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Positive Character Formation Strategy Through Gadgets (Study of Semester I and III Students of the Islamic Guidance and Counseling Study Program)

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Abstract

This research aims to find strategies for forming positive characters through gadget usage. The study uses a mixed-method approach with a psychoanalytic framework to identify the negative influence of gadgets on 100 first and third-semester students at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra, Medan. A census sampling method was employed, focusing on self-defense, personality development, emotions, and individual motivations concerning gadget use. Data were collected through questionnaires and literature reviews. The data analysis includes pre-analysis testing, hypothesis testing, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The research results show that gadget usage has a negative impact, particularly related to dependence and mental health disorders. Strategies for forming positive character include individual awareness, family roles, wise use of technology, social participation, and inter-institutional cooperation. The Healthy Gadget Movement is proposed as a key initiative emphasizing increased awareness and collaboration between the government, educational institutions, and the technology industry, along with the integration of digital literacy into the curriculum. Parental support and continuous evaluation are crucial to the success of this movement in creating a society capable of using gadgets healthily and positively.

Keywords: *Formation Strategy, Positive Character, Gadget.*

Introduction

Amid technological advances, gadgets have become the faithful partners of modern-day humans in their everyday lives. Its existence is no longer merely a means of communication but also a primary necessity in embedding the network of modern life. The gadget has become a control center with instant access to information, social connections, and unlimited entertainment (Azuriati, 2022; Eloyra, 2023; Maharani, 2021). Gadgets change how we interact with the world, form new social dynamics, remove geographical boundaries, and create a virtual community that unites in one handle. The gadget has become a symbol of paradigm change in how humans interact with their surroundings (Stevanny et al, 2020). Gaps have accelerated cultural globalization and blurred the boundaries of local identity, creating new challenges in preserving cultural heritage and diversity (Widyadhana, 2024). Given their ease of access, the presence of gadgets in the modern era significantly influences everyday life. The opinion is that gadgets have become a primary need for many individuals, changing how they work, learn, communicate, and even relax, thus creating new behavior patterns heavily dependent on technology (Cholik, 2021**)**.

Also said that in modern life, gadgets are a practical tool and a reflection of a person's lifestyle and social status, affecting self-perception and interpersonal interaction in society. It

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is undeniable that humanity at this time has undergone a significant change in its lifestyle, where life without gadgets feels almost impossible (Abdullah, 2017). Gadgets, be they smartphones, tablets, or other smart devices, have become a significant symbol of the transformation of modern human social culture. In its evolution, gadgets also bring new challenges, such as rapidly growing dependencies and environmental impacts that must be considered.Suggested that excessive use of gadgets can disrupt mental and physical health. This is especially true of the younger generation, who are prone to sleep disorders, anxiety, and depression as a result of excessive gadget use. Besides, the lack of social interaction resulting from too much stuck on the gadget's screen is also a severe problem that the study revealed (Kamaruddin et al., 2023).His study concluded that gadget addiction is a real problem and needs serious attention. Gadgets have become an integral part of everyday life, and their abuse can have an adverse impact, both individually and socially. It shows the need for awareness of the healthy and balanced use of technology in modern society.

In his study, he says gadget use affects the overall human mindset and behavior. The ease of access to information offered by the gadget can change how humans think and process information. Besides, addiction to gadgets can also change how humans interact with each other, both in social and occupational contexts, which can affect the social and cultural dynamics of societies as a whole (Hudaya, 2018). The existence of gadgets has had a significant impact on various aspects of human life. One consequence is a transformation in the way humans communicate. Highlighted the negative effect of social isolation from over-focused gadget screens and a lack of face-to-face interaction. excessive use of gadgets can potentially cause problems in mental health, such as social media addiction, sleep disorders due to excessive screen exposure, and a decrease in the quality of live social interaction (Ariantoro, 2016; Astuti et al, 2021)).

This behavioral change is a severe concern for balancing technology and human well-being. In this study, the researchers looked at the urgency of healthy gadget movements by focusing on positive character-building strategies among societies increasingly exposed to gadgets. (Zubaidah et al., 2022). The increasingly widespread use of gadgets in society has raised concerns about their negative impact on individuals' character and psychological health. (Qadaruddin, 2022; Y. A. Safitri et al., 2020). Based on the observations, the researchers identified that Semester I and III students of the Islamic Studies Program, Faculty of Religion and Communication, the Islamic State University of North Sumatra Field, tend to use gadgets daily. However, the issue is that they do not use the gadget dominantly for activities supporting positive character formation. The researchers found that semester I and III students were more likely to use gadgets to be active on social media, often filled with unfiltered content.

So, through this research, the researchers aim to explore strategic ways to shape a positive character in everyday gadget use. In this study, the researchers will analyze the psychological impact of the overuse or unhealthy use of gadgets and design concrete strategies to promote positive gadgets by elaborating behavioral guidelines or educational campaigns to change public perceptions of the gadgets while educating about healthy and responsible use. This research is expected to give particular attention to how technology can support positive character formation, such as educational platforms that support positive growth and balance in using gadgets. Through this approach, this research is expected to make a real contribution to shaping psychologically healthier and positive societies in an era increasingly associated with gadget technology.

Method

This research employs a mixed-method (quantitative-qualitative) approach to explore the influence of gadget use and to investigate the natural conditions of gadget users. The mixed-method approach provides a comprehensive understanding by combining statistical analysis with a more nuanced qualitative exploration (Creswell 2014). This dual approach enables the research to capture both the measurable impacts of gadgets, such as time spent using devices, and more complex psychological effects. The psychodynamic framework, as used in this study, focuses on understanding how deep psychological processes are influenced by external factors such as gadgets. Have highlighted how gadget dependency can significantly shape an individual's behavior, influencing emotional regulation and personality development (Hasibuan et al, 2019).

The research sample consisted of 100 students from the Islamic State University of North Sumatra, specifically targeting those in their first and third semesters of the Islamic Studies Guidance and Discipline program. These participants were selected using a census sampling technique, which ensures that every member of the target group is included in the study, providing a more reliable data set (Sugiyono, 2019). Focusing on key factors such as self-defense mechanisms, personality growth, emotional responses, and individual motivations related to gadget use, this study builds on recent research into how gadgets shape young people's mental health. Show that prolonged exposure to gadgets can lead to behavioral shifts and emotional disturbances, which aligns with the focus of this research on gadget-induced negative influences (Anderson et al, 2018).

Data collection was comprehensive, involving both direct observations and the use of questionnaires to quantify gadget impact. A review of the relevant literature provided further context, aligning the findings with broader trends in technology use and psychological health. The analysis followed a structured process involving pre-analysis testing, hypothesis testing, data reduction, and presentation, which ensured that the results were both statistically valid and contextually meaningful (Sugiyono, 2019). Also confirm that the excessive use of gadgets correlates with increased mental health issues, particularly anxiety and depression. The findings of this research further support these conclusions, indicating that while gadgets can be beneficial in certain educational contexts, they also pose risks related to dependency and psychological well-being (Twenge et al, 2018).

Results

Negative Impact of Gadgets

Based on the results of the questionnaire distributed through the research lift, the researchers obtained the following results: At the data validation stage, the researcher obtains valid data based on the (Ghozali, 2016) criterion, which says that when the data produces the value of r Table, then the data is said to be valid. Referring to the threshold value r, i.e., 0.196, then the researcher obtains the value rCalculate > rTable of the entire item in the study as follows:

Correlations

		X1	X2	X3	X4	Total X
X1	Pearson Correlation	1	.280**	.334**	.479**	.719**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005	.001	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
X2	Pearson Correlation	.280**	1	.333**	.446**	.672**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005		.001	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
X3	Pearson Correlation	.334**	.333**	1	.502**	.739**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	001		.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
X4	Pearson Correlation	.479**	.446**	.502**	1	.827**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Total X	Pearson Correlation	.719**	.672**	.739**	.827**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	100	100	100	100	100

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1. Data Validity X (Data analysis with SPSS 26)

No.	Items	rCount	rTable	Information
1	X1	0,719	0,196	Valid
2	X2	0,672	0,196	Valid
3	X3	0,739	0,196	Valid
4	X4	0,827	0,196	Valid

Correlations

		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	TOTAL Y
Y1	Pearson Correlation	1	.492**	.492**	.329**	.726**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.001	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Y2	Pearson Correlation	.492**	1	.438**	.507**	.814**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Y3	Pearson Correlation	.415**	.438**	1	.521**	.770**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
Y4	Pearson Correlation	.329**	.507**	.521**	.1	.755**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.oo1	.000	.000		.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL Y	Pearson Correlation	.726**	.814**	.770**	.755**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	100	100	100	100	100

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2. Validity of Data Y (Data Analysis with SPSS 26)

No.	Items	rCount	rTable	Information
1	X1	0,719	0,196	Valid
2	X2	0,672	0,196	Valid
3	X3	0,739	0,196	Valid
4	X4	0,827	0,196	Valid

Based on tables 1 and 2, it can be seen that all items in variable X (gadget users) consisting of X1, r > 0.196. This decision is based on the theory of (Ghozali, 2016), which states that if the rCount value is greater than the rTable, then the research data is said to be

valid. 0.196 was obtained from the distribution of r values with a respondent scale (n) of 100 samples.

At the data reliability stage, the researcher obtained reliable data based on (Ghozali, 2016) criteria, which states that if the data produces a Cronbach Alpha value of more than 0.6, then the data is said to be reliable. Referring to this threshold, the researcher obtained a Cronbach Alpha value for all research items > 0.6 as follows:

Table 3. Reliability of Data X (Data Analysis with SPSS 26

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.725	4

Table 4. Reliability of Data Y (Data Analysis with SPSS 26)

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.765	4

Based on Tables 3 and 4, all variable items X (0.725) and Y (0.765) produce Cronbach Alpha > 0.6. This decision is based on Ghozali's (2019) theory, which states that if the Cronbach Alpha value produces a value greater than 0.6, then the research data is said to be reliable.

At the data normality stage, researchers obtain normal data based on Ghozali's criteria, which states that if the data produces a significance value smaller than 0.05, then the data is said to be normal (Ghozali, 2016). Referring to this threshold, the researcher obtained a significance value for all research items < 0.05 as follows:

Table 5. Normality of Research Data (Data Analysis with SPSS 26)

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Unstandardardized Residual
N		100
Normal Parametersa, b	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	1.55863513
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.137
	Positive	.137
	Negative	-.058
Test Statistic		.137
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.00c

a. hTest distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

Based on Table 5, it can be seen that all research items produce a significance value of <0.05, namely 0.00. This decision is based on the theory of (Ghozali, 2016), which states that if the significance value produces a value smaller than 0.05, then the research data is normally distributed.

At the data homoscedasticity stage, researchers obtain homogeneous data based on the criteria of (Ghozali, 2016), which states that if the data produces a significance value greater than 0.05, then the data is said to be homogeneous. Referring to this threshold, the researcher obtained a significance value for all research items > 0.05 as follows:

Coefficients

Table 6. Homoscedasticity of Research Data (Data Analysis with SPSS 26)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constan)	305	.695		.438	.662
	Tootal	.070	.052	.134	.1342	.183

a. Dependent Variable: Abs_RES

Table 6 shows that all research items produce a significance value > 0.05, namely 0.183. This decision is based on Ghozali's theory (2019), which states that if the significance value produces a value greater than 0.05, then the research data is homogeneous. Based on Ghozali's criteria, the data autocorrelation stage states that if the data produces a Tolerance value > 0.10 or a VIF value < 10.00, then the data is autocorrelated (Ghozali, 2016). Referring to this decision-making, the researcher obtained the following:

Coefficients

Table 7. Autocorrelation of Research Data (Data Analysis with SPSS 26)

		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	5.553	1.149		4.835	.000		
TOTAL	.556	.086	. 547	6.474	.000	1.000	1.000

Dependent Variable: Totaly

Based on Table 7, it can be seen that Tolerance produces a value (1,000) indicating a gain greater (>) than 0.10 and VIF (1,000) indicating a gain smaller (<) than 10.00, which means that this research data is autocorrelated. This decision is based on the theory of Ghozali (2019), which states that if the tolerance value is greater than 0.10 and the VIF value is smaller than 10.00, then the research data will be autocorrelated. At the data regression analysis stage, the researcher obtained the magnitude of the influence of variable X (gadget users) on variable Y (negative impact of gadgets) as follows:

Model Summary

Table 8. Regression Analysis of X against Y (Data Analysis with SPSS 26)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std.Error of the Estimate
One	.547a	.300	.292	1.567

a. Predictors: (Constant), Totalx

Based on Table 8, R Square (R^2) obtained a value of 0.300, which shows that the influence of variable X (gadget users) on variable Y (negative impact of gadgets) is 30%. The other 70% is the influence of variables not included or discussed in this research.

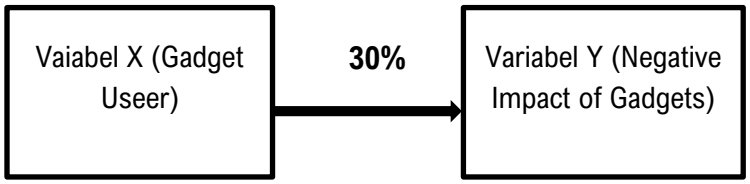

Figure 1. Influence of variable X (gadget users) on variable Y (negative impact of gadgets) (Data Analysis with SPSS 26)

Based on the results of data analysis, this research reveals a significant negative impact from using gadgets. Variable Y, which reflects the negative effects of gadgets, consisting of Y1 to Y4, shows a strong correlational relationship with variable X, which reflects gadget users. A significant correlation at the 0.01 level between these two variables indicates that the higher the use of gadgets (X), the greater the negative impact experienced (Y). This impact involves increased dependence on gadgets, potential interference with mental health, and negative effects on productivity.

The regression analysis results show that variable X explains 30% of the negative impact of gadgets. These results highlight the importance of awareness and management of gadget use to reduce potential negative consequences. Therefore, further attention must be paid to these aspects in the management and use of gadgets to mitigate possible negative impacts.

Positive Character Formation Strategy

Positive Character-Building Strategy Positive character-building becomes a crucial aspect of sustainable personal development. First of all, the results of data analysis from this study show that the use of gadgets has a particularly negative impact, especially on aspects such as dependence and potential disorders in mental health (Afidatama, 2020; Aisyah, 2023; Hudaya, 2018, 2018; Nugrahadi & Mamahit, 2022). Therefore, a positive character-building strategy can begin with an individual's awareness of the negative impact. A deeper knowledge and understanding of the wise and balanced use of the gadget can be the basis for building a positive character.

This is in line with the results of (Aisyah, 2023), which states that individuals' awareness of the negative impact of gadgets is a crucial initial step in addressing potential disorders in mental health. In positive character formation, a deeper knowledge of how to use the gadget wisely and balancedly can provide a strong foundation for building a positive attitude towards technology. Besides, the importance of developing healthy habits related to gadgets and understanding the time limits for digital activity can help individuals create the necessary balance between online and offline life (Irene, 2023; Khoirroni et al., 2023; Y. A. Safitri et al., 2020; Samsiah, 2021). According to (Fitri, 2017) States that the strategy of positive character formation through gadgets begins with early introduction and education. He states that children and adolescents should be given an adequate understanding of the risks of gadget addiction and the importance of regulating the timing of use. School education programs can play an important role by including curricula teaching digital health and technological literacy. Parents should also be involved in this process, as they are a direct example for children in terms of the smart use of gadgets.

Positive character formation is not limited to education and timing but also involves the development of social and emotional skills. He highlighted the importance of face-to-face interaction and physical activity in reducing the negative impact of gadget use (Faturrohmah & Sagita, 2022). By limiting the time spent in front of screens and increasing social activity, (Andi Ayudia Khaerani, 2020; Harini Et Al., 2023; S. Safitri, 2019; Syifa, 2020) Individuals can develop empathy, effective communication, and conflict-resolution skills (Aminullah & Ali, 2020; Azzahra, 2023; Marzandi, 2020; Stevanny & Pribadi, 2020). According to (Aminullah & Ali, 2020) If used correctly, technology can be used for positive character formation. (Aminullah & Ali, 2020) Proposes a more holistic approach, using technology for educational and self-development purposes. Applications and educational platforms, for example, can help individuals learn new skills, develop hobbies, and increase productivity. (Aminullah & Ali, 2020) Also highlighted the importance of regularly monitoring and evaluating gadgets by individuals and external actors such as educators and parents to ensure their use remains within healthy and constructive limits.

The family has a crucial role in creating an environment that supports positive character development by giving examples and applying moral values (Marlina et al., 2023). Open communication among family members is a means of sharing positive values and understanding the individual's role in the family (Ariantoro, 2016; Hanifah & Fahyuni, 2021; Suryadi, 2015; Widyadhana & Mashudi, 2024). The wise use of technology is also an important strategy in forming a positive character in this digital age. Integrating policies for using healthy gadgets in families, educational environments, and communities can help reduce the negative impact that may arise (Halik & Aini, 2020; Rohmawati & Rofi'ah, 2022). Timing of gadget usage, content access control, and a balanced approach between the digital and real worlds can be concrete steps to that goal (Rizqi, 2024; Syarofi & Hidayah, 2024).

The results of (Widyadhana & Mashudi, 2024) Highlight the importance of smart technology in forming positive character in the digital age. Strategies for integrating policies for using healthy gadgets in family, educational, and community environments become crucial. Timing of gadget usage, content access control, and a balanced approach between the digital and real world are concrete steps to reduce the negative impact. Furthermore, positive character formation can be strengthened through social and social activities. Engaging in volunteering, developing social skills, and building healthy relationships with others can help form a strong positive character. Participating in these activities can also help individuals develop values such as honesty, respect, and cooperation. (Fairuza et al., 2024; Manembu, 2018). Joint efforts of various parties support the implementation of positive character-building strategies. Through this collaboration, each individual will gain consistent support in building and strengthening their positive character. This is in line with the findings of (Harini et al., 2023), which shows the importance of collaboration from various parties, including schools, families, and communities, in support of positive character formation.

The Healthy Gadgets Movement has become an initiative to address the negative impact of using gadgets by raising public awareness of the importance of using healthy and useful gadgets. Through the @gerakangadgetsehat campaign on Instagram initiated by Prof. Ridha Dharmajaya, the movement uses a series of strategies to form a positive character in the use of gadgets, namely: (1)This movement personifies the public by providing information on the importance of giving guidance or mentoring to children in using gadgets to the family; (2) This movement creates constructive content specifically aimed at children as the main audience, which aims to provide an understanding of healthy and beneficial ways in using the gadget. (3)

This movement is actively engaged directly in the social sphere to improve the understanding and implementation of healthy practices in gadget use in the community.

With these strategies, the Healthy Gadgets Movement can be an important benchmark in designing strategies that aim to create an environment that supports the use of gadgets positively and beneficially. The movement emphasizes the importance of awareness and education about using technology responsibly and productively. In the context of Semester I and III students of the Islamic Studies Program at the Faculty of Religion and Communication of Islamic State University of North Sumatra Field, implementing the Healthy Gadget Movement principles can help them develop good digital habits. Quality and techniques to avoid digital distraction allow students to focus more on activities that support academic development and positive character.

In addition, implementing the Healthy Gadgets Movement can create a more conducive digital ecosystem for students. A more structured and supportive learning environment can be formed by involving the academic community in a healthy gadget campaign. Initiatives such as creating a productive online discussion community, providing verified digital resources, and developing a digital mentoring program can help students direct their gadget use in a more positive direction. Thus, they use technology for entertainment, self-development, and positive societal contributions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research confirms the urgency of addressing the negative impacts of gadget use, particularly its links to addiction, mental health disorders, and decreased productivity. While the data indicates that gadget usage variables account for approximately 30% of these negative effects, the importance of developing strategies for positive character building cannot be overstated. Key measures include fostering individual awareness, enhancing the role of families, promoting the responsible use of technology, encouraging participation in social activities, and facilitating inter-agency cooperation. The introduction of the Healthy Gadgets movement emerges as a vital initiative, aiming to increase public awareness through collaboration between the government, educational institutions, the technology industry, and the creation of interactive educational tools. Moreover, integrating digital literacy into school curriculums and ensuring the active involvement of parents are essential for cultivating a society capable of using gadgets responsibly and positively. Ongoing evaluation and monitoring of the Healthy Gadgets movement will be crucial in achieving these long-term objectives.

Acknowledgment

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