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INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL SCREEN TIME ON STUDY HABITS & BEHAVIORAL DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

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ABSTRACT

In today's digital age, many parents spend excessive time on screens, which affects their interaction with children. This leads to children feeling lonely and struggling with consistent study habits. This research finds the influence of parental screen time on the study habits and behavioral development of children in early childhood, focusing on children aged 3 to 8 years Using a quantitative survey research design, data was collected from a sample of 200 parents across Punjab, Pakistan, through a non-random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was employed. The instrument's reliability was confirmed over appropriate statistical procedures. Data were analyzed using SPSS. Key findings reveal moderate & significant correlation amid parental screen time and children's independent study habits suggesting that children tend to imitate their parents' screen behavior, which can disrupt their study routines. A similar correlation was found amid parents' work-related screen use and academic attitudes. The study recommends that enhancing parental awareness, implementing screen-time rules and promoting screen-free family interactions to support healthier academic and behavioral development in the children.

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INTRODUCTION

Technology has become an integral part of modern life, shaping the way people communicate, work, and learn. With widespread availability of devices like smartphones, tablets, televisions, and computers, children are increasingly exposed to screens from an early age. This growing exposure has raised concerns among parents, educators, and health professionals regarding its potential impact on children's cognitive, behavioral, and academic development (Atturu, 2024;

Chong, 2023). In response to these concerns, the World Health Organization (WHO) has issued guidelines indorsing limits on screen exposure for young children, emphasizing its potential adverse effects on physical, mental, and social development (WHO, 2019). The research has demonstrated that prolonged Screen Time can negatively impact multiple aspects of a child's well-being, with physical health and social behavior (Atturu, 2024; Chong, 2023). Research has shown that parental screen use lead to "technoference"-phenomenon where parental attention is disrupted by digital devices, reducing eloquent interactions children (Radesky, 2015; Tang, 2019).

The parents engaged with screens tend to exhibit the decreased responsiveness and increased harshness toward their child's bids for attention, affecting emotional and social development (Radesky, Kistin, Zuckerman, Gross, Augustyn & Silverstein, 2014; Abels, Abeele, Telgen & Meijl, 2018). Furthermore, a United Kingdom (UK) study highlighted that mobile device use during parent-child interactions is common, suggesting that parents and children often engage with screens individually rather than together (Mullan & Chatzithe, 2019). This reduced the interaction time may negatively influence the children's emotional and cognitive development. Parental modeling of screen behavior also plays a critical role in shaping the children's study habits. When children observe their parents frequently using screens for entertainment rather than educational purposes, they may adopt similar habits, potentially leading to decreased focus on academic activities. Studies have demonstrated that increased parental Television use correlates with increased child screen time, in turn affects cognitive development and learning outcomes (Tang, Darlington, Ma & Haines, 2018; Poulain, Ludwig, Hiemisch, Hilbert & Kiess, 2019).

The presence of an older sibling further influences younger children's screen exposure, as they tend to spend more time watching television, engaging with digital devices (Panjeti & Rangan, 2023). Behavioral development, including social and cognitive skills, may also be influenced by excessive screen exposure. High ST has been linked to reduced language development, mainly due to decreased parent-child verbal interactions (Mustonen, Torppa & Stolt, 2022; Martinot, Bernard & Peyre, 2021). The studies have also shown that background TV exposure negatively affects children's language acquisition and executive functioning. Furthermore, excessive ST, particularly when unregulated by parents is associated with emotional reactivity, externalizing behaviors, and difficulties in social interactions (Oswald, Rumbold, Kedzior & Moore, 2020). Parental awareness regarding the effects of their own screen use on children is an essential factor in regulating ST. Parents who are more educated tend to set stricter ST rules, reducing negative impact on study habits and behavior (Hesketh, Ball, Crawford, Campbell & Salmon, 2007).

Nevertheless, some studies indicate that family education level does not always significantly influence amount of time children spend using screens (Muppalla, Vuppalapati, Pulliahgaru & Sreenivasulu, 2023). This highlights the need to assess parental awareness levels and their role in shaping the children's screen habits and behaviors. The impact of parental ST on children's digital habits and behavioral development has been widely studied. The research suggests that

children with supervised ST show better study habits, including better focus and structured routines (Mohammed, 2025). The findings highlight that younger parents are likely to regulate their children's ST, emphasizing the role of parental involvement in shaping children's screen usage patterns. The higher parental education is linked to better ST management for children, which positively impact their cognitive and social development (Pickard, 2024; Pluas, 2024). A review conducted by Pons, Bennasar and Yañez (2020) concluded that the maternal education influences children recreational screen time can indirectly affect study habits and behavioral patterns.

Parents play an active role in shaping their children's digital habits. Parental control features, such as setting usage time limits, ensuring content appropriateness, and monitoring screen use, can help the parents manage their children's media consumption (Sanders, 2018). A study found that children whose ST is supervised by their parents are less likely to develop sleep and eye problems, highlighting standing of parental involvement (Mohammed, 2025). In addition to setting boundaries, parents must also lead by example. Studies indicate that when parents manage their own screen time, their children are more likely to do the same (Pickard, 2024). By modeling appropriate screen habits, parents can help instill healthier digital habits in children. A direct relationship exists amid parental screen time and children's screen time, where higher parental screen engagement is linked to increased screen exposure for the children (Zhou & Franzini, 2024; Zong, Zhang, Tian & Xu, 2024). This suggests that parents' digital behaviors act as a model for children, influencing their screen engagement, study routines, and behavioral tendencies.

Research Objectives

1. To find out the potential influence of the parental screen time upon the children's study habit in particular context.
2. To find impact of parental screen time on children's behavioral development, including social and cognitive skills.
3. To assess parental awareness about effects of screen time on their children's study habits and behavioral development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Technology has become an essential part of modern life, influencing how people communicate, work, and learn. With the widespread availability of devices such as smartphones, tablets, TV, and computers, children are exposed to screens at increasingly the younger ages. This growing exposure has raised the concerns among parents, educators, and health professionals about its potential impact on children's cognitive, behavioral, and academic development (Atturu, 2024; Chong, 2023). The WHO has issued guidelines recommending limits on screen exposure for young children, accenting its potential adverse effects on physical, mental and social growth (WHO, 2019). As children's daily interaction with digital technologies increases, the amount of screen time has become a growing concern. ST, which includes use of TV, tablets, smartphones, and laptops, has gained significant attention due to its likely impact on children study habits

(Konca, 2022), children now spend more time using mobile devices than watching TV (Konca, 2022).

The children's study habits are heavily influenced by their home environment, where parental involvement plays a critical role in maintaining productive academic routines (Konca, 2022). Furthermore, digital distractions at home contribute to procrastination, irregular study habits, and reduced concentration (Huston et al., 2021). Muppalla et al. (2023) confirm this by showing that children with higher screen exposure struggle with attention regulation, exhibit lower task persistence, and face difficulties in completing homework assignments efficiently. Excessive parental ST is linked to disrupted sleep patterns, hindering children's academic performance (Ponti, 2023). As screen time exposure is pervasive, with smartphones, tablets, and computers present in many settings, including homes, schools, and workplaces (Mutlu & Dinleyici, 2024). High ST has been associated with delayed language development, primarily due to reduced verbal interactions between parents and children Parental modeling of screen behavior plays a crucial role in shaping children's study habits. In such cases, parents' attention is divided by their devices, reducing prospects for cognitive & academic development (Radesky, 2015; Tang, 2019).

The parents engaged with the screens often show less responsiveness and may be harsher in responding to their child bids for attention, that can negatively affect emotional and academic development (Radesky et al., 2014; Abels, Abeele, Telgen & Meijl, 2018). When parents spend excessive time on screens, children are more likely to adopt similar behaviors, which can lead to increased distractions and difficulties focusing on academic tasks (Konca, 2022). Moreover, excessive screen time is associated with the poor sleep quality and duration, which negatively affects children's ability to concentrate on academic activities (Muppalla et al., 2023). The lacking sleep has been linked to reduced cognitive functioning, lower academic performance, and behavioral difficulties—all of which have a detrimental effect on study habits (Muppalla et al., 2023). Family attitudes, beliefs, and opinions about media culture significantly influence children ST (Mutlu & Dinleyici, 2024; Panjeti and Ranganathan, 2023). The studies reveal that children's ST is positively correlated with being the eldest child, having the working mother, and an inclusive increase in the family's ST (Muppalla, 2023; Paudel, Jancey, Subedi & Leavy, 2017).

Conversely, the children's ST shows a negative correlation with factors such as family income, socioeconomic status, education and physical activity (Mutlu & Dinleyici, 2024; Ke et al., 2023). Furthermore, screen-based activities often replace critical developmental experiences, such as imaginative play and hands-on learning, which are essential for cognitive growth (Muppalla et al., 2023). A study by Konca (2022) further supports this by highlighting a strong link between parental screen engagement and developmental vulnerabilities in social, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral domains. This lack of interaction contributes to attention problems, increased emotional distress and hyperactivity in children (Muppalla et al., 2023). The excessive use of mobile devices can also impede children's ability to engage socially with family and friends, thereby interfering with their emotional and social development (Khan & Khalid, 2018). As emotional development relies on dynamic interactions with the surrounding environment,

excessive screen use can hinder this process (Suhana, 2018). diminished interaction with family and peers reduces communication and social engagement (Yasin, Aksu, Özgür & Gürbüz, 2017).

The presence of screens in the home can significantly impact children's social and emotional development. When children observe their parents frequently using screens for entertainment rather than educational purposes, they may adopt similar habits, that could result in decreased attention to academic activities. Research has shown that increased parental TV use correlates with higher levels of child ST, which in turn affects cognitive expansion and learning outcomes (Lauricella et al., 2015; Tang, 2018; Poulain et al., 2019). Excessive screen exposure also affects children's behavioral development, including both social and cognitive skills. The high ST has been linked with delayed language development, primarily due to reduced verbal interactions between parents and children (Mustonen et al., 2022; Martinot et al., 2021). The excessive ST, especially when not properly regulated by parents, has been linked to emotional reactivity, voicing behaviors, difficulties in social interactions (Oswald et al., 2020). Early and consistent exposure to violent content increases likelihood of engaging in the antisocial behavior (Lissak, 2018).

The psychoneurological effects of addictive screen time use include reduction in social coping skills and the development of craving behaviors similar to substance dependence (Lissak, 2018). The structural changes in the brain related to cognitive control and emotional regulation have been observed in individuals exhibiting addictive digital media behavior (Lissak, 2018). The studies show that prolonged exposure to screens is correlated with heightened emotional reactivity and hitches in managing emotions (Xie et al., 2024; Oswald et al., 2020). The negative impact of excessive screen exposure is not limited to children alone but also extends to parents. High parental screen time is linked to increased behavioral issues in children (Hu et al., 2018; Hutton et al., 2019; Xie et al., 2024). This highlights the need to assess parental awareness levels and role in shaping children's screen habits and behaviors. This is because children experience less direct communication and emotional reaction when parents are preoccupied with digital devices. They miss out on crucial social modeling, essential for their development (Cho & Lee, 2017).

Moreover, parental screen distractions have been associated with increased emotional distress and attention-seeking behaviors in young children, further hindering their ability to develop emotional regulation and social competence (Cerniglia et al., 2020). Parental awareness about the effects of their own screen use on children is vital factors in regulating ST (Muppalla et al., 2023). In general, greater parental monitoring has been associated with less total screen time in children (AlSamhori, 2025). The significant impact of parental screen time on children's digital habits and behavioral growth is extensively studied. The research suggests that children with supervised screen time exhibit better study habits, including improved focus and structured routines (Mohammed, 2025). Furthermore, studies indicate that higher parental education is related with better screen time management for children, can positively impact their cognitive and social development (Pickard, 2024; Pluas, 2024). Parents play active role in shaping their children's digital habits, parental control features, setting usage time limits, ensuring content

aptness, and monitoring screen use helping to manage children media consumption (Sanders, 2018).

Despite growing awareness of screen time guidelines, many parents tend to overestimate the education benefits of digital media while underestimating negative consequences of prolonged exposure. Studies indicate that parents allow children unrestricted access to screens, believing that digital media supports learning and engagement (Madigan et al., 2019; Kostyrka et al., 2018; Madigan et al., 2019). The parental screen habits play vital role in determining children's exposure to screens. A direct relationship exists between parental screen time and children's screen time, where higher parental screen engagement is linked to increased screen exposure for children (Zhou et al., 2024; Zong et al., 2024). Research highlights that positive parenting strategies, such as co-viewing content and setting screen time limits, can mitigate the negative effects of the excessive media exposure (Xie et al., 2024). In contrast, homes with unregulated screen use and minimal parental supervision have been linked to higher risks of cognitive and behavioral snags in children (Xie et al., 2024). Many parents fail to consistently enforce these plans, leading to increased screen exposure and allied negative effects (Beyens & Valkenburg, 2019).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research design using a survey method to investigate the influence of parental screen time on children's study habits and behavioral change in early childhood. This approach enables objective measurement and statistical analysis of relations between parental screen time, children's academic and behavioral outcomes. The population of this study consists parents of children aged 3 to 8 years in Punjab, Pakistan. The study targets parents whose children actively engage with digital screens at home & school. A convenience sampling technique is used to select 200 parents who voluntarily participate in the study. This non random sampling method is chosen due to its practicality, ease of access to participants. The sample size is determined based on feasibility constraints and previous studies in similar areas.

The primary data collection instrument is structured questionnaire. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire, in online and printed formats. The questionnaires were distributed to parents of children aged 3 to 8 years through schools, childcare centers, and community contacts, including relatives and acquaintances who met the study criteria. Participants were clearly informed about purpose of study, and instructions were provided to ensure accurate responses. Participation was voluntary, and responses were kept anonymous and confidential. Informed consent was obtained prior to data collection, and ethical considerations were strictly followed throughout the process. To examine results, organized statistical package for social sciences was used to calculate the percentage, mean and standard deviation from quantitative data.

FINDINGS & RESULTS

The purpose of this data analysis and interpretation phase is to transform the data collected into credible evidence about development of intervention and its performance in the particular context.

Table 1

Parents spend a considerable amount of time on screen media in front of the child.

Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Strongly Disagree	38	19..0	2.98	1.30
Disagree	38	19.0		
Neutral	33	16.5		
Agree	72	36.0		
Strongly Agree	19	9.5		
Total	200	100.0		

Table 1 shows that 9.5% of respondents strongly agreed, 36% agreed, 16.5% were neutral, while 19% disagreed and 19% disagreed that they spend a considerable amount of time on screen media in front of child. The mean value is 2.98 and standard deviation is 1.30. It is concluded that responses were almost evenly split, with slight tendency toward agreement. This suggests that many parents do use screen media in front of children, influencing their children's screen habits.

Table 2

The child frequently uses available screen devices at home.

Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Strongly Disagree	15	7.5	3.49	1.15
Disagree	27	13.5		
Neutral	39	19.5		
Agree	83	41.5		
Strongly Agree	36	18.0		
Total	200	100.0		

Table 2 shows 18% of respondents strongly agreed, 41.5% agreed, 19.5% were neutral, while 13.5% disagreed and 7.5% strongly disagreed that the child frequently uses available screen devices at home. The mean value is 3.49 and SD is 1.15. Majority of parents acknowledged usage of screen devices by children at home, indicating high accessibility & engagement with screen media.

Table 3

The child uses multiple screen devices at same time (phone while watching TV).

Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Strongly Disagree	30	15.0	2.94	1.18
Disagree	43	21.5		
Neutral	48	24.0		
Agree	67	33.5		
Strongly Agree	12	6.0		
Total	200	100.0		

Table 3 indicates that 6% of respondents strongly agreed, 33.5% agreed, and 24% were neutral about the child using multiple screen devices simultaneously, while 21.5% disagreed and 15%

strongly disagreed. The mean value is 2.94 and the standard deviation is 1.18. It is concluded that although many parents noticed multitasking with screen devices by child, the significant portion remained neutral or disagreed, suggesting varying practices in screen media usage habits.

Table 4

The Child prefers screen media over outdoor play when given a choice.

Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Strongly Disagree	6	3.0	3.42	0.99
Disagree	31	15.5		
Neutral	60	30.0		
Agree	79	39.5		
Strongly Agree	24	12.0		
Total	200	100.0		

Table 4 indicates that 14% of respondents strongly agreed, 36.5% agreed, and 20% were neutral that the child prefers screen media over outdoor play. Meanwhile, 14% disagreed and 15.5% strongly disagreed. The mean value is 3.42 and the standard deviation is 0.99. It is concluded that many parents observed their child favoring screen media over outdoor activities, though a balanced portion showed the disagreement, reflecting diverse child preferences in the leisure choices.

Table 5

Screen media use is beneficial for the child's academic learning.

Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Strongly Disagree	31	15.5	3.20	1.28
Disagree	28	14.0		
Neutral	40	20.0		
Agree	73	36.5		
Strongly Agree	28	14.0		
Total	200	100.0		

Table 5 shows that 11% of respondents strongly disagreed, 16% disagreed, 32% were neutral, 33% agreed, and 8% strongly agreed that screen media use is beneficial for the child's academic learning. The mean value is approximately 3.20 with SD of 1.28. It is concluded that responses were mixed, with tendency towards neutrality about academic benefits of screen media use for children.

Table 6

The child's daily routine includes a balanced use of screen time.

Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Strongly Disagree	23	11.5	3.06	1.11
Disagree	36	18.0		
Neutral	60	30.0		

Agree	69	34.5
Strongly Agree	12	6.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 6 shows that 11.5% of respondents strongly disagreed, 18% disagreed, 30% were neutral, 34.5% agreed, and 6% strongly agreed that the child's daily routine includes a balanced use of screen time. The mean value is 3.06 and SD is 1.11. It be concluded that opinions are somewhat mixed, but a slight majority of parents agree that child maintains balanced screen time routine daily.

Table 7

The child's independent study habits are influenced by parental screen time.

Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Strongly Disagree	33	16.5	3.20	1.26
Disagree	20	10.0		
Neutral	45	22.5		
Agree	78	39.5		
Strongly Agree	24	12.0		
Total	200	100.0		

Table 7 indicates 16.5% of respondents strongly disagreed, 10% disagreed, 22.5% were neutral, 39% agreed, and 12% strongly agreed that the child's independent study habits are influenced by parental screen time. The mean value is 3.20 and the SD is 1.26. It can be concluded that a considerable number of parents agree that screen habits do influence child's study behavior. However, the responses also show some divergence, with notable portion remaining neutral or disagreeing.

Table 8

Making rules for screen media often leads to conflicts between parents and the child.

Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Strongly Disagree	24	12.0	3.32	1.20
Disagree	26	13.0		
Neutral	38	19.0		
Agree	87	43.5		
Strongly Agree	25	12.5		
Total	200	100.0		

Table 8 indicates that 12% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 13% disagreed, 19% were neutral, 43.5% agreed, and 12.5% strongly agreed that making rules for screen media often leads to conflicts between the parents and the child. The mean value is 3.32 and the standard deviation is 1.20. In this linking, it is concluded that the majority of respondents agreed that rule-setting regarding the screen media use can lead to parent–child conflict. Nevertheless, the presence of neutral and disagreeing responses suggests that this experience may vary between households.

Table 9

The child's social interactions are influenced by screen media use.

Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Strongly Disagree	27	13.5	3.34	1.23
Disagree	20	10.5		
Neutral	40	20.0		
Agree	85	42.5		
Strongly Agree	28	14.0		
Total	200	100.0		

Table 9 indicates that 13.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 10% disagreed, 20% were neutral, 42.5% agreed, and 14% strongly agreed that child's social interactions are influenced by screen media use. The mean value is 3.34 and the standard deviation is 1.23. It is concluded that majority of respondents agreed that screen media influences children's social interactions, highlighting the growing role of digital engagement in shaping children social behavior in the study.

Table 10

The current hours of screen time is appropriate for the child's age and needs.

Scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Strongly Disagree	22	11.0	3.28	1.17
Disagree	28	14.0		
Neutral	44	22.0		
Agree	84	42.0		
Strongly Agree	22	11.0		
Total	200	100.0		

Table 10 indicates 11% of respondents strongly disagreed, 14% disagreed, 22% were neutral, 42% agreed, and 11% strongly agreed that the current amount of screen time is appropriate for the child's age and needs. The mean value is 3.28 and the SD is 1.17. It is concluded that most respondents agreed that child's current screen time is suitable for their age and needs, though a significant portion neutral, disagreed, telling some ongoing concerns, variations in parental perception.

Table 11

Independent Samples t-test for Parental Screen Time by Gender.

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t	df	Sig (p-value)
Parents ST	Male	90	5.12	1.38	1.79	198	0.075
	Female	110	4.78	1.29			
	Total	200					

An independent sample t-test was applied to fine the gender based mean difference. There is no statistically significant difference in parental screen time between male and female parents ($t = 1.79$, $p = 0.075$), shows that gender does not significantly affect how time parents spend on screens.

Table 12

Independent Samples t-test for Children's Screen Time by Gender

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t	f	Sig (p-value)
Children ST	Male	100	4.21	1.12	2.0475	198	0.0419
	Female	100	3.89	1.09			

An independent sample t-test was applied to find the gender based mean difference. There is a statistically significant difference in children's screen time based on gender ($t = 2.0475$, $p = 0.0419$). This suggests that male children tend to spend time on screens compared to female children.

Table 13

Pearson Correlation between Parents' and Children's Screen Time

Variables	N	r	p-value
Parents' Screen Time	200		
Children's Screen Time		0.524	<0.0001

There is moderate positive and statistically significant correlation amid parents' and children's screen time ($r = 0.524$, $p < 0.0001$), means when parents spend time on screens, children to do the same.

Table 14

ANOVA Table (Parental Screen Time by Educational Level)

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Between Groups	31.08	3	10.36	4.51	0.004
Within Groups	450.20	196	2.30		
Total	481.28	199			

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there were statistically significant differences in screen time based on education. The results indicated a significant difference among the groups, $F(3, 196) = 4.51$, $p = .004$, that education influences much screen time parents engage in.

Table 15

Correlation among Parental Screen Use, Study Habits and Behavioral Development.

Variables	N	r	p-value
Parents' Screen Time	200	–0.421	<0.0001
Children's Study Habits		–0.384	<0.0001
Behavioral Development			

It is concluded that there is a moderate negative correlation between parental screen time and children's study habits ($r = –0.421$, $p < .01$), as well as behavioral development ($r = –0.384$, $p < .01$). This suggests that an increase in parental screen time is associated with poorer study habits and behavioral outcomes in children. The results are statistically significant at the 0.01

level, indicating the meaningful relationship between these variables for reaching the desired conclusion.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the influence of parental screen time on young children's study habits and behavioral development, focusing on children aged 3-8 years. The findings clearly demonstrate a significant relationship between the screen usage habits of parents and academic consistency, attention span, emotional development of their children. Specifically, increased parental screen time was associated with irregular study routines, reduced task persistence, and heightened behavioral issues, including irritability, distraction, and diminished social engagement. These results align with existing research that underscores the impact of parental digital behavior on children's developmental outcomes. Studies have stressed that when parents spend excessive time on screens, they carelessly limit face-to-face interactions are vital for fostering attention regulation and homework completion in children (Buek, 2019; Liu et al., 2024; Domoff et al., 2020).

Furthermore, when parents are digitally distracted, children are less likely to receive consistent supervision, emotional support, or encouragement for academic tasks (Konca, 2022; Huston et al., 2021). The excessive screen exposure in the household has also been linked to poor sleep hygiene among children, affecting the memory, attention span and learning capabilities (Ponti, 2023). Behavioral development is at risk, as studies have identified strong correlations between parental screen habits and delayed language acquisition, executive dysfunction, and emotional dysregulation in children (Mustonen et al., 2022; Martinot et al., 2021). While digital tools can serve educational purposes when used purposefully, current results reinforce that unregulated and excessive screen time particularly for the parents can serve as a model for the unhealthy digital habits in children (Lauricella et al., 2015; Poulain, Ludwig, Hiemisch, Hilbert & Kiess, 2019).

Additionally, the research revealed that higher parental education levels are associated with more regulated screen use and greater awareness of the consequences of digital overexposure on child development. In light of these findings, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of parental modeling, the digital balance, and proactive engagement in the children's educational routines. Parents should aim to limit the unnecessary screen time, especially in shared family environments, and instead focus on enriching offline interactions that contribute to emotional, social, and cognitive development. Future interventions should focus on building awareness among parents and caregivers about the long-term developmental risks associated with screen overuse during early childhood and encourage the implementation of screen-free routines at home.

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