

## - Senses and sensation

# Excessive screen time grays out brain, senses

The Manila Times · 5 Oct 2023 · B10 · BY ANDREANNA DY Andreanna Dy is a Grade 11 student at Faith Academy in Cainta, Rizal.

---

DESPITE the widespread knowledge that excessive screen time has several harmful side effects, many people, including adults and teenagers, continue to spend uncontrolled amounts of time on their devices and online. It has reached the point where most people's lives now revolve around using internet-connected devices, whether for putting in extra effort on a project or binge-watching shows.

The National Institute of Drug Abuse, in an article posted on its website, "Can too much screen time harm you?" said screen time greatly affects the development of an adolescent's brain. In addition, it said that staring at a screen when you are supposed to be asleep reduces your brain's melatonin production. But how does the knowledge of excessive screen time's harmful effects influence people's device usage habits?

In a survey of 74 respondents within the age brackets of 13 to 59 years old, I found out 34.2 percent of participants admitted to having spent more than 7 hours on their devices; 46.6 percent of participants claim that they are addicted to screen time; and 88.4 percent of participants reported they noticed negative results from their excessive internet habits.

According to an article titled "What does screen time do to my brain?" which holds information from medical doctor Victoria L. Dunckley as posted on pstdam.edu, screen time essentially overstimulates the brain, leading to poor concentration. As reported by 69.9 percent of my survey's participants, they noticed that they could concentrate on work better without their devices near them.

In addition, Dr. Dunckley said that screen time is the cause of increased stress. Chronic and acute stress can also create unusual hormonal and brain changes that may induce irritability. In my survey, 65.8 percent of participants reported that social media continues to stress them out despite their decision to be active users.

Dunckley communicated that studies have shown that late-night electronics have been found to be connected to depression, which can lead to more life-threatening risks. More than half of respondents, 64.4 percent, reported willingly spending time on their devices rather than getting the good night's rest their body needs.

Despite all these reported side effects of excessive screen time, most people welcome their screen addiction with open arms. However, more thought should be given to this topic. There is a need to question and weigh the pros and cons of persisting with unhealthy internet habits. Exceedingly undesirable results may not appear at the moment, but prolonging this routine will only lead to damaging permanent effects, which will surely end with regret.