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Factors influencing children's internet use: Parental level of education, parental monitoring and young children's experiences of online porn in Greece and Portugal

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Why Greece and Portugal?



- **Previously: Factors shaping children's internet use: domestic arrangements, family structures and 'bedroom culture' in Greece and Portugal**
- Comparative context between Greece and Portugal
 - Both countries are small nations
 - Shared a similar political trajectory
 - Considered as not particularly advanced in relation to larger EU counterparts\PIGS countries
 - Laggards when it comes to the adoption and diffusion of new technologies
 - **Classified as 'non-high degree of online risk' countries** -overall classification of the EU Kids Online countries (Hasebrink, et al. 2009; Lobe, Segers and Tsaliki 2009)

Focus of Research



- Sample: 9-11 year old children (why?)
- Research Question: **'How does parental level of education affect parental monitoring and children's internet use, especially regarding pornographic content?'**
- **We examine:**
 - Parental Level of Education ↔ Children's risky experiences
 - Greek and Portuguese Nationals

Focus of Research



- Parents' Profiles (Internet Users):
 - 1. parental approaches to children's internet use**
 - 2. parental mediation**
 - 3. parental perceptions of children's risky experiences**

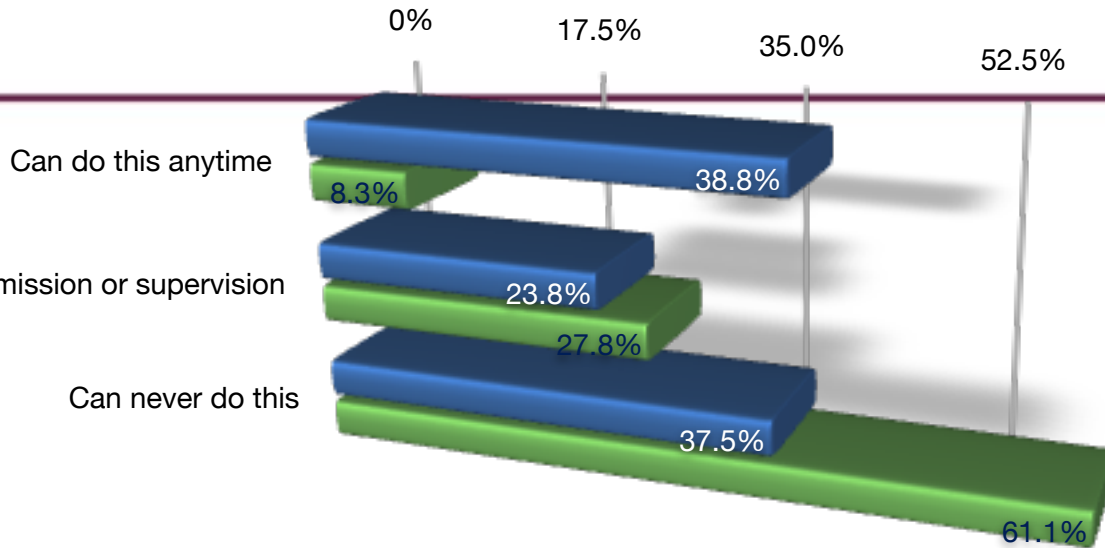
- Whether parental mediation in Greece and Portugal impinges on children's experiences of online porn:
 - a.the level of parental mediation**
 - b.parental mediation as experienced by the children themselves**
 - c.parental perceptions of children's risky experiences**
 - d.children's negative experiences of sexual online content**

Figures of Sample Populations

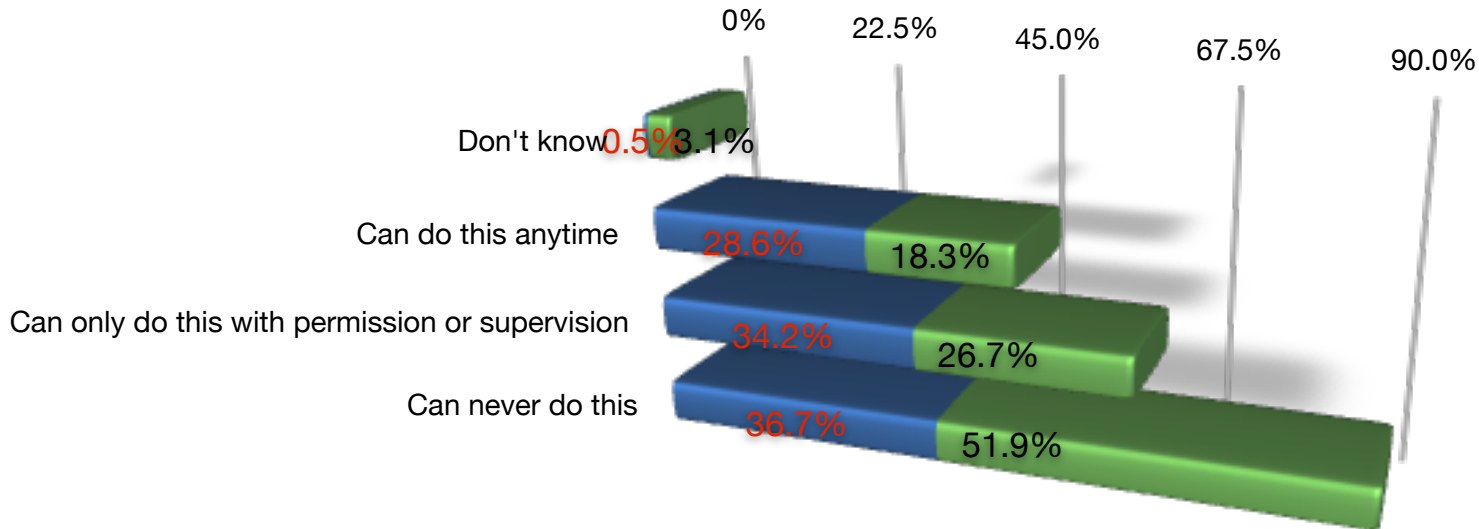


	Greece	Portugal
9-11 yr old children	392	429
Parents with lower educational background (no basic education; primary; lower secondary; upper secondary)	819 individuals	911
Parents with higher educational background (post secondary, first stage tertiary, second stage tertiary)	179	88
Parents internet users	62.9%	61.3%

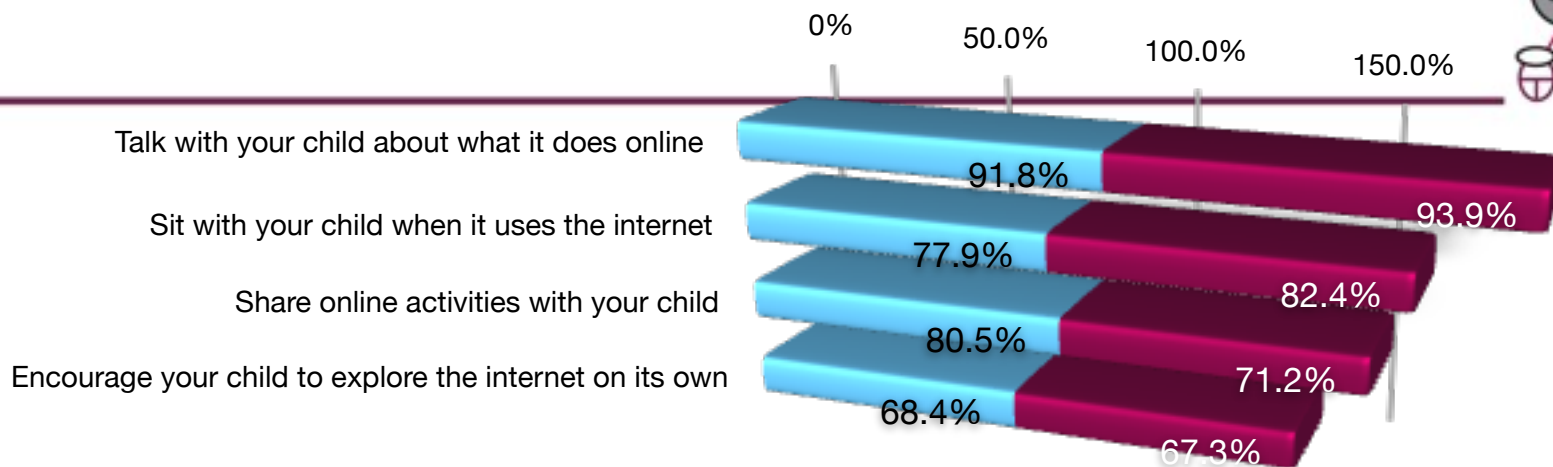
Child is allowed to: Download music or films on the internet (Higher Education)



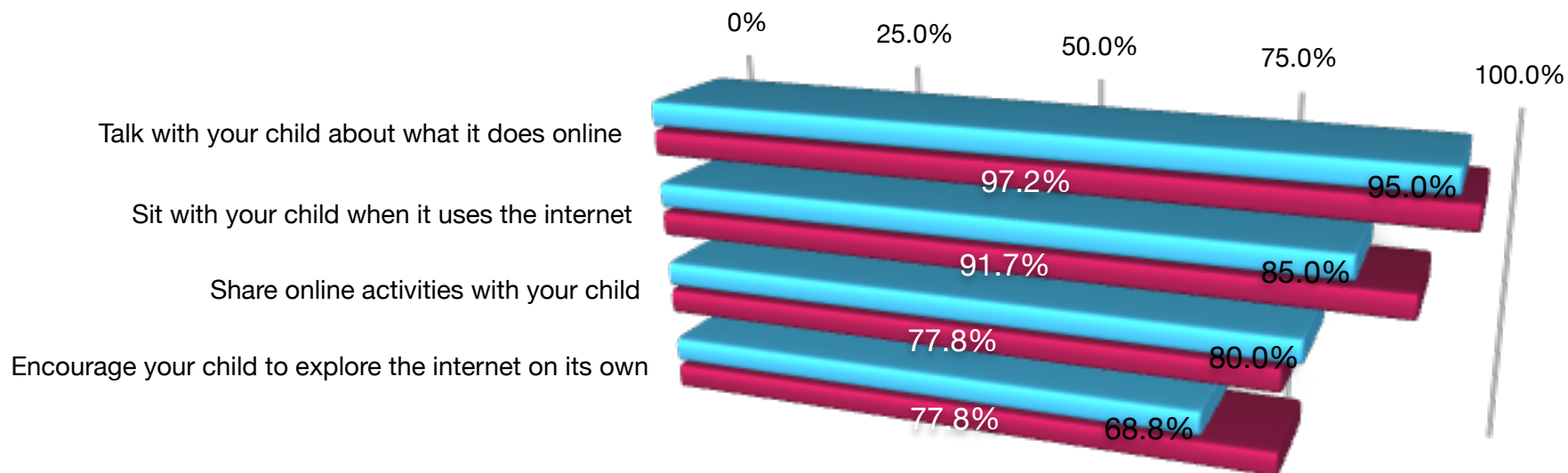
Child is allowed to: Download music or films on the internet (Lower education)



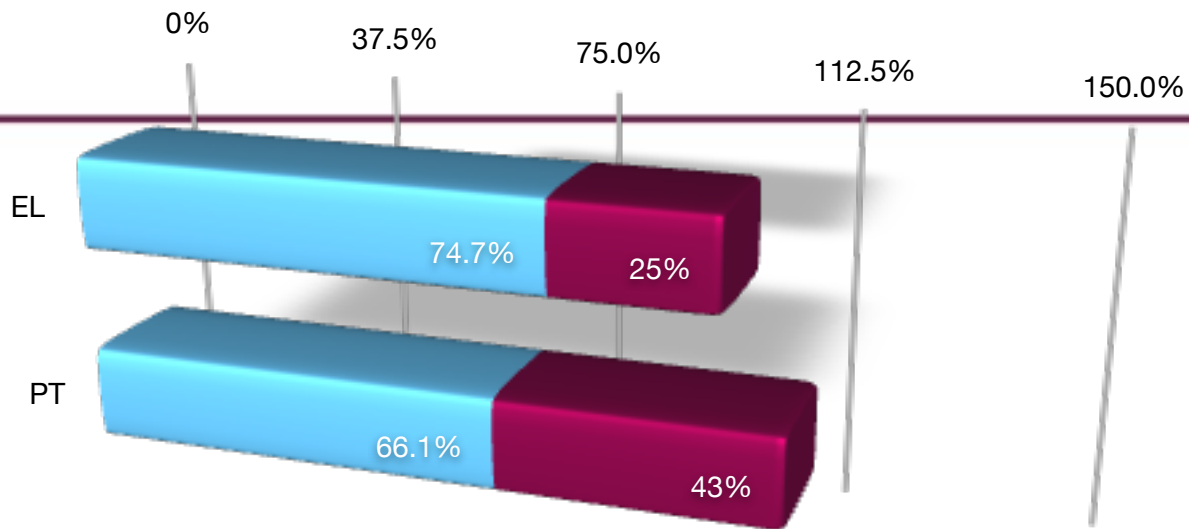
Parental Mediation (Lower Education)



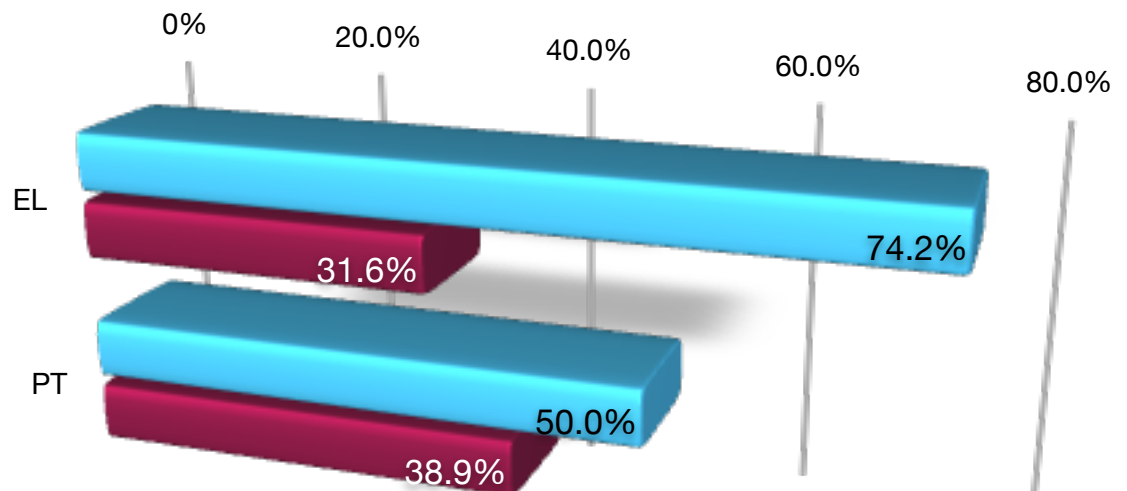
Parental Mediation (Higher Education)



Restrictive Mediation (Lower Education)



Restrictive Mediation (Higher Education)



Children's perceptions of parental mediation



- **Parents know 'a lot' about what kids do online:** Greece- 2/3 (64.8%), 26.8% **know 'quite a bit'**. Portugal- 46% and 32% (respectively)
- **Discuss with their parents what they do on the internet:** Greece, 83.4%; Portugal, 89%
- **Parents sit with kids:** Greece- 71.5%, Portugal- 70.8%
- **Share online activities with parents:** Greece- 3/4 (71.3%); Portugal- 55%

Risky experiences and encounters with porn: what parents think about their youngsters' activities



- **whether child had seen something online that bothered them in the past year**
- **great majority of parents regardless of national origin and level of education reported that their children had seen no such content**
- **almost all parents said that their offspring were not the recipients of sexual messages or images**
- **almost all parents said that children themselves had not sent such messages or images to someone else)**

Young children's experiences with sexually explicit material



- **Have you seen any obviously sexual images in the last year?**
 - **Greece:** 28 children - rather rarely (less than once or twice a month)
 - **Portugal:** 22
 - 3/4 both for **Greece** and **Portugal**- seen it offline (TV)
- **Not only very few children between the age 9-11 have actually been exposed to sexual content *online* in either Greece (3) or Portugal (13), but even among those who were, the number of children who actually felt bothered was even smaller (1 in Greece & 2 in Portugal)**

Conclusions



- **Parental mediation *is* effective regardless of parental level of education**
- **Low level of exposure to sexual content online linked to effective parental mediation**
- **young children not interested in pornography as defined by adults => moral panics out of proportion and overhyped**

Limitations



- We only deal with data frequencies
- Even if we employed cross tabs, we would still be looking at what is in reality only a correlation of factors
- We intend to proceed with a more elaborate analysis in a second phase of investigation, where we would be seeking causality between factors by employing regression analysis