

THE IMPACT OF ELECTRONIC GADGETS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Technology has played a crucial role in 21st century in stimulating educational exercises. Contrary to this fact, technology becomes a major cause of distraction for learners, adversely affecting their academic performance. Therefore, this study examines strategies that can be adapted to control the online gadgets that will improve students' academic performance in the 21st century. This study investigated the impact of using electronic gadgets on the academic performance of postgraduate students in West Bengal. To determine the impact, this study deployed quantitative research approach to collect data (n=100) from postgraduate students. The questionnaire has been adopted as a tool for the research. It was found that using electronic gadgets distracts students from their studies in certain aspects. The findings also exhibits that electronic gadgets affect the academic lives of the postgraduate students at various universities in West Bengal. It can be concluded that using electronic gadgets made an impact on students both positively and negatively.

Keywords: Academic performance; Electronic Gadgets; Postgraduate students; Learning;

INTRODUCTION

Technology and innovations embedded in the current educational system needed to meet global challenges and should open up many opportunities in these fields. Thus, from the conceptual point of view, the adoption of new technologies such as IT, ICT and educational technology constitute the pillar of process innovations for the actual utilization of the new system. Educational innovations have been benefitted greatly from technological advances, providing teachers and students with more options in their teaching and learning practices. The usage of technology has become an

integral part of our daily lives. From the last two decades, there is a rapid utilization of electronic gadgets namely mobile phones, tablets, video games, television, and computers etc. Technology introduced many new gadgets with several new features and people are relying on these gadget heavily. On one side technology usage has positive role in our life, but on the other side it has many negative impacts as well. One of the most existing environmental factors that influence adolescent's behavior is "electronic gadget". In recent years, electronic gadgets play an important role for all. People are using electronic gadgets for better communication, research, employment etc. Currently educational institutions have updated themselves with digitalization. The students are also using laptops, tablets and computers instead of books.

Digital technology has brought along with it various new challenges and benefits. Education landscape has changed dramatically as a result of the array of devices, software and programs that are available and the services that are available. Students have experienced both positive and negative effects from gadgets, but for the most part, gadgets have made learning fun. Students seem to thrive in classrooms that use technology. One of the biggest contributors to their success must be the influence of social media. With the internet and social media, the classroom has become a global stage where students can interact and share ideas with students from various parts of the world. The new generation of students grew up in a world in which geographical borders are no longer a barrier. Nowadays, students have access to a myriad of gadgets for use in class, but smartphone is the most popular.

Technological advancements as well as the use of devices for education are making schools more focused on the positive impact of gadgets on students. The affordability and capabilities of modern technology have narrowed the divide among people and more people have now access to the tools that were previously reserved for the privileged. As technology becomes more affordable, the gap will inevitably shrink, and innovative ideas will begin to flow from all over.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Al Sagr et. al (2020) conducted a study on the effect of electronics on the growth and development of young children. This research aimed to synthesize and appraise the published literature on the effects of electronics on growth and development of children. These study findings from both quantitative and qualitative studies were reviewed and included. Study findings on the effect of electronic gadgets on child development and growth are mixed. Studies show that using gadgets might be beneficial for children; however, the use of gadgets might negatively impact their growth and development.

The study by Bayanova et. al (2019) in their study has determined the relationship between student performance and the use of gadgets in class. The study of this problem is the methods of questioning and testing, allowing to make a qualitative analysis of the leading type's characteristics of students' attitude to the study. Researchers found that technology has a positive impact on academic performance and it permits students to share knowledge, prepare for classes; record lectures, and views their textbooks online. Negative impact on academic performance manifests itself in peeping answers and solutions to tasks on the test and on independent work; sitting in social networks during classes; distraction of students from educational material. Researchers in this study report both positive and negative effects of gadgets used by students in the classroom, as well as the motivations for the use of gadgets in the educational process by teachers and students.

The study by Hegde et. al. (2019) was carried out to explore the usage of electronic gadgets and its impact on the overall behavior, academic performance, and health of school children. The descriptive analysis of the data revealed that 69% of the students use gadgets before sleeping, and 59% complained of frequent headaches in the morning, along with some difficulty seeing the blackboard from last benches of the classroom. The majority of children reported difficulties concentrating during classes or at home while studying, resulting in an overall drop in grades. Chinomona et. al. (2013) conducted a study to discuss the impact of product quality on perceived value, trust and students' intention to purchase electronic gadgets. This study focuses on increasing attention on the role played by product quality on desirable customer behavioral outcomes. Though there are still a number of issues to be addressed, one of which is the impact of the quality of electronic gadgets on the perception of value, trust, and intention to purchase students. The article discussed the managerial implications of the findings and identifies future research directions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The researcher has considered the following objectives for the study:

- To find out the positive impacts of electronic gadgets usage on the academic performance of postgraduate students.
- To find out the negative impacts of electronic gadgets usage on the academic performance of postgraduate students.
- To find out the effects of electronic gadgets on postgraduate students' academic capabilities.

RESEARCH METHOD

The present study focuses on the impact of using Electronic Gadgets on the academic performance of Postgraduate students. Hence, this study systematically assesses the number of related components and issues covered through the subject matter of the study. Considering the demand and nature of the proposed study, descriptive Survey method has been used. The data have been collected from five universities in West Bengal. A total of 100 students have been selected for the study by using purposive sampling method. Data collection methods included a survey method using a questionnaire. Required data will be gathered by a self-made questionnaire from the students. The questionnaire has been conceived as a systematic compilation of questions logically related to the problem under study. Bearing the study objectives in mind and equipped with an extensive literature review. The questionnaire was made of 20 items, excluding the background information about the respondents.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

After collecting the data, an analysis has been done to explore the impact of using electronic gadgets on the academic performance. Descriptive statistics has been used to analyze the data. The analysis of findings in this study is a result of the collected questionnaires on the empirical investigation of the impact of using Electronic Gadgets on the academic performance of Postgraduate students. The data analysis is arranged into four parts. Part 1 deals with the demographics; part 2 focuses on the positive impact of using Electronic Gadgets on the academic performance of Postgraduate students; part 3 deals with the negative impact of using Electronic Gadgets on the academic performance of Postgraduate students; while part 4 deals with the effects of using Electronic Gadgets on the academic performance of Postgraduate students.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Demographic information

In the demographic section of the questionnaire, students were asked questions such as their gender, age range, and academic level. The reason behind including demographic questions is to determine or to find the basic personal information of the respondents.

It has been found from the study that more of the respondents were female. The respondents who filled out the questionnaire were among the age group of 21 to 30 years. This implies that the overall population was dominated by young students. This is an indication that most respondents come from the final-year postgraduate's students who are more exposed to the digital world such as using electronic gadgets.

Positive impact of using electronic gadgets on the academic performance of postgraduate's students

A cross-tabulation was performed between the genders of the students using electronic gadgets distracting students from learning in general; it has been explored that 50 of the male respondents found using electronic gadgets distracting and 43 were female students who suggest that electronic gadget usage is not distractive in general. Furthermore, a cross-tabulation was done between student faculty and the question: "Do you have internet access in your classroom venues?" The results show that Commerce students have more classroom venues that have internet access and the faculty with the least internet access is Human and Social Sciences, with eight of the students from the faculty saying that they have internet access in their classroom venue, and students were asked whether their academic performance has increased with the use of electronic gadgets; the results showed that 76.% of the students stated that it has partially increased, 5% said that it has not increased and the other 4% suggested that their academic performance has definitely increased. Furthermore, 15% of the respondents get help from their classmates when seeking assistance. It was found that the use of electronic gadgets by students increases collaborative activities, information sharing, academic assistance, and support from one another. It shows that 'sometimes' (52%) and 'frequently' (38%) using electronic gadgets assists respondents academically. That positively highlights the use of electronic gadgets to assists students in many ways, including doing research (42%), doing assignments (19%), accessing lecture slides (10%) and many more. Furthermore, proves that sometimes respondents reach out to their lecturers via electronic gadgets. In all cases, electronic gadgets are found to to be beneficial undergraduates academically since it improves their academic performance.

Negative impacts of electronic gadgets usage on the academic performance of postgraduates students

There are negative impacts of electronic gadgets on the academic performance of students the correlation that was found displayed that relationships exist between the age range of the students and how often they use their electronic gadgets in the class. The finding shows a positive relationship between the two variables, which means that the ages of the students have a significant impact on how often they use their electronic gadgets in a classroom. In the descriptive statistics, question 1 proves that sometimes (71%) suggests that they are distracted using electronic gadgets use in general, while a higher percentage of the students indicated that they sometimes (61%) use while in class, with 18% going with the 'always' option and 18% of the students never use on their electronic

gadgets and 33% of the students 'sometimes' used. Cross-tabulations indicate, however, that the use of electronic gadgets has a greater effect on the sleeping patterns of female students than on those of male students. Because of these mentioned distractions, some schools have restricted the use of electronic gadgets or Smartphone in classes or during lectures. Electronic gadgets usage consumes participants' time, with 29% of the students in support. Overall, the use of electronic gadgets decreases academic performance, as 43% suggested. This implies that many of the participants are negatively affected by electronic gadgets usage because they are mostly distracted in one way or the other while using electronic gadgets. The findings show that Electronic gadgets improve lives and improve activities of its users and encourage collaboration, support, and information sharing.

Effects of using electronic gadgets on academic capabilities of postgraduates' students

The descriptive analysis for the questions under this part showed that a greater number of students find it convenient to access their academic materials on their electronic gadgets. One of the most important features of the ever-evolving features of the electronic gadgets is its small or rather portable size and its ability to be used not only in the classroom, but also outside the classroom. Furthermore, the final year students have the largest number of students who find it convenient to access their academic materials on their electronic gadgets, with 17 of the final-year students saying that they do not find it convenient while 63 sometimes find it convenient.

In addition, it showed that the student's year of study has a significant impact on the electronic gadgets instilling academic knowledge in the students. The finding is also backed by data analysis, which shows that 68% of the students believed that electronic gadgets usage instilled academic knowledge in them. Based on this, 61% of the respondents believe that electronic gadgets usage should be encouraged at postgraduate level. The encouragement should come from fellow students, lecturers, parents, educational institutions, sponsors and many more. The findings show that electronic gadgets usage by postgraduate students offers positive capabilities to the users. The capabilities listed above are sets of factors that encourage postgraduate students to use electronic devices for academic purposes. However, the invention of mobile phone/ electronic gadgets technology thrives and brings in attitudinal changes among university students and most of them are affected, including postgraduate students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the literature review, important ideas were raised, which pointed out the positive and the

negative impacts of the use of electronic gadgets on the academic performance of postgraduate students. This is a clear indication that university level students now turn to electronic gadgets to help them carry out academic activities. Even as the use of electronic gadgets is common among higher education level students or, in this case, postgraduate students, there lie with it some factors that are detrimental to the increase of the academic performance of students who use them. However, the positive aspects of electronic gadgets can improve the performance of postgraduate students if used well. The finding on the effect of electronic gadgets on the academic performance found out all respondents, regardless of differences in sex, age, grade level, length of years and exposure were “very effective.” However, postgraduate students were “extremely effective” in the awareness of the ill effect of these useful devices. As per the findings that have been discussed above, there are a few recommendations that are made for consideration. They are as follows:

- Students said that they find electronic gadgets helpful in keeping in contact with their lecturers. Furthermore, a higher percentage of the students found electronic gadgets convenient in accessing their academic materials. In light of this, it is recommended that lecturers should communicate more with the students through this medium. This could be achieved by creating chat groups that can help every one of the students and lecturers stay connected in order to share information.
- Electronic gadgets they claim to be extremely helpful for their development as individuals and academics. Thus, electronic gadgets are very effective for the development of knowledge, skills, and attitude of students toward their academic performance in higher education.
- Academic institutions should also implement programmes that can restrict students from using electronic gadgets and applications while attending lectures.

Lastly, even though a higher percentage of the students said that they do not use while in class, it is recommended that the students are only allowed to use their electronic gadgets when the lecturer tells or recommends them to do so; for example, to access their academic materials or something of the sort.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings show that there are many ways that electronic gadgets affect the academic lives of the postgraduate students in West Bengal. In literature studies, there were arguments made for and against the impacts that electronic gadgets have on the academic performance of students. This study can conclude with the fact that using electronic gadgets made an impact on

students both positively and negatively. Then, it will be highly beneficial if there could be more research carried out in developing countries on how students use electronic gadgets to increase their academic performance, how low-income families or communities have impacts on students' usage of electronic gadgets and the impact of electronic gadgets on students attending classes and other academic related activities. This study presents an in-depth understanding on the effects of electronic gadgets on postgraduate students in a developing country. The findings show that postgraduate students, in general, need to understand that electronic gadgets improve their social and academic lives and it can also cause decreased performance in academic studies. However, the effective use of electronic gadgets brings more advantages than disadvantages to postgraduate students' lives. The results of this study will enlighten the postgraduate students on the effects of using electronic gadgets for multiple aspects.

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