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EMPIRICAL STUDY ON SCREEN TIME AND ITS IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH OF IT EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

In the modern corporate world, the ubiquity of digital devices has significantly increased the amount of screen time for employees. While these technologies offer numerous benefits in terms of productivity and connectivity, they also pose potential risks to mental health. Understanding the relationship between screen time and mental health among corporate employees is crucial for developing strategies to mitigate negative impacts and promote well-being.

***Keywords**: Screen Time, Mental Health, IT, Corporate World.*

Introduction

In the digital age, screen time has become an integral part of daily life, especially among corporate employees. The proliferation of digital devices such as computers, smartphones, and tablets has revolutionized the workplace, increased productivity and enabling remote work. However, the extensive use of these devices has raised concerns about their impact on mental health. This empirical study seeks to investigate the relationship between screen time and mental health among corporate employees, focusing on the potential psychological and emotional consequences of prolonged exposure to screens.

Title of the Study

An empirical study on screen time and its impact on mental health of IT employees

Scope

The scope of the study is confined only to IT employees spending their time on screen. The study is limited only to understanding mental health of employees on screen. All the IT employees chosen as sample for the study fall within the ambit of only one state (Karnataka).

Objectives

- To understand various challenges posed by IT employees
- To study the impact of screen time on mental health of the IT employees.

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- To propose suitable remedial measures to address the mental challenges faced by the IT employees.

Methodology

The methodology used for the study are primary source. Relevant questions were designed and questionnaires were prepared to conduct a study. A designed questionnaire was distributed to the employees working in IT sector. Google Forms were sent to employees of different IT companies.

Sample Design

- Population Size: The population constitutes IT employees working in IT sector on the digital devices.
- Sample Size: A sample size of 100 respondents was surveyed for the study.
- Sample Method: The snowball sampling technique was used to collect the data from the respondents.

Sample Area

Area covers selected IT companies within the vicinity of Karnataka.

Analysis

Table 1: Showing the Gender of Respondents

Gender	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	51	51
Female	49	49
Total	100	100

Analysis

The respondents' pool is almost evenly split between male and female participants, with male's comprising 51 percent and female's 49 percent. No respondents identified as non-binary or preferred not to disclose their gender. This suggests a balanced gender representation in the sample.

Table 2: Showing the Age of the Respondents

Age	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
18-25	43	43
26-35	33	33
36-45	15	15
46-55	9	9
TOTAL	100	100

Analysis:

The data indicates that the majority of respondents are aged 18-25, comprising 43 percent of the sample. This is followed by the 26-35 age group at 33 percent, the 36-45 age group at 15 percent, and the 46-55 age group at 9 percent.

Table 3: Showing The Stress Level of Respondents After Prolonged Screen Time

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	18	18
Agree	60	60
Neutral	19	19
Disagree	2	2
Strongly disagree	1	1
Total	100	100

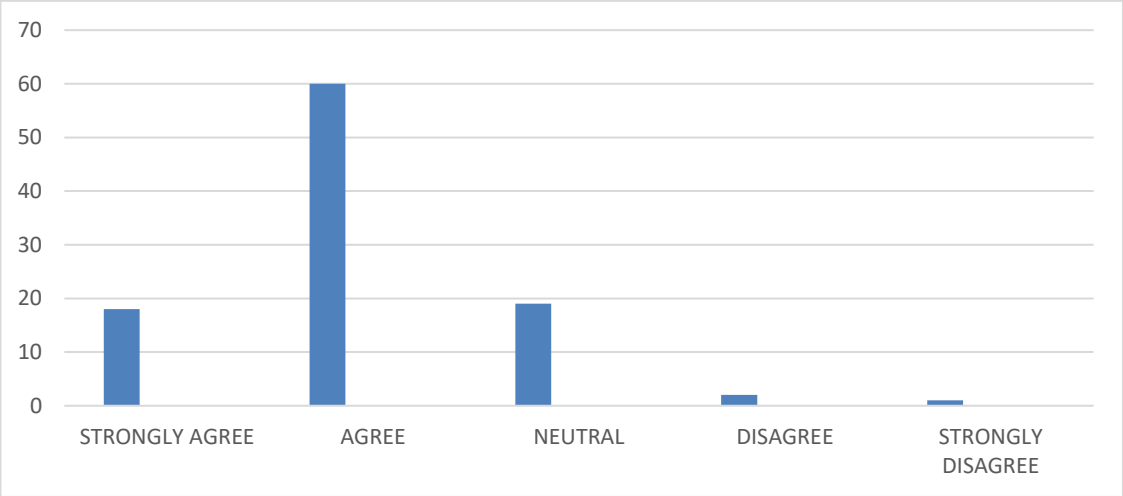

Chart 3: Showing the Stress Level Of Respondents after Prolonged Screen Time

Analysis

The data reveals that 18 percent and 60 percent of respondents agree and strongly agree that they are experience stress after prolonged screen time and 19 percent of the respondents were of the neutral opinion on the above said statement while 2percent of the respondents disagree that they are experience stress after prolonged screen time with 1percent disagreeing on the same. Hence, majority of the respondents agree to the fact that working on the screen for prolonged duration led to increase in stress level.

Table 4: Showing Symptoms of Burnout Because of Screen Time

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	22	22
Agree	54	54
Neutral	20	20
Disagree	3	3
Strongly disagree	1	1
Total	100	100

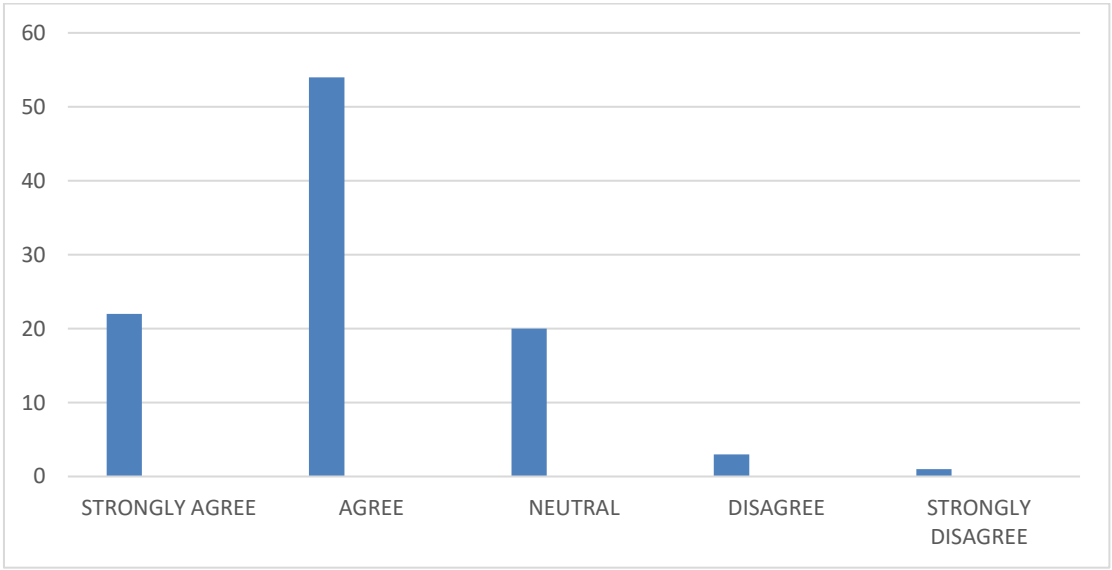

Chart 4: Showing Symptoms of Burnout Because of Screen Time

Analysis

The data reveals that 22 percent and 54 percent of respondents agree and strongly agree that they are experiencing the symptoms of burnout because of screen time and 20 percent of the respondents were of the neutral opinion on the above said statement while 3percent of the respondents disagree that they are experiencing the symptoms of burnout because of screen time with 1percent disagreeing on the same. Hence, majority of the respondents agree to the fact that working on the screen for prolonged duration led to rise in the symptoms of burnout.

Table 5: Respondents Experiencing Fatigue or Exhaustion after Prolonged Screen Time

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	18	18
Agree	63	63
Neutral	15	15
Disagree	3	3
Strongly disagree	1	1
Total	100	100

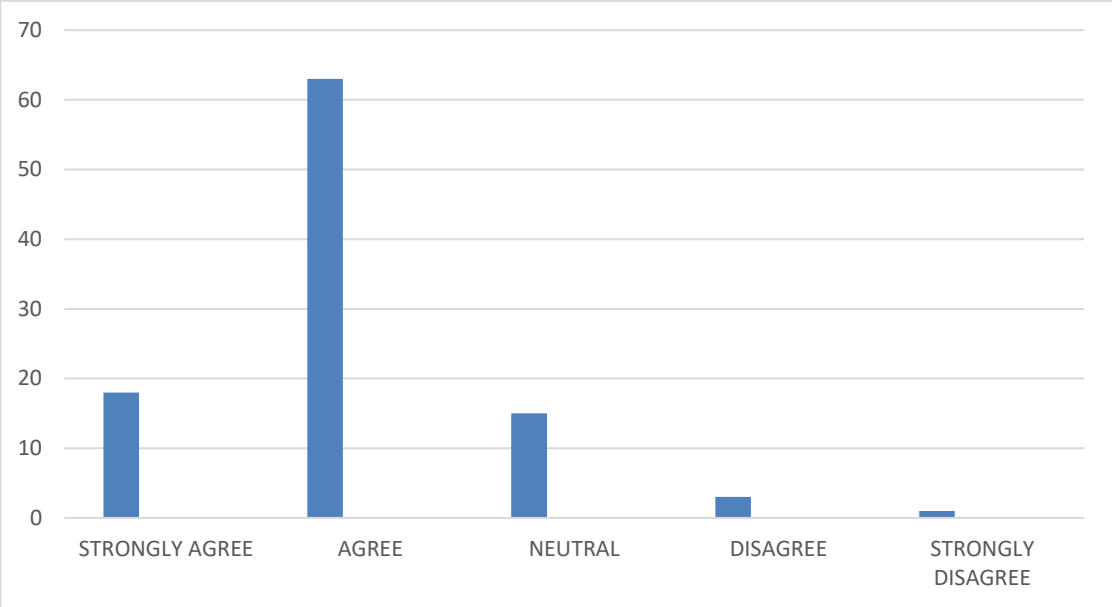

Chart 5: Respondents Experiencing Fatigue or Exhaustion after Prolonged Screen Time

Analysis

The data reveals that 18 percent and 63 percent of respondents agree and strongly agree that they are experiencing fatigue or exhaustion after prolonged screen time and 15 percent of the respondents were of the neutral opinion on the above said statement while 3percent of the respondents disagree that they are experiencing fatigue or exhaustion after prolonged screen time with 1percent disagreeing on the same. Hence, majority of the respondents agree to the fact that working on the screen for prolonged duration led to rise in fatigue or exhaustion.

Table 6: showing level of anxiety experienced by respondents due to screen time habits

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	15	15
Agree	42	42
Neutral	34	34
Disagree	8	8
Strongly disagree	1	1
Total	100	100

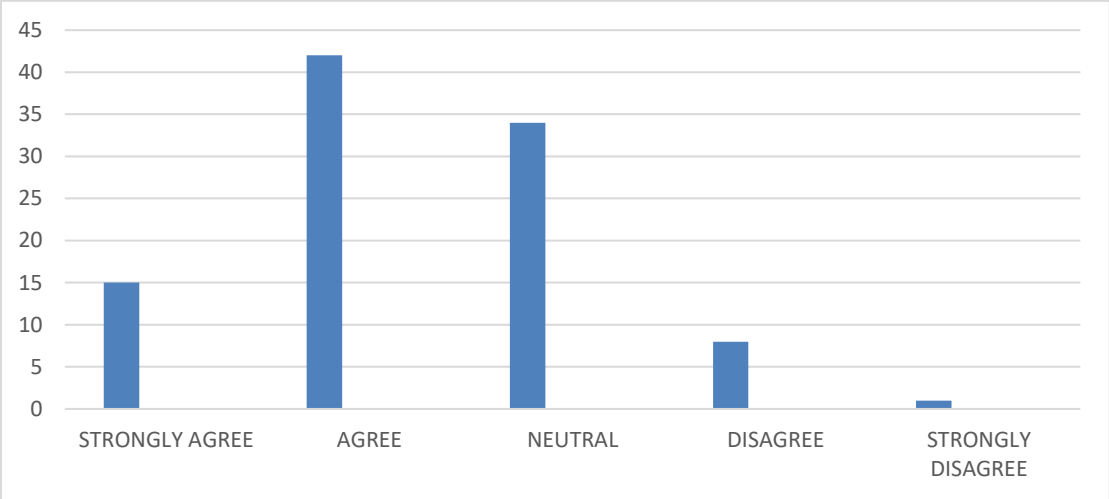

Chart 6: Showing Level of Anxiety Experienced by Respondents Due to Screen Time Habits

Analysis

The data reveals that 15 percent and 42 percent of respondents agree and strongly agree that they are experiencing anxiety due to screen time habits and 34 percent of the respondents were of the neutral opinion on the above said statement while 8percent of the respondents disagree that they are experiencing anxiety due to screen time habits with 1percent disagreeing on the same. Hence, the anxiety related to screen time is common, it does not affect everyone equally.

Table 7: Showing Need for Professional Help or Counselling to Manage Mental Health of Respondents

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	11	11
Agree	19	19
Neutral	31	31
Disagree	35	35
Strongly disagree	4	4
Total	100	100

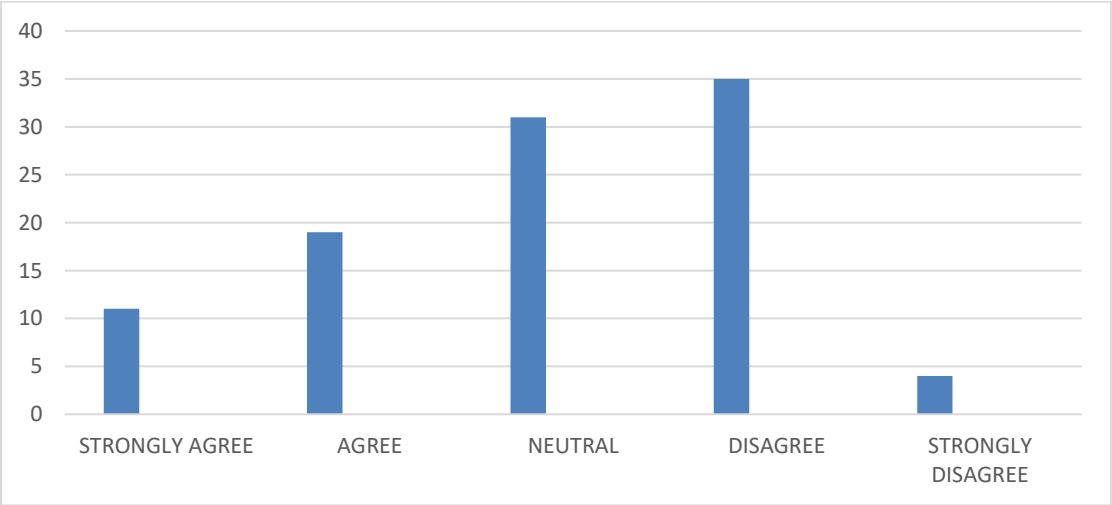

Chart 7: Showing Need for Professional Help or Counselling to Manage Mental Health of Respondents

Analysis

The data reveals that 11 percent and 19 percent of respondents agree and strongly agree that they have sought professional help or counselling for mental health concerns related to screen time and 31 percent of the respondents were of the neutral opinion on the above said statement while 35percent of the respondents disagree that they have sought professional help or counselling for mental health concerns related to screen time with 4percent disagreeing on the same. Hence, majority of the respondents disagree to the fact that they have sought professional help or counselling for mental health concerns related to screen time.

Table 8: Showing Difficulties Encountered by the Respondents in Staying Focused on their Work During Prolonged Screen Time

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	12	12
Agree	56	56
Neutral	25	25
Disagree	7	7
Strongly disagree	12	12
Total	100	100

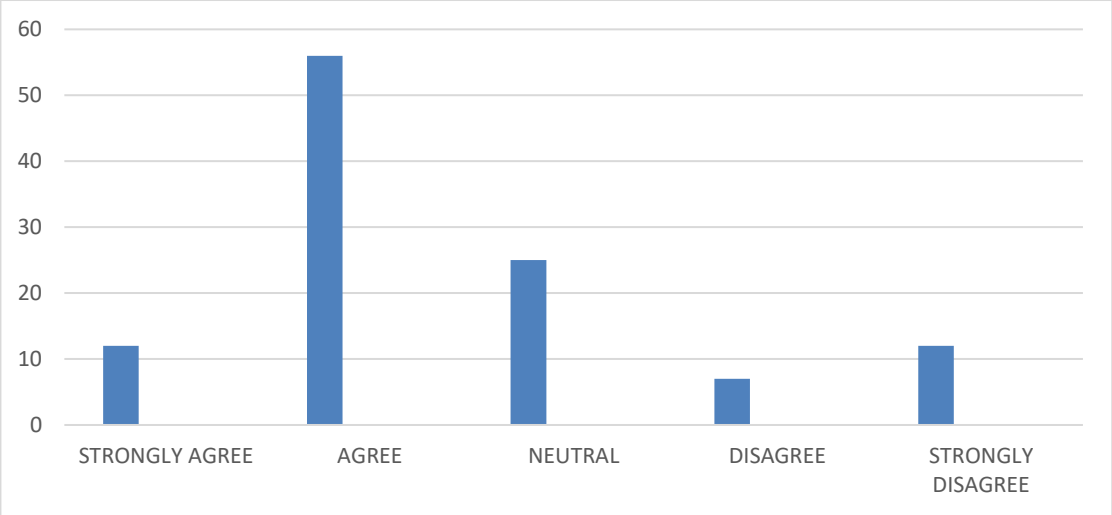

Chart 8: Showing Difficulties Encountered by the Respondents in Staying Focused on their Work During Prolonged Screen Time

Analysis

The data reveals that 12 percent and 56 percent of respondents agree and strongly agree that they have encountered difficulties in staying focused on their work during prolonged screen time and 25 percent of the respondents were of the neutral opinion on the above said statement while 7percent of the respondents disagree that they have encountered difficulties in staying focused on their work during prolonged screen time with 12 percent disagreeing on the same. Hence, majority of the respondents agree to the fact that they have encountered difficulties in staying focused on their work during prolonged screen time.

Table 9: Showing Loneliness Experienced by the Respondents While on Screen

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	6	6
Agree	46	46
Neutral	36	36
Disagree	11	11
Strongly disagree	1	1
Total	100	100

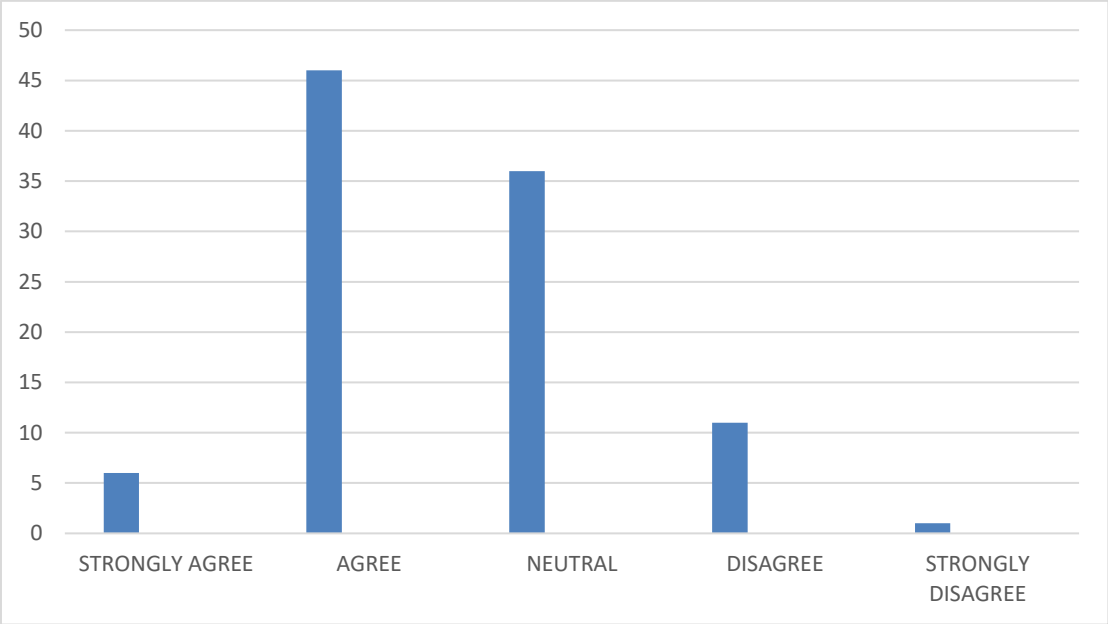

Chart 9 Showing Loneliness Experienced by the Respondents While on Screen

Analysis

The data reveals that 46 percent and 6 percent of respondents agree and strongly agree on the view loneliness is experienced while working on the screen and 36 percent of the respondents were of the neutral opinion on the above said statement while 11percent of the respondents disagree feeling loneliness while on screen with 1percent disagreeing on the same. Hence, majority of the respondents agree to the fact that working on the screen for prolonged duration led to loneliness.

Hypothesis 1

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between gender and stress experienced after prolonged screen time.

Question: 1						
Respondents' perception on being stressed due to prolonged screen time						
Gender	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**
Female	0	0	9	34	6	49
Male	1	2	10	26	12	51
Total	1	2	19	60	18	100

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between gender and stress experienced after prolonged screen time.

χ^2 Tests			
	Value	**df**	**p**
χ^2	6.08	4	0.193
N	100		

Analysis

The chi -square test value is 6.08 with 4 degrees of freedom and p-value of 0.193. Since the p-value is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This means there is no significant relationship between gender and the experience of feelings of stress during or after prolonged screen time based on the provided data.

Hypothesis 2

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between age group and frequency of anxiety experienced on routine screen time habit.

Question: 2						
Respondents' perception on prolonged screen time leading to anxiety						
Age Group	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**
18-25	0	3	16	22	2	43
26-35	1	4	9	10	9	33
36-45	0	0	3	9	3	15
46-55	0	1	6	0	0	7
56+	0	0	0	1	1	2
Total	1	8	34	42	15	100

χ^2 Tests			
	Value	**df**	**P**
χ^2	27.5	16	0.036
N	100		

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between age group and frequency of anxiety experienced on routine screen time habit.

Analysis

The chi -square test value is 27.5 with 16 degrees of freedom and p-value of 0.036. Since the p-value is less than the typical significance level of 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis. This means there is significant relationship between gage group and the frequency of experiencing of feelings of anxiety because of screen time habits based on the provided data.

Hypothesis 3

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between gender and the perception that screen time habits impact the ability to maintain a work -life balance.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between gender and the perception that screen time habits impact the ability to maintain a work -life balance.

Respondents' perception on ability to balance work life due to prolonged screen time						
Gender	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**
Female	7	6	18	17	1	49
Male	7	12	16	13	3	51
Total	14	18	34	30	4	100

χ^2 Tests			
	Value	**df**	**p**
χ^2	3.61	4	0.461
N	100		

Analysis

The chi -square test value is 3.61 with 4 degrees of freedom and p-value of 0.461. Since the p-value is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This means there is no significant relationship between gender and the perception that screen time habits impact the ability to maintain a work -life balance based on the provided data.

Findings

- A significant portion of respondents spend extensive time on screens, raising concerns about screen fatigue and challenges in maintaining work-life balance.
- Burnout associated with prolonged screen use appears to be a prevalent issue among the respondents.
- Many respondents report experiencing anxiety linked to their screen time habits, suggesting this is a common concern.
- A strong majority agrees that extended screen use negatively impacts their sleep quality.

- More than half of the respondents feel that excessive screen time contributes to feelings of loneliness or isolation.

Suggestions

- Encourage employees to take regular breaks from screens to reduce stress and prevent burnout.
- Develop policies supporting work-life balance, such as flexible working hours and remote work options.
- Offer mindfulness and relaxation programs to help employees manage screen time effects.
- Provide training on effective screen time management to improve focus and productivity.
- Regularly monitor employees' physical and mental health to identify and address screen time-related issues early.
- Design ergonomic workspaces to minimize physical health issues related to prolonged screen time.
- Educate employees on good sleep hygiene practices to mitigate screen time's impact on sleep quality.
- Adopt a workplace culture that recognizes the importance of mental health and encourages employees to seek help.
- Offer flexible work arrangements to reduce the pressure of prolonged screen time.
- Conduct regular assessments of screen time habits and their impacts to continuously improve workplace policies and support systems.

Conclusion

While digital tools are integral to modern work, their excessive use poses significant challenges to mental health, productivity, and physical health. By adopting comprehensive strategies to manage screen time and support employee well-being, organizations can create a healthier, more productive work environment. The findings highlight the need for a balanced approach to digital work, where technology serves as a tool for efficiency without compromising the health and well-being of employees. Ultimately, fostering a supportive and health-conscious corporate culture can lead to sustained productivity and a more engaged and satisfied workforce.

The analysis reveals that the respondents, primarily young adults with limited experience and working mainly in Information Technology, are experiencing increased screen time over the years. This increase has led to mixed impacts on work efficiency, with some feeling better equipped to handle conflicts, while others face significant stress, burnout, and fatigue. The negative health consequences of prolonged screen time are evident, including stress, anxiety, poor sleep quality, and physical health issues, indicating a need for better ergonomic practices and more frequent breaks. Despite engaging in mindfulness exercises, many struggle with concentration and maintaining relationships, pointing to the ongoing challenge of balancing screen time with personal and professional life. Respondents also feel pressured by work demands to spend extended periods on screens, although most believe their screen time habits align with their personal values. Overall, the findings highlight the need for effective strategies to manage screen time, reduce its negative effects, and improve both mental and physical well-being.

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