

THE INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY USAGE ON CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

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Research Aim:

The aim of this study is to analyze the influence of digital technology usage on various aspects of children's well-being, including their emotional, cognitive, and social development. The research seeks to determine how screen time, type of digital activity, and parental involvement affect children's mental health, empathy, and behavioral regulation. Special attention is given to identifying the balance between beneficial and harmful digital engagement and to outlining preventive strategies that support healthy digital habits among school-aged children.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted from February to June 2025 among 160 school-aged children (8–15 years) from urban and suburban schools. A cross-sectional survey method was applied to evaluate the effects of digital technology use on children's emotional, cognitive, and social well-being. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of sections on screen time, type of device, purpose of use, and parental control. Psychological parameters such as attention span, emotional regulation, and sleep quality were assessed through both self-reports and parental feedback. All collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 28.0, applying descriptive statistics and correlation analysis to identify significant relationships between screen exposure and behavioral outcomes ($p < 0.05$). Ethical approval and parental consent were obtained prior to data collection.

Results

Out of 160 participants, 51% were male and 49% female, with a mean age of 11.8 ± 2.1 years. The average daily screen time was 4.3 ± 1.7 hours, exceeding the recommended two-hour limit for most children. A significant association was found between excessive screen use and sleep disturbances (64%), reduced physical activity (58%), and emotional irritability (47%) ($p < 0.05$). Children who used digital devices mainly for entertainment showed lower concentration levels and weaker social interaction compared to those using technology primarily for educational purposes. However, moderate digital use (2–3 hours per day) under parental supervision was linked to better academic engagement and improved emotional stability, suggesting that balanced and guided technology use can have positive effects on children's cognitive and psychological well-being.

Conclusion

This study concludes that digital technology has a dual effect on children's well-being. Moderate and purposeful use—especially for educational or creative activities—can enhance learning motivation, emotional awareness, and problem-solving abilities. In contrast, excessive and unsupervised screen time negatively impacts sleep quality, emotional balance, and social interaction. To protect children's mental and physical health in the digital era, parents and educators should promote balanced screen

time, encourage physical activities, and develop digital literacy programs that teach responsible and mindful technology use.

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