

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INTENSITY OF GADGET USE WITH SOCIAL INTERACTION AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN (4-6 YEARS)

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ABSTRACT

The use of electronic devices among children is increasing. Gadgets are considered safe and easy to supervise by many parents. They often do not consider the negative effects on the development of children's social and emotional interactions. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between social interaction and emotional development with the amount of gadget use in preschool children (aged 4-6 years). This type of research is quantitative correlation with a cross-sectional approach. The number of respondents was 68 people with a proportional stratified random sampling method. The research instruments included the SDQ questionnaire, the gadget use intensity questionnaire, and the social interaction questionnaire. The results of this study showed that 43 children (63.2%) used electronic devices in the high category. Hypothesis testing using Spearman Rank produced a p value of 0.000 (less than 0.05) which indicated a relationship between gadget use in preschool children with social emotional development with a correlation between gadget use and social contact of 0.639, emotional development with difficulty of 0.455, and emotional development with strength of 0.418. The conclusion is that there is a relationship between the use of gadgets in preschool children and social emotional development and parents need to be more selective in choosing the toys given to children and monitor and limit the provision of excessive toys.

Introduction:Currently, many parents believe that gadgets can be safe friends for children, even though gadgets themselves are not recommended for preschool children because gadgets themselves have a negative impact on children's social and emotional development.

Objectives:The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between the intensity of gadget use in preschool children (4-6 years) with children's social interactions and emotional development.

Methods:This research was conducted quantitatively using cross-sectional and correlation methodology.

Results:The results of this study found a relationship between gadget use in preschool children and their social and emotional development.

Conclusions:Parents need to be more selective in choosing toys given to children and supervise and limit excessive toy giving. This is because excessive use of toys can have an impact on the growth and development of preschool children.

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Introduction

Gadget use in children has become a common habit, even Indonesia is recorded as one of the countries with the highest gadget use. China became the leader in smartphone use in 2020 with the number of users reaching 953.55 million, and a penetration rate of 66% of the total population. Indonesia, as an archipelagic country in Southeast Asia with the largest population in the region (273.52 million people), ranks fourth in gadget use with 170.4 million users, and a



penetration rate of 61.7%. Newzoo estimates that globally there will be around 3.6 billion gadget users in 2020, an increase compared to the previous year, namely 2019, which recorded 3.4 billion users. This projection shows a tendency for an increase in the number of gadget users in the future (Katadata.co.id, 2023). In Indonesia itself, the province with the highest gadget owners and users is East Kalimantan with the highest percentage of cellphone users in 2022, which is 82.37%. Riau Province is in fifth place with a percentage of 73.47%. Meanwhile, the province with the lowest number of gadget users and owners is Papua Province with the lowest percentage of gadget users at 35.33% (Katadata.co.id, 2023). As many as 29% of early childhood in Indonesia have used gadgets in the last three months. Its role is 3.5% for babies under one year old, 25.9% for toddlers aged 1-3 years, and 47.7% for premature children aged 4-6 years (Katadata.co.id, 2023). According to the World Health Organization in Arfina Indah Azwi (2022) reported that 5-25% of preschool children experience developmental disorders. The results of the Basic Health Research (RISKESDAS) in Yuni quoted by Arfina Indah Azwi (2022) Child development report in 2018 recorded an increase in children's social-emotional development in Indonesia to 69.9%, but still lower than neighboring countries such as Vietnam which reached 91.2%.

Based on research conducted by Munisa (2020), on "The Effect of Gadget Use on Early Childhood Social Interactions at TKPanca Budi Medan". Shows that there is an influence in the use of gadgets on children's social interactions. In line with Pardede & Watini (2021) on "The Effect of Gadget Use on Early Childhood Emotional Development at Adifa Karang Mulya Kindergarten, Tangerang City". That there is an influence of playing gadgets on children's emotional development. Continuous use of gadgets will have a negative impact on children's behavior in their daily lives. Activities that children tend to do in using gadgets frequently will make children dependent and become routine activities carried out by children in their daily (Fiidatun Rohana, 2020))

Many parents today believe that these devices are safe and easy-to-supervised playmates.(Widya, 2020). According to mental health science, preschool children should not use electronic devices because it can interfere with their natural development.(Sari & Mitsalia, 2016). The preschool period covers development from 4 to 6 years of age. During this period, children spend time playing with peers, learning to become more independent and take care of themselves, and acquiring the skills necessary to enter school. The process of growth and development occurs in various aspects, including social interaction and emotional development.(Dwinita et al., 2019). According to Lisdian inNurlatifah et al., (2022)Social interaction is defined as the existence of interdependence between individuals and groups. The ability to behave socially is an important basis in developing children's skills to interact with their environment as a whole. Social interaction itself must be developed since preschool age because social interaction itself is very influential and important for the future of children. If children are unable to interact socially, it can result in children being ostracized from the environment, children become shy individuals who are not confident and children will experience difficulties when developing.

Children who are too busy playing gadgets in their daily lives at home or in their playing environment, so that children are more busy with their gadgets and even ignore calls and orders from people around them. Crying and feeling angry when technological devices are taken away, is one of the causes of children being addicted to gadgets. Giving children electronic devices without parental supervision can have a negative impact on children's mental well-being.(Pardede & Watini, 2021).

Based on a preliminary study through an interview process with 5 student guardians on March 23, 2022 at Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten, the average results of the five parents said that they facilitated their children with gadgets. two of them said they gave gadgets so that their



children would not be fussy and three of them gave gadgets so that children would not play outside the home. The average of the five respondents interviewed said that their children use gadgets for more than 2 hours per day. Parents also said that if the child has played with gadgets, the child often forgets time, is lazy to study, is called not to answer, often gets angry and cries when given orders when the child is playing gadgets, ignores people who are talking to him, and is lazy to play with his peers and emotional development of preschool age children at Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten, Pelalawan Regency, Riau.

From the background above, it can be seen that the purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between the intensity of gadget use in preschool children (4-6 years) with social interaction and emotional development at Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten, Pelalawan Regency.

Methods

This study is a quantitative correlational study with a cross-sectional approach that aims to identify the relationship between the intensity of gadget use with social interaction and emotional development of preschool children at Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten, Pelalawan Regency, Riau. This study examines the relationship between the variable of gadget use intensity with social interaction and emotional development of preschool children aged 4-6 years. The total population is 80 children, and only 68 children were sampled with Inclusion Criteria: Parents of children who are active as students of Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten aged 4-6 years, Children who are able to use gadgets and have gadgets, Parents of children who are willing to be respondents, Exclusion Criteria: Children who do not attend school, Parents of children who are not willing to be respondents. This study used a stratified random sampling method. The social interaction questionnaire, the device usage intensity questionnaire to measure the duration and frequency of device use, and the SDQ questionnaire to measure the emotional aspects of children were part of the research instruments. The validity test of SDQ itself has been tested on research instruments in several versions. Goodman began this research in 1997 and obtained the results of SDQ-teacher reports (TR) and parent reports (PR) which were as useful as the Rutter scale. The reliability test of SDQ was proven to be satisfactory, with internal stability (0.73), cross informant correlation (0.34) and test retest stability after 4-6 months (0.62). This study is non-parametric, namely the correlation coefficient with the Spearman test, this analysis is used because both variables use an ordinal measurement scale. The category of the correlation coefficient is if the correlation coefficient value (r) is 0 then the two variables are not related, and if the correlation coefficient is -1 or +1 it means that the two variables are related. Data management in this study uses the SPSS program (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Results

Table 1 Respondent characteristics based on gadget usage

Gadget Usage	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Low	10	14.7%
Currently	15	22.1%
Tall	43	63.2%
Total	68	100%

Table 5 shows that as many as 43 children (63.2%) use electronic devices in the high category,



Table 2 Respondent characteristics based on social interaction

Social Interaction	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Good	18	26.5%
Enough	17	25.0%
Not enough	33	48.5%
Total	68	100%

Table 6 shows that 33 children (48.5% of children) were not involved in social interactions.

Table 3 Distribution of Children's Emotional Development

Emotional Development	Difficulty Scale F %	Power Scale F %
Abnormal	29 42.6	31 45.6
Borderline	15 22.1	9 13.2
Normal	24 25.3	28 41.2
Total	68 100	68 100

Table 7 shows that the majority of children have emotional development with a difficulty scale in the abnormal category, namely 29 children (42.6%) and 31 children (45.6%).

Table 4 cross-tabulation of the relationship between gadget use and social interaction in preschool-aged children at Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten

Use of Gadgets	Social Interaction							
	Good		Enough		Not enough		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Low	6	8.8	4	5.9	0	0	10	100
Currently	7	10.3	6	8.8	2	2.9	15	100
Tall	5	7.4	7	10.3	31	45.6	43	100

Table 8 shows that as many as 31 children (45.6%) are included in the category of high gadget use and low social interaction.

Table 5 Cross tabulation of the relationship between gadget use and emotional development (difficulty scale) in preschool children at Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten

Use of Gadgets	Emotional development (difficulty scale)							
	Normal		Borderline		Abnormal		Total	
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
Low	6	8.8	4	5.9	0	0	10	100
Currently	9	13.2	2	2.9	4	5.9	15	100
Tall	9	13.2	9	13.3	25	36.8	43	100



According to the cross-tabulation results, table 9 shows that 31 children (45.6%) have high gadget usage and low social interaction.

Table 6 cross-tabulation of the relationship between gadget use and emotional development (strength scale) in preschool-aged children at Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten.

Use of Gadgets	Emotional development (strength scale)							
	Normal		Borderline		Abnormal		Total	
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
Low	8	11.8	1	1.5	1	1.5	10	100
Currently	8	11.8	3	4.4	4	5.9	15	100
Tall	12	17.6	5	7.4	26	38.2	43	100

Table 10 shows emotional development in abnormal strength scale is associated with high gadget use in 26 children (38.2%).

Table 7 Analysis of Relationships Between Variables

Relationship between variables	p	r	N
Gadget Use with Social Interaction	0,000	0.639	68
Gadget Use with Emotional Development (difficulty scale)	0,000	0.455	68
Gadget Use with Emotional Development (strength scale)	0,000	418	68

There is a relationship between gadget use and social interaction and emotional development in preschool children, according to the results of table 10, with a p value of 0.000, which means it is less than 0.05. Gadget use with emotional development (difficulty scale) and social interaction has a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.639, which indicates a strong correlation. The correlation coefficient (r) between gadget use and emotional development (strength scale) is 0.455 which indicates a moderate correlation.

Discussion

A. Intensity of Gadget Use in Preschool Children.

The results of the study on the use of electronic devices in preschool children at Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten, Pelalawan Regency, Riau Province showed that out of 68 children surveyed, 10 children (14.7%) were in the low category of electronic device use, 15 children (22.1%) were in the medium category, and 43 children (63.2%) were in the high category. This finding indicates that most children, namely 43 out of 68 children surveyed, or 63.2%, use electronic devices in the high category.

This research is in accordance with previous research that has been conducted by Narullita (2022) Of the 96 respondents, most preschool children (3-6 years) (52.1%) used gadgets for more



than an hour, which is included in the high category. The various positive and negative effects of gadget use on preschool children indicate that parents should set appropriate time limits for their children to use gadgets. According to research conducted by Widiawati in Puput Oktafia (2021), children aged 3–6 years are accustomed to using electronic devices, and parents say they use them mainly to play games and keep them busy. Most parents allow their children to use electronic devices for more than an hour as a way to keep them busy and avoid distractions (N. Asiah & Sofia, 2019).

According to Warisyah in Pardede & Watini (Pardede & Watini, 2021) said that gadget addiction, known as Screen Dependence Disorder, was recognized by around 70% of parents who allowed their children aged between 6 months and 4 years to use gadgets while parents were doing housework. As many as 65% of them also reported doing the same thing to calm their children while in public places. Then, one in four parents admitted to leaving their children alone with their gadgets before going to bed, even though gadgets themselves can cause eye damage and disrupt sleep comfort. Most parents also reported that children under the age of 1 year use gadgets to play games and watch videos. Factors that cause gadget addiction in children include visual and audio appeal, minimal interaction with others, low physical risk, avoiding conflict with friends, ease of use, flexibility in various locations, and curiosity about technological advances (Derry Iswidharmanjay, 2014).

According to the researcher's opinion, many parents now give electronic devices to their young children. Working parents often use these devices to monitor their children's activities at home after school, while stay-at-home parents use them to keep their children busy and help them complete household chores. Parents are advised to supervise preschool children's use of gadgets and set time limits to prevent negative impacts.

B. Intensity of Gadget Use with Social Interaction in Preschool Children.

Of the 68 children who used high devices, 23 (59.0%) had high device use; 31 (43.6%) had low social interaction; 17 (25.0%) had sufficient social interaction; and 18 (26.5%) had good social interaction, these findings are in accordance with the study by Rohana et al. (2020), which showed that of the 39 people who responded, 23 (59.0%) had high device use, while 21 (53.8%) also had it. The correlation value of 0.872 indicates a strong and positive relationship between device use and social interaction. This study is also in line with previous research conducted by The Untamed (2020), According to the regression analysis, there is a relationship between social interaction and the use of electronic devices in preschool children at Panca Budi Kindergarten Medan. The results showed that children's social interaction tended to increase with higher devices and decrease with lower devices, with an R coefficient of 0.773 and $p < 0.05$.

The results showed that 31 children did not interact socially. The use of devices is an important factor that supports this. Ayuby in Rohana (2020) said that continuous use of gadgets can have a negative impact on children's behavior if it becomes an addiction and becomes a routine. Many children now spend more time playing electronic devices than making friends with their friends. Children who are not actively socializing tend to have difficulty interacting with their peers.

Factors that cause lack of interaction in children include internal and external factors. Internal factors include elements within the child, such as their beliefs about themselves and their desire to socialize with peers. External factors include factors such as parental education level, peers, and teacher encouragement. (Kurnia, 2020). Communication and social contact are two main conditions that are not met if social interaction does not occur or is hampered. This term refers to the reciprocal influence between individuals or groups to achieve certain results. The



basic conditions for coexistence, namely social contact and social communication, can only be recognized as social interaction in the social process.(Dr. Baharuddin, 2021).

According to Ismato in *The Untamed* (2020), children who often use electronic devices tend to ignore their surroundings and prefer to use electronic devices rather than socialize with their friends. As a result, their social interactions with their surroundings decrease, or may even disappear. In addition, children's ability to express emotions is also hampered, because they may have difficulty conveying their feelings. As social beings, humans are basically part of a group or establish relationships with others. Social behavior and actions arise from the thought process, and when these behaviors occur in the context of relationships, social interactions occur. These social behaviors and actions can occur in various situations, such as at school or outside of school.(Dr. Baharuddin, 2021).

Based on facts supported by the theory, researchers argue that children's social interaction is the relationship between children and their surroundings, such as the relationship between children and their peers, children and family, children and parents, children and teachers, and the relationship between children and the surrounding environment. Social interaction in children is clearer when children play with friends of the same age, children's free play time is a time when children can explore the environment around them. Social interaction is very much needed for preschool children where this social interaction will be used until adulthood if children who have less social interaction are worried that it can interfere with their social development. The role of parents is very important for children's social development both at home and in the surrounding environment. The negative factor of this gadget is that it can reduce children's social interaction where children will become closed individuals and like to be alone. Parents are advised to pay more attention to their children where parents must teach children how to interact and introduce children to the environment around them. Giving limits to children's gadget usage is the most appropriate thing, rather than children playing with gadgets all the time, it is better for children to use their time to interact with their parents, such as chatting, playing games that children like, taking children for walks or exercising.

C. Intensity of Gadget Use with Emotional Development in Preschool Children

Research on the intensity of gadget use and emotional development found that on the difficulty scale, 29 children (42.6%) were categorized as abnormal, 15 children (22.1%) were categorized as borderline, and 24 children (35.3%) were categorized as normal. On the strength scale, 31 children (45.5%) were categorized as abnormal, 9 children (13.2%) were categorized as borderline, and 28 children (41.2%) were categorized as normal. This study is consistent with Damaiyanti's (2020) study which showed that 38.2% of respondents who used devices for more than one hour experienced problematic emotional development, compared to 14.6% of respondents who used devices for less than one hour. There is a significant correlation between the duration of device use and the emotional development of preschool children. The results of the bivariate analysis were carried out with a confidence level of 95% ($p \leq 0.05$).

The study revealed that 29 children were categorized as abnormal on the difficulty scale, and 31 children were categorized as abnormal on the strength scale. Several factors can cause abnormal emotional development, including frequent use of gadgets for more than one hour per day. Excessive use of gadgets can have a negative impact on children, both on their health and emotional development. Gadgets have many sophisticated features that can interfere with children's learning process at school. For example, at home, children may play with their gadgets and ignore their parents' calls, showing indifference to the people around them. When children are engrossed in their electronic devices, their social-emotional relationship with their parents



can be disrupted. Children may get angry, cry hysterically, or even hit if their parents take the device away.(Pardede & Watini, 2021).

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics in(Nurmalitasari, 2015)says Emotional development refers to a child's ability to understand and express emotions comprehensively, including recognizing and displaying positive and negative emotions. Emotional development also includes the skills needed to build relationships with other children and adults in the surrounding environment. Using gadgets for more than an hour can have a negative impact on a child's health and emotional development. The sophisticated features of gadgets can interfere with a child's learning process at school. For example, when a child plays with a gadget at home and his parents call, the child may ignore the call and not care about the people around him. This can affect the child's social and emotional relationship with his parents. If the parents take the gadget away, the child may become angry, cry hysterically, or even hit(Pardede & Watini, 2021).

Using gadgets for more than an hour can have negative impacts on children, both in terms of their health and their emotional development. Gadgets themselves have many sophisticated features and these features can interfere with children's learning process at school. For example, when at home a child plays with his gadget and his parents call him, but the child is reluctant to heed his parents' calls and does not even care about the people around him. When a child is busy playing with his gadget, it will have an impact on the child's social and emotional relationship with his parents, such as when the parents take the gadget, the child will get angry and cry hysterically and even hit(Pardede & Watini, 2021)

According to the researcher's opinion, emotional development is very important if parents underestimate the emotional development of children, it can cause psychological disorders, for example, children can have dangerous tantrums. If this happens and is not handled, it can cause emotional disorders in children in the future. Gadgets can interfere with children's emotional development. Children can become addicted when using electronic devices, so they get bored when they don't play with them, get restless, and get angry when separated from their favorite electronic devices. When children play with electronic devices, they are more likely to play alone than with their peers. According to researchers, emotional development is very important if parents underestimate the emotional development of children, it can cause psychological disorders, for example, children can have dangerous tantrums. If this happens and is not handled, it can cause emotional disorders in children in the future. The negative impact of gadgets themselves is that they can interfere with children's emotional development, where when children use gadgets, children will become addicted to gadgets, making children easily bored when they don't play with gadgets, get restless and get angry easily when separated from their favorite gadgets. When children are too busy playing with gadgets, they will be alone more often than playing with their peers.

D. The Relationship between Intensity of Gadget Use and Social Interaction and Emotional Development of Preschool Children

The results of the study indicate that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected. This is because the p value of the Spearman rho test is 0.005. This shows a relationship between device use and social interaction and emotional development of preschool children (4-6 years) at Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten in Pelalawan Regency, Riau. The correlation results (r) show a strong positive relationship between gadget use and social interaction (0.620), emotional development on the difficulty scale (0.455), and the strength scale (0.418). This shows that the more gadgets are used in children, the less social interaction and emotional development.



This study is in line with the results of research conducted by Nuraini (2023) The results of the Spearman correlation test showed a value of 0.613 which indicates a correlation between the duration of device use and the social emotional development of preschool children. A significance value of 0.000, which is lower than 0.05, strengthens this finding. The development of a person's social and emotional skills is known as social emotional development. The emotional aspect refers to factors that influence a person's emotional response to certain situations, while social skills refer to a person's ability to interact and adapt to their environment. Excessive use of gadgets can prevent children from participating in active activities and eliminate the stimulation needed for the progress of various aspects of their growth.

According to Efendi in Dinda Berliana et al., (2022) These factors include lack of supervision, lack of communication between children and other family members, especially parents, lack of supervision, inappropriate parenting, and children's boredom with repetitive routines. Many parents set a time limit for gadget use of more than one hour, probably because of their busy schedules, to keep their children calm and prevent them from disrupting their activities. Gadget use in children can have many negative effects, including hopelessness, brain health problems, eye and hand problems, sleep disorders, solitary behavior, possible aggression, decreased creativity, and exposure to screen radiation. (Derry Iswidharmanjay, 2014).

From the theory above, it can be seen that the negative impacts of gadget use on preschool children are far greater than the positive impacts. Another negative impact is the increase in internet access through gadgets, which displays information that should not be appropriate for the level of maturity of children. Many children are starting to become addicted to gadgets and neglect socializing with their surroundings, which has an impact on their psychological well-being, especially related to a crisis of self-confidence, and has an impact on physical development. (Pardede & Watini, 2021)

According to researchers' opinions, many parents today give electronic devices to their children. Despite the fact that the use of gadgets in preschool children can have a good or bad impact on their daily lives, the use of gadgets can cause problems with social interaction and emotional development. These problems are seen in children who become irritable, impatient, rebellious, difficult to control, unresponsive, indifferent to their surroundings, and often ignore calls or attempts by parents to communicate. Childhood is a time when children learn to take care of themselves, learn to build skills, and play with peers to explore the world around them. Social and emotional development occurs during this period. To prevent adverse effects, parents should monitor their children when they use these devices and set time limits for their use. Parents should supervise their children more closely and set a time limit for the use of electronic devices every day, a maximum of twenty minutes per session. In addition, parents should pay more attention to their children so that they feel loved and cared for. Spending quality time with children can help you not get bored. When children are bored and unnoticed, they tend to turn to electronic devices for entertainment. However, inadequate parental supervision during the use of such devices can be very dangerous as children may access inappropriate features or applications.

Conclusion

Preschool children at Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten in Pelalawan Regency, Riau, mostly using electronic devices. Preschool children typically do not have the interaction their social and emotional development is not normal. At Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten, Pelalawan Regency, A significant relationship was found between the intensity of electronic device use and social interaction and emotional development of preschool children.



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