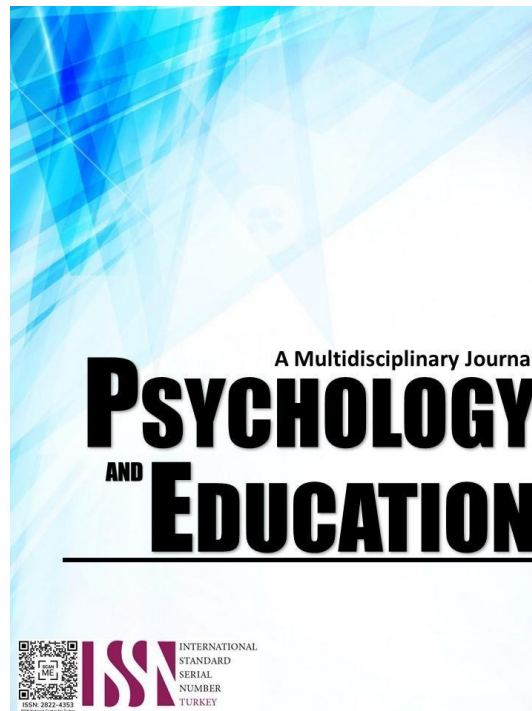


# **EXPLORING THE IMPLICATION OF GADGETS USE TOWARDS SCHOOL AND BEHAVIOR OF MIDDLE CHILDHOOD: THE MOTHERS' PERSPECTIVES**



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## Exploring the Implication of Gadgets Use Towards School and Behavior of Middle Childhood: The Mothers' Perspectives

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### Abstract

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the mothers' perspectives on how gadgets affect their children in middle childhood in relation to school and behavior. Using interpretative phenomenological analysis on data gathered indicates that the mother's guidance is vital for the children's social and behavioral development. To avoid excessive gadget use that may harm their children's health, mothers limit usage by making sure all of the schoolwork is completed before allowing them to use their devices. Some children's behavior changes when they are asked to follow parental instructions, and they often spend the majority of their time on the gadget they have neglected to use for their chores. The findings of this study brought out recommendations and proposed programs specifically for the mothers of children in middle childhood.

**Keywords:** *social development, middle childhood, phenomenological study, gadgets use, behavioral development*

### Introduction

The era of gadgets is very rampant in these modern days. Utami (2022) claims that gadgets are a type of modern-day communication medium that has a tiny, portable shape. The ability of gadgets to affect people's attitudes and conduct at this time is unmistakable proof of the growth of science and technology. As stated by Zickuhr (2011), the majority of people today own cell phones, among other gadgets that have gained popularity across generations. Both desktop and laptop PCs. Youthful adults are setting the pace for greater mobility, favoring using their cell phones for a variety of purposes, such as the internet, email, video, games, and music. When it comes to age groups, Millennials are by far the most likely to not only own the majority of the devices we surveyed but also use a greater range of features. For instance, despite the fact that cell phones are already commonplace in American homes, the majority of cell phone owners only utilize two of the primaries: They use their phones for texting and picture-taking, which are non-voice functions. While this is the case, most Millennials also use their phones to go online, write emails, play games, listen to music, and record videos. However, when it comes to owning certain gadgets like game consoles, Gen X and Millennials are also fairly comparable. Additionally, Gen X are more likely to own a desktop computer than Millennials.

According to George Town University, Middle childhood is characterized by modest, consistent growth until the start of puberty, which happens late in

later adolescence or early in adolescence. Every year, children acquire an average of 7 ounces and 2 1/2 inches tall. They go through periods of rapid growth, which are frequently associated with an elevated desire to eat consumption. What does today's childhood necessarily involve? Modern children's lives have certainly improved on a range of matters, thanks to increased public safety and assistance for physical and mental health. Before they can walk or talk, many children have access to cell phones and the unlimited potential that the digital world offers. Simultaneously, children in the twenty-first century are reporting higher levels of stress and anxiety, and the pervasiveness of the digital world introduces new threats, such as cyberbullying, that follow children from the playground into their homes (Burns & Gottschalk, 2019).

Human behavior encompasses a wide range of human behaviors that are largely shaped, by mindsets, moods, morals, honesty, prerogatives, engagement, hallucination, consensus building, violence, and/ or genetics. Human behavior refers to the possibility and expressed levels of physical, mental, and social activity throughout the stages of a person's life (learner, 2012). Children's environments are greatly influenced by the digital world we live in today, and this is the world they will grow up in, therefore recognizing the risks will be critical for their health and future.

Middle childhood screen time has recently increased, which has a negative impact on kids' sleep and mental health. However, there isn't much knowledge about

effective strategies to reduce kids' screen time. Parental education is a successful intervention for lowering screen time and enhancing children's attention spans and quality of sleep. Healthcare providers ought to think about establishing parental education programs to cut down on screen usage and enhance children's sleep and psychosocial well-being (Lin, 2020). 67.11 percent of the participants reported using their cell phones daily out of all the gadgets. Because to the current COVID-19 epidemic, 24.48% of respondents attended online classes using electronic devices. In comparison to 2019, the participants were said to have used devices much more (P .05) in 2020. Children had a lower propensity to engage in outside activities. More than 50% of the participants spend less than an hour each day engaging in outside activities. In our investigation, we found a correlation between gadgets use and health issues such headache, backache, vision disruption, and sleep disturbance (Rashid, Mawah, Banik, Akter, Deen, Jahan, & Mannan, 2021).

According to Bizieff (2021), kids would rather be on their gadgets than be kids. Our youth's minds are being influenced by the digital world far too much and too young. Some key themes related to the impact of gadgets on youth and how it affects their mental, physical, and social development. An upsurge in mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression, and suicidality, has been connected to a theme that is impacting children's mental health. Another effect of gadgets on children's physical development is a lack of physical activity and sleep loss. Isolation and physical activity limitations as a result of technology use were the last themes that gadgets had on children's social development.

The purpose of this study was to find out how gadgets affect middle childhood in relation to school and behavior. Moreover, the main objective of this study is to explore the implication of gadgets to the school and behaviors of middle childhood: a mother's perspective to give adequate and precise knowledge to parents about the danger and uncertainties brought by gadgets to their children, and also to give awareness to them.

The significant result will help children know the bad consequences of gadgets. This research will also reveal how their use of gadgets affects their school and behaviors as well as their mental development. This study will serve as a guide for every family member's precaution and awareness in order to avoid the long-term risks posed by gadgets and to be more hands-on in enabling the children's daily routines. This study will aid future researchers in conducting more in-depth

research on relevant research subjects and can be used as a guide to help them better their research. Furthermore, the number and profile of respondents can be improved in order to collect a wider range of data.

### Research Questions

This study entitled, Exploring the Implication of Gadgets use Towards School and Behavior of Middle Childhood: The Mothers' Perspectives, intends to explore the implication of gadgets use in school and child behavior of middle childhood in Bocaue. Specifically, this research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the perceived parental supports of the parents towards the gadgets use of their children?
2. What are the social development and behavioral modifications of gadgets use on children?
3. What are the challenges faced by mothers in monitoring and ensuring that their children use gadgets effectively?
4. What meaning do the respondents make out of their experiences on gadgets?

### Methodology

This chapter features the strategies of inquiry, respondents of the study, data collection approaches, and data analysis procedures that are utilized to generate results of this study.

### Strategies of Inquiry

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is a qualitative research method that aims to provide comprehensive assessments of human lived experience. People are sense-making beings; thus, they develop their own account of lived experience rather than relying on pre-existing theoretical notions. It is idiographic in its commitment to properly explore each instance's individual experience before going on to larger general statements about society (Pain, 2015). The IPA approach has the distinct advantage of being highly effective when investigating issues that are complex, ambiguous, and emotionally intense. The researchers decided to employ the IPA approach to indicate the study's primary objective, which is to

identify the Implication of Gadgets Use Towards School and Behavior of Middle Childhood.

### Respondents of the Study

The participants in this study are mothers of children in middle childhood who are actively guiding their children who use gadgets during this time. The twenty (20) participants in table 1 are mothers with their children ranging from 6-12yrs old. Furthermore, all participants in this study are currently residing in Bulacan, according to the criteria.

The face-to-face interview was conducted and recorded by the researchers. Confidentiality and privacy have been maintained. Additionally, it was done with their agreement. The safety of everyone was ensured by doing this.

### Data Collection Approaches

There are a variety of situations in which establishing an emotional bond between the researchers and the participants is crucial. It's probable that rapport-building will be difficult while the virus is still there. On the other hand, it was determined by cultivating a sense of mutual reliance among participants and offering support in terms of their own problems, terminology, and aesthetic settings.

Participants were given a consent form in advance to guarantee compliance with legal requirements. This was provided to each participant using Google Forms, along with a consent form authorizing the recording and transcription of the entire interview.

The interview guide was selected to include twenty-four (24) questions that might last up to one hour. As a result of any technical interruptions that may occur, the participants were encouraged to voice any clarifications, concerns, or disconcerting questions they had after the opening phases of the meeting. To make sense of the information gathered from a face-to-face semi-structured interview, a thorough transcription and analysis were performed. To eliminate any doubt regarding the data collection's contents, the interview transcription comprises the exact verbatim responses of each participant.

### Data Analysis Procedure

According to Canary (2019) the method of thematic content analysis begins with the removal of biases and the establishment of the overall impressions made by the data.

To gather qualitative data, a variety of ways might be utilized. One of the most effective methods for avoiding content errors is to record and transcribe interviews. To make sense of the data collected from young workers, a thorough review is required first. The transcripts of the interviews were subjected to a thorough review and included each participant's exact statements exactly.

The next step will entail developing preliminary codes and identifying themes that were collected and tied together with each piece of information. It is anticipated that the participants' perceived parental support, social development and behavioural modification, challenges faced by the mothers and meaning do the respondents make out of their experiences would be the key topics of this research. The method was also finished with the development of more precise sub-themes and the production of a brief and cohesive report including these sub-themes, among other things. All of the tactics work together, to guarantee that the data content is trustworthy, accurate, and unavoidable.

## Results and Discussion

The following sections present the analysis of data gathered after following an intricate procedure. Based on the data collected, the following themes were identified in this study; namely, (1) Perceived parental support, (2) Social development and behavioral modification, (3) Challenges faced by the mothers, (4) Meaning that respondents make out of their experiences.

### The Perceived Parental Supports towards the Gadgets Use of their Children

Every mother has a different perspective on whether gadgets use is good or bad for her children. According to the participants, using gadgets can sometimes benefit us in various aspects of our lives, but it can also have an adverse effect on us if we don't have enough guidance. The following subthemes, which are based on their perspectives, were also identified from the data gathering.

**Involvement.** According to the participants, their relationship with their children is good. Sometimes, they have difficulties keeping the children away from gadgets. In order to prevent their children from being hooked to gadgets, they support and limit their use instead of punishing them. According to Pew Research Center (2020), Parents of young children openly admit

their worry about the negative impacts of screen time. One study found that 71% of parents of children under the age of 12 are at least somewhat concerned that their child will one day spend too much time in front of screens, with 31% of them being extremely concerned. Additionally, some parents of children in this age range think their children already spend too much time on certain gadgets, such as smartphones. 86% of parents of kids between the ages of 5 and 11 say they limit the hours of the day or the amount of time their kids spend on devices.

Specifically, mother No.2 said;

*“Nag papaalam naman sila, pero kapag hindi ako pumayag ibig sabihin hindi talaga pwede kasi ayoko naman masira din mata sa cellphone.”*

Mother no.5 shared the same sentiments;

*“Pinapayagan ko sila na mag lalro o manuod sa youtube as part ng playtime nila pero bago sila gumamit kailangan tapos lahat ng gagawin nila at aasikasuhin mga sarili”*

Even after their children are finished with their schoolwork, parents limit their usage of gadgets because it can harm their children's health. Mother no.17 said;

*“Oo kailangan limitahan kasi palagi ko sinasabi sa kanila na masama ang sobrang pag gamit ng gadgets sa kanila. Minsan napupuyat pa kasi kakagamit non.”*

**Monitoring.** According to the participants, even if they occasionally struggle to keep their children away from technology, they have different parenting ways that enable them to monitor, communicate with, and be aware every time their child use gadgets. The findings supported the study of Pramudyani (2020), according to pramudyani, parents who have used this kind of forceful parenting are more intelligent. These parents emphasize instilling positive behaviour when handling their child with the gadget. Mother no.5 said;

*“Chine check ko sila pag gumagamit ng cellphone, kung ano yung pinapanuod nila at mga nilalaro nila at alam ko yun lahat”*

Mother no.8 shared same sentiments;

*“Ahh sinusubaybayan ko lng tas ni checheck time to time para alam ko din kung anong ginawa nya. Tas dapat alam nila yung limitation nila.”*

According to Mother No.7, if she is not in their house, their maid was there to check and monitor her child. Then, when she got home their made will report to her. Mother no.7 state that;

*“Chine check ko mismo mga recent nila sa phone at pag wala ako sa bahay si yaya ang gumagawa nun at nirereport sa akin”.*

### **The Social Development and Behavioral Modifications of Gadgets Use on Children.**

Children require guidance from parents in their life to comprehend and convey their needs in situations and environments that are appropriate to the scenario and environment. With that, a mother's guidance is significant in the social and behavioral development of their children.

**Sociable.** According to the participants, most of their kids get along well with others. Many of them are amiable and engaged in outside play with their friends. Most of the participants are not having a problem in this aspect, they develop a lot of confidence to be themselves in socializing. These findings supported the study conducted by Mchale, Dariotis , and Kauh (2022), that the development of social skills, which are essential for the emergence of close and harmonious social connections, takes place during a period of significant transition in middle childhood. Additionally, around this time, children's social circles broaden as they begin to spend more time away from their parents or other primary caregivers. Specifically, respondent 17 said;

*“ Ayyy nako, yung nga anakko apaka friendly nila palagii, kasi sanay sila sa bawat isa na lagging maging mabait sa kapwa, kaya pag sa labas yan sila marunong kumausap ng iba di nahihya.”*

Some of the participants stated that they're letting their children go outside be with their friends and meet new people so that they can build their social life and learn new things. Specifically, respondent 12 stated;

*“Ayos din naman, kasi nakikita ko naman marami silang mga kalaro tapos kaibigan. Sociable naman sila sa nakikita ko tsaka hinayahaan ko rin kasi talaga para nila makihalubilo sa iba para matuto din ngibatib ang ugali para mas madami sila matutunan.”*

**Interaction.** Participants stated that guiding a child to have a proper behavior are not an easy task, however



setting rules are one of the key aspects in making their children to understand the importance of having a balance time in using gadgets and different things of their life. In addition, they said that implying these rules may also result to behavioral adjustment to their child. Rules teach children self-control and the ability to make sound decisions. It's unlikely that you'll educate children that rules are enjoyable, but you might persuade them that knowing what's required of them and how they can finally acquire what they want is advantageous. Finally, this is about teaching youngsters on what they need to know to succeed and reach their goals (Hartstein, 2017). Specifically, mother no. 6 stated that;

*“Syempre sa bata di mo naman maiiwasan mag tampo yan kung di mo pinapayagan. Pero sakin kasi pag nag tatampo sya kinakausap ko ng maayos, pinapaliwanagan ko para maitindihan nya.”*

Mother No. 3 shared the same sentiments:

*“Syempre nagagalit lalo pag may toyo tapos gustong gusto mag cellphone na hindi pa nagagawa ang assignment ay hindi ko talaga pinapayagan, bahala sya mag wala sya, umiyak sya basta usapan assignment muna bago cellphone”*

According to participants, behavioural adjustment are important to their children understanding of how important to have balance life. In result, they did not see a negative impact to their children's behaviour before and after the use of. Mother no.5 states:

*“Wala naman, kase expected nila lagi na may time lang ung paggamit nila. Sa ganoong paraan nape-prepaire sila na hanggang ganong time lang sila.”*

Mother No. 20 also said;

*“Wala naman pareho parin naman masiyahin tapos wala namang problema sa kanya. Kasi di naman sya talaga nag bababad sa gadgets”*

### **The challenges faced by mothers in monitoring their children's' gadgets use.**

Children using gadgets has been one of the alarming concerns faced by mothers for today's generation. Parenting now has a new aspect because to the rise of technology, which makes it harder to maintain solid relationships with the kids and meaningful communication. Adult and family connections are also challenged by it.

**Disobedience.** According to the participants, they find it hard to give household instructions to their kids while using gadgets, some say they see how their kids changed their mood when they ask them to do something. According to Marie (2020), spending a lot of time using gadgets could cause your kids to act disobediently in many different ways. It is a known medical fact that allowing your youngster to spend hours playing gadgets might cause tantrums and make him disobey their parents. The child will not be able to take advantage of the best internet features or, at most, manage them. However, children will undergo some significant character changes, such as disobeying in front of the elders. Such as, mother no. 4 said;

*“Minsan talaga nagiging hardheaded siya, di na siya nakakasunod dahil sa gadget. Mga makakalima ka pang utos sakanya bago sumunod”.*

Mother No. 13 shared the same sentiments;

*“May time na mahirap silang pasunurin lalo pag nag cecellphone kasi pag nandyan ka na sa screen focus ka talaga”.*

**Inattention.** Use of gadgets makes their kids forget time and tend to ignore the people around them. According to Regis College (2021), screens are an easy way for kids to divert themselves from difficult or dull tasks, like schooling, and can cause attention issues. Children may spend less time with their families the more time they spend in front of screens. In response, many parents have tried to place limitations on how much time their kids can spend on technology. Mother No. 3 said;

*“Meron times na nakakalimutan nya yung oras ng pagkain dahil sa paglalaro ng cellphone kaya nag-aaway kami kasi dapat isusurrender nya sakin after 1 hour e kapag nag-enjoy madalas nakakalimutan kaya hindi ko maiwasang pagalitan”*

Mother No. 16 shared the same sentiments:

*“Sa sobrang focus nila, nabibingi na sila kapag tinatawag sila hahahah. Uulitin ko pa utos bago sumunod. Nakakairita minsan pero pinagsasabihan ko naman”.*

**Brain Underdevelopment** . Working parents frequently have to spend a lot of time cleaning the house or cooking for family's food while mothers are busy preparing, the children can spend time alone. It is simple for kids to indulge themselves in video games,

social media, and checking their phones to stay in touch with peers during that time. The early years of a toddler's schooling have a positive impact on the development of his or her brain. However, she can experience some negative effects on her mental state majority of the time. Some of the students have the potential to cause attention deficiencies, impaired learning, declining capacities, and decreased self-control. Therefore, wise parents advise giving their children cell phones within the allotted time frame (Marie, 2020). As a solution mother No. 8 said;

*“Sinasabi ko sa kanya tigilan nya ang paggamit ng cellphone kasi naapektuhan mata nya baka pag nasa school na hindi nya makita masyado yung nasa blackboard hindi sya makakasunod sa pinag-aaralan nila”.*

Mother No. 9 shared the same sentiments;

*“Masyado sya nadidistract sa pinapanood nya kaya pag minsan may pinapakabisa sa school hindi sya makafocus hindi makabisado yung pinapabasa kasi nga gusto magcellphone na”*

**Time Wasting.** Some of the participants stated that their children consumed the rest of the day after school playing cellphones. The best thing to do is to impose certain rules regarding when the child should use his or her cell phone and when they shouldn't. To lessen their children's dependence on mobile devices, parents frequently mediate their kids' mobile usage. Parental monitoring is one form of mediation technique that parents regularly use, and it has garnered much social attention. Parental monitoring is the practice of parents keeping tabs on their kids' internet activity, and it is frequently an effective technique to stop their kids from becoming addicted to their gadgets (Fu, Liu, Liu, Ding, Wang, Zhen, & Jin, (2020). Mother No. 7 said;

*“Nakikita ko lang minsan napapansin ko mas mahaba pa yata yung oras ng paglalaro nya kaysa pagsesearch ng aaralin online”.*

Mother No. 1 and 3 shared the same sentiments:

*“Ako rin kasi nagcecellphone kapag maglalaro sya ng cellphone sasabihin ko ‘nak dito lang sa loob bibigyan ko lang sya ng mga isang oras kaso madalas nawiwili rin ako sa pag cellphone kaya hindi ko na sya masyado nabibisita ng tingin”;*

*“Sinasabi ko sa kanila yung limitasyon ng oras tapos kung ano lang yung dapat lalaruin nila o kaya pinapanood”.*

### **Meanings that Respondents Make Out of their Experiences on Gadgets.**

Gadgets and social media have become an integral part of people's everyday life, particularly those of youngsters. There are benefits to utilizing technology and being active on social media, but there are also drawbacks and hazards associated with the prolonged use of electronic gadgets.

**Living with gadgets.** According to the study by Haquel. (2016) the accessibility of various implementation on this traditional computer allows users to develop relationships, start communicating, take pictures, record videos, and use some other complex technologies to perform an activity. Parent and child relationship has never been easy. According to Auxier, Anderson, Perrin, & Turner, (2020). The proliferation of mobile devices and the rise of social media has added a new twist to the challenges of parental responsibility. According to the participants, the use of gadgets, students can now gain knowledge faster and efficiently thanks to advances of technology, traditional textbooks are being partially replaced by search terms and e-book. Specifically, mother NO. 7 said;

*“Gadget is a big part of our lives na, even sa study or sa skills mo, it really helps.”*

Mother No. 10 shared the same sentiments;

*“Nakakatapos naman sya agad ng school works nya. Minsan may mga kausap pa sya sa computer habang nagagawa siya ng school nya. Wala ako problema sap ag aaral nya at disiplinado naman sya pag pinapatulog ko na o piapakain.”*

Gadgets helps students in different aspects such us; school related, personal lifestyle and development. Gadgets is capable of unlocking keys of learning with all student. Mother No. 3 said;

*“Natututo ng math nya nagiging masaya naman sya kapag pinapayagan ko mag-cellphone tsakan madali kasi syang makatulog kapag gabi eh kaya sakin syang makatulog kapag gabi eh kaya sakin okay lang din naman pagamitin ng gadget ang anak pero hwag lang sosobra”*

**Benefits of Using Gadgets.** Parenting has never been easy. According to Auxier, Anderson, Perrin, &

Turner, (2020) the widespread adaption of smartphones and the rise of social media has introduced a new wrinkle to the challenges of parenthood. In fact, a majority of parents in the united states (66%)- who include those who have at least one child or children- say that parenting is harder today than it was 20 years ago, with many in this group citing technology as a reason why, according to a Pew research center survey. According to the participants there are excellence upon using gadgets. They develop their talents, interest and social cognitive behavior. On the other hand, gadgets may aid in stimulating imagination. It also helps promote listening ability, sound learning and speaking ability. According to mother no. 19; *“Siguro, updated sila sa balita. Tas yung bunso nakakakuha ng bagong kaalaman sa mga kanta kanta.”*

Mother No. 5 shared the same sentiments;

*“Malaking tulong din kasi mas nagiging advance sila, at nag kakaroon sila ng mga dagdag kaalaman sa environment nila.”*

There are numerous instructional apps and educational videos available on the internet to help children of all ages. Children become responsible for their responsibilities at school and at home, they balance things out, and it's an excellent impact of having instructional command by parents and taking action by their children. According to mothers no. 10 and 13 said;

*“Okay naman sa tingin ko kasi nagagawa nya maayos ung pagaaral nya. May mga aibigan din sya and alam ko nakakausap nya sa computer. Yun nga lang kulang sa exercise dahil madalas lang sa kwarto. Kaya minsan sinasabihan ko rin sya na lumabas sya kapag weekend pero ayaw din namn nya kaya diko na rin pinipilit”, “syenpre nag iimprovedin yung nak dahil sa cellphone, lalo na sa mga kaalaman nila pero syempre may mga negatibo padin silang nakakuha kaya kailangan gabayan.”*

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusion was derived: (1) It is critical to provide the correct amount of time for children to study and be entertained by gadgets, as well as regular supervision, in order to preserve a balanced lifestyle for children. (2) Children form social links with their classmates

through physical activities such as playing outside, which helps them gain confidence. The children were disciplined on how to act right and have good conduct as a consequence of the proper amount of time balance in terms of using gadgets and accomplishing activities at home and in school by developing guidelines and directives. (3) Struggles with family regulations cause children to ignore parentally imposed responsibilities. Children's attention is diverted by gadgets to the point where they lose track of time, forcing them to disregard their tasks and responsibilities at home and at school. The limited usage of gadgets avoids work from going incomplete and helps them to accomplish their duties. (4) Gadgets provide knowledge and convenience in finding information that might help children improve their skills and discover new talents or interests in terms of learning through educational videos, informative articles, and educational apps.

With conclusions drawn, the significant findings of this study recommended the following: (1) Establish the children's gadgets usage schedule in accordance with their educational requirements, considering any extracurricular activities that can help them study. (2) Create and include children in other activities to get them off their gadgets so they can learn social and practical skills that will help them successfully navigate their communities. (3) The mothers may consider putting their children's health, education, and safety first. It is important to be mindful of this issue. (4) Future studies may also explore the dangers of various gadgets on children's behavior and school performance.

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