

## Impact Analysis of Using Gadgets on Imitating Behavior in Early Childhood

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the impact of gadget use on the imitative behavior of early childhood in Santa Maria Integrated Preschool and Kanaan Christian Integrated Preschool Banjarmasin. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to multi-site design, with data collection through interviews, observation and documentation. The data analysis stage involves two stages, namely site data analysis and cross-site data analysis. The results of the research are 1) positive impact: increased imagination and self-confidence; hone cognitive and social intelligence; and develop reading, numerical and problem solving skills. 2) negative impact: decreasing concentration and feeling lazy about learning to write and read without gadgets; worsens sociability; harm health and trigger addiction; and hinder progress in cognitive and language development.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Early childhood education is very important to equip children with future competencies, such as problem-solving skills, health and success in the job market which have an impact on the nation's social and economic health (Lasaiba, 2016). In the preschool period, children learn to be more independent and care for themselves, develop a number of school readiness skills (following instructions, recognizing letters) and spend a lot of time playing with peers (Santrock, 2007). Brain development in early childhood accelerates to 80% of the entire adult brain. This is because children get many new things from their environment. The child's physique will also develop rapidly, various parts of the body will begin to function properly.

Children usually like to imitate what they see. When children see the behavior of adults around them, they will follow and remember. Therefore, it is very important to foster good social behavior for children by fostering good values from the people around them, especially the family environment, because after all the family is the child's first educator. Freud in (Jannah, 2021) stated that children's social development today will have an impact on children's social behavior when they are adults, so it is important to instill social behavior in early childhood. The social interaction process includes imitation, suggestion, and identification (Jannah, 2021). Children tend to imitate and can also carry out identification, namely the child's desire to be exactly the same as someone else. According to Bandura in (Fithri, 2014) most human behavior is learned through imitation or presentation. A person's behavior is the result of the interaction of factors within oneself (cognitive) and the environment.

According to Tadjudin in (P. Sari & Marlina, 2021) imitating behavior is an initial skill in the socialization process, which is called the imitation process, which is a process where children learn to imitate socially acceptable behavior. An imitator is someone who is well accepted by a social group, children get the opportunity to develop their characteristics and increase the group's acceptance of themselves (Rahmah, 2021). Imitative behavior will be related to the child's social development. According to Albert Bandura in (Laila, 2015), the process of students' social and moral development is always related to the learning process because it determines students' ability to behave and behave socially in line with religious moral norms, traditional morals, legal morals, and other moral norms that apply in the world. public. From this, the environment around the child can influence how the child behaves (Jamain & Hafidzi, 2018). If the surrounding environment provides positive examples, then the child will become a good person or even better than the example he sees. If the surrounding environment brings negative influences, then he will become a bad person or even worse than the example he sees. and have an impact on social behavior (Novitawati; Wamaungu & Astuti, 2018).

According to Indrijati in (Jannah, 2021) the main role in children's social attitudes is the family. The family is the primary environment that provides guidance to instill moral values for the formation of individual children. The family is the first and main place of learning in identifying personality as a social existence. The family environment is the first environment that is a good example

for forming and nurturing a child's personality. Proper supervision from parents is very important for children, because children are still too young and do not have the experience to guide their own development towards maturity. Parental direction and guidance is the key to a child's success in being able to form an independent and socially competent personality in line with current developments. The development of the times continues to penetrate the digital era. The digital era is a big challenge for parents in educating children, parents have never received education on how to educate children properly and well. However, reality confronts parents with a very important thing, namely making their God-entrusted children become human beings with dignity, character, social skills who are able to adapt to the environment so that they are able to face various challenges. Becoming a strong next generation (Syarifudin & Syamsurrijal, 2022).

In the modern era, the use of gadgets has become commonplace. Gadgets can no longer be separated from human life, from children to adults use gadgets in their daily lives, even many young children have been given their own gadgets. Gadgets have many benefits for human life, for example there are Instagram, Facebook, Twitter which can be used to connect with many people and increase friendships with people from various corners of the world. Then there is YouTube which can be used as a means of entertainment and broadening your knowledge. There are also other applications that can be downloaded easily from Playstore, it is so easy to download applications from Playstore that even kindergarten age children can do it. However, behind the many benefits of gadgets, there are also negative impacts of using gadgets for users if they are not controlled. With the many features available on gadgets, it can also be a gateway for children to access many things that are not appropriate for their age and can interfere with their development.

Through initial observations at the Santa Maria Banjarmasin Integrated Preschool and Kanaan Christian Integrated Preschool Banjarmasin on November 21 2022, students tend to behave by imitating the things and behaviors they get through using gadgets in their daily lives. The imitation activities that children do on something they watch or get from gadgets are very diverse, according to the students' own environment in supervising and regulating children's gadget use. Imitation can be either a good thing or a bad thing. From the results of the researcher's initial observations and interviews, most children, if their parents don't give them to play with gadgets, some will cry and even throw tantrums, there are also children who don't want to eat if they don't play games on their gadgets and the researchers saw that parents also don't pay much attention to their children playing. gadgets, most parents will also give gadgets when their children cry so that their children stop crying. Therefore, it is important for researchers to study in more depth the impact of gadget use on the imitating behavior of young children.

## LITERATUR REVIEW

Children usually like to imitate what they see. When children see the behavior of adults around them, they will follow and remember. Therefore, it is very important to foster good social behavior for children by fostering good values from the people around them, especially the family environment, because after all the family is the child's first educator. Freud in (Jannah, 2021) stated that children's social development today will have an impact on children's social behavior when they are adults, so it is important to instill social behavior in early childhood. The social interaction process includes imitation, suggestion, and identification (Jannah, 2021).

## METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative research approach and a type of field research. Qualitative research methods are systematic research methods used to study an object in a natural setting without any manipulation in it and without testing hypotheses, using natural methods when the research results are expected to be the meaning (in terms of quality) of the observed phenomena (Prastowo, 2014). This research uses qualitative because the researcher wants to explore, deepen and explore as well as to reveal phenomena and facts about the impact of gadget use on the imitating behavior of young children.

This research uses a case study with a multi-site design. Multi-site research studies have the same characteristics and occur in different places, then explained and compared to provide insight to find the common thread. This research was carried out in two locations, namely at the Santa Maria Banjarmasin Integrated Preschool and the Kanaan Christian Integrated Preschool Banjarmasin.

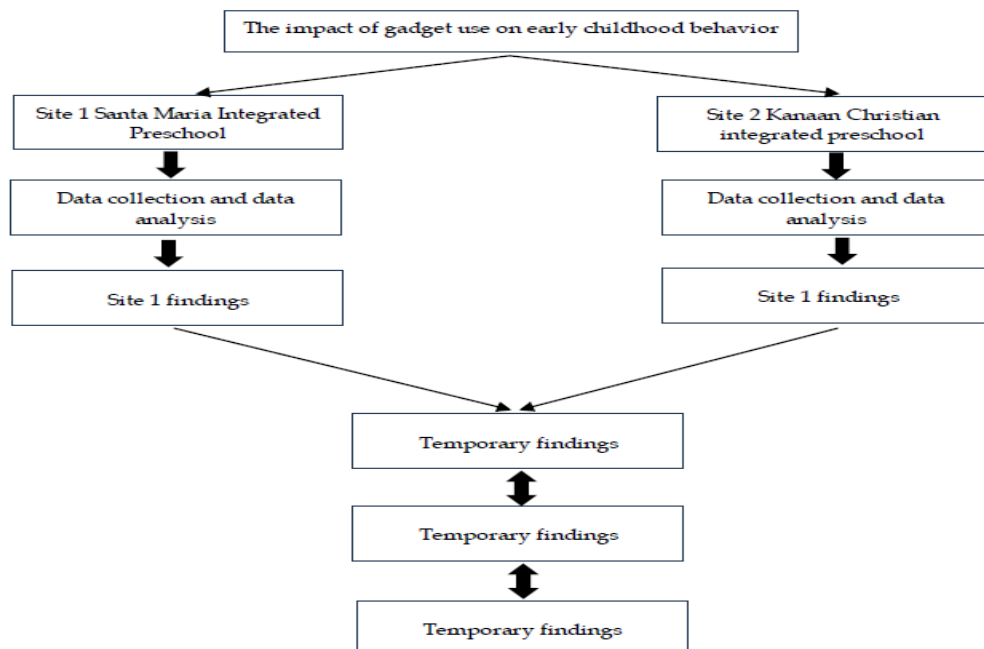


Figure 1. Cross-Site Data Analysis

The aim of this research is to describe the impact of gadget use on the imitating behavior of early childhood in the Santa Maria Banjarmasin Integrated Preschool and Kanaan Christian Integrated Preschool Banjarmasin. The data analysis steps in this research will be described in two stages, namely: single site data analysis, and cross-site data analysis. Single site data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman model which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions/verification. Then in general, the cross-site data analysis process includes three activities: formulating propositions based on the findings of the first site then continuing with the second site, combining theoretical findings from both research sites, formulating theoretical conclusions based on cross-site analysis as the final findings from both research sites (Figure 2).

## RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *The Positive Impact of Using Gadgets on Imitating Behavior in Early Childhood*

Based on research findings at the Santa Maria Banjarmasin Integrated Preschool, there is a positive impact of using gadgets on the imitating behavior of young children. The positive impact is the development of children's imagination, increasing self-confidence, honing cognitive and social intelligence, developing reading, numerical and problem-solving skills. Children experience positive development in several aspects which can also be seen in their imitation behavior in the types of direct imitation, indirect imitation, combined imitation and continuous imitation, meanwhile no positive impact has been found on children's imitation behavior in the instantaneous/immediate type of imitation.

Likewise, at research site 2, namely Kanaan Christian Integrated Preschool Banjarmasin, a positive impact was found on the use of gadgets on the imitating behavior of young children. Aspects that develop positively are the same as the first site, namely developing children's imagination, increasing self-confidence, honing cognitive and social intelligence, developing reading, numerical and problem-solving abilities. The form of children's behavior at Preschool 2 site in terms of positive development aspects is similar to Preschool site 1, only there are differences in the types of activities and shows that children watch. Positive development in children is also seen in children's imitating behavior in the types of direct imitation, indirect imitation, combined imitation and continuous imitation. There has also been no positive impact on children's imitation behavior in this type of instantaneous imitation at the Preschool site 2.

The positive impact that appears in early childhood occurs when gadgets are used with appropriate supervision and time limits. According to Ardianti in (Wiyanti et al., 2022) one of the positive impacts of gadgets for young children is that they make children more creative because with applications on gadgets children can be stimulated and more creative. Gadgets that are used by young children appropriately and in a controlled manner will stimulate their creativity (Wiyanti et al., 2022). The use of gadgets in early childhood can have a positive impact on increasing children's imagination and self-confidence. This is in line with the results of Juliadi's research in (Marpaung, 2018) that the use of gadgets can be a factor that increases the imagination of young children. The increasing level of children's creativity certainly influences the children's imagination which will also increase (Mahendra, 2023).

Furthermore, the use of gadgets by young children can also have a positive influence on children's self-confidence. Children's self-confidence increases, both because of the motivating influence of watching shows that exemplify speaking and appearing confident in front of the camera, or because of the feeling of pride in being able to complete a game on a gadget. As Handiranto said in (Marpaung, 2018) that when they win a game, children continue to have the motivation to be able to complete the next level. Apart from showing high enthusiasm, this also shows that the child is very confident in his abilities.

The use of gadgets can also have a positive effect on children's cognitive intelligence. This is because gadgets can also be used as learning tools or media by opening features that can help children's learning process, such as videos and educational games. That way, children will focus on positive activities and get two benefits at once, namely learning through playing (Warisyah, 2015). Then (Nurhasanah & Yudha, 2023) said that the positive impact of gadgets for early childhood is that it makes things easier for children and sharpens children's intelligence. Educational applications will have a positive impact on children's brain development.

Early childhood children who use gadgets with good control and proper direction can also have increased social intelligence. This is because gadgets can be a factor that helps children easily communicate with other friends and increase friendships, so that applications in gadgets will expand children's friendship networks both in the virtual and real world (Witarsa et al., 2018). The use of gadgets that can have a good effect on children's social intelligence is accompanied by optimal positive involvement in their environment (Tri A, 2016). According to Ali & Asrori in (N. P. Sari & Jamain, 2019), intelligence has an important role in influencing an individual's ability to adapt, this is because thinking power helps individuals to choose and make appropriate decisions for themselves and their environment.

Furthermore, the correct use of gadgets can also have a positive influence on children's reading, numerical and problem solving abilities. According to Zaini & Soenarto (2019), the positive impact of using gadgets in early childhood can be in the form of developing reading, mathematics and problem solving skills. In this case, the child will develop a basic nature of curiosity about something which will make him aware of the need to learn on his own without being forced. Early childhood children usually tend to be happy with new things they get through playing activities (Pebriana, 2017).

Febriyanni, et al (2023) also said that the positive impacts of using gadgets include making it easier for children to learn about writing. There is various educational content and applications that children can learn from. This makes it easier for children to recognize writing, pictures and numbers, thereby influencing language skills in early childhood. According to Rezkisari in (Sulastri & Rini, 2022) playing games on gadgets can have a positive impact on children because when playing them children need the ability to think and reason to be able to solve every problem in the game. This can sharpen the brain to get used to solving problems with ever-evolving reasoning. Furthermore, the use of gadgets in early childhood can have a positive impact on children's imitating

behavior in the form of direct imitation, indirect imitation, combined imitation and continuous imitation. Through repeated observations when using gadgets, young children can directly imitate positive activities which increase children's insight into how to do something new or useful. As said by Bandura in (Luviani & Delliana, 2020) in social learning theory, most people learn selectively by observing and remembering the behavior of other people.

In the results of the research, children observed the spectacles and games they got from using gadgets, then the children directly imitated the activities they observed. According to Tri A (2016), basically children have inherited the character of imitation, something that is seen and known will be applied in everyday life. However, when a child has a good basis or foundation, the child will understand which good things he should do and which bad things he should not do. Using gadgets can also make children indirectly imitate the positive things they watch or play. Children are used to watching educational animated shows on the gadgets they use, on several occasions children see characters learning new things. Then, even though the characters do not demonstrate directly to children, children indirectly observe the behavior of these characters. Bandura in (Crain, 2007) argues that in social situations, humans often learn more quickly through observing other people's behavior and then imitating after getting used to observing something.

Early childhood can also carry out combined imitation through the use of gadgets. The combination of imitation that children usually experience in this study is when children watch videos where characters are teaching or exemplifying new things to other characters on gadgets, while children have also been directly exemplified by those closest to them regarding these new things. According to Dwi in (Repita et al., 2016), this is a type of symbolic model, in this case children understand the behavior of the characters in YouTube videos or online games, then imitate them. In the results of this research, children can also carry out continuous imitation through the use of gadgets. After children observe the spectacle they get from using gadgets, children imitate positive behavior that is carried out routinely every day. As stated by (Zahroh, 2019) that children have a very high level of curiosity compared to adults, so children are very happy to imitate the behavior of someone they see, one of which is general behavior that is usually done anywhere and at any time, namely a form of continuous imitation.

In this way, based on the results of research at both research sites, it was found that the use of gadgets can positively influence the imitation behavior of young children in four types of imitation, namely direct imitation, indirect imitation, combined imitation and continuous imitation. As for the type of instantaneous imitation, no impact was found from using gadgets based on interview information and observations. This is because the type of immediate imitation is behavior that is imitated and is only appropriate for certain situations, while the positive imitation behavior found in this research can apply in all situations.

### ***The Negative Impact of Using Gadgets on Imitating Behavior in Early Childhood***

Apart from the positive impact, based on research findings at the Santa Maria Banjarmasin Integrated Preschool, there is a negative impact of using gadgets on the imitating behavior of young children. These negative impacts include decreasing children's focus and concentration in learning, triggering laziness in writing and reading, decreasing social skills, addiction, causing health problems, inhibiting children's cognitive and language development, and having a negative influence on children's daily behavior. In this study, the negative impact on dominant children's imitation behavior was seen in the types of direct imitation and instantaneous imitation.

On the Preschool 2 site, namely Kanaan Christian Integrated Preschool Banjarmasin, the negative impact of using gadgets on the imitating behavior of young children was also found. These negative impacts appear in the same aspects as the first research site, namely decreasing children's focus and concentration in learning, triggering laziness in writing and reading, decreased social skills, addiction, causing health problems, hampering children's cognitive and language development, and having a bad influence on children's daily behavior. At Preschool site 2, a dominant negative impact was also found on children's imitation behavior in the types of direct imitation and instantaneous imitation.

Negative impacts will arise behind the positive impacts of using gadgets if they are not properly controlled. The features provided by gadgets provide ample space for users, so that children can potentially access things that are not age appropriate which could interfere with their development. The results of this research found that the use of gadgets in early childhood can be a factor in reducing children's concentration and making children lazy about writing and reading without gadgets. This is as explained by Setianingsih, et al. (2018) that excessive use of gadgets will increase the risk of attention deficit disorder, in this case disrupting children's concentration. Children who experience impaired focus accompanied by behavioral disturbances become easily restless, which will complicate the child's learning process.

According to Rahayu, et al. (2021) gadgets can also have a bad effect on children's learning activities, especially reading and writing, children become more lazy about studying. In line with that, in the research of Febriyani, et al. (2023) found that children who use gadgets too often without proper control will find it difficult to get rid of them, so that when studying at school they always want to go home quickly so they can use gadgets again. The next negative impact of using gadgets in early childhood is in the form of decreasing social skills and causing bad behavior. In this research, it was found that children can imitate the bad behavior of the characters they see on the gadgets they use. As stated by Sulastri & Rini (2022), the negative impact of using gadgets can cause children to rarely move because they are fixated on gadgets and choose not to play with their peers. The habit of being alone with gadgets makes children become closed and have difficulty interacting with their environment (Rajaminsah, 2019).

Apart from that, the research results of Sijinjak, et al. (2017) explained that children can imitate the actions of characters watched on gadgets and practice them with friends, such as hitting, jumping around and light fighting. This is in line with research by Fatiha, et al. (2023) who said that the negative impact of using gadgets on children will lead to less polite and polite behavior. The negative impact on children's use of gadgets at an early age is that it can cause health problems and make children addicted. In this research, it was found that excessive use of gadgets can disrupt children's eye and psychological health. As stated by Sunita & Mayasari (2018), one of the health problems that can affect children who use excessive gadgets is tension in the nerve muscles which causes dry and sore eyes.

Apart from that, Rahayu, et al. (2021) said that the most frightening negative impact of children's use of gadgets is mental and psychological disturbances to children, children can feel anxious when restricted from using gadgets, which can lead to depression. The next negative effect is addiction to using gadgets. In this research, it was found that young children can become addicted to using gadgets, especially when they are not properly and firmly controlled by their parents. This is as explained by Setyarini, et al. (2023) that young children who constantly use gadgets are starting to show signs of technology dependence. Things that please children trigger excessive dopamine production in the brain, this can cause addiction. In this regard, Srinahyanti, et al. (2019) explained that the hypothalamus, which is responsible for regulating emotions and mood, will be hampered by an abundance of dopamine when children are busy using gadgets.

The next negative impact of using gadgets in early childhood is that if the use of gadgets in early childhood is not properly supervised and used, it will become one of the factors that hinders children's cognitive and language development. This is as explained by Sulastri & Rini (2022) that using gadgets excessively will reduce children's learning motivation, so that it can have a negative impact on children's cognitive development which is related to the child's process of learning, paying attention, observing, imagining, estimating, assessing and thinking. the environment.

Harsela & Qalbi (2020) also said that if the use of gadgets by young children exceeds 5 hours per day, it will have many negative impacts including inhibition and disruption to the child's cognitive function.

Furthermore, the negative impact is in the form of hampering children's language progress. In this research, it was found that children had difficulty speaking because they had absorbed too much foreign language and things they didn't know before from using gadgets, which made the children confused and confused about what they were saying. This is as stated by Fatiha & Yuniar (2023) that children are increasingly hampered in the pronunciation of language use, especially Indonesian because there is too much new language information obtained from content on gadgets.

Then, the use of gadgets in early childhood can have a negative impact on children's imitating behavior, especially in the type of direct imitation and momentary or immediate imitation. The results of this research found that children can directly imitate bad behavior they encounter from using gadgets, such as saying rude words or hitting. This is in line with the statement by Mazidah & Reza (2015) that children's aggressive behavior can be caused by children's direct imitation of scenes played by characters they watch on gadgets. Aggressive behavior after being exposed to shows on gadgets includes hitting, throwing and said harshly.

In this regard (Juliswara, 2014) states that children imitate bad behavior because they are not aware of the bad things they are doing. Children are used to seeing bad behavior or violence on gadgets such as falling over, hitting and physical intimidation packaged in scenes that seem funny to children. Children do not realize that this scene is a practice of bad behavior. This research also found a negative impact of gadget use on the type of momentary or immediate imitation carried out by young children. Children apply the things they imitate at inappropriate times, such as shouting at friends even though they are only a short distance away or hitting, which in gadget shows is intended for criminals, but children apply it to their peers.

According to Fauziah, et al. (2023), this can be caused by children not being able to differentiate between fantasy and reality. A child's simple thinking ability makes his imagination of being a super hero like what he sees on his gadget deny the reality that what he is facing are friends or other people who do not deserve violence whose initial goal is self-defense. In line with this, Juliswara (2014) stated that children are used to imitating violent scenes for the reason of playing with friends. Even so, of course this is a bad thing that comes from content on gadgets which indirectly promotes scenes of violence.

In this way, based on the results of research at both research sites, it was found that the use of gadgets can have a negative influence on the imitation behavior of young children in two types of imitation, namely direct imitation and continuous imitation. This is because young children easily imitate bad behavior directly from the content or gadget games they use, especially when there is minimal adult supervision and are not controlled, and some of the behavior imitated by children becomes negative because it is done at the wrong time or at a certain time. just..

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the results of the research and discussion as previously described, the following conclusions can be drawn. First, the use of gadgets in early childhood with appropriate supervision and time limits will have several positive impacts on imitative behavior in the form of increasing imagination and self-confidence in older children. early; hone cognitive and social intelligence; as well as developing reading, numerical and problem solving skills in early childhood. Apart from that, the use of gadgets in early childhood has a positive impact on children's imitating behavior in the form of direct imitation, indirect imitation, combined imitation and continuous imitation.

Second, the use of gadgets in early childhood also has a negative impact on imitating behavior, especially if used excessively and without proper control. The negative impacts include decreasing children's concentration and feeling lazy about learning to write and read without gadgets; worsening the child's sociability and behavior; harming children's health and triggering addiction; and hinder the progress of children's cognitive and language development. Apart from that, the use of gadgets in early childhood can also have a negative impact on children's imitation behavior, especially those practiced in the type of direct imitation and momentary or immediate imitation.

The suggestion from researchers is that educators and parents can control the use of gadgets in early childhood wisely and appropriately. Understand the impacts that can arise from using gadgets and avoid the worst possibilities by preventing addiction and other negative impacts.

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