



The Role of Parents in Monitoring Gadget Use by Early Children

Mayang Belia Sameto¹, Wanda Sentia², Anita Indria³

¹STIT Syekh Burhanuddin Pariaman, Indonesia

²STAI-YDI Lubuk Sikaping Pasaman Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

³STIT Ahlussunnah Bukittinggi, Indonesia

✉ wandasentia05@gmail.com *

Article Information:

Received February 15, 2025

Revised March 28, 2025

Accepted April 19, 2025

Keywords: *Gadgets, early childhood, impact*

Abstract

Gadgets are modern technological devices that offer a variety of interesting features and are easily accessible to various groups, including young children. The use of gadgets without parental supervision can have a negative impact on children's development, especially in social, emotional, and behavioral aspects. This study aims to determine the patterns of gadget use among young children, identify its impact on their development, and understand the role of parents in supervising such use. This study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data was collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, involving children who use gadgets, their parents, and other family members. Data analysis was conducted in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate variations in how children access gadgets and the emergence of several negative impacts, such as social disruption, decreased concentration, and behavioral changes. Active parental involvement is essential to limit and guide gadget use to prevent it from hindering children's development.

INTRODUCTION

The modern era we live in today has made gadgets an essential necessity for people of all ages, including both children and adults (Yumarni, 2022). Gadgets are not only used as communication tools but also to facilitate various other activities. However, it has become increasingly common for parents to give gadgets to toddlers. The role of parents as playmates is now often replaced by the presence of gadgets (Harianti et al., 2025). However, the toddler stage is a crucial period for physical and psychological development. Young children should be active to ensure optimal physical development. When children are exposed to gadget screens for too long, there is a risk that their social development may not be optimal (Hidayat, 2023).

The early childhood period, specifically ages 1–5, is known as the golden age, a critical phase for the development of all aspects of intelligence: intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. During this time, children become skilled imitators, exhibit a high level of curiosity, and tend to absorb what they see and hear. Therefore, introducing gadgets too early has the potential to disrupt their natural developmental process. One of the effects is disruption to children's language acquisition (Angeli et al., 2023). Additionally, what is more concerning is the impact of gadgets on

How to cite:

Sameto, M. B., Sentia, W., Indria, A. (2025). The Role of Parents in Monitoring Gadget Use by Early Children. *Bunayya: Journal of Islamic Early Childhood Education*, 1(1), 28-34.

E-ISSN:

XXXX-XXXX

Published by:

The Institute for Research and Community Service

children's emotional development. Many games on gadgets include competitive elements that can trigger frustration. Even adults sometimes feel annoyed when they lose a game. In children, this can lead to them becoming easily angry, impatient, and having difficulty regulating their emotions (Angeli et al., 2023).

Currently, both in urban and rural areas, the use of gadgets by children has become commonplace. Many parents provide entertaining shows or entertainment through gadgets to keep children from crying or disrupting their activities. This habit, if done continuously, can lead to dependence in children (Unggul, 2024). The use of gadgets by children should be limited. The WHO has established guidelines for screen time for children under the age of 5, which is no more than one hour per day. Lanca & Saw (2020) state that children aged 1–4 years should not be exposed to digital screens for too long. Lestari & Millenia, (2020) add that prolonged screen time can affect the frontal cortex of the brain, even producing effects similar to those of addictive substances like cocaine.

According to Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, early childhood education is an effort to nurture children from birth to six years of age through educational stimulation to support their physical and mental growth and development. Meanwhile, SISDIKAS explains that early childhood encompasses the age range of 0–6 years. If gadget use is limited and accompanied by proper parental supervision, children can still benefit from the positive aspects of technology. The content selected should be educational and not excessive (Rahmi et al., 2024). For example, content related to counting, reading, or educational stories that are engaging.

Gadgets can also have other positive effects, including training fine motor skills such as finger and wrist movements, improving cognitive abilities through educational applications (Miranti & Putri, 2021), and providing a fun means of entertainment (Manalu, 2022). Additionally, competitive games can help children develop their ability to face challenges and become accustomed to a competitive environment. However, the benefits of gadgets can only be fully realized if their use is not excessive. On the contrary, uncontrolled use risks causing negative impacts on children's motor, cognitive, social-emotional, and physical health aspects, such as vision problems and addiction (Rawanita & Mardhiah, 2024).

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach (Baxter & Jack, 2015; Brennen, 2021; Engkizar Engkizar et al., 2023). Data sources were obtained from children aged 3 to 6 years, the parents of these children, close family members such as siblings who have a close relationship and are familiar with the children's habits in using gadgets. Informants were selected through in-depth interviews using purposive sampling techniques, observation, and documentation. The selected informants met four criteria: they had a good understanding of the research problem, were still active in the field being studied, had time to provide information to the researcher, and provided information consistent with the facts observed in the field. Data validity was maintained through several important criteria. First, credibility, achieved by extending the observation period and maintaining diligence in observation. The researcher also used triangulation, including source triangulation, method triangulation, and theory triangulation (Engkizar et al., 2024). For example, comparing interview results among informants, comparing interviews with observation results, and matching findings with relevant documents and theories. Data analysis techniques are carried out through three main stages, namely: i) data reduction, which is the process of sorting and simplifying raw data obtained from the field; ii) data presentation, by organizing data into narrative or visual forms for easy understanding; and iii) drawing conclusions, as an effort to understand the

meaning of the data and identify patterns or trends relevant to the research focus (Febriani et al., 2020).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Use of Gadgets in Early Childhood

Before discussing the use of gadgets in early childhood, it is necessary to explain what gadgets are. According to the dictionary, a gadget is a small electronic device that has a specific function. Originally, gadgets were primarily focused on communication tools, but with advancements in technology, these devices have been enhanced with various features, enabling users to perform a wide range of activities with a single gadget, such as making calls, sending messages, emailing, taking photo or photographing objects, playing games, and much more. There are several types of gadgets, such as smartphones, tablets, laptops, and PlayStation, which have evolved alongside the increasing human need for modern and practical media. For example, smartphones now come in various operating systems, such as Android, Windows Phone, and BlackBerry.

Gadgets can be used by anyone and for any purpose, depending on the owner's needs (Ruhayahadati et al., 2024). Gadget usage today spans from young children to adults. Adults typically use gadgets for communication, searching for information or browsing, watching YouTube, playing games, or other purposes. Meanwhile, young children's use of gadgets is usually limited and primarily serves as an educational tool, for playing games, and watching animations. The duration and intensity of gadget use also vary between adults and children (Indrayasa & Suryanti, 2024). Generally, young children use gadgets daily, with varying durations. Children use gadgets daily to play games and watch YouTube videos, such as animations or children's cartoon series.

Based on the analysis results, the author found three groups of characteristics in gadget usage among young children. First, children who use their own personal gadgets, purchased by their parents. This case is commonly found in families with an upper-middle-class economic background, where each family member is provided with a smartphone, including five-year-old children. The provision of gadgets is intended to prevent children from disrupting their parents' activities and keep them calm at home. Children in this group tend to have very high usage durations, averaging around 6 to 7 hours per day (Mawarni et al., 2024). Second, children who use gadgets belonging to their parents or siblings. Gadgets are given as a response to the child's whining or crying, which then becomes a habit and develops into dependency. Children in this group tend to cry or get angry if they are not given access to gadgets. Third, children who purchase Wi-Fi access independently by paying Rp2, 000 per hour. This occurs in families with lower-middle-income conditions, where parents cannot afford an internet package. Children, especially boys aged 5–6 years, use their pocket money to play online games for 1 to 2 hours per day. Initially, it was just an experiment, but it later developed into a habit showing signs of addiction (Mulyana et al., 2023).

From the above description, it can be understood that initially, it was the parents who introduced gadgets to their children, even before the children could speak or read. The fundamental reason parents give gadgets to their children is to provide entertaining content that their children enjoy. Additionally, it serves as a solution when their children cry, as giving them a gadget usually makes them quiet. Thus, the gadget becomes a tool to calm them down. However, because this practice is repeatedly carried out by parents giving gadgets to their crying children over time, children become addicted to using them again. Furthermore, most parents also give gadgets to their children to prevent them from disrupting the activities the parents are engaged in or from going outside to play (Rahayu et al., 2021; Syahran, 2015; Winda & Dafit, 2021).

The Negative Impact of Gadget Use on Young Children

First, children's social development is disrupted. When children become addicted to using gadgets, they lose interest in socializing and interacting with their peers. In fact, these children feel more comfortable with their gadgets than with their friends (Annisa et al., 2022). At this age, especially between 3 and 5 years old, children should be guided to interact with their environment so they can socialize and adapt to their surroundings. According to parents, before their children were exposed to gadgets and became addicted, they enjoyed playing with their peers, such as playing ball, hide and seek, sandbox games, and so on. However, since becoming familiar with gadgets and developing gadget addiction, they no longer show interest in interacting with their peers; instead, they prefer to isolate themselves while using gadgets (Rohmawati & Rofi'ah, 2022).

Second, loss of concentration. When children become addicted to using gadgets, it becomes difficult for them to focus their attention. For example, when called or spoken to, they may not hear because their attention is fully occupied by using gadgets (Nuraida, 2023). Concentration disorders or attention deficits are known as ADHD (Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder). The use of gadgets, especially among young children without parental supervision and control, can have negative and harmful effects on children, such as difficulty concentrating, eye health issues, unstable emotions, behavioral disorders, and others.

Third, it can harm eye health. Children who spend a long time using gadgets often experience eye pain, such as a burning sensation and redness due to radiation from the gadgets. Fourth, it can affect children's behavior. Children who frequently use gadgets will experience behavioral changes that can even cause their emotions to become unstable, such as becoming easily angry or crying easily.

The role of parents in supervising gadget use in early childhood

Parents are the most responsible figures in addressing children's addiction to gadgets (T & Nasution, 2023). Why is this the case? This is because children become familiar with gadgets because their parents introduce them to these devices (T & Nasution, 2023). According to the author's analysis, it is advisable that parents do not introduce gadgets to children aged 0-6 years. Let them interact socially with their peers. Let them explore their potential and talents in their own world with their childlike nature. Do not contaminate them by giving them gadgets. Although initially it may seem very "helpful" for parents because giving gadgets to children keeps them quiet and does not disrupt their activities, the negative impacts on early childhood development are significant (Sari et al., 2020).

Parents play a significant role in guiding and preventing technology from having a negative impact on children (Sinambela & Simanjuntak, 2025). This is determined by the child's developmental stage and age, with the introduction and use of gadgets divided into several age groups. For children under 5 years old, gadgets should only be used for introducing colors, shapes, and sounds. This means that children under 5 years old should not be given too many opportunities to play with gadgets. At this age, the focus should not be on the gadget itself, but on the role of the parents. After all, gadgets are merely one tool for educating children. However, for children who have become addicted to using gadgets, parents must be firm in monitoring and limiting the duration of their gadget use (Riwu & Barus, 2023). Even if the child initially protests and cries, parents must be firm and find ways to divert the child's attention away from the gadget. For example, by taking the child to a fun children's playground. This approach can help divert the child's attention away from the gadget (Setiadi et al., 2024).

In addition, parents should avoid using gadgets in front of their children so that their children will completely forget about playing with gadgets. This is in line with the opinion Yuliantika et al (2024) that the factor causing young children to

become addicted to using gadgets is because they see their parents frequently using gadgets, which makes them curious about the gadgets and ask their parents for them.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that i) the use of gadgets among young children can be divided into three groups, namely children who use their own personal gadgets (purchased by their parents), children who use their parents' or siblings' gadgets, and children who purchase Wi-Fi access at a cost of 2000 per hour. ii) The effects of gadget use among young children include disrupted social development, loss of concentration, impaired eye health, and unstable behavior, such as being easily angered or prone to crying. iii) The role of parents in supervising children's gadget use is that parents should not introduce gadgets to their children. However, for children who have already become addicted to using gadgets, parents should be firm in supervising and limiting the duration of their children's gadget use.

REFERENCES

- Angeli, B. R., Saragih, F. A., Nuriyah, N., Setiawan, M. D., Syahputra, S., & Agustina, D. (2023). Analisis Hubungan Kesehatan dengan Penggunaan Gadget terhadap Pola Tidur pada Siswa: Literature Review. *Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Batanghari Jambi*, 23(2), 2205. <https://doi.org/10.33087/jiubj.v23i2.4305>
- Annisa, N., Padilah, N., Rulita, R., & Yuniar, R. (2022). Dampak Gadget Terhadap Perkembangan Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 3(09), 837–849. <https://doi.org/10.59141/japendi.v3i09.1159>
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2015). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544–559. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2008.1573>
- Brennen, B. S. (2021). Qualitative Research Methods for Media Studies, Third Edition. In *Qualitative Research Methods for Media Studies, Third Edition* (pp. 1–256). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003122388>
- Engkizar, E., Jaafar, A., Sarianto, D., Ayad, N., Rahman, A., Febriani, A., Oktavia, G., Guspita, R., & Rahman, I. (2024). Analysis of Quran Education Problems in Majority Muslim Countries. *International Journal of Islamic Studies Higher Education*, 3(1), 65–80. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24036/insight.v3i1.209>
- Engkizar, Engkizar, Jaafar, A., Taufan, M., Rahman, I., Oktavia, G., & Guspita, R. (2023). Quran Teacher: Future Profession or Devotion to the Ummah? *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research of Higher Education (IJMURHICA)*, 6(4), 196–210. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24036/ijmurhica.v6i4.321>
- Febriani, A., Miftahurrahmah, M., Pajaria, S. A., & Nurhaliza, S. (2020). Six Motivations for Students to Take Tutoring. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research of Higher Education (IJMURHICA)*, 3(3), 121–129. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24036/ijmurhica.v3i3.192>
- Harianti, D. S., Prasetyo, S., Sibawaihi, S., & Al Faqh, M. A. (2025). Peran Orang Tua Dalam Mengatur Penggunaan Gadget Pada Anak Usia Dini. *Kumara Cendekia*, 13(1), 9. <https://doi.org/10.20961/kc.v13i1.96477>
- Hidayat, A. H. (2023). Pengaruh Gadget Terhadap Perkembangan Emosional Anak Usia Dini Di Desa Ujunggurap Kecamatan Padangsindimpuan Batunadua. *Jurnal Al-Iryad: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Islam*, 4(2), 317–334. <https://doi.org/10.24952/bki.v4i2.6534>
- Indrayasa, K., & Suryanti, P. (2024). Hubungan Pola Tidur Dan Kesehatan Emosional Anak Usia Dini. *The Journal of Health Promotion and Education*, 1(2), 54–59. <https://doi.org/10.36049/hope.v1i2.272>
- Lanca, C., & Saw, S. M. (2020). The association between digital screen time and

- myopia: A systematic review. *Ophthalmic and Physiological Optics*, 40(2), 216–229. <https://doi.org/10.1111/opo.12657>
- Lestari, P. W., & Millenia, S. J. (2020). Peningkatan Pemahaman Anak Melalui Edukasi Dampak Penggunaan Gawai Berlebih. *Jurnal Masyarakat Mandiri (JMM)*, 4(2), 264–272. <https://doi.org/10.31764/jmm.v4i2.2027>
- Manalu, A. W. (2022). Peran Guru Dalam Menyikapi Psikologi Anak Usia Dini Yang Kian Menurun Akibat Gadget. *BUHUTS AL-ATHFAL: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Anak Usia Dini*, 2(2), 283–299. <https://doi.org/10.24952/alathfal.v2i2.6148>
- Mawarni, D., Purba, H., & Pulungan, E. N. (2024). Problematika Penggunaan Gadget pada Anak Usia Dini di Masa Pandemi Covid-19 Lingkungan V Kelurahan Tanjung Rejo Kecamatan Medan Sunggal. *Ta'rim: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Anak Usia Dini*, 5(4), 238–247. <https://doi.org/10.59059/tarim.v5i4.1720>
- Miranti, P., & Putri, L. D. (2021). Waspada Dampak Penggunaan Gadget Terhadap Perkembangan Sosial Anak Usia Dini. *Jendela PLS*, 6(1), 58–66. <https://doi.org/10.37058/jpls.v6i1.3205>
- Mulyana, E. H., Aprily, N. M., & Zaenab, A. S. (2023). Perilaku Kecanduan Bermain Gadget Pada Anak Usia Dini. *Ceria: Jurnal Program Studi Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 12(2), 11. <https://doi.org/10.31000/ceria.v12i2.9926>
- Nuraida, H. (2023). Risiko Gadget Berlebihan: Dampak Negatif pada Karakter Mental dan Emosi Anak. *Seroja: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 2(4), 387–395. <https://doi.org/10.23969/jp.v8i2.10100>
- Rahayu, N. S., Elan, E., & Mulyadi, S. (2021). Analisis Penggunaan Gadget Pada Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Paud Agapedia*, 5(2), 202–210. <https://doi.org/10.17509/jpa.v5i2.40743>
- Rahmi, N., Khadijah, K., Sindy, Y. A., & Yuspika, R. (2024). Dampak Penggunaan Handphone Terhadap Perkembangan Sosial Emosional AUD. *Fonologi: Jurnal Ilmuan Bahasa Dan Sastra Inggris*, 2(2), 118–129. <https://doi.org/10.61132/fonologi.v2i2.660>
- Rawanita, M., & Mardhiah, A. (2024). Strategi Orang Tua dalam Mengelola Penggunaan Gadget Anak Usia Dini di Gampong Tanjung Deah Darussalam. *Wathan: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 1(3), 274–294. <https://doi.org/10.71153/wathan.v1i3.152>
- Riwu, G. C. A., & Barus, G. (2023). Tingkat Kemampuan Orang Tua dalam Meregulasi Penggunaan Smartphone pada Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 7(2), 1413–1421. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v7i2.4010>
- Rohmawati, E., & Rofi'ah, R. (2022). Dampak Gadget Terhadap Interaksi Sosial Pada Anak Usia Dini Di Dusun Sumuran Desa Sumurgayam Kecamatan Paciran Kabupaten Lamongan Tahun 2022. *Conseils: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling Islam*, 2(2), 24–30. <https://doi.org/10.55352/bki.v2i2.157>
- Ruhsyahadati, Liana, N., Tri Yana, R., Susanti, M., Helmizar, R., Nani Jelmila, S., Puspita, D., & Tri Septiana, V. (2024). Edukasi Efek Penggunaan Gawai Terhadap Kesehatan Tubuh Dan Mental. *Jurnal Abdi Insani*, 11(3), 2360–2367. <https://doi.org/10.29303/abdiinsani.v11i3.1650>
- Sari, I. P., Wardhani, R. W. K., & Amal, A. S. (2020). Peran Orang Tua Mencegah Dampak Negatif Gadget Melalui Pendekatan Komunikasi dan Psikologi. *IJIP: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Psychology*, 2(2), 267–289. <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijip.v2i2.267-289>
- Setiadi, F. M., Maryati, S., & Mubharokkh, A. S. (2024). Analisis Dampak Penggunaan Gadget Terhadap Perkembangan Psikologis dan Keagamaan Anak Usia Dini (TK dan SD) dalam Perspektif Pendidikan Agama Islam. *Muaddib: Islamic Education Journal*, 7(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.19109/muaddib.v7i1.24432>

- Sinambela, J. L., & Simanjuntak, M. (2025). Strategi Mengatasi Dampak Negatif Kebiasaan Penggunaan Gadget. *Didaktika: Jurnal Kependidikan*, 14(1 Februari), 1085–1094. <https://doi.org/10.58230/27454312.1395>
- Syahrar, R. (2015). Ketergantungan Online Game Dan Penanganannya. *Jurnal Psikologi Pendidikan Dan Konseling: Jurnal Kajian Psikologi Pendidikan Dan Bimbingan Konseling*, 1(1), 84–92. <https://doi.org/10.26858/jpkk.v1i1.1537>
- T, A. P. R., & Nasution, S. (2023). Pola Asuh Orang Tua Terhadap Anak Dalam Mencegah Efek Negatif Kecanduan Smartphone. *G-Couns: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, 7(03), 508–519. <https://doi.org/10.31316/gcouns.v7i03.4782>
- Unggul, A. (2024). Analisis Perubahan Perilaku pada Anak Usia Dini yang Kecanduan Gawai. *Jurnal Cerlang Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini(JCPAUD)*, 1(2), 16–22. <https://doi.org/10.37640/jcpaud.v1i2.2077>
- Winda, R., & Dafit, F. (2021). Analisis Kesulitan Guru dalam Penggunaan Media Pembelajaran Online di Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Pedagogi Dan Pembelajaran*, 4(2), 211. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jp2.v4i2.38941>
- Yuliantika, N., Hasibuan, H. B., & Nasution, R. A. (2024). Pengaruh Penggunaan Gadget terhadap Perkembangan Karakter Peduli Sosial pada Anak Usia 4-5 Tahun di Taman Kanak-Kanak Adetia. *Khirani: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 2(3), 168–182. <https://doi.org/10.47861/khirani.v2i3.1291>
- Yumarni, V. (2022). Pengaruh Gadget Terhadap Anak Usia Dini. *Jurnal Literasiologi*, 8(2), 8106–8112. <https://doi.org/10.47783/literasiologi.v8i2.369>

Copyright holder :

© Sameto, M. B., Sentia, W., Indria, A.

First publication right:

Bunayya: Journal of Islamic Early Childhood Education

This article is licensed under:

CC-BY-SA