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DIGITAL CHILDHOOD: NAVIGATING THE EDUCATIONAL IMPACTS OF SCREENS

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the development of a research project linked to the Stricto Sensu Program in Educational Sciences at the International Institute of Education and Research (IIEP) and the University for the Integration of the Americas (UNIDA), Ciudad del Este, Paraguay. The project's guiding theme is the investigation of the impacts of digital childhood that reverberate in the school environment. Children in early childhood education, from zero to five years old, tend to interact early and excessively with digital screens during a crucial phase of biological, neural, psychosocial, cognitive, motor, affective, and linguistic development. Educators express concerns about the consequences of this early technological exposure, particularly given that most children are shifting from playing to screens. The research project's literature review indicates that early and extensive screen time in early childhood education causes sleep and eating disorders, a sedentary lifestyle, obesity, difficulty concentrating and socializing, among other harmful effects. Conversely, technology, when combined, supervised, and planned in the classroom, provides and improves sensory activities, autonomy, and decision-making. Research like this helps avoid a one-sided and reductionist view, warning of future harm to child development, and providing guidance to the entire school community, redefining education.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education and Screen. Digital Childhood. Impacts of Screens.