

SCREEN TIME AND STUDY TIME: BALANCING GADGET USE AMONG PUPILS

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As digital devices become increasingly accessible to young learners, the challenge of balancing screen time with study time is more relevant than ever. This article explores the impact of screen time on elementary students' academic performance, health, and social behavior. It also examines strategies to achieve a healthy balance between educational and recreational gadget use. Supported by recent research, these insights aim to help educators, parents, and students understand the importance of managing screen time to promote both learning and well-being.

Excessive screen time can have adverse effects on academic performance, as evidenced by research conducted by Othman (2020). This study highlights that students who engage in prolonged gadget use for non-educational purposes often experience decreased focus and motivation for their studies. Othman emphasizes that screen-based distractions, such as games and social media, can impede students' ability to concentrate on academic tasks, thereby impacting their overall performance. When students prioritize recreational screen activities over study time, they may struggle to maintain their grades and grasp critical academic concepts. This research underscores the importance of setting screen time limits to ensure that students' gadget use does not interfere with their education.

In addition to academic concerns, the physical health effects of extended screen time are significant. According to Wahyurin et al. (2019), prolonged screen exposure can contribute to eye strain, headaches, and poor posture among students. The study, which involved students in Banyumas, revealed that excessive gadget use led to increased rates

of sedentary behavior and associated health issues. For children in their developmental years, these physical impacts are concerning, as they may contribute to long-term health problems. By encouraging balanced gadget use and promoting physical activities, parents and educators can help mitigate these health risks and support students' overall well-being.

Dessai et al. (2023) examined how screen time influences students' social behavior, particularly during remote learning periods. This research found that students who spend excessive time on digital devices may experience reduced face-to-face interactions, leading to feelings of isolation and decreased social skills. Dessai and colleagues argue that a lack of direct interaction with peers can hinder the development of essential social skills, such as empathy and effective communication. In the classroom setting, teachers can play a role in fostering a balanced environment that encourages both digital learning and interpersonal connections, ensuring that screen time does not replace valuable peer interactions.

To address these concerns, researchers suggest implementing strategies that encourage balanced gadget use. According to Masfufah and Darmawan (2023), time restrictions on screen use, especially during study hours, are essential for maintaining students' focus and motivation. The study highlights that establishing specific times for both academic and recreational screen activities allows students to enjoy the benefits of technology without compromising their educational goals. By creating a structured routine for screen use, parents and teachers can help students develop time-management skills that support both study and relaxation, fostering a balanced approach to digital engagement.

Mabaroh and Sugianti (2021) emphasize the importance of promoting digital literacy among students to foster responsible gadget use. Their research suggests that when students are taught to navigate the digital world responsibly, they are better equipped to balance their study and screen time. This approach involves educating

students about the potential impacts of excessive screen use and encouraging mindful consumption of digital media. By integrating digital literacy into the curriculum, educators can empower students to make informed decisions about their screen habits, ultimately supporting both academic success and well-being.

Balancing screen time and study time is crucial in today's digital era, where gadgets have become a staple in children's lives. The studies discussed highlight both the benefits and challenges associated with screen time, underscoring the need for careful management to promote students' academic, physical, and social development. By setting clear guidelines, encouraging physical activities, and fostering digital literacy, educators and parents can help students cultivate a healthy relationship with technology. This balanced approach ensures that gadgets serve as tools for learning rather than distractions, supporting students in achieving their educational goals while safeguarding their overall well-being.

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