The Effects of Technological Devices on Short-Term Memory

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Technology plays a key role in today's society, but with all the buzz about its benefits, the effects it has on our memory and mental well-being are often overlooked. Heavy technology use has been linked to fatigue, stress, and depression in young adults, and social media has been shown to affect memory. In order to discover technology's direct effects on short-term memory capacity, sixty individuals, the majority of which were high school students, were given a visual digit span test, a tool for measuring short-term memory capacity, once using index cards and once using a PowerPoint presentation. The average score on the index card-based digit span test was higher than that of the PowerPoint-based test, as 43% of individuals had a higher score on the card-based test. However, this difference was shown to be statistically insignificant. Additionally, slight trends for females to have higher average digit span scores than males were observed. Only sixty participants were tested; with a larger sample size, the insignificance of the difference in the data could be rejected, and sturdier assumptions could be made about the effects that our addicting devices have on our minds.

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