



IMPACT OF SMARTPHONE USAGE ON SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: ANALYSIS OF EFFECTS AND CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effects of smartphone usage on the social behavior of elementary school students and identify the factors contributing to their gadget use. A qualitative approach was employed, utilizing observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that smartphone usage negatively affects students' social behavior, including reduced attention to learning, increased use of inappropriate language, and diminished social interactions with peers and the surrounding environment. However, when used responsibly, smartphones can provide positive outcomes such as improved access to information and communication. Key factors influencing gadget use among elementary school students include parental supervision, peer influence, and academic demands. Therefore, stricter monitoring by both parents and schools is essential to optimize smartphone usage for students' social and academic development.

Keywords: Smartphone, Social, Behavior, School, Students

A.INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of technology is an inevitable aspect of contemporary society. It has brought transformative changes that simplify various human activities, including shopping, education, and communication. For instance, shopping can now be performed conveniently through smartphones, while educational tools like projectors have replaced traditional blackboards, enabling teachers to deliver lessons more efficiently. In addition, communication has undergone a paradigm shift; where face-to-face interactions were once the norm, today's technologies facilitate instant connections through phone calls, messaging, and social media platforms.

Technology, as defined by Miarso, is a process that enhances value by utilizing or producing specific products that integrate seamlessly into existing systems. However, alongside these benefits, technological advancements have introduced new challenges, such as social alienation, diminished solidarity, and reduced interpersonal engagement. These changes highlight the dual-edged nature of technology, which offers both opportunities and risks to societal behavior.

One significant outcome of technological progress is its impact on human interaction. Social media platforms, driven by the quest for rapid and easy communication, exemplify how information technology has evolved at an unprecedented pace. The widespread use of gadgets, even among elementary school students, is a telling example. While this accessibility helps children become adept at utilizing technology, it also raises concerns about their exposure to inappropriate content, reduced sensitivity to their surroundings, and the potential influence on their social behavior.

The term "impact," as described by Otto Soemarwoto (cited in Daniel, 2019), refers to changes caused by specific activities, which could be chemical, physical, biological, or human-induced. Similarly, gadgets are defined as compact electronic devices with multifaceted functions, offering convenience and enjoyment to users, as highlighted by Kurniawan (Rohman, 2017; Huda, 2019). While gadgets have revolutionized modern living, their usage among children demands careful supervision due to their susceptibility to mimic behaviors and absorb information indiscriminately.

Thoma Lickona (Kurniawan Syamsul, 2016) underscores the warning signs of societal decline, including increased youth violence, deteriorating language, substance abuse, diminished work ethics, and eroding moral values. These signs are increasingly evident among today's younger generations, particularly elementary school students, who are highly impressionable and heavily influenced by the digital content they consume. The lack of parental guidance exacerbates this issue, making it imperative to address the implications of gadget use on children's behavioral development within the family and society.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach, enabling the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of phenomena through direct interaction with participants in their natural environments. Braun and Clarke (2019) emphasize that thematic analysis is particularly effective for identifying patterns and themes in complex data, ensuring findings are both rich and systematically organized. Similarly, Creswell and Poth (2018) argue that qualitative methods are ideal for exploring personal experiences and perspectives, particularly in unique geographic and cultural contexts such as Pancana Village, where the research was conducted. The location, situated along the Makassar Strait, comprises three hamlets—Pancana, Kaworo,

and Cenrapole—making it an appropriate setting for examining social and environmental dynamics.

Data collection for the study took place over three months, from September to November 2024, involving a purposive sampling strategy. The research focused on 20 students, 10 parents, and five teachers directly connected to SD Inpres No. 14 Pancana. Data were gathered through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document review. These methods allowed the researcher to engage deeply with the daily routines and social interactions of participants, capturing detailed and meaningful insights into their lived experiences.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a systematic process of familiarizing, coding, and developing themes to interpret findings comprehensively. Ethical considerations were rigorously adhered to, ensuring participants were fully informed of the study's aims, with their confidentiality safeguarded through anonymized data handling. Additionally, efforts were made to minimize any discomfort or harm to participants during the study, upholding the principles of ethical research practice.

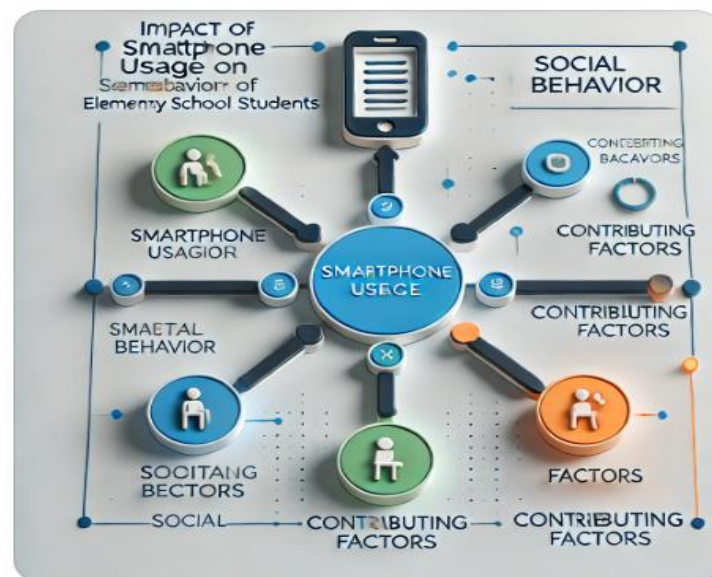


Figure 1 Flowchart Diagram Representing The Critical Thinking Process.

C.RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

➤ RESEARCH RESULTS

This study explores the impact of smartphone usage on the social behavior of students at SD Inpres No. 14 Pancana and the factors influencing such use. Data were collected using observations, interviews, and documentation to analyze behaviors, language, and interactions.

Observations indicate that smartphone usage negatively impacts students' concentration, sensitivity to their surroundings, and social etiquette. Students tend to use inappropriate language, delay tasks, and exhibit reduced social engagement, particularly with peers and neighbors. Their social behaviors, influenced by prolonged exposure to digital media, often lack the politeness and respect typical of earlier generations.

The intensity of smartphone use varies based on parental supervision, with durations averaging 1–2 hours daily under strict monitoring. The way students communicate has also shifted significantly, reflecting the language and expressions they encounter online. Certain phrases or slang, often inappropriate for their age, are commonly used among peers. Teachers and parents alike observed that excessive smartphone usage diminishes attention to schoolwork and disrupts traditional social norms, including respect for teachers and elders. Despite its challenges, some students demonstrate improved linguistic skills and expanded social networks through exposure to online platforms.

- Factors Influencing Smartphone Usage

Several factors contribute to the prevalence of smartphone usage among students. One prominent driver is the pandemic-induced reliance on digital devices for educational purposes. While intended for academic tasks, many students divert to games or social media. Peer influence and family dynamics also play significant roles; children often pressure parents to provide smartphones to mimic their friends or relatives. Moreover, some parents use smartphones as a pacifying tool to keep children occupied, which inadvertently fosters dependency.

Although smartphones can serve as a valuable educational resource, they are deemed less critical for younger students due to their limited maturity and susceptibility to negative influences. Teachers highlight the need for parental supervision and guidance to ensure balanced use. Without such oversight, children risk prioritizing entertainment over educational and social development, leading to a detrimental impact on their cognitive and social growth. This underscores the importance of cultivating responsible smartphone usage among young learners.

➤ DISCUSSION

1. Impact of Smartphone Usage on Social Behavior

The widespread use of smartphones among children, including elementary school students, has undeniable consequences on their social behaviors. This research highlights both the negative and positive impacts of smartphone usage among students at SD Inpres No. 14 Pancana.

a. Intensity of Smartphone Usage

The study revealed that students' daily smartphone usage typically ranges from 1–2 hours, with parental supervision playing a crucial role in limiting excessive screen time. Parents who actively monitor their children's use often mitigate potential adverse effects, suggesting the importance of guidance in shaping appropriate habits.

b. Language Style

The exposure to inappropriate language through online content significantly influences the students' communication styles. Words such as "anjng" and "kamprt," which are unsuitable for their age, have been incorporated into their vocabulary. This behavioral shift can be attributed to their unfiltered access to online games, videos, and social media platforms. Furthermore, students frequently adopt expressions and speech patterns mimicking older individuals or content they consume, leading to a maturity in language use that is inconsistent with their developmental stage.

c. Social Behavior

Smartphone usage has also disrupted traditional social norms among students. Findings indicate a decline in courtesy, such as using respectful phrases like "tabe-tabe." Students appear less attentive to their surroundings and display reduced respect toward teachers and peers. Their reluctance to engage in physical social interactions further underscores the isolating nature of excessive screen time. However, the potential for positive impacts cannot be dismissed; when exposed to appropriate content, students may adopt positive behaviors and acquire knowledge beyond the school curriculum. Moreover, smartphones enhance access to information and communication, fostering efficiency and connectivity in their daily lives.

d. Social Interaction

The nature of students' interactions has shifted significantly. Rather than engaging in physical play with peers, they increasingly socialize through digital platforms, such as online games and social media. While this can expand their network of friends, it often comes at the expense of face-to-face interactions, diminishing their ability to form meaningful in-person relationships.

2. Factors Influencing Smartphone Usage and Social Behavior

The research identifies several factors contributing to smartphone usage among elementary students. Initially, academic requirements during the pandemic necessitated the use of digital devices for remote learning. However, a lack of parental oversight and unrestricted screen time has allowed students to divert their attention to non-educational activities, including online games, social media, and streaming platforms such as TikTok and YouTube.

Parental control or the lack thereof plays a pivotal role in shaping the impact of smartphone use. Parents who fail to establish clear boundaries inadvertently enable students to explore inappropriate content, further influencing their social behavior. These findings highlight the need for structured guidelines and active involvement by parents and educators

to balance the benefits and risks of smartphone use. Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative approach to ensure that smartphones serve as tools for learning and growth rather than distractions that impede social development.

D. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Conclusion**

This study highlights the significant impact of smartphone usage on the social behavior of elementary school students at SD Inpres No. 14 Pancana. While smartphones offer benefits, such as providing access to information and enhancing communication, their unregulated use leads to notable negative effects. Key findings include:

1. **Social Behavior:** Excessive smartphone use has been linked to reduced social interaction, diminished respect for teachers and peers, and a decline in traditional values of politeness.
2. **Language Style:** Exposure to inappropriate content has influenced students to adopt harsh language and communication styles unsuitable for their developmental stage.
3. **Social Interaction:** Students increasingly rely on digital platforms for socializing, limiting physical interactions and weakening community bonds.
4. **Usage Factors:** The initial purpose of smartphones for educational support during remote learning has expanded to include recreational use, driven by inadequate parental supervision and peer influence.

- **Recommendations**

1. **Parental Guidance:** Parents should actively monitor and regulate their children's smartphone usage, setting clear boundaries for screen time and ensuring access to age-appropriate content.
2. **School Policies:** Schools should implement digital literacy programs that teach responsible smartphone use and promote face-to-face social interaction among students.
3. **Community Involvement:** Collaborative efforts among parents, teachers, and the broader community are essential to instill balanced values and address the challenges posed by digital technology.
4. **Further Research:** Future studies could explore interventions that optimize the positive impacts of smartphone usage while minimizing its adverse effects on young children's development.

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