

Digital Well-Being Among Students Balancing Technology and Real-Life Activities

Jisha Shanavas¹, Muhammed Zaeem Meeyath Nissam²

¹*Faculty of Information and Communication Technology, Department of Information Communication Technology Cochin International School, Kochi, India*

²*Grade 10 Student Department of Information Communication Technology Cochin International School Kochi, India*

Abstract—Technology has become an integral part of students' daily lives, influencing education, communication, entertainment, and social interactions. While digital devices provide access to information and learning opportunities, excessive screen time may negatively affect physical health, mental well-being, academic performance, and interpersonal relationships. This study investigates the importance of maintaining a balance between technology use and real-life activities among students. A survey conducted among students aged 13–17 years, along with secondary research from organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, and Common-Sense Media, was used to examine digital usage patterns and their effects. The findings indicate that excessive screen time is associated with distractions, reduced physical activity, sleep disturbances, and increased stress levels. However, responsible use of technology can enhance learning, communication, creativity, and productivity. The study concludes that developing healthy digital habits is essential for promoting digital well-being and maintaining a balanced lifestyle in an increasingly technology-driven world.

Index Terms—Digital Well-being, Screen Time, Technology Usage, Healthy Digital Habits, Student Lifestyle, Mental Health, Physical Health, Social Media, Digital Balance.

I. INTRODUCTION

Technology has transformed modern society and has become an essential part of everyday life. Students use smartphones, tablets, laptops, and other digital devices for learning, communication, entertainment, and social networking. Educational platforms, online resources, and digital collaboration tools have

improved access to information and created new opportunities for learning. The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated the adoption of digital technologies in education, making online learning an important component of modern schooling.

Despite these advantages, concerns have emerged regarding excessive technology use among young people. Increased screen time has been linked to reduced physical activity, sleep deprivation, eye strain, decreased concentration, and mental health concerns such as anxiety and stress. Social media usage, while beneficial for communication, can sometimes contribute to distractions, reduced productivity, and excessive dependence on digital validation.

Digital well-being refers to the ability to use technology in a balanced and responsible manner that supports overall health, productivity, and personal development. Developing healthy digital habits is becoming increasingly important as students spend more time online for both academic and recreational purposes.

This study aims to examine how technology influences students' daily lives, identify common digital habits, and explore strategies for maintaining a healthy balance between technology use and real-world activities.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study employs both primary and secondary research methods to investigate the impact of technology on students' lifestyles and well-being.

Primary Data Collection

A survey was conducted among 20 students between the ages of 13 and 17. The questionnaire focused on daily screen time, device usage habits, sleep patterns, study distractions, and awareness of digital well-being practices. The responses were collected and analyzed to identify trends in technology usage among students.

Secondary Data Collection

Secondary information was gathered from reports and publications by reputable organizations including the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, Common Sense Media, UNESCO, and academic research articles related to digital well-being, adolescent health, and technology usage.

Research Variables

The independent variable in this study is the use of digital technology, including smartphones, computers, tablets, and social media platforms. The dependent variables include physical health, mental well-being, academic performance, sleep quality, and social interactions.

The collected data were analyzed to identify relationships between technology usage patterns and their effects on students' daily lives.

III. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The survey results revealed several important patterns regarding technology use among students.

Approximately 70% of students reported using digital devices for more than four hours each day. Around 50% admitted to using their smartphones immediately before bedtime, while nearly 60% stated that notifications and social media alerts frequently distract them during study sessions. Additionally, 85% of students agreed that technology helps them learn more effectively, while 65% expressed a desire to better manage their screen time.

Survey Indicator	Percentage (%)
Use devices more than 4 hours daily	70
Use phones before sleeping	50
Experience study distractions from notifications	60
Believe technology improves learning	85

Survey Indicator	Percentage (%)
Want better screen-time control	65

Table 1. Student Survey Results

The findings suggest that while students recognize the educational value of technology, many also experience challenges associated with excessive usage.

Research-Based Findings

Studies conducted by WHO and UNICEF indicate that prolonged screen time is associated with lower physical activity levels, sleep disturbances, and increased risk of mental health concerns among adolescents. Research also suggests that excessive social media usage may contribute to reduced attention span and increased stress levels.

At the same time, educational research highlights that technology enhances access to learning resources, promotes collaboration, and supports the development of digital literacy skills necessary for the modern workforce.

IV. IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON DAILY LIFE

Technology influences nearly every aspect of students' daily routines.

Positive Impacts

Technology provides instant access to educational content, online courses, research materials, and interactive learning platforms. Students can collaborate with classmates, communicate with teachers, and explore new subjects beyond the traditional classroom environment. Digital tools also encourage creativity through coding, graphic design, content creation, and multimedia projects.

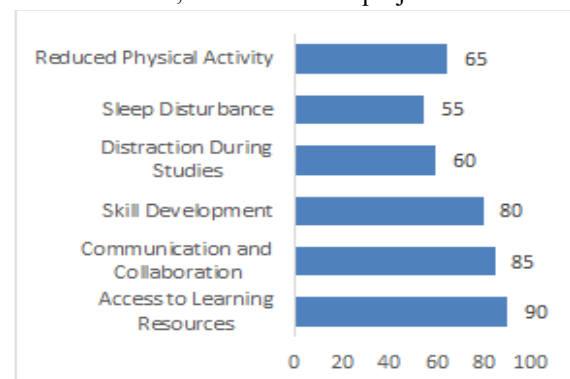


Figure 1 Benefits and Challenges of Technology Use

Technology provides significant educational and communication benefits. However, students continue to face challenges such as distractions, sleep disturbances, and reduced physical activity.

Negative Impacts

Excessive technology use can result in physical and psychological challenges. Long periods of screen exposure may cause eye strain, headaches, poor posture, and reduced physical activity. Overuse of social media can contribute to stress, anxiety, reduced self-esteem, and difficulty concentrating on academic tasks. Poor sleep quality caused by late-night device use is another common concern among teenagers.

Factor	Balanced Usage (%)	Excessive Usage (%)
Academic Focus	85	55
Physical Activity	80	40
Sleep Quality	82	45
Social Interaction	78	50
Mental Well-being	84	48

Table 2. Comparison of Outcomes

The comparison demonstrates that students who maintain balanced technology habits generally experience better outcomes in health, academics, and social relationships.

V. IMPORTANCE OF DIGITAL WELL-BEING

Digital well-being involves using technology in a manner that supports overall quality of life. It focuses on maintaining healthy relationships with digital devices while avoiding excessive dependence.

Students who practice digital well-being are more likely to manage their time effectively, maintain healthy sleep schedules, participate in physical activities, and engage in meaningful face-to-face interactions. Developing awareness of digital habits can help students make informed decisions regarding technology use and reduce the risks associated with excessive screen time.

VI. DEVELOPING HEALTHY DIGITAL HABITS

Several practical strategies can help students develop healthier relationships with technology:

- Establish daily screen-time limits.
- Follow a consistent study and sleep schedule.
- Take regular breaks using the 20-20-20 rule.
- Avoid smartphone use at least one hour before bedtime.
- Participate in sports, hobbies, and outdoor activities.
- Turn off unnecessary notifications during study sessions.
- Designate technology-free periods during meals and family interactions.

Adopting these habits can improve concentration, productivity, and overall well-being.

VII. ROLE OF PARENTS AND SCHOOLS

Parents and schools play a critical role in promoting healthy technology use. Parents can encourage balanced lifestyles by monitoring screen time, setting household guidelines, and modelling responsible technology behavior. Schools can support digital well-being through awareness programs, classroom discussions, and digital citizenship education.

Teachers can also encourage students to use technology purposefully by integrating both online and offline learning activities, ensuring that technology remains a tool for learning rather than a source of distraction.

VIII. FUTURE OF DIGITAL HABITS

As technology continues to evolve, students will increasingly rely on artificial intelligence, virtual learning environments, and digital collaboration tools. Features such as screen-time monitoring, focus modes, and digital wellness applications are already helping users manage their technology usage more effectively. Future innovations may provide personalized recommendations for maintaining healthy digital habits. However, regardless of technological advancements, self-discipline, awareness, and responsible decision-making will remain essential for maintaining digital well-being.

IX. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that technology has both positive and negative impacts on students' lives. While digital tools provide valuable opportunities for learning, communication, creativity, and personal development, excessive use can negatively affect physical health, mental well-being, academic performance, and social relationships.

The survey findings reveal that many students spend considerable time using digital devices and frequently experience distractions and sleep-related challenges. These results highlight the importance of developing healthy digital habits and maintaining a balance between technology use and real-life activities.

By practicing responsible technology use, managing screen time effectively, and participating in offline activities, students can enjoy the benefits of digital technology while minimizing its potential drawbacks. Promoting digital well-being is essential for preparing young people to thrive in an increasingly connected world.

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