Screen Time Effects on Children and Dilemma of Parents

Rama Banerjee, Ph. D.

Anupam Nagar, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, INDIA

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Author

Rama Banerjee, Ph. D.

E-mail : ramapaul1818@gmail.com

shodhsamagam1@gmail.com

Plagiarism Checker X - Report
Originality Assessment

6%

Overall Similarity

Date: Jun 3, 2025 (07:27 AM)
Matches: 146 / 2470 words
Sources: 10

Remarks: Low similarity detected, consider making necessary changes if needed.

Verify Report: Scan this QR Code

ABSTRACT

This research paper focuses completely on the screen time effect on children and ideological parenting tips implementation. It is discussing about impact of screen time on developmental health of child and about the contents which are being served to children on the name of entertainment. Few of cartoon shows name has been mentioned to discuss about its content and effect of those content on children. Role of all the family members in inculcating, lessening or eliminating the screen time from the daily routine of the kids is discussed in brief. The dilemma through which parents goes through is explained when it comes to following the ideological parenting philosophy and how one should handle the situation is discussed. How all these things all together harms the growth of the children is explained in the research paper. The methodology which has been adopted for this research paper is qualitative and descriptive on the basis of which an analysis has been done to present the health issues which children face due to excess screen time.

KEY WORDS

Parents, Children, Ideological, Electronic, Health, Development.

INTRODUCTION

Parents of present generation are facing many issues related to their kids which never existed in past. The lifestyle and technologies have changed and upgraded so much that it has been included as basic needs in day-to-day life. People are adopting and utilizing these technological facilities available to make their life easier and luxurious. Along with making their works easier parents nowadays are preferring to engage their children in electronic gadgets like TV,

laptop, i-pad, mobile phones by playing cartoons in it so that parents can get some personal time for themselves. Children are being provided with their own tablets, mobile phones and even laptops for their personal usage so that they don't have to wait for gadgets of their parents to watch their own shows and cartoons. This culture has been developed in last two decades where children having their personal electronics items and gadgets has become matter of status along with providing personal space for parents.

There are many parents who does not want to give such privacy and screen time to their kids in so early age and tries to manage their whole day activity by making themselves available for their children and plans a fruitful schedule for them. This scenario changes when the children start learning by observing what they see in the world outside, they start demanding for the things which are not suitable or fruitful for them and start behaving stubbornly when not provided with he desirable things. At such moments parents put their foot down in front of such stubbornness of children because of philosophical parenting ideologies which they have received from old people of the society or blogs advocating such parenting tips. Many institutions are publishing print or non-print articles on parenting and promoting them it in every possible place without even realizing that each and every child is different, the circumstances in their surroundings are different. The parents get confused whether to nurture their children according to the practical situation or ideological instructions, finally believing that ideological tips are from experts as a result allowing their children with what they seek for.

These small decisions of providing daily screen time with unchecked contents are ruining the emotional, mental and physical health of children and letting parents lose all their control over their own child's development.

How is Screen Time Affecting Development of Babies?

Screen time has multiple affects on development of children and their overall personality, few of which are:

1. **Myopia:** Myopia is an eye condition which causes unclear far vision and is also known as short-sightedness or near-sightedness. A study in China shows that children exposed to screen before age of 1 year are four times more likely to develop myopia by preschool age, than kids who are exposed to screen after 3 years, where as kids exposed to screen before 2 years of age have double the risk of myopia than those who are exposed after 3 years.

2. **Developmental Delays:** Prolonged screen time for babies brings developmental delays on them which is now a days a major problem with which parents are dealing. It delays development of communication skills, gross-motor skills, fine motor skills, and problem-solving skills.

3. **Reduces Empathy:** Face to face interactions are the only way by which young children learn to understand non-verbal signals and interpret them, but exposure to screen reduces the ability of babies to read human emotion and control over their frustration.

4. **Language Development:** Language is an important part of communication and screen time diverts the babies from activities which helps them in language development like reading and verbal interactions with family members or care takers.

5. **Physical Health:** Physical health means over all physical well-being of anyone which includes healthy body and sound sleep for getting which some physical activities are required like plating with toys, walking, crawling, creeping. But screen time keeps away the babies from all these activities resulting in to weight gain, weak muscles and sleep disruption.

6. **Cognitive Problems:** Excessive screen time may affect the ability of babies to pay attention, concentration power and focus. It can also lead to brain activity changes and problems with executive functioning further in life.

All these issues are awaiting the babies whose parents neglects the side-affects of screen timings and facilitates their babies with gadgets as and when they demand for it. Just to have some personal time and space parents are compromising with babies' health and future.

Content being Served as Screen Time

Practically it seems difficult to avoid or boycott screen time completely so in difficult or unavoidable situation screen time is considerable but at the same time what content is being served for entertainment of the children is also a matter of concern. The development of brain takes place up to 6 years of age and during these years it is very important and crucial to see what the children are listening and watching, not only through screen but also in near by surroundings. It is very important to keep the home environment good and healthy for healthy development of children's brain and also the content they are watching during their screen time.

For entertainment of children so many online contents are available and parents does not bother to spare some time for choosing content to be served to their children when screen time is really needed as help, resulting which the kids learn unwanted behaviour from cartoons. Like the content in "Meow-Meow" is about beating insects and the eggs who are thieves, seeing which the behaviour of children becomes aggressive and they start beating every object they see around in the house. In content of "Gecko's Garage" the frog is a good mechanic who repairs and washes vehicles in his garage, seeing which the children start breaking their toys and then repairs it by considering themselves as mechanic. The Youtube channel named "Babybus" is serving variety of contents in terms of stories and contents related to moral and fundamental duties but along with all these it is also promoting usage of junk food among kids. One can see finger fries, soda, coca-cola, pizza, ice creams, burgers are being consumed by the characters of the cartoon seeing which the children also demands for such edible items from their parents which is not good for their health and growth. Cartoons like "Tom n Jerry", "Monkey and Trunky" though teaches good lessons but are speechless which again is not good for the development of the children.

Basically, children start behaving the same way what they have observed during their screen time, so it is necessary to choose content properly if there is need of giving occasional screen time to the children, otherwise screen time is a big No-No for them. It has been observed that children watching such contents or having long screen time can develop Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It is a neurodevelopment condition which leads to abnormal social interaction and communication, repetitive behaviours and interests, sensory processing can become intense spectrum of abilities.

Role of Family in Practice of Regular Screen Time

In India maximum people are living in joint family which is like a boon for babies when it comes to learning about the social relations, and our culture and traditions. But when it comes to the usage of gadgets and screen time unlike past time family members now days immediately take help of these facilities for engaging children of the house. They facilitate the children with TV, mobile or other electronic gadgets rather than engaging them with some physical activities, interactions and games. Family members find it difficult to spare time for children of the house like the parents because they can not handle crying kids and pacifies them by fulfilling their unnecessary demands like watching TV, eating unhealthy food, etc.

It has been observed that grand parents in Indian families let the children do what makes them happy and what seems them attractive without realizing that they are unintentionally creating obstacles in the natural development process of babies and when parents interrupt family members do not take it in healthy way.

Parents today are vigilant enough about each and every developmental milestone of their child resulting which they try their level best to keep their child away from the things that hinder the development process of the child, but unfortunately can not control the adults who in the name of taking care of the children allows them to do what is not good for child's development, especially the long and extended hours of screen time.

Effect of Parenting Philosophies on Parents

Ideological parenting tips are available easily at every virtual and real place. People are writing n number of articles and posting blogs on ideological parenting. These tips provide a framework to parents for raising

April to June 2025   www.shodhsamagam.com
A Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, Referred, Quarterly, Multi Disciplinary and Bilingual International Research Journal

Impact Factor
SJIF (2023): 7.906

591

their child. "A framework" means some pre-decided ways to handle things or situation with kids, but at he same time it does not clarify and covers the conditions which parents are encountering practically in day-to-day life. It is important to understand that situations can not be ideal all the time to follow any framework, it can not be same in every child-parents relationship.

There comes time when these tips do not work at all in practicality and in that very moment the parent undergoes a dilemma whether to follow the guidelines of the framework or act as per the demand of the situation. The children become spoiled brats in many cases if they are not handled with some strictness. So, it is necessary for parents to overcome the effect of fake parenting ideologies and to make their children realize that things will not always be in their favour in life, it is necessary to provide them with lessons that are opposite to their expectations.

CONCLUSION

All the studies ever done in the field of affect of screen time on children has come up with results on negative side i.e., it has more side-effects. The channels for kids are running different types of shows, but all of them are not serving contents that are growth friendly. Whenever it is unavoidable situation and screen time is the only option to engage child, parent has to be vigilant about screen time duration and its content.

Parents including other members of the family should start prioritizing children in front of their personal time and space. The main motive of parent should be proper growth and development of the child because this small prioritization can save the little ones from n-number of developmental problems. It is better to stay attentive right from the start than to seek therapists, doctors and counsellors in later on stages of child's development. Apart from physical growth, prioritizing children will also have good effect on their emotional health and social relations. They will feel more connected with all the members of the family, they will understand the value of emotional need and will grow up being a caring person.

Parents should make sure that no members of the family encourage the habit of regular screen time. It is important for the elder members of the family to understand the logic behind such decision of parents and support them in it instead for preaching old school ways of upbringing the child. It is also important to understand that at the end it's the child who is going to suffer the repercussions of other's leniency. All the family members should be understanding enough to accept the fact that any type of screen timing is harmful for the little ones. It is duty of all family members to educate the children about good and bad habits.

By choosing the content in emergency cases parents can save the children from adverse effects of contents promoting consumption of junk food, violence, anger, dangerous games, etc. The content chosen should preach moral values, promote consumption of healthy food, funny without sarcasm and should inculcate emotional bonding with loved ones, spreading love and harmony, harmless actions. Taking care of all these things will lead the coming generation towards a healthy and peaceful life ahead.

Parents are advised to implement philosophical tips of parenting to an extent because those tips are not ideal for every situation. There are moments when parents have to act according to the demand of time. Philosophical tip suggests loving and calm behaviour all the time but with respect to screen time such tips should be followed up to a limit and if no change is visible then it's time for some strictness and tough decisions. Its only the parents who can decide good or bad for any child at such early age, so parents should keep a close eye on each and every activity of their children without being a villain on their part because poking them in every small matter can make them irksome and stubborn.

Most importantly, provide children with options of play time that seems attracting and entertaining to them to lessen the screen time. While choosing the toys keep their intellectual growth in mind and allow them to discover their own path of learning. Do not push them to anything that makes them unhappy, try putting efforts on small and new techniques of keeping them engaged without any screen time. It is better to keep the

April to June 2025   www.shodhsamagam.com
A Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, Referred, Quarterly, Multi Disciplinary and Bilingual International Research Journal

Impact Factor
SJIF (2023): 7.906

592

children away from those who spend maximum of their time on the screen. The "work from home" culture of corporates has changed the working style of the era, so parents should make sure that their should be separate room in the house for working on the screen which is not much accessible by the children of the family.

REFERENCES

1. Keria, S.; Almas, A.; Guhn, M. (2022) Screen Time and Developmental Health: Results from An Early Childhood Study in Canada, *BMC Public Health,* Vol. 22, No. 310, 2022.

2. Muppalla, Sudheer Kumar; Vuppalapati, Sravya (2023) ffects of Excessive Scree Time on Child Development: An Updated Review and Strategies for Management, *Cureus,* Vol. 15, No. 6, June, 2023.

3. Panjeti, Madan; Vaishnavi, N. (2023) Impact of Screen Time on Children's Development: Cognitive, Language, Physical, and Social and Emotional Domains, *Multimodal Technologies and Interaction,* Vol.7 No. 5, 52.

4. Ponti, Michelle (2023) Screen Time and Preschool Children: Promoting Health and Development in a Digital World, *Paediatrics and Child Health,* Vol. 28, Issue 3, p. 184-192, June 2023.

****

April to June 2025 www.shodhsamagam.com
A Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, Referred, Quarterly, Multi Disciplinary and Bilingual International Research Journal

Impact Factor
SJIF (2023): 7.906

593