

From Screens to Playgrounds: A Study of Digital Gaming and Outdoor Play on Children's Attention and Social Skills

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to compare the effects of digital gaming and outdoor play on young children's attention and social skills. With the increasing use of digital games among children, understanding how different types of play influence cognitive engagement and social development is essential. The study will involve children aged 6 to 12 years recruited from selected primary schools. A cross-sectional comparative design will be used, with participants grouped according to their primary mode of play as either digital gaming or outdoor play. Data will be collected through standardised parent- and teacher-rated questionnaires measuring children's attention and social skills. Statistical analyses, including t-tests and regression analysis, will be conducted to examine differences and relationships between the type of play and developmental outcomes. It is expected that children engaged mainly in outdoor play will show higher attention and social skills, while digital gaming will be negatively associated with social development. This study aims to provide empirical evidence on how digital and traditional forms of play differentially influence children's cognitive and social growth. The findings are expected to support parents, educators, and policymakers in making informed decisions about promoting balanced play environments that foster healthy and well-rounded child development. Future research may extend these findings through longitudinal designs to better understand the long-term effects of play patterns on children's development.

Keywords: Digital gaming; Outdoor play; Attention; Social skills; Cognitive Engagement

