emotional experiences (Scott *et al.*, 2024; Tag *et al.*, 2022) [11, 14]. However, digital interaction cannot fully replace direct personal contact. Its emotional value depends on the nature of the relationship and how technology is used. Overall, digitalization has expanded the ways family members maintain emotional closeness while leaving face-to-face interaction as an important part of family relationships.

5.3 Changing practices of family care and support

Digitalization has introduced new ways of providing care and support within families. Parents can use digital technologies to stay connected with children, access information and remain involved in their daily lives. Family members living apart can also use digital communication to check on each other and provide support when face-to-face contact is not possible.

At the same time, digital forms of care require families to manage technology use carefully. Parents may need to guide children's digital activities, while family members may need to balance online engagement with personal and family time. Overall, digitalization is not replacing traditional family care. It is adding new ways of maintaining contact, involvement and support within family life.

5.4 Opportunities and challenges of digital family relationships

Digital family relationships offer both opportunities and challenges. Digital technologies make it easier for family members to stay connected across physical distance and provide convenient ways to exchange information, share experiences and offer support. They can also support parental involvement and help families remain connected despite differences in work, education and daily routines.

The challenges are also significant. Excessive technology use may reduce face-to-face interaction and limit shared family time. Privacy concerns, online exposure and intensive social media use may further create tensions within households. The effects of digitalization therefore depend on how technology is used and integrated into family life. Overall, its role is neither entirely positive nor negative, but shaped by patterns of use, family circumstances and the quality of existing relationships.

5.5 Generational differences in digital family interactions

The review suggests that digital family interactions vary across generations. Younger and older family members may differ in

their familiarity with digital technologies, preferred platforms and ways of communicating. These differences can influence how often and how comfortably family members interact through digital media.

At the same time, digital platforms can provide a common space for maintaining intergenerational contact. Messaging applications, for example, allow family members to share everyday experiences and remain connected despite differences in age and location. However, differences in communication preferences may sometimes create misunderstandings or distance. Overall, digitalization can strengthen intergenerational connections when family members are able to adapt to each other's digital habits and communication preferences.

6. Conclusion

The study shows that digital technologies have changed everyday family life in several ways. Family members can now communicate more easily and remain in contact even when they live apart. Digital platforms also provide simple ways to express care, share everyday experiences and offer emotional support. For many families, these activities have become part of their normal routines.

At the same time, digital connectivity can create its own difficulties. Excessive use of digital devices may reduce face-to-face interaction and shared family time. Privacy concerns and extensive social media use can also create tension within the household. These experiences may differ across families, particularly because generations often have different ways of using technology and communicating online.

Overall, the study finds that digitalization is changing rather than replacing family relationships. Technology has added new ways of staying connected and providing support, but direct personal interaction remains important. The way families use digital technologies in their daily lives, and the balance they maintain between digital and personal interaction, plays an important role in shaping these relationships.

7. Implications

The study has practical implications for family life in a digitally connected society. Digital technologies can help family members stay in touch, maintain emotional connections and provide support, particularly when they are separated by distance. At the same time, regular face-to-face interaction remains important. Families therefore need to maintain a reasonable balance between digital communication and direct interaction.

Parents and other family members also have a role in encouraging responsible technology use. Open discussion about online activities, privacy and appropriate digital boundaries may help families deal with some of the difficulties associated with excessive use. This is particularly relevant in families where different generations have different levels of familiarity with digital technologies.

The study also highlights the importance of using technology in ways that support family relationships. Digital technologies

can be useful for communication, emotional connection and family support when they are used thoughtfully. Therefore, future research should examine not only access to digital technologies but also the ways in which they are used within everyday family life.

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