



## Association of Media Consumption on YouTube and Sleep Problems among Preschoolers: A Qualitative Study Based on Mothers' Perspectives

MINAL ASFAND

PhD Scholar, Riphah International University, Islamabad, [minalasfand246@gmail.com](mailto:minalasfand246@gmail.com)

MUHAMMAD RIAZ

Assistant Professor & HOD, Riphah Institute of Media Studies, Riphah International University, [muhammad.riaz@riphah.edu.pk](mailto:muhammad.riaz@riphah.edu.pk)

MUHAMMAD NASIR BUTT

PhD scholar, Riphah International University, Co-founder of Fake News Watch Dog and Editor in Chief of Pakistan Narrative, [muhammadnasirbutt@gmail.com](mailto:muhammadnasirbutt@gmail.com)

FARRAH MEHMOOD

PhD Scholar, Riphah International University, Islamabad, [farrahmahmoodrana@gmail.com](mailto:farrahmahmoodrana@gmail.com)

### ***Abstract***

*The increasing exposure of preschoolers to digital media (especially cartoons and AI generated content on YouTube) is causing concern worldwide, as this has an impact on both sleep quality and a child's early development. By going back 10,000 years in our biological memories, it is possible to appreciate the quintessential role of darkness in child sleep. Mothers are children's primary caregivers and so should have a clear understanding of their media consumption and their sleep patterns. This qualitative study was conducted to analyze how YouTube effect on two- to six-years old children and in particular the point problem from the viewpoint of mothers whose child has spent time living. Through Qualitative survey (open ended questions) of 294 mothers of 2 to 6 years preschooler aged children. This work attempts to describe in detail various sleeping problems among two-to six-year-old children due to spending excessive time on YouTube. Data was analyzed using the six phase thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke and the results showed five main themes: excessive media consumption on YouTube in everyday routines, delay to falling asleep and bedtime resistance, awakening at night and restless sleep, emotional*



*and behavioral dysregulation, maternal awareness and challenges in regulation of excessive media consumption on YouTube. Taken as a whole, these findings suggest a strong bonding between excessive media consumption habits and sleep problems among preschoolers. Parents need to be educated about their effect on children's bedtime habits and given guidelines from authorities in order that it may not become widespread; intervention programs can also help children establish new healthy patterns.*

**Keywords:** Media Consumption, Screen Time, sleep problems, preschool children, mothers' perceptions

## INTRODUCTION

The early years of childhood mark a sensitive time of physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. During this stage, sleep plays a fundamental role in lend brain maturation, emotional regulation, learning, memory consolidation and physical growth. Preschool children (usually two to six years of age) need suitable amount and sleep patterns in order to preserve healthy functioning. However, it has become increasingly common for preschool-aged children to have sleep issues such as a lack of sleep initiation and frequent awakenings during the night and a shorter sleep duration (Owens & Weiss, 2017) .In recent decades, technology has developed so quickly that family life has transformed, leaving many people with access to digital media devices in their everyday life. Televisions, smartphones, tablets, and laptops are now widely used in the household including by very young children. Screen exposure during early childhood has grown significantly with many preschoolers engaging in screen-related activities on a daily basis. While digital media may be a source of entertainment and educational material, the over or inappropriate consumption of screen media has raised concerns about the impact it is having on children's health and development, especially sleep. Excessive media consumption habit can have a negative impact on sleep through a number of biological and behavioral mechanisms. Additionally, stimulating screen content, such as fast-paced cartoons or interactive games, may cause an increase in cognitive and emotional arousal, making it difficult for children to relax before bedtime (Carter et al., 2016). As a result, children with screen exposure, especially in the evening hours, are more likely to have a delayed sleep onset, reduced sleep duration, and decreased sleep quality (Cheung et al., 2017).

Preschool children are especially susceptible to the effects of screen exposure because of the continuing growth of their brains and the lack of self-regulation skills that comes with it. At this age, children rely deeply on caregivers to regulate daily routines, such as bedtime practices and media time. Parental behaviors, as well as the media environment in the home, are a key part of children's screen habits and sleep patterns. Mothers, being the primary caregivers in most cases, are influential in controlling children's routines and are usually the first to notice any sleep-related problems. Understanding maternal perspectives is especially critical, as parents also frequently report having problems in limiting excessive media consumption despite knowledge of adverse consequences (Radesky, 2020) Factors such as workloads of parents, no alternative activity and children's emotional dependence on their screens tend to lead to more screen-time. Exploration of these experiences can help determine barriers that hinder a healthy screen practice and can help provide information for more realistic and culturally sensitive

interventions. Given the rising prevalence of media consumption habit for preschool-aged children and the growing concern about the negative impact on children's sleep, there is a clear need for qualitative research that will focus on the early childhood setting. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between media consumption and sleep problems in preschoolers, with the perspectives of mother using thematic analysis as a method of qualitative survey. By examining mother narratives, this research aims at adding meaningful information on how screen exposure affects sleep behaviors and routines in children at preschool ages, and to help the development of evidence-based parental guidance and early intervention strategies.

## Problem Statement

The rapid rise in the digital media usage of preschooler children has become an emerging global concern, especially when it comes to sleep health at an early age. Preschoolers are becoming addicted to YouTube cartoons as part of their daily routines, including evening and bedtime. While, sleep is necessary for cognitive development, emotional regulation, and physical growth, a growing number of preschool children suffer from sleep-related issues such as delay in sleep induction, night time awakenings, and lack of sleep length. Existing research indicates that a relationship exists between excessive media consumption on YouTube and sleep disturbances; however, much available data is based on quantitative data and addresses older children and adolescents mainly.

There is a poor understanding of the impact of excessive media consumption on sleep in preschool-aged children from the mother's perspective, who is usually the primary caregivers and observers of children's daily behaviors. Mother experiences are an important source of insight into actual practices of screen usage from children's homes including bedtimes, challenges to setting limits on screen exposure on digital video especially on YouTube, etc. The absence of qualitative research work in this field limits the possibilities of understanding the contextual factors, parental choices and culturally guided practices regarding screen usage on digital media and sleep. Therefore, the current study aims to fill this gap by performing an in-depth qualitative study of the relationship between media consumption on digital media (especially YouTube cartoons) and sleep problems among preschoolers considering mothers' perceptions to refer to effective parental advice and early childhood interventions.

## Research Questions

1. How do mothers perceive the relationship between media consumption on digital media and sleep problems among preschool children?
2. What kinds of sleep related problems do mothers relate with increased or late-evening media exposure on YouTube in preschoolers?
3. How do mothers describe their children's media consumption patterns and bedtime routines?
4. What barriers do mothers face in managing screen time to promote healthy sleep in preschool children?

## Research Objectives

1. To examine mothers' perceptions of the relationship between media consumption on digital media and sleep problems among preschool children.
2. To explore kinds of sleep related problems mothers relate with increased or late-evening media exposure on YouTube in preschoolers.
3. To investigate how mothers describe their children's media consumption patterns and bedtime routines.
4. To understand barriers mothers face in managing screen time to promote healthy sleep in preschool children.

## Significance of the Study

The study is important because it contributes to the existing body of knowledge that examines early childhood screen usage on YouTube and sleep health by developing a qualitative insight related to mother's perception. The study provides depth, survey based information on the ability of screen exposure to affect sleep patterns, behaviors, and routines in preschoolers by providing a lived experience of mothers. Such findings will be useful in filling the gap between empirical study and daily life parenting. The research outcomes could be useful to parents and caregivers due to their enhanced awareness of the possible effect of YouTube on sleep and practical obstacles in media consumption management. To healthcare workers, educators, and those working with children in the area of child development, the results can be used to inform culturally sensitive sleep hygiene practices and culturally sensitive interventions that target parents. Also, the findings can be employed by policymakers and early childhood program planners to implement their contribution to the prevention of unhealthy media consumption on digital media habits and poor sleep outcomes among preschooler aged children. The academic contribution of this study to the body of literature on qualitative research is that it uses thematic analysis on a considerable number of mother populations, thus promoting the perception of screen-related sleep complications in the populations of preschooler.

## Literature Review

Sleep is a fundamental component in early childhood development, and it influences growth (both physical and cognitive), emotions and behavior stability. During the preschool years, it is especially important for healthy sleep patterns to be established, because sleep problems at this stage have been found to be associated with developmental delays, behavioral problems, and problems with daytime functioning. In recent years, the accelerated catalyst of digital technology has resulted in screen exposure in preschool children, and devices such as smartphones, tablets, and televisions are familiar and commonplace in the home setting. This change in daily routines has increased concern about the possible impact of media consumption on sleep health as young children have a high sensitivity to environmental and behavioral factors that affect sleep. To better understand the relationship between excessive media consumption and sleep disorders, relying on existing literature on the topic, can group them into

categories of physiological mechanisms, behavioral factors, and empirical findings in different populations.

### **Reduction in Sleep Duration**

(Silva et al, 2025) through a scoping review aimed to explore the link between screen time and sleep quality among children and adolescents. The review was based on an analysis of 32 studies, and concluded that excessive media consumption and when before bed, is consistently associated with poor sleep outcomes, including reduced sleep duration, increased sleep onset latency and increased sleep fragmentation. Risk factors such as use of social media and video games were especially harmful to sleeping patterns. The authors further indicate a lack of standardization in defining and measuring screen time, the need for future research to investigate interventions, such as parental education, blue-light filters and policies for restrictions in using devices at night, as mitigating intakes with respect to negative consequences on the sleep quality of youth. The systematic scoping review by (Sticca, 2025) summarizes the empirical evidence for the relationships between screen time in early childhood (0-36 months) with a broad array of early childhood developmental outcomes, such as sleep, physical health, cognition, language, motor skills, socio-emotional skills, and social interaction. The review found the majority of associations between screen time and developmental outcomes were undesirable or non-significant and only a few positive effects were found. Importantly, it seems that the impact of screen time may be moderated by factors such as child characteristics, screen content, and contextual variables indicating that the impact of screen time is not uniform and may be dependent on the quality and context of use. The authors highlight the need for more research where a causal design can be used to better understand the impact of early screen exposure on child development.

### **Psychological Issues in Children**

(Zehra, 2025) summarizes findings from studies conducted over the past decade and sees a consistent theme in the literature that increased exposure to screens is correlated with increased symptoms of childhood attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, disrupted sleep patterns, and co-occurring behavioral and cognitive problems for children. The authors point out the fact that too much screen time may worsen the severity of the symptoms associated with the Attention Deficit Disorder, as well as having a detrimental effect on emotional regulation and daily functioning. Despite the fact that the findings of causality cannot be definitely determined because of the variability among study designs, the importance of screen time, linked to an outcome of the presence of AD/HD, is highlighted in this review and more rigorous research is needed to elucidate the nature and mechanisms of the link.

### **Aggressive Behavior due to Excessive media consumption on Cartoon**

Preschoolers have been linked to excessive media consumption that leads to negative sleep, aggressive behavioral, and cognitive consequences. Merin et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review and revealed that the longer the screen exposure on YouTube among children aged between three and six years, the shorter the sleep duration, lower the quality of sleep, and higher the bedtime resistance. The review further found behavioral problems, especially those

of externalizing like hyperactivity and impulsivity to be associated with excessive media consumption on cartoon, with inconsistent results with internalizing problems. Negative effects of the cognitive domains such as attention and executive functioning were found in some studies, but the results were heterogeneous. The mediating role was shown to be played by sleep, and the behavioral and cognitive problems were likely to be aggravated by the disturbed sleep. The authors pointed out methodological weaknesses in all studies such as parental report and cross-sectional designs and they demanded longitudinal studies with objective measures. While (Dilshad et al., 2025) reported that the amount of media consumption that children spend has risen significantly due to the high penetration of digital devices which is of concern regarding its effect on development. The available research relates excessive media consumption with language, social interaction and cognitive development delays, sleep and behavioral issues. A variety of studies have found that there is some sort of association between increased media consumption on digital media and more symptoms of autism spectrum disorder although this may also be a two way street with children with ASD showing an interest in screen based activities. In general, the data point to an association rather than to a causal relationship, which means that the more robust longitudinal studies should be conducted, which should take into account the number and the character of screen exposure.

### **Trouble Falling Sleep**

The study is the relationship between the excessive usage of media that is projected to the screen (TVs, computers, mobile devices) and sleep habits of school-age children. The researcher used a sample of 341 children in six elementary schools in the city of Ismailia, Egypt, to gather the data using the Children Sleep Habits Questionnaire (CSHQ) and a screens usage questionnaire on a correlational descriptive design. The findings indicated that two-thirds of the children were overusing screen-based media and that a relatively large percentage of children had sleep falling problems. Statistically significant correlation between high media consumption and interrupted sleep patterns was found ( $P < .001$ ) and the media consumption was identified to explain approximately 7% of the variation in sleep patterns. The paper concludes that screen media exposure has adverse effects on the trouble falling sleep of children and it suggests parental awareness and interventions to decrease the time spent on the digital media. (Ali, 2024).

### **Cognitive and Language Development**

(Puspitasari, 2025) Research on the use of digital gadgets among early childhood experiences points the comparative between the benefits and risks of development. While interactive digital technologies can support cognitive involvement and introduce educational material that encourages attention and problem solving, overuse or unguided use has been linked to negative outcomes such as decreased face-to-face contact as well as suppressed social growth. Parents, educators, and peers have an important role to play in moderating how children engage with technology in that it is important to emphasize that doing things intentionally and in a supervised fashion can improve learning experiences while unregulated exposure can contribute to developmental concerns. Across studies, there is a widespread recommendation to find evidence-based guidelines for maximizing the use of technology in early learning settings and reducing the risk of over-exposure to screens and lessening the need for traditional forms of play and social interaction. The author (Lieber, 2024) shows a growing research focus on how digital media exposure affects children aged 0–5 years. Studies consistently report that



excessive media consumption is linked with delays in language acquisition, reduced attention spans, and poorer academic performance, particularly when media consumption habit replaces active play and caregiver interaction. While some research highlights potential benefits of interactive and educational content or co-viewing with adults, the overall trend suggests that passive screen exposure correlates with worse cognitive outcomes such as hindered problem-solving and language skills. While The author (McGough, 2022) conclude in his article that the growing accessibility of digital devices has increased screen time for children to a great extent and it has become a new challenge for pediatric health and development. Pediatric screen time is the amount of time spent by children watching televisions, smartphones, tablets and other electronic media, and studies have shown that many children are getting more than what is recommended, and this may have an impact on physical activity, sleeping, and developmental outcomes of children. Excessive screen exposure has been linked to negative effects on cognitive and language development, lack of social interaction and increased sedentary behavior, making it ever more important to have evidence-based guidelines and parental involvement to encourage a more positive use of media in early child development. These findings underscore the importance of clinicians and caregivers absorbing and moderating screen time in order to support excellent growth and wellbeing in pediatric populations.

#### **Digital screen as worse motor development**

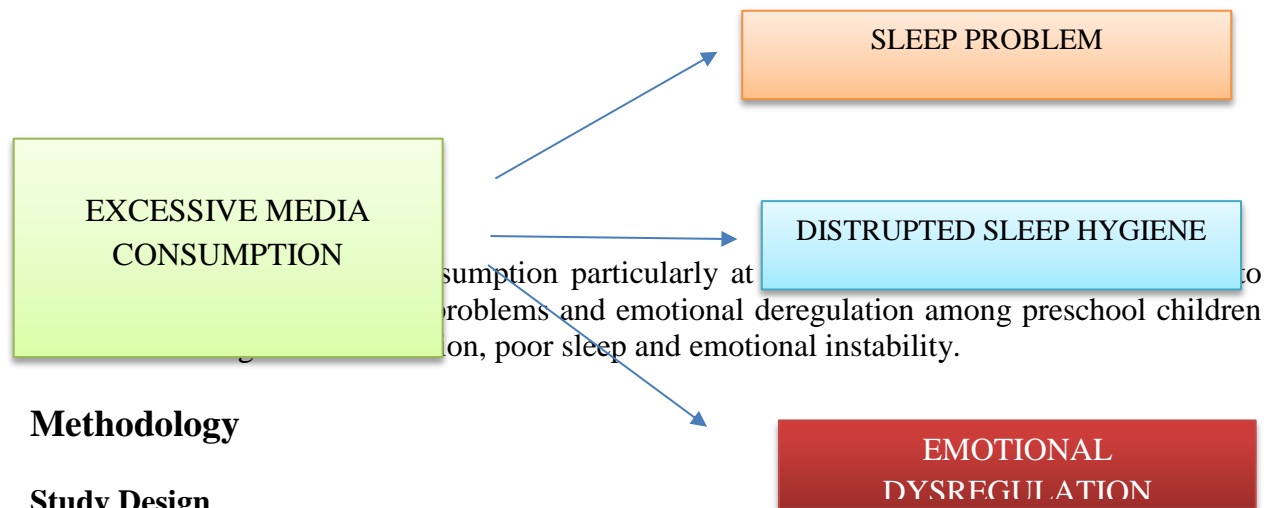
The article critically reviews the literature on the relationships between screen time and motor development in children between the ages of 0 to 7 years and concludes that more time spent at the Digital screen is typically related to worse motor development. Through PRISMA and AMSTAR guidelines, the authors reviewed 24 eligible observational and experimental studies and provided the findings that the majority (17 out of 24) of them established a significant negative correlation between increased screen time and both gross and fine motor development, though some studies did not find any significant correlation, and some established mixed results based on the type of screen and context. The review points out that the effect differs depending on the nature of the screen activity and environmental conditions and that extended screen time can substitute active play, which is important in the acquisition of motor skills hence recommends moderated use of screens and early screening to help in healthy development. (Bakht et al., 2025)

#### **Theoretical Framework**

Sleep Hygiene Theory offers a relevant and appropriate theoretical basis for this study as it explains how behaviors that occur on a daily basis, environmental conditions and bedtime routines affect the quality of sleep, especially in young children. **Dr. Nathaniel Kleitman, the theorist who presented the Sleep Hygiene Theory**, emphasizes the significance of sleep routines and habits, which he says are necessary for overall health and sleep quality.

In preschool children with their immature sleep wake regulation systems, adherence to sleep hygiene practices is highly dependent on regulation in the caregiver and especially mothers. This theory is very relevant to the current study as it can help to explain mother perceptions that excessive media consumption on YouTube interferes with bedtime routines, delay the onset of sleep and contribute to night-time awakening and poor sleeping quality, which in turn contributes to children's problems with emotional regulation and daytime behavior. By grounding the study on the framework of Sleep Hygiene Theory, the research offers a coherent

framework of understanding about the interconnected relationship between media consumption on YouTube cartoons, sleep problems and behavior outcomes in preschoolers in the context of everyday family life.



## Methodology

### Study Design

This study used qualitative survey research design (open ended questions) in order to examine the mother's perception of media consumption of preschool children and its association with sleep related problems. A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate because it enabled to understand the experiences, perceptions and observations of the mothers in a natural context. The study drew on thematic analysis which enabled to systematically figure out patterns and recurring themes in the narratives of the participants.

### Participants and Snow Ball Technique

The target study were mothers of preschoolers between 2 and 6 years of aged children. A snow ball technique was taken in recruitment of participants who could give relevant and meaningful information to meet the aims of the study. A total number of 294 mothers were recruited through schools, daycare centers and networks in the community. Inclusion criteria included mothers of children aged 2 to 6 years, screens being part of the media, and being willing to provide an informed consent.

### Data Collection Tool

Data were obtained based on a qualitative survey that consisted of open-ended questions. The survey was developed using a review of relevant literature to ensure that the content is relevant and understandable. The questions covered the main areas of interest, including types and duration of media consumption, timing of screen exposure especially before bedtime, sleep routines and bedtime behaviors, sleep-related problems including difficulty going to sleep, night waking, and nightmares, and mother's perceptions about how excessive media consumption affects their child's sleep.



#### **8.4 Data Collection Procedure**

The survey was carried out on online format, depending on the accessibility and preference of the participants. Participants were informed of the study's purpose before participating in the study. Results were collected confidentially, to deliver accurate and balanced information. Respondents were also informed that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they may withdraw participating in the research at any time without any adverse effects.

#### **Data Analysis**

The 6-step Approach and framework of Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis were utilized to evaluate the collected data. Firstly familiarization of the researcher was conducted by reviewing the data several times from the responses. Initially, codes were then developed manually by recognizing relevant sections of text at that time. These codes were categorized into prospective themes, which were reviewed and examined in an iterative process. Final themes were accurately described and named based on mothers' insights of media consumption and sleeping issues in preschoolers. This methodical analysis helped to improve the validity and accuracy of the approach.

#### **Reliability and Validity**

Reliability was provided by having consistent standards over the development procedure of coding and themes. Findings were analyzed many times to confirm that the codes and themes were accurate. Reflexive records were maintained throughout the analysis procedure to diminish researcher bias and encourage transparency.

Validity was strengthened carefully to create the questionnaire tool using previous literature ensuring that the questions properly addressed the objectives of research correctly. Credibility was additionally improved by locating themes in the answers that respondents provided, and by spending significant amount of time with the responses to confirm reliable interpretation.

#### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethical approval was gained before the gathering data. Informed approval was received from all the respondents and they were assured confidentiality and privacy. No personal information was gained and the findings were utilized for research purposes only. Respondents were informed that they had the right to leave the study at any time without any consequences.

#### **Findings and Results**

By using a qualitative thematic analysis approach, this research studied mothers' perceptions of the association between excessive media consumption on YouTube and sleep issues in preschool-aged children. Analysis of responses from 294 mothers indicated recurring patterns across participants' narratives. Mothers offered comprehensive description of their children's screen usage, bedtime rituals, sleep-related troubles, and behavioral abnormalities. The results

reveal an extensive observed relationship between higher screen usages on YouTube, especially during evening hours of the days, and sleep problems in preschool children. Five major themes revealed from the responses following Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis. These themes depend on mother experiences and observations regarding how media consumption on YouTube impacts quality of sleep and subsequent attitude in preschoolers.

## **THEMATIC ANALYSIS**

### **Theme-I: Excessive Media consumption on YouTube in Everyday Routines**

Mothers frequently described media consumption as a vital element of the daily activities of their children. YouTube was regularly reported during meal time, leisure time and before going to bed. Many mothers admitted the usage of devices to maintain children distracted, calm them down, or to handle household chores. A number of mothers highlight their concern about the fact that their toddlers had an excessive reliance on YouTube, several times demanding for the digital devices as a regular activity. This dependence was particular noticeable in the evening hours when devices were used as a way of relaxing before sleep. Media reduction by parents occasionally lead to arguments, temper tantrums or psychological issues leading to impossible to maintain control.

### **Theme -II: Delay to Falling Asleep and Bedtime Resistance**

A recurring theme throughout mother remarks was difficulty in falling asleep. Mothers claimed that utilization of YouTube prior to before bed caused more time to fall sleep. Sleep time resistance, which includes rejecting to go to sleep, demanding for further media consumption or sustaining mental vigilance after screen utilization, was often noticed. Mothers reported that it was not uncommon for children who had media consumption before bedtime to be still talking about the content on the YouTube, discussing their videos or games, and having trouble relaxing. This led to later bedtimes and irregular sleep schedules which mothers felt were directly associated with exposure to screens.

### **Theme-III: Awakening at Night and Restless Sleep**

Many of the mothers said that excessive consumption of YouTube was linked to disruption of sleep at night. Children were said to have frequent awakenings, restless movements, nightmares or crying episodes after falling asleep. Mothers did see a problem associated with stimulating or visually intense YouTube content, but this was in terms of disrupted sleep patterns. Some mothers said that children were waking up frightened or disrupting emotionally and this was linked to content viewed before bedtime. These sleep disturbances frequently led to a decrease in the overall sleep time and an increase in the next-day fatigue.

### **Theme-IV: Emotional and Behavioral Deregulation**

Mothers generally attributed sleep problems related to excessive media consumption on YouTube to detectable differences in the behavior of their children during the day. Children who had poor sleep were described as being more irritable, hyperactive, emotionally sensitive or less attentive during the day. Behavioral difficulties, including mood swings, increased tantrums and difficulty following instructions were also commonly reported. Mothers reported that insufficient sleep had a negative impact on their children's ability to manage their emotions

and overall ability to function in daily life. In some cases, YouTube were used again to manage these behaviors in a further perpetuating cycle involving screen dependency and sleep disruption.

### **Theme-V: Maternal Awareness and Challenges in Regulation of Media Consumption**

While the majority of mothers showed they are aware of the negative effects of excessive usage of YouTube on sleep, mothers was reported as a significant issue faced in regulating excessive media consumption. Practical issues such as parental workload, a lack of other activities and children's heavy attachment to screens made it hard to enforce screen-free routines. Some mothers reported guilt or frustration and understanding of the harmful effects of too much exposure to screens, as well as feeling limited in managing this consistently. Mothers stressed the need for guidance, support and realistic approaches to help manage media consumption and maintain good sleep routines for their children.

### **Summary of Results**

The outcomes of this qualitative research reveal the presence of a strongly connected relationship between media consumption on YouTube and sleep problem in preschool aged children from mother point of view. Mothers were frequently stating screen exposure to the adverse of sleep well being primarily when the exposure occurred in the late evening, concluding in a prolonged start of sleep, awakenings at night-time, and poor-quality sleep. These sleep problems were additionally associated with psychological and emotional issues among preschoolers. Thematic analysis discovered that while usually awareness of the adverse effects of excessive media consumption on YouTube among the mothers, there are practical and emotional challenges in the regulation of media consumption habits. The results highlights the importance of education of parents, involving of regular bedtime routines and beneficial strategies aimed towards the development of good screen behaviors and better sleep experiences in early childhood.

### **Discussion**

This qualitative study addressed mothers' perspectives about the association between media consumptions on YouTube and sleep challenges in preschool children. The outcomes indicate that there's an important observed association between extensive and late evening utilization of YouTube and sleep disorders such as prolonged sleep bedtime, awakenings at night and inadequate sleep quality. Mothers observing regarding bedtime difficulty and awareness following utilization of YouTube is consistent with findings from studies showing that the production of melatonin is suppressed and circadian rhythms are delayed with exposure to screens in young children (Cheung C. H.-S., 2017). Disturbance in sleep was additionally linked with psychological and behavioral challenges which includes anger, anxiety, and mood swings the findings provides solid evidence for the Sleep Hygiene Theory which underscores the significance of having regular bedtime rituals and preventing stimulating behavior prior going to bed (Mindell et al., 2009). Watching YouTube prior to bedtime is considered poor sleep hygiene, and thus parental narrative contributes to the role of parental regulation on

children's sleep behavior. However, despite the awareness of negative effects, the mothers showed difficulties in limiting media consumption which reflects previous research of parental difficulty in managing children's use of media (Radesky et al., 2020). Overall, this study adds qualitative content to an understanding of how excessive media consumption on YouTube affects sleep hygiene and influences behavior in preschool children and that parental guidance and practical interventions are needed to promote healthy screen-time behavior and better sleep results in early childhood.

## Conclusion

This qualitative study emphasizes on the mother's perception on a strong correlation of the relationship between media consumption on YouTube and sleep problems in preschool aged children. Excessive and late night screen exposure is perceived to be the source of delayed sleep onset, restlessness, and disturbed sleep routines. Although mothers are generally aware of the negative effects of excessive media consumption on YouTube on sleep, many have practical difficulties when trying to limit media consumption because of day-to-day responsibilities and children's resistance. This research delivers mothers the understanding to observe and manage the media consumption of children, particularly at late evening hours and night. For media scholars, they examine the requirement to consider psychological and cognitive findings in media research and educate theoretical models of media consumption.

## Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Conduct parental education programs targeted at healthy and age-appropriate habits of media consumption.
- Dwell out clear guidelines on reduction of media consumption before bed time.
- Encourage screen-free bedtime routines to support better sleep quality.

## 13. Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. The findings are based on the self-reported data and subjective mother senses that may cause bias. Additionally, there is a possibility that cultural and contextual factors specific to the study population may hinder the generalizability of the results to other contexts.

## References

Ali, H. R. (2024). Excessive Screen-Based Media Use and Its Relation to Sleep Pattern of School Age Children. Trends in Nursing and Health Care Journal, 8(1), 86-104.  
<https://doi.org/10.21608/tnhcnj.2024.251014.1040>

- Bakht, D., Yousaf, F., Alvi, Z., Buhadur Ali, M. K., Hadeed Khawar, M. M., Munir, L., ... & Qureshi, A. A. (2025). Assessing the impact of screen time on the motor development of children: A systematic review. *Pediatric Discovery*, e70002. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pdi3.70002>
- Carter, B., Rees, P., Hale, L., Bhattacharjee, D., & Paradkar, M. S. (2016). Association between portable screen-based media device access and sleep outcomes. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 170(12), 1202–1208.
- Cheung, C. H. M., Bedford, R., Urabain, I. R., Karmiloff-Smith, A., & Smith, T. J. (2017). Daily touchscreen use in infants and toddlers is associated with reduced sleep and delayed sleep onset. *Scientific Reports*, 7, 46104.
- Cheung, C. H. M., Bedford, R., Urabain, I. R., Karmiloff-Smith, A., & Smith, T. J. (2017). Daily touchscreen use in infants and toddlers is associated with reduced sleep and delayed sleep onset. *Scientific Reports*, 7, 46104. <https://doi.org/10.1038/srep46104>
- Dilshad, A., Khan, M. H., Sujana, C. S., Ahsan, A., Mehta, F., Meshram, Y., Singh, P. K., Verma, A., Singh, A. K., & Akbar, A. (2025). \*The relationship between autism spectrum disorder and screen time in children: A literature review\*. *Annals of Medicine and Surgery*, 87\*(7). <https://doi.org/10.1097/MS9.0000000000003397>
- Lieber, C. (2024). Effects of screen time on cognitive development in early childhood: A systematic review. *Research Journal in Psychology and Behavioral Studies*, 1(1), 01-09.
- McGough, K. (2022). Pediatric screen time. *Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners*, 34(4), 631-638. <https://doi.org/10.1097/JXX.0000000000000682>
- Merín, L., Toledano-González, A., Fernández-Aguilar, L., Nieto, M., Del Olmo, N., & Latorre, J. M. (2024). Evaluation of the association between excessive screen use, sleep patterns and behavioral and cognitive aspects in preschool population. A systematic review. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 33(12), 4097-4114. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00787-024-02430-w>
- Mindell, J. A., Meltzer, L. J., Carskadon, M. A., & Chervin, R. D. (2009). Developmental aspects of sleep hygiene: Findings from the 2004 National Sleep Foundation Sleep in America Poll. *Sleep Medicine*, 10(7), 771–779. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sleep.2008.07.016>
- Owens, J. A., & Weiss, M. R. (2017). Insufficient sleep in adolescents: Causes and consequences. *Minerva Pediatrica*, 69(4), 326–336.

- Puspitasari, R. N. (2025). The use of gadgets in early childhood: A literature review of benefits and risks. *Journal of Early Childhood Education Research*, 1(1), 39–45. <https://ssed.or.id/journal/jecer/article/view/349>
- Radesky, J. S., Weeks, H. M., Ball, R., Schaller, A., Yeo, S., Durnez, J., ... & Barr, R. (2020). Young children's use of smartphones and tablets. *Pediatrics*, 146(1). <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-3518>.
- Silva, R. L., Gonçalves, B. P. C., Ferreira, M. H. L., & Carvas Junior, N. (2025). *Consequences of screen time on sleep quality in children and adolescents: A scoping review. Journal of Pediatric Health Care*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pedhc.2025.08.005>
- Sticca, F., Brauchli, V., & Lannen, P. (2025). Screen on= development off? A systematic scoping review and a developmental psychology perspective on the effects of screen time on early childhood development. *Frontiers in Developmental Psychology*, 2, 1439040. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fdpys.2024.1439040>
- Zehra, U. U. B., Raza, R., Tindyala, E., Venkatesh, K. K., Mansoor, I., Zehra, M., ... & Rekhum, S. (2025). Screen Time as a factor for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in children: A Systematic Review. *medRxiv*, 2025-04. <https://doi:10.1101/2025.04.29.25325745>