

Impact of Short-form Videos or Reels on Study Habits

Pranjal Dixit^{1*}, Pragam Dixit²

^{1*} Delhi Public School, Secunderabad, Telangana, India

² Indian Institute of Technology Ropar (IIT-Ropar), Punjab, India

*Corresponding Author Email: dixitpranjal.hyd@gmail.com

Abstract

Short-form videos, such as TikTok videos, YouTube Shorts, and Instagram Reels, have become a key element in the digital lives of many young adults and adolescents. These platforms provide social interaction, entertainment and opportunities for rapid access to information, but increased and uncontrolled use may interfere with study habits. The study examines the relationship between SFV consumption and academic behaviour, with a focus on study-time procrastination, sleep disruption, cognitive functioning, memory, and perceived academic performance. This analysis was made with help of mixed methods; both survey and secondary sources were used. Findings are presented in the study sources and consider patterns across different levels and contexts of SFVs. Findings show a clear association between SFV exposure and study-related outcomes. The findings of the study have shown that the disruption scores are substantially increased from 0.49 among the low users to 1.67 among the participants who are reporting use of SFVs for 4 hours or more. The cognitive difficulties have increased from 0.98 to 1.94, and behavioural-function scores have increased from 0.56 to 1.67. The negative grade impact increased from 37% among the students who are using less than 30 minutes daily of SFVs to almost 80% who are consuming these videos for more than 3 to 4 hours. The findings have shown that frequent viewing is seen during study time and before sleep. The overall study has concluded that there are developments of reduced self-control, attention fragmentation, sleep disruption and procrastination among students who have excessive SFV consumption, and it impacts their study habits.

Keywords

Academic performance, Adolescents, attention, Cognitive functioning, Doom scrolling, Reels, Short-form videos (SFVs), Sleep disruption, Study habits.

INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an integral part of adolescent and young adult life, and platforms offering short-form videos have particularly changed the patterns of how digital consumption is done. These videos are highly engaging and are easily accessible. Short-form videos generally consist of visually stimulating videos that are brief and can be consumed within a few seconds to a few minutes. The algorithm is personalised in nature and allows the user to receive continuous streaming of content based on their interest, interaction and previous viewing behaviour. According to authors such as [1], YouTube Shorts, Instagram Reels, and TikTok videos are examples of SFVs. These often depict the consumption pattern shift from conventional long-form media towards vertical, compressed, and fast-paced content.

The popularity of SFVs has generated concerns, and these concerns are greater among students, as it is impacting their academic behaviour. According to authors such as [2], social media can have positive functions, including community participation, communication, information sharing and access to education. However, excessive use can be problematic and interfere with time management and concentration. Academic engagement and sleep: The study has identified that the possibility of superficial learning can replace deeper engagement with study material. Students are shifting their attention between academic activities and

notifications of short videos, and there is no sustained concentration. The analysis of the research study has shown that SFV consumption can bring about fragmentation mechanisms and time displacement.

One of the pivotal biological functions that is disrupted by short-form video consumption. Video consumption disrupts the sleep pattern that is observed when adolescents require consistent and sufficient sleep for physical development, cognitive function and emotional regulation. The authors, such as Ebster et al. (2026), have indicated that if there is extended use of screens, particularly during the evening hours, it can interfere with these sleep routines. It is also noted by [3], that sleep disruption increases, and there is an important connection between subsequent academic difficulties and digital consumption. The second pathway that is disrupted due to video consumption is cognitive functioning [4]. Memory, learning, attention and executive functioning are central to successful studying and increases in cognitive difficulties are seen if there is sleep deprivation, which leads to failure in academic performance.

The third important parameter is self-regulation, and it is seen that procrastination associated with last-minute assignments increases; by using SFVs, the student escapes stress, and it is moderately impacted by a decrease in study time. This is suggestive of the fact that students who are spending more time watching short-form videos might see changes in their behaviour, and it reflects on difficulties in controlling their planned academic activities and digital

consumption. The concept of doomscrolling comes into play, and authors such as [5], pinpoint that doomscrolling is part of students' behaviour, and students continue to watch videos despite initially intending to view just one or two videos.

The implication of the report is to examine SFV consumption in relation to students' study habits, with the student focused on the survey findings that take into consideration behavioural functioning, cognitive functioning, sleep, academic impact, procrastination, mood and the context related to it. The study will not consider SFV solely as beneficial or harmful. Rather, the analysis will recognise entertainment and educational potential alongside the risks that are associated with poor and prolonged consumption of this type of videos.

OBJECTIVES

The central objective of the study is to examine the relationship between short-form video consumption and the study habits of the academicians.

The following are the subobjectives associated with the research study:

- To investigate the patterns and levels of short-form video consumption among the academicians or students.
- To investigate the relationship between sleep disruption and SFV consumption
- To assess the reported association between use of SFV and cognitive functioning, including parameters such as memory and attention
- To examine the relationship between behavioural indicators such as procrastination and last-minute academic work with SFV consumption
- To assess the relationship between SFV exposure and grade-related outcomes or negative academic outcomes.
- To identify the important context in which the students mainly consume short-form videos, particularly during bedtime and study periods.

METHODS

The research design is mixed, involving both analysis of surveys and secondary literature to investigate the use of short-form video (SFV) and its implications for students and study results. Total of 378 school students have participated in the survey. It takes into account adolescent and young adult populations and makes a comparison between those students who watch SFVs less than 30 minutes a day and those who watch between three and four hours or more a day. This lower- and higher-use comparison provides the analysis with a definite organizing focus and links exposure patterns to questions of the study.

The questionnaire measures behavioural functioning, cognitive functioning and daily sleep disruption on the basis of numerical scores. The description of behaviours in the paper is summarized using percentages, such as viewing

when studying and before going to sleep, and mood and energy patterns. Pearson correlation analyses examine associations between SFV viewing time and behavioural measures such as procrastination, rushing assignments at the last moment and stress-escape measures. Collectively, these analyses reveal the way in which the paper drifts between the description of the experiences of the students and the analysis of the associations between the main variables which are important to the main questions of the study.

The secondary literature builds on this analysis by addressing the topic of cognitive functioning, sleep, behaviour, academic outcomes, procrastination, mood and energy. This provides the assignment with a broader background by which to explain the trends in the surveys and retain focus on a number of related aspects of the study experience. Numerical analysis together with published discussion sustains a rounded analysis of SFV usage, with a clear connection to student behaviour and academic performance.

On the whole, the descriptive and correlational approach is well suited to underline patterns and relationships in the material presented. The analysis is aligned with the overall goal through the group comparison, percentages, and Pearson correlation. The results may thus be left to be talked about as correlations between SFV consumption and study outcomes, and the approach presents a logical foundation for the conclusions made in the assignment.

RESULTS

Consumption of SFV and Sleep Disruption

Short-form videos are rapidly growing globally, and there are rising concerns about the study habits and cognitive impacts on adolescents, most of them. Reviews have explored that short-form videos have become an addiction affecting physical and mental health. The researchers believe that adolescents and children are becoming extra sensitive to the impacts of blue light because their eyes are letting in more light. For this particular reason, it is important to limit screen time, specifically during the evening for adolescents and children. It is also important as it prevents any kind of sleep problems [6]. Smartphones are impacting melatonin levels more than that of the television screens, as they tend to be held nearer to the face; it is seen that sleep appears to suffer more when teenagers start using phones in a dark room, possibly because the pupils are more dilated, and it leads to more blue light. These consequences lead to sleep deprivation among teens. Sleep deprivation among adolescents might cause problems with emotional regulation, mood swings, academic performance, and reduced cognitive abilities. The teen has started experiencing fragmented sleep, and this is due to interpersonal issues. With their peers. Chronic sleep loss can lead to weakened systems, and mental health conditions might deteriorate [7]. Sleep loss has caused increased tiredness during the day, and it is having a very negative impact on young adults. In this particular review, it

is seen in Figure 1 that the deprivation of the correlation score to the triples from the coefficient of 0.49 → 1.67 between the lowest and highest SFV users. These findings have indicated that the strong purpose of the survey is to show how sleep disruption can be caused due to doom scrolling.

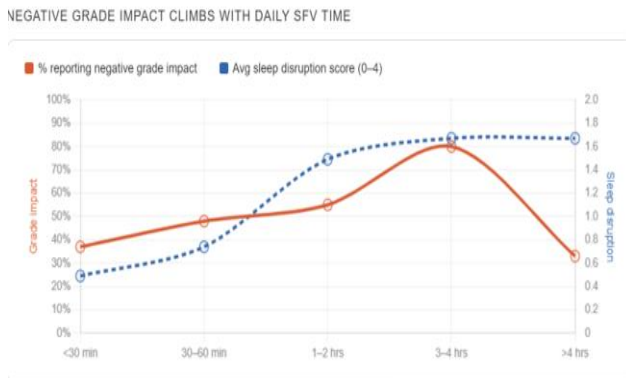


Figure 1. Negative Grade Impact climbs with sleep disruption through SFV time

The article from Sleep Foundations by [8], has stated that screen time is linked with insomnia symptoms for teenagers. The article states that delayed melatonin is due to an increase in screen time, and it takes time for teens to fall asleep, leading to less restful sleep. Most of the teenagers have restricted their school times and later back bed time. This has resulted in increased next-day sleepiness and fragmented sleep overall. It is seen that there are consistent late weekday bedtimes, and catching up on sleep during the weekend is disrupting the circadian rhythm. The studies by [9] in their cross-sectional study have stated that extended consumption of SFV can lead to a depressive state among the participants, and it is associated with poor sleep quality. This is because of hormonal regulation disequilibrium, and it is seen that sleep disruption causes changes in the Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Thyroid (HPT) axis that led to changes in Thyroid-Stimulating Hormone (TSH) production.

SFV Consumption and Cognitive Functioning

Sleep disruption has a direct relationship with cognitive function, and this is due to overworking of neurons, slow information processing and destabilising the basic alertness of the brain. Cognitive functions refer to the mental processes and abilities of the brain to think, perceive, remember, and interact with the surroundings. These are essential functions, as everything from having a conversation to solving daily problems healthcare and psychology mainly have categorised. Healthcare practitioners categorise cognitive function into 6 domains: Complex Attention, Executive Function, Learning and Memory, Language, Perceptual-motor Control and Social Cognition. The healthcare provider has measured these abilities by standardised assessments, such as the Mini-Mental State Examination or the Online Integrated Cognitive Assessment. Cognitive function is highly adaptable, and it can actively

support and protect the brain when it is exercising regularly by eating a balanced diet and getting quality sleep to maintain an active lifestyle. This is interconnected with sleeping habits, as well as studying habits [10]. The brain is considered one of the hardest-working organs, and it automatically functions to understand its responsibilities, as shown in Figure 2.

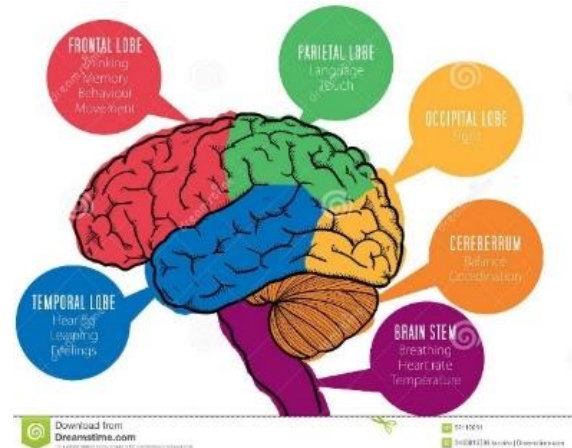


Figure 2. Diagram of brain depicting six cognitive functions

Cognitive Deficits – StatPearls – NCBI Bookshelf has depicted that cognitive deficiency is not an illness, but it is a manifestation of underlying conditions, and this makes the people to see notice in themselves, caretakers, or friends. Therefore, it is important for the person to take up cognitive training, physical activity, proper sleep and relaxation techniques to develop their cognitive health, and the Mediterranean diet is also important for developing cognitive abilities. The survey has shown that cognitive skills are negatively impacted, and they have doubled from 0.98 → 1.94 (on a 0 – 4 scale), from the lowest to the highest SFV consumption group. This validates the research objective of linking heavy SFV use to attention and self-regulation decline. Overall, the results have stated that the impact of SFV is on declining cognitive health, and there is considerable variation seen in the sample characteristics. There are multiple studies, such as [11], that have stated that Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and TikTok videos have changed the cognitive ability of children, and these are noticeable in the primary years of adolescence.

Behavioural Functioning and Association with Self-regulation

SFVs have profoundly impacted adolescent behaviour by providing an immediate gratification loop, coupled with attention fragmentation, and this is owing to algorithmic hyper-personalisation. This gratification loop is developed as teenagers, at this stage, undergo development of the prefrontal cortex loop, and this is helpful in the development of psychological, cognitive and social behavioural changes [12]. However, it is seen that with prolonged SFV consumption, it reshapes the cognitive and behavioural functioning patterns, and there is a switch in behaviour that

leads to attention fragmentation. The nervous system becomes destabilised causing irritability among the teenagers, and they are distracted by cognitive load, which causes superficial changes in their thinking patterns. They are not aware of their physical surroundings and subsequently avoid complex academic tasks that take longer mental effort.

Figure 3 represents that impact on cognitive and behavioural scores. The behavioural function score almost triples from 0.56 → 1.67 (on a 0 – 4 scale). Studies have shown that academic harm is caused, and there is an interconnected relationship between cognitive and behavioural functioning and the use of digital media. The relationship is not fully understood, but multiple studies have shown that SFV consumption is consistently associated with lower academic performance, poorer GPA, reduced study time and sleep disruption. There are impairment related attention deficits among the children with this consumption. “Short-form Video Use and Sustained Attention: A Narrative Review (2019–2025)” [13] have stated that SFVs cause impaired attention among the students, and it is compared with non-addictive students. The neurophysiological studies have stated similar findings that cause attentional deficiencies, and it delays the formation of higher-order cognitive functioning.

COGNITIVE & BEHAVIOURAL IMPACT SCORES BY SFV DAILY TIME

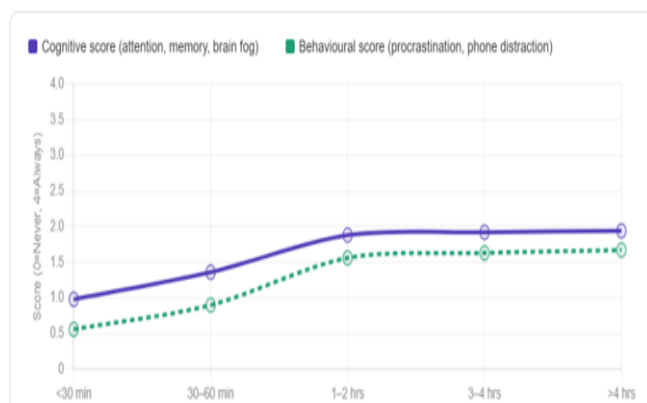


Figure 3. Impact of SFV on cognitive score and behavioural score

The authors, such as [14] have empirically mentioned that SFV addiction can lead to significant academic procrastination and lead students to delay their assignments and struggle with timely completion of their academic tasks. This directly or indirectly impairs their attentional control and overall compromises the academic achievement of the students.

Consumption of SFV and Academic or Grade-Related Impact on Students in Terms of Memory and Decision-making

The figure is representative of the fact that higher-order functions, such as memory, can be impacted with higher consumption of SFV, and 57% of the students feel anxious

and foggy if they are watching longer sessions of these videos. The brain is mostly in a constant state of sensory tracking after doomscrolling and there is insufficient cognitive bandwidth that is developed from the transition from working memory into long term storage [15]. An article, “Context-switching in short-form videos: What is the impact on prospective memory?” published on tandfonline.com, has stated that context switching is important, as it helps students to control their urge to continue watching these videos [16]. The between-group tests have depicted three corresponding changes 1) unlimited context-switching, (2) limited context-switching and (3) control (no short-form video stimulus). The cognitive ability of the participants was measured pre- and post-viewing of the content with a combination of Lexical Decision (LD) and Prospective Memory (PM) performance tasks. The participants in the unlimited context switching had significantly deteriorated Prospective Memory performance post-interruption.

However, the study has depicted that fast context-switching can cause Prospective Memory decline following short-form video consumption [17]. This can be evidenced after seeing the documentary, and people have shown better memories. Moreover, the study depicted that it can diminish working memory capacity with diminished verbal recall, and there will be disruption in continuous memory encoding. Therefore, it is stated that controlled cognitive engagement of memory performance can be disrupted with higher consumption of SFVs

This eventually impacts the decision-making process. The authors, such as [18], have stated that longer SFV consumption can take a toll on academic life, and it has a cumulative impact on multilayered cognitive disruptions. The academic under performance is not an individual outcome. Rather, it is manifested as a downstream of interconnected deficits across decision-making, procedural memory, attention and the self-regulatory system. We reviewed papers, and systematic literature reviews have shown similar findings. It appears that excessive watching of short-form videos can heighten attention, reduce concentration among students and bring about severe disruption in the thinking process.

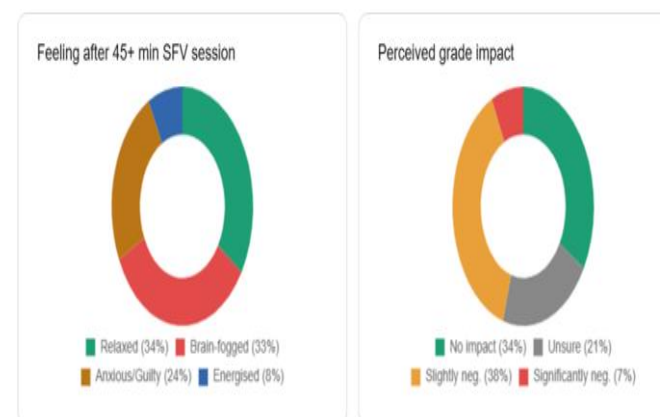


Figure 4. Brain fog and grade impact

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These secondary findings are validated by the survey analysis that is conducted by the researcher, and it is seen that 26% of the students doomscroll and intend to watch just 1-2 videos. This is indicative of the fact that a significant number of students have difficulty accessing their behavioural logistics with higher use of SFVs. The Pearson Correlation analysis in Figure 5 has shown that there is a linear association between the parameters. This moderate positive correlation between SFV time suggests that students who were spending more time on social media videos are experiencing this kind of behaviour. There is an increase in last-minute assignment rushing with higher procrastination, stress-escape and last-minute assignment rushing.

CORRELATION OF SFV TIME WITH KEY BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

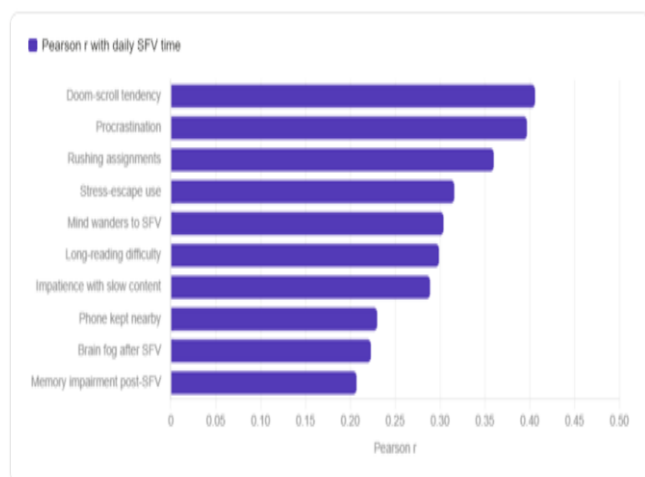


Figure 5. Correlation of SFV Time with Key Behavioural Indicators

Consumption of SFV and Academic or Grade-related Impact

This eventually impacts the decision-making process. The authors, such as Ye et al. (2025), have stated that longer SFV consumption can take a toll on academic life, and it has a cumulative impact on multilayered cognitive disruptions. The academic under performance is not an individual outcome. Rather, it is manifested as a downstream of interconnected deficits across decision-making, procedural memory, attention and the self-regulatory system. We reviewed papers, and systematic literature reviews have shown similar findings. It appears that excessive watching of short-form videos can heighten attention, reduce concentration among students and bring about severe disruption in the thinking process.

Negative grade impact increased monotonically from 37% at under 30 min/day to almost 80% at 3–4 hours/day and is supported by the correlation studies. Temporal Motivation Theory (TMT) has shown similar findings and there are certain micro rewards with SFVs. However, it is observed that it might delay cognitive functioning and it is shown that 79% of the students find that they are not able to associate with studying while they consume these videos as shown in Figure 6. 57% show a foggy mind and 34% feel relaxed. The subjective study shows similar findings and short form videos can genuinely impact educational performance but there is failure in self-regulation. This impact is developed through the self-assessment survey, and it is seen that 69% of the students show a low drop in their energy after a 45 plus minute session, while older students between the grades 11 and 12 show higher doom scrolling rates as shown in figure 6.

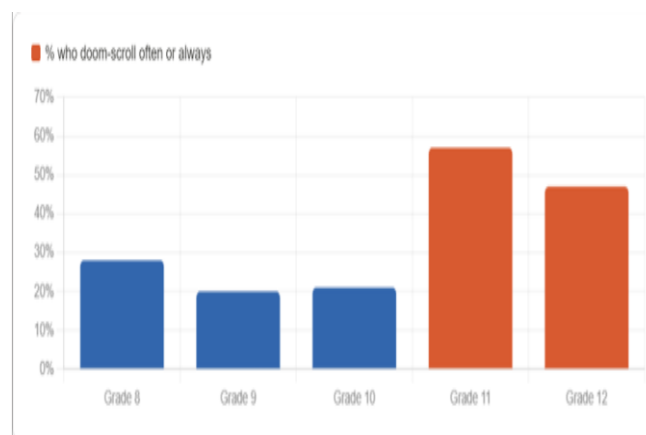


Figure 6. Class-wise distribution of number of students

Timing of Students Watching SFVs

Figure 7 represents that sixty eight percent of the children during study hours watch the visors and 41% before going to sleep.

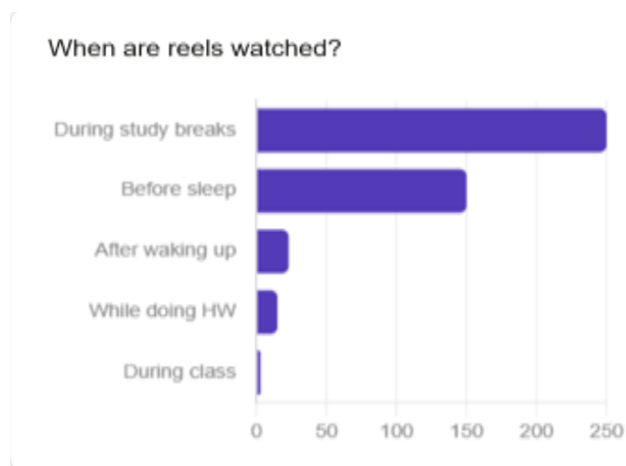


Figure 7. When are Short Form Videos watched

DISCUSSION

From the above results, it can be correlated that scrolling during exam, study breaks have become the most vulnerable moment for the students as there is an increase in academic pressure. If there are academic doubts and the children are able to solve it. Then they access this kind of videos and eat just attracts hours of study, and they undergo these changes in the brain where the brain Cognitive control through doom scrolling. The study has significantly assessed that SVF impacts the cognitive and behavioural functions changes of the students by bringing about low performance in their exams, foggy mind and sleep disruptions.

CONCLUSION

The SFV analysis of the research study has concluded that there is a consistent association between consumption of short-form video and poorer reported study-related outcomes among the students. Increases in consumption of SFVs have shown significant changes in cognitive, sleep difficulties, disruption and behavioural difficulties. Sleep disruption among these students has increased from 0.49 to 1.67, cognitive difficulties have increased from 0.98 to 1.94, and there is a change in behavioural-functional difficulties from 0.56 to 1.67. The comparative group analysis has shown that negative grade impact is increased among the students who are using SFV for less than 30 minutes by 37% and among the students for 3-4 hours or more by 80%.

The findings have pointed out that the timing of the consumption of these videos is important. 68% of the students have demonstrated that they watched SFVs during study times, and 41% watched these videos before sleep time. Moreover, the study has concluded that 26% of the students' doomscroll beyond the original intention of watching these videos, and their main intention was to watch 1 or 2 videos. These patterns have indicated that attention management and self-regulation are important parameters for developing healthy digital behaviour.

The overall analysis of the study has indicated that poorly and excessively regulated SFV consumption can interfere

with the study habits of these students, and these are interconnected pathways that mainly involve attention, fragmentation, time displacement, sleep deprivation and procrastination. The most important part of the study is that the findings are correlational, and they cannot be interpreted as definitive evidence of causality. There is a requirement of future longitudinal research, and it will investigate how the content of the video, duration, timing and individual characteristics influence academic outcomes. The effective recommended responses need to have balanced digital use, a healthy sleep routine, self-regulation and protection of dedicated academic study time.

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