Technology Impact on Children

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# **Abstract**

A student at Northern Marianas College describe how technology can impact children from the age of 1 to 11 in the CNMI. Technology has impacted our society since it was first invented. The student wanted to inform the effects of technology and how it also affects their development as they grow older. Surveys and literatures were used to gather data. The survey is use to find trends and the uses from children for using technology. Different benefits and negative aspects are found in journal article and from respondents. This study is important because it shares awareness of how technology affect children at any ways.

# **Introduction/Background**

Young children – even toddlers – are now seen holding and using iPhones, tablets, or other electronic devices. Technology comes in different forms like phones or tablets. Kids in the CNMI are now usually indoors playing games or watching videos instead of going outside to socialize or spend time outdoors. The student’s topic is about the negative effects of kids using technology at a young age. Not many people are aware of the effects of the excessive use of technology and it can create negative effects that will lead to addiction, child obesity, or disruptive sleeping patters. It can also risk the safety of the child from being exposed to inappropriate stuffs. This research proposal presents a plan to identify and learn about the negative and positive effects of technology and how it also affect a child’s development and a parent-child relationship.

# **Literature Review**

Technology can be seen as a benefit in the modern world. It can be used for easier communication, access to lots of different information, for education purposes, etc. Technology has its advantages for young kids. One advantage can be used for educational purposes. Children between the age of 3 to 5 can watch education programs from the tablet or computers. "In addition, encouraging parents to change to educational content and engage with their children around technology will allow children to reap the most benefit from what they view" (O'Graddy, 2016). For example, if kids are watching educational videos, as they grow older the information they learn will be used to their advantages. Education contents will help their knowledge and help with their education experiences.

Although technology has its benefits, there are risk and consequences for young kids. One risk is that there are chances that kids will be expose to inappropriate contents. “The risks are becoming more diverse, with increasing reports, in the media at least, of mobile phones being used to record images of children being physically or sexually assaulted or send texts to children for the purposes of bullying them” (Gallagher, 2005). Language skills and development can be delayed when kids are expose to different digital platform (Heid, 2016). Parents have to be aware of their child’s activities in the Internet. Another risk is the disruption of their sleep schedule. Young kids need their average amount of sleep. For instance, using devices before going to bed will disrupt the sleep schedule and the sleep quality. Blue light is the source that affect the sleep. “Recent research has shown screens from devices such as tablets and smart phones emit harmful blue light that can cause headaches, eye strain and irritated eyes for children” (Patel, 2017). Lack of sleep will affect children’s daily performances.

Parent interaction is important to a child’s development. If kids are too busy using technology, it can affect a child’s relationship to their parents and even to their peers. For instance, a 5-year-old girl is seen using a device and her mother called out her name. The 5-year-old is not paying attention and her mother called out her name again. She didn’t respond to her mother again because the device is distracting the young child. Technology is sometimes a distraction and eventually, this can affect the child’s attention span.

# **Research Questions**

Primary Question

* How does the use of technology affect young children?

Secondary Questions:

* What are the positive and negative effects?
* How does it affect child development?
* How does it affect a child’s relationship with their parents?

# **Methodology**

The researcher has created a pilot survey and a final survey. The researcher has listed questions in the pilot survey (see Appendix A). The instructor, Dr. Kimberley Bunts-Anderson, recommended to add demographic questions. The questions were about the amount of time spent on technology, the age range, about the negative effects of technology, and the respondents’ reason for their answers. Many feedbacks were given regarding the questions on the pilot survey. Unfortunately, the researcher has to revise the survey questions. There were not enough demographic questions and questions were mainly focusing on the negative side of technology. The researcher also wanted to do an audience research, so she included an extra demographic question in the final survey such as race. The question about the positive effects were added and the question on negative effects was revised. The surveys were planned to be given out to students and families with young children. Statistics will be used to measure the amount of data that will be collected and use to compare the results.

Second, the researcher use is to find reliable information from the web. The researcher ­­spent her time in the internet to look for reliable sources and to make sure the information is not bias. She used EBSCO Host to look for periodical and academic journals. She has found many articles. When looking at periodicals or academic journals, she checks for the authors, the published date, the publisher, and the credibility. The researcher reads the articles to know if the source can be used or if it is not reliable for this research.

# **Analysis/Findings**

The first method the researcher has used is a survey. A total of 10 questions in the survey are given to parents and students. A total of 18 responses received. Some students who answered this survey are also parents. According to the result from the survey, the option family relatives have more results from the other options. Based on the student research data, 55.6% of the majority age group is between 1 to 4 years old (see Appendix B). Parents with children from the age group of less than a year old and 1-4 years old let their kids use technology less than 2 hours. Children from age 5 and over use technology between 3 – 5 hours. For questions 3, respondents select the type of technology is used. 77.8% of kids use mobile phones such as Samsung, iPhone, etc. There are different uses for technology. The top uses for technology are watching videos/movies by 77.8% and playing video/mobile games by 83.3%. Other uses include listening to music, use for education and one result is use for nursery rhymes.

According to the result, technology can also affect parent-child relationships. 69.2% said that kids will sometimes ignore people when they are being talked to. The survey listed options that include benefits and negative effects that can impact children. There are many benefits when using technology. Many use technologies to help kids be familiar with it because we live in a technology era. It is also use for education, socialize and also develop skills. Technology has its positive aspects and its negative aspects. 83.3% said that technology can also affect their studies. Parents are worried that technology will negatively affect their studies by showing poor performance during school, grades are affected, etc.

# **Discussion**

In this research, the student has combined data from survey results and online research from journal articles and academic journals for this research. The student was not able to contact the experts to help add more in-depth information for this topic. Getting answers from experts will likely help with this research topic. The survey results are used to see trends between the age group and the number of hours they spent on. Using technology for music, videos, games or for educational use are increasing. Consequently, technology can have a negative impact on children. It can affect their studies, sleep schedule, or risk of seeing inappropriate contents in the Internet.

# **Conclusion**

The researcher was able to answer the research questions. The survey was used to see any trends with different age groups of children using technology. Online research was also use to help gather more information based on the research topic. The research learns more ways how technology affect children. Technology impact children in both negative and positive ways. It also has different uses. Excessive use of technology is an issue. It is important to know the positive and the negative side of technology. Parents needs to be aware of the risk when they let their kids use electronic devices.

# **References**

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# **Appendices**

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**Appendix A - Survey Questions**

1. **Do you have kid(s), young family relatives, and/or younger siblings?**
   * Kid(s)
   * Family Relatives (Nephews, nieces, cousins, etc.)
   * Younger Siblings
   * None
2. **How old are they?**
   * Less than one year old
   * 1 – 4 years old
   * 5 – 7 years old
   * 8 – 10 years old
   * 11+ years old
3. **Do they have their own device or use someone else’s device?**
   * Have their own device
   * Uses someone else’s device (using parents or siblings’ devices)
4. **What type of technology device? (Select all that apply)**
   * Mobile phones (Samsung, iPhone, etc.)
   * Gaming consoles (Nintendo, Play Station, X-Box, etc.)
   * Computer or laptop
   * Tablets or iPad
   * Other
5. **What do they use technology for? (Select all that apply)**
   * Watching videos/movies
   * Playing video/mobile games
   * Listen to music
   * Browsing the web
   * Social Media
   * Education
   * Other
6. **For parents, how many hours do you allow your kids to use technology?**
   * Less than 2 hours
   * 3 – 5 hours
   * More than 6 hours
7. **In what ways has technology affect their mood, personality, or behavior? (Select all that apply)**
   * Addicted to their phones or any devices
   * Spending less time outdoors
   * Throwing tantrums, or cry when device is taken away from them
   * Always feeling tired or exhausted
   * Doesn’t affect them
8. **For parents, how has technology affect your relationship with your kid(s)?**
   * Kids spending less time with family
   * Sometimes ignore you when you talk to them
   * Relationship has deteriorated
   * Improved family relationship
   * Doesn’t affect family relationship in anyway
9. **What do you think are the benefits for kids when using technology? (Select all that apply)**
   * Be familiar with technology in today’s society
   * Able to communicate or socialize with families, peers. etc.
   * Support schoolwork and improve educational experience
   * Boost self-esteem and improve self-confidence
   * Develop skills (language, communication, etc.)
   * Other
10. **In what ways do you think technology does that can negatively affect children? (Select all that apply)**
    * Affect their studies (poor grades, poor performance at school, etc.)
    * Oversharing personal information
    * Staying up late or not getting enough sleep
    * Doing less physical activities
    * Risk of exposer to inappropriate contents from the Internet
    * Interacting with strangers in the Internet
    * Exposure to violence in the Internet
    * Other

**Appendix B - Survey Results**













