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Blog Post #18

Student Insights on Digital Awareness: Feedback from Our Smartphone Addiction Seminars



We recently concluded an innovative educational program dedicated to digital awareness. This initiative consisted of four seminars focused on the topic of smartphone addiction, involving 124 Italian students of 15-17 y.o. in a collective journey of reflection and growth. In an era where smartphones have become almost natural extensions of our bodies, we felt an urgent need to create a space for authentic dialogue with young people. Our goal was not to demonize technology, but rather to help students develop a more conscious and healthy relationship with their digital devices.

At the end of these four sessions, we administered a questionnaire to gather impressions, evaluations, and suggestions. The results were enlightening and demonstrate how much students need these opportunities for discussion.

The Importance of Interaction

The most frequent request in the feedback was clear: more interaction. Students greatly appreciated the moments when they could speak, compare perspectives, and share their own experiences. As one student wrote, "It was useful to listen to the various experiences of others and to discuss these topics together". Another student emphasized that active involvement was the best aspect of the course.

Practical and Concrete Tools

Many students found the time-tracking and monitoring apps we presented to be particularly useful. "The apps for limiting smartphone addiction that they recommended were very helpful," several students noted. There was also strong appreciation for the section dedicated to concrete solutions, with students finding value in practical tips on how to reduce phone usage.

The Impact of Real-World Data

Presenting real data and statistics had a significant impact. Students noted that "real data is very useful for helping us understand the situation" and that "the reported data was very interesting and had a clear source, which made it more credible". These numbers helped the students become aware of a phenomenon they often experience personally without fully recognizing it.

Activities for Self-Reflection

Activities requiring introspection were especially well-received. Students stated that reflecting on their phone usage time and the reasons why they use their devices helped them understand many things. This confirms that young people are willing to pause and think when they are offered the right environment.

Constructive Criticism and Quantitative Results

The feedback also included constructive criticism. Some students felt certain content was repetitive or already known from school curricula. Others suggested not taking for granted that the proposed ideas would be received positively by everyone. One student noted that the core issue is not the tool itself, but how we use it, a perspective that invites us to shift focus from the object to the behavior.

The questionnaire results paint a positive picture: average satisfaction with the overall course organization was 3.27 out of 5, with the interaction methods 3.28 out of 5, and with the quality of the activities offered 3.22 out of 5. These numbers are encouraging but, above all, indicate concrete room for improvement.

Conclusion

This journey has taught us that young people are not only aware of the problems related to smartphone use, but are also eager to address them constructively. They are not looking for moralizing lectures, but for authentic spaces for reflection and concrete tools to better manage their digital lives.

For us educators, their suggestions are invaluable. They remind us that the effectiveness of an educational intervention is measured by the ability to listen, adapt, and create meaningful experiences. We will continue on this path, carrying with us the voices and reflections of these students. Ultimately, educating for digital awareness is not about imposing rules from above, but about walking together toward a freer and more conscious use of technology.



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