Parental Perceptions of Gadget Used in Children Aged 4-6 Years in Tarumajaya District

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Abstract

Rapid technological developments have encouraged the use of gadgets among various groups, including early childhood. This study aims to describe parental perceptions of gadget use in children aged 4–6 years. The study used a descriptive quantitative approach with a survey technique of 33 parents in Tarumajaya District. The data collection instrument was a Guttman scale questionnaire which was analyzed descriptively using. The results showed that the majority of parents had a negative perception of the impact of gadget use, especially related to behavioral, social, and emotional disorders in children. However, some parents also acknowledged the positive benefits of gadgets in supporting children's cognitive, language, and creative development, as long as their use is limited and properly supervised. These findings emphasize the importance of parental knowledge and involvement in guiding gadget use to minimize negative impacts and optimize benefits.

Keywords: *Age 4-6 years, parental perception, positive impact, negative impact, duration of gadget use*

INTRODUCTION

The increasingly rapid development of technology has made human tasks easier because technological advances facilitate the acquisition of information. The convenience of gadgets allows individuals of all ages to utilize technology. Gadgets are small electronic devices with unique features, such as smartphones. Furthermore, gadgets are the latest technical advancements with enhanced capabilities and more useful and practical purposes. Along with technological developments, the variety of gadgets continues to grow (Miranti & Putri, 2021, p. 59).

Based on data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association, in 2024 there were 221,563,479 internet users in Indonesia out of a total population of 278,696,200 in 2023. Contribution to Indonesia's internet penetration based on gender, men were the largest contributor with 50.7% and women 49.1%. As many as 34.50% of Gen Z (born 1997-2012) are the majority of internet users in Indonesia, followed by the Millennial Generation (born 1981-1996) at 30.62%, Gen X (born 1965-1980) at 18.98%, Post Gen Z (born before 2023) at 9.17%, Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) at 6.58% and Pre Boomers (born 1945) at 0.24% (APJII, 2024).

Given the large number of internet and device users in Indonesia and the ease of accessing the internet today, it is possible that all age groups use the internet and devices, including early childhood. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency, 33.44% of preschool-aged children in Indonesia access the internet. As many as 25.5% of children aged 0-4 years and 52.76% of children aged 5-6 years use devices (Rusawalsep et al., 2023, pp. 206-288). Based on the National Socioeconomic Survey, as many as 12.27% of children aged 5-12 years in 2023 used the internet in the last 3 months. As many as 25.99% of children living in urban areas and 27.45% of children living in rural areas who are still in school have used the internet in the last 3 months (Directorate of Statistics, Finance, Information Technology and Tourism, 2024, pp. 206-288).

Ease of use of technology and internet access for young children can have a positive impact. According to (Yumarni, 2022, p. 109), the benefits of using technology or devices for young children include fostering creativity, helping develop adaptive skills, and facilitating language development. Children who use devices will learn and adapt to ever-increasing technological advances.

Despite the benefits of gadgets for young children, they can also have negative impacts. Negative impacts can arise from children's lack of self-regulation skills and a lack of parental supervision, leading to negative consequences such as addiction due to excessive use.

The use of gadgets in early childhood can also affect their development. This is in line with the results of research conducted by (Siregar, 2022, pp. 149-150) on the Impact of Gadget Use on Early Childhood Case Study on Early Childhood in Siolip Village, which found that the negative impacts of gadget use on early childhood aged 4-6 years in Siolip Village include disruption of children's social development, loss of concentration in children, reduced eye health, and changes in children's behavior such as irritability and crying easily.

Parents' perceptions of device use can influence their children's use. Parents with positive perceptions of device use can have a positive impact on their children's device use. Conversely, parents with negative perceptions can have a negative impact on their children's device use.

Research conducted by (Cahyana, 2023, pp. 69-70) on Parental Perceptions of the Phenomenon of Gadget Use in Children in Talunajaya Village found differences in perception among the five informants. Negative perceptions of informants focused more on the negative impacts of gadget use on young children, leading informants to reject and not tolerate it. Meanwhile, positive perceptions of informants tended to accept and favor gadget use in children because it suited their personalities. Informants also considered gadget use in children to be normal and natural.

The results of this study differ from those of Wijayanti et al., 2021, who stated that parents often use gadgets as a practical solution for accompanying their children. With a variety of engaging features and applications, parents use gadgets to keep their children calm, allowing them to carry out activities without worrying about their children getting dirty, damaging the house, and so on. Many parents believe that gadgets can be safe playmates for their children, resulting in some parental roles being replaced by them.

Based on the problems outlined above, the researcher will conduct a study entitled "Parents' Perceptions of Gadget Use in Children Aged 4-6 Years." This study was conducted with parents of children aged 4-6 years in Tarumajaya District.

METHOD

This research uses a quantitative approach. According to (Sugiyono, 2013, p. 8), a quantitative approach can be defined as a research method based on the philosophy of positivism, used to research a specific population or sample, data collection using research instruments, and quantitative or statistical data analysis, with the aim of testing a predetermined hypothesis. The type of research used is quantitative descriptive, and the method used in this study is a survey method.

According to Kerlinger (Setyawan, 2021, p. 38), a variable is a construct or characteristic to be studied, such as aspiration level, education, income, social status, gender, salary bracket, work productivity, and so on. A variable can also be defined as a characteristic derived from different values. This study only discusses one variable: parents' perceptions of device use.

The sample in this study consisted of 30 parents with children aged 4-6 years in Tarumajaya District, Bekasi Regency. The data collection technique used in this study was a questionnaire via Google Forms, which was then distributed to parents. This study also used the Guttman scale with Yes and No categories, and there were 30 statement items in this questionnaire.

This study used a questionnaire distributed to parents via Google Forms to collect data. The collected data was then processed using SPSS to determine the frequency of parental perceptions of device use among children aged 4-6.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the questionnaire results obtained, 33 respondents completed the questionnaire. Respondent characteristics data included parent's name, child's age, and daily device usage duration. The frequency and percentage of children's age and daily device usage duration are as follows:

Table 1. Child Age

Child Age	Frequency	Percentage
4 years	13	39,4%
5 years	10	30,3%
6 Years	10	30,3%
TOTAL	33	100%

Of the 33 respondents, 13 respondents or parents (39.4%) had children aged 4 years, 10 respondents or parents (30.3%) had children aged 5 years and 10 respondents or parents (30.3%) had children aged 6 years. Based on these data, respondents who have children aged 5 and 6 years are relatively balanced. The majority of respondents to this study were parents who have children aged 4 years.

Table 2. Duration of Children's Gadget Use Per Day

Duration of Children's Gadget Use Per Day	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 hour per day	10	30,3%
More than 1 hour per day	5	15,2%
Less than 2 hours per day	8	24,2%
More than 2 hours per day	10	30,3%
TOTAL	33	100%

There are four categories of children's daily device usage duration: 10 children (30.3%) used less than 1 hour per day, 5 children (15.2%) used less than 2 hours per day, 8 children (24.2%) used more than 1 hour per day, and 10 children (30.3%) used more than 2 hours per day. Based on these data, the majority of children aged 4-6 years old used devices in two categories: less than 1 hour per day and more than 2 hours per day. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Canadian Paediatric Society (Darwis et al., 2022, p. 204), children aged 2-4 years old used devices for less than 1 hour per day, and children aged 5 years and above used devices for no more than 2 hours per day (excluding learning needs). Thus, there are 10 children aged 4-6 years who used devices for more than 2 hours.

Table 4. Results of the Parental Perception Questionnaire Regarding the Negative Impact of Gadget Use on Children Aged 4-6 Years

No.	Item	Of	No
1.	In my opinion, gadgets can cause children to speak with bad language.	22 (66,7%)	11 (33,3%)
2.	In my opinion, gadgets can cause children to behave impolitely towards their parents.	22 (66,7%)	11 (33,3%)
3.	In my opinion, gadgets can cause children to tend to neglect religious activities, such as praying, attending religious lessons, and reading the Quran or their religious scriptures.	23 (69,7%)	10 (30,3%)
4.	In my opinion, gadgets can hinder children's speaking abilities.	20 (60,6%)	13 (39,4%)
5.	In my opinion, gadgets can cause children to have difficulty understanding words or sentences.	18 (54,5%)	14 (45,5%)
6.	In my opinion, gadgets can reduce children's critical thinking skills.	24 (72,7%)	9 (27,3%)
7.	In my opinion, gadgets can reduce children's ability to focus while learning.	30 (90,9%)	3 (9,1%)
8.	In my opinion, gadgets can cause children's problem-solving abilities to tend to be less developed.	21 (63,6%)	12 (36,4%)
9.	In my opinion, gadgets can cause children to be less	27 (81,8%)	6 (18,2%)

	likely to interact with friends or their surroundings, thus reducing their social skills.		
10.	In my opinion, gadgets can cause aggressive behavior in children because of the content they see.	28 (84,8)	5 (15,2%)
11.	In my opinion, content containing physical and sexual violence that is widely spread on the internet can trigger children to imitate it.	31 (93,9%)	2 (6,1%)
12.	In my opinion, gadgets can cause a lack of physical activity in children, such as walking, running, and jumping.	22 (66,7%)	11 (33,3%)
14.	In my opinion, gadgets can cause addiction in children so that children can do movements and songs that are not appropriate for their age.	29 (87,9%)	4 (12,1%)
15.	In my opinion, gadgets can help children form behavioral habits that are in accordance with moral guidelines in their social environment.	24 (72,7%)	9 (27,3%)
13.	In my opinion, gadgets can hinder children's fine motor development, such as writing and drawing.	24 (72,7%)	9 (27,3%)
16.	According to me, devices can help children to learn religion, such as recognizing hijaiyah letters or prayers that are appropriate to their religion.	29 (87,9%)	4 (12,1%)
17.	According to me, devices can help children in letter recognition.	30 (90,9%)	3 (9,1%)
18.	In my opinion, gadgets can help children's understanding through short stories.	25 (75,8%)	8 (24,2%)
19.	In my opinion, gadgets can improve children's vocabulary.	29 (87,9%)	4 (12,1%)
20.	In my opinion, gadgets can train children's way of thinking.	22 (66,7%)	11 (33,3%)
21.	In my opinion, gadgets can train children's reasoning.	23 (69,7%)	10 (30,3%)
22.	In my opinion, gadgets can train children's memory.	23 (69,7%)	10 (30,3%)
23.	In my opinion, gadgets can develop children's curiosity.	30 (90,9%)	3 (9,1%)
24.	In my opinion, gadgets can facilitate children's communication with their parents and friends, thereby supporting their social skills.	23 (69,7%)	10 (30,3%)
25.	According to me, devices can	21 (63,6%)	12 (36,4%)

	increase a child's self-confidence.		
26.	In my opinion, gadgets can train children's fine motor skills by holding and moving the gadget.	18 (54,5%)	15 (45,5%)
27.	In my opinion, gadgets can train children's physical abilities by imitating the movements on the gadget.	29 (87,9%)	4 (12,1%)
28.	In my opinion, gadgets can develop children's creativity, such as drawing, singing, and so on.	30 (90,9%)	3 (9,1%)
29.	In my opinion, 4-year-old children can use gadgets for less than 1 hour per day.	27 (81,8%)	6 (18,2%)
30.	In my opinion, children aged 5-6 years can use gadgets for less than 2 hours per day (excluding learning needs).	21 (62,6%)	12 (36,4%)
	Rate-Rata	75,21%	24,75%

For statement number 1, 22 respondents answered "Yes" and 11 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can lead to children using offensive language. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For statement number 2, 22 respondents answered "Yes" and 11 respondents answered "No." This indicates that most parents agree that gadget use can cause children to behave disrespectfully towards their parents. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For statement number 3, 23 respondents answered "Yes" and 10 respondents answered "No." This indicates that most parents agree that gadget use can cause children to neglect religious activities, such as praying, attending religious lessons, and reading the Quran or their religious scriptures. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For statement number 4, 20 respondents answered "Yes" and 13 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can hinder children's speech development. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For statement number 5, 18 respondents answered "Yes" and 15 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can cause difficulty for children understanding words or sentences. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For statement number 6, 24 respondents answered "Yes" and 9 respondents answered "No." This indicates that most parents agree that gadget use can reduce children's critical thinking skills. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For statement number 7, 30 respondents answered "Yes" and 3 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can reduce children's ability to focus during learning. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 8, 21 respondents answered "Yes" and 12 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can lead to underdevelopment of children's problem-solving skills. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 9, 27 respondents answered "Yes" and 6 respondents answered

"No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can cause children to interact less with friends or their surroundings, thus diminishing their social skills. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 10, 28 respondents answered "Yes" and 5 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that device use can lead to aggressive behavior in children due to the content they view. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of device use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question 11, 31 respondents answered "Yes" and 2 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that content containing physical and sexual violence, widely distributed online, can trigger children to imitate it. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of device use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question 12, 22 respondents answered "Yes" and 11 respondents answered "No." This indicates that most parents agree that gadget use can lead to a lack of physical activity in children, such as walking, running, and jumping. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question 13, 22 respondents answered "Yes" and 11 respondents answered "No." This indicates that most parents agree that gadget use can hinder children's fine motor development, such as writing and drawing. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question 14, 29 respondents answered "Yes" and 4 respondents answered "No." This indicates that most parents agree that gadget use can lead to addiction in children, leading to movements and songs that are inappropriate for their age. This finding also indicates that parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 15, 24 respondents answered "Yes" and 9 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that device use can help children develop behavioral habits that align with the moral guidelines of their social environment. These findings also indicate that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of device use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question 16, 29 respondents answered "Yes" and 4 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can help children learn religion, such as learning the hijaiyah alphabet or prayers appropriate to their religion. These findings also indicate that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6.

For question 17, 30 respondents answered "Yes" and 3 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can help children recognize letters. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question 18, 25 respondents answered "Yes" and 8 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that using gadgets can help children understand short stories. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question 19, 29 respondents answered "Yes" and 4 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can improve children's vocabulary. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 20, 22 respondents answered "Yes" and 11 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can train children's thinking skills. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 21, 23 respondents answered "Yes" and 10 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents

agree that gadget use can improve children's reasoning skills. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 22, 23 respondents answered "Yes" and 10 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can improve children's memory. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question 23, 30 respondents answered "Yes" and 3 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can foster children's curiosity. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question 24, 23 respondents answered "Yes" and 10 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadgets can facilitate children's communication with their parents and friends, thus supporting their social skills. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 25, 21 respondents answered "Yes" and 12 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can increase children's self-confidence. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 26, 18 respondents answered "Yes" and 15 respondents answered "No." This indicates that most parents agree that using gadgets can develop children's fine motor skills through grasping and moving the device. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 27, 29 respondents answered "Yes" and 4 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can train children's physical abilities by imitating movements displayed on the device. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question number 28, 30 respondents answered "Yes" and 3 respondents answered "No." This indicates that the majority of parents agree that gadget use can develop children's creativity, such as drawing, singing, and so on. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years.

For question 29, 27 respondents answered "Yes" and 6 respondents answered "No." This indicates that most parents agree that 4-year-olds can use devices for less than 1 hour per day. This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of device use on children aged 4-6.

For question number 30, 21 respondents answered "Yes" and 12 respondents answered "No." This indicates that most parents agree that children aged 5-6 can use devices for less than two hours per day (excluding learning needs). This finding also indicates that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of device use on children aged 4-6.

Based on the findings above, most parents agree with the negative impacts of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years. These findings indicate that parents have a negative perception of the negative impacts of gadget use. The negative impacts of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years, among others, can cause children to behave disrespectfully towards parents, can cause aggressive attitudes in children, can cause addiction, and so on. These findings are in line with the results of research conducted by (Fatonah et al., 2024, p. 129) which stated that when children are asked by their parents to stop playing gadgets, the children then show negative emotions such as crying, screaming, and throwing things, as well as behaving disrespectfully towards parents, such as hitting.

The results of this study also show that most parents agree with the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years. The results of this study indicate that parents have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use. The positive impacts of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years include helping children recognize letters, increasing children's vocabulary, training children's thinking skills, and developing children's creativity. This is in

line with the results of research conducted by (Novitasari & Novitasari, 2023, p. 180) which states that parents believe that gadgets have benefits for the development and growth of early childhood, including being used for play and learning, stimulating children's language and cognitive development, such as training children's thinking skills by using the features on the device. In addition, gadgets can also help children develop their creativity.

In addition to the negative and positive impacts of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years, most parents also agree that 4-year-old children can use gadgets for less than 1 hour per day and children aged 5-6 years can use gadgets for less than 2 hours per day (excluding learning needs). These results indicate that most parents have a positive perception of the duration of gadget use in children aged 4-6 years. The results of the study (Hidayati et al., 2023, p. 919) stated that parents of 4-year-old children will set a time limit for using gadgets, namely a maximum of 1 hour. If it is more than 1 hour, then parents will invite their children to play games that do not require gadgets together. This aims to ensure that children have time with their surroundings and do not miss the golden age.

One of the negative impacts of gadget use in early childhood is impaired eye health due to excessive use of gadgets. It can also disrupt children's emotional development, such as becoming easily irritated and crying if their parents don't give them their gadgets. This is in line with the results of research conducted by (Yusnia et al., 2021), which states that gadget use can have negative impacts such as responses with harsh language, crying, anger, rebellion, and fighting with siblings to get the gadgets they want.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the majority of parents have a negative perception of the negative impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years. Parents agree that gadget use can have negative impacts, such as impolite behavior, decreased focus on learning, reduced social skills, aggressive behavior, and so on. However, the majority of parents also have a positive perception of the positive impact of gadget use on children aged 4-6 years. Most parents also stated that the ideal duration of gadget use for children aged 4 years is less than 1 hour per day, while for children aged 5-6 years it is less than 2 hours per day (excluding learning needs).

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