

A Study to Assess the Mothers' Perception Regarding the Effect of Electronic Media on Child Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

In today's world, there is a strong and ubiquitous connection between electronic media and children. Children are exposed to electronic media from an early age. Even though electronic media can provide entertainment and educational content, its effect on children's development is a matter of concern. Excessive screen usage might promote sedentary habits and impede social and emotional growth. Well-being of children depends on finding the right balance between utilising the advantages of electronic media and minimising their risk. The purpose of study was to assess the mother's perception regarding effect of electronic media on child well-being. The descriptive study was adopted a convenient non-probability sampling technique. Data from 100 mothers were gathered by self-constructed child well-being scale. The self-constructed well-being scale was measured based on Domains Physical well-being, Emotional well-being, social well-being and Coping behaviour of child. The result denotes that the mean value of mother's perception regarding effect of electronic media on child well-being was 114.4, 63% of respondents identified mild effects, 34% had optimum well-being and 3% had moderate effects of using electronic media on their child's well-being. Electronic media has become part of daily life, and many technology projects target children, who often find them entertaining. Due to its enticing features and program, electronic media is drawing children's attention. Usage of electronic media can have both positive and negative effect. Since children do not yet understand the negative effect of electronic media, its critical to limit media usage among Z generation.

Keywords: Effect, mother's perception, Electronic media, wellbeing

INTRODUCTION

The present era is marked by a significant shift in technology, where it has become dominant over humans. Generation Z is a part of this era. This generation's children are mainly called digital natives because they were born when the internet was widely used. The increasing number of young generations experience extensive use of digital technology, mostly these days, starting as

early as childhood, due to the easily available and affordable touch-screen devices among younger children; now such a generation can be called the "touch generation". From the moment hundreds of millions of children enter the world, they are steeped in a steady stream of digital communication and connection. As children grow, the capacity of digitalization to shape their life experiences grows with them, offering seemingly

limitless opportunities to learn and to socialize, to be counted and to be heard. Children of this generation have had certain characteristics, such as being internet experts rather than talking face-to-face, using social media platforms to communicate, always choosing short-form content, having a shorter attention span, being prone to anxiety, and being financially minded. Electronic media has advanced at an unparalleled rate over the past few decades. Which provides a wide range of material, from educational programs and interactive apps to social networking and video games.^[1] Children spending time in front of screens has dramatically increased in present generation as a result of the widespread usage of smartphones, tablets, laptops, and televisions in homes. Due to this increase in consumption, concerns regarding the possible effects of prolonged exposure to electronic media have surfaced. As our society becomes increasingly intertwined with technology, the relationship between children and electronic media becomes vital.^[2]

After the COVID-19 pandemic technology has developed to a great extent and has become an important part of everyone's life. The pandemic has brought many challenges to children, they have been forced to continue their education online. Under the shade of the pandemic, children spend more time with electronic media for education, connectivity, entertainment, etc. Taking a closer look at these electronic media use trends in the era of COVID-19, we can see a marked raise in the usage.^[3]

Wellbeing: "where the goal of life isn't feeling good but living virtuously" - said by Aristotle.

Wellbeing is the state of being comfortable, healthy, and happy physically, socially, psychologically, and emotionally. For children, well-being will lay the foundations for healthy behaviour and educational attainment.^[4]

Child well-being refers to the overall health, happiness, safety, and development of the child. A child's well-being is greatly

influenced by a variety of elements, including their access to high-quality education, their environment's safety and stability, their health and nutrition, and their love connections with their careers. Understanding well-being will provide crucial information on children's growth and development patterns. To be a perfect and productive citizen for tomorrow, promoting children's well-being is a common obligation of families, communities, governments, and other organizations. For children's future achievement and general quality of life, it is crucial to foster their well-being.^[5]

Today's children are naturally literate enough to use digital media, and this phenomenon generates advantages and disadvantages. Reports were made regarding the effect of electronic media on the well-being of children.^{[6][7][8]} Society becomes increasingly intertwined with technology. The dynamic relationship between children and electronic media has garnered significant attention due to its profound impact on their well-being. The common health issues reported are children not having eye strain or vision problems, bad posture, addiction, not getting enough sleep, obesity, delays in learning and social skills, negative effects on school performance, behaviour problems, problematic internet use, risky behaviours, sexting, cyberbullying, aggression, social withdrawal, etc., which will affect the child's development and overall wellbeing.^[9] Media's influence over children has steadily increased as more sophisticated and new types of media have been developed and made accessible to the general public. Due to the increasing accessibility and affordability of family media, it is now more readily available to children.^[10] At the same time, media might benefit children's health in various ways. Even though there are many issues, all are maximising their beneficial qualities and minimising the detrimental ones.

The study adopted conceptual framework based on Nola J. Pender's Health Promotion Model^[11]. It mainly focuses on the goal of health promotion. Pander explained that

positive health-promoting behaviours can improve the health or well-being of an individual. Healthcare providers, teachers, and parents can all use Pander's theoretical framework and adopt healthy behaviours that improve the well-being of an individual. In the present study, health-promoting behaviours can include better utilisation of electronic media, having a proper diet, outdoor activities, proper social involvement, etc. We cannot fully take it from children. The only thing we can do for the coming generation is to focus on the guidance and safe use of technology and electronic media.

Objectives

- To assess the mother's perception regarding the effect of electronic media on the child well-being
- To assess mother's perceptions regarding electronic media usage among their child
- To find out an association between mother's perception regarding the effect of electronic media on child well-being with selected baseline variables.

Hypothesis

H₁1: There will be significant association between mothers' perception on effect of using electronic media on child well-being with selected baseline variables.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Study adopted Non-experimental research design which is descriptive in nature. Samples for the study was mothers of children studying in 7th and 8th standard in the selected schools of Mangalore. Total Sample size of 100 mothers were selected using Non probability Convenient sampling technique. Data from the samples were gathered using baseline variables and a self-structured child well-being rating scale. The baseline variables comprise characteristics of mothers and their children. such as Age of mother, Religion, Education status of mother, Occupation of mother, Monthly income of

family, Type of family, Class of the child, Gender of child, and Ordinal position in family. Along with this part it includes information regarding Usage of electronic media in their children such as Child owns any personal gadgets, Purpose of child using gadgets, Screen time of the child in a day and usage of gadgets. The self-structured child well-being rating scale is used to assess the child well-being. It consisted of 30 items, which gives the rating from 1 to 5 for each item. Items in the tool had grouped under four domains such as physical well-being, emotional well-being, social well-being, and coping behaviour of the child. The tool has been validated by experts from related domain. Reliability of the tool was assessed using Cronbach's alpha reliability test and it was found to be (0.79).

Both the descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the acquired data. To describing the baseline variable, frequency and percentage of data were calculated. The child's well-being was analysed using the

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The child's well-being was analysed using the mean, mean percentage and standard deviation, Chi square analysis was done to determine the association between child well-being with selected baseline variables.

RESULT

1. Description of the baseline variables

Result of present study disclose that the majority 35% of the samples were in the age group ≤ 40 years, 54% of the samples are Hindus, 33% mothers were graduates. Highest percentage of the respondents (35%) are unemployed, 29% were had a monthly family income of Rs. 25001-35000, and 67% were belongs to nuclear family. Majority 53% of sample's children are studying in 8th standard and both boys and girls represented in equal percentage (50%). Majority 47% of children were first ordinal position in the

family, 43% were second and least 8% were third ordinal position in the family.

2. Usage of electronic media

In this study most 67% children not had any personal gadgets. Majority 59% children

were using gadgets for academic purpose, 22% were for gaming and 19% were using for social networking. Most 82% children use gadgets at evening after school, and least 8% were use late night, and 6% were use early morning before school.

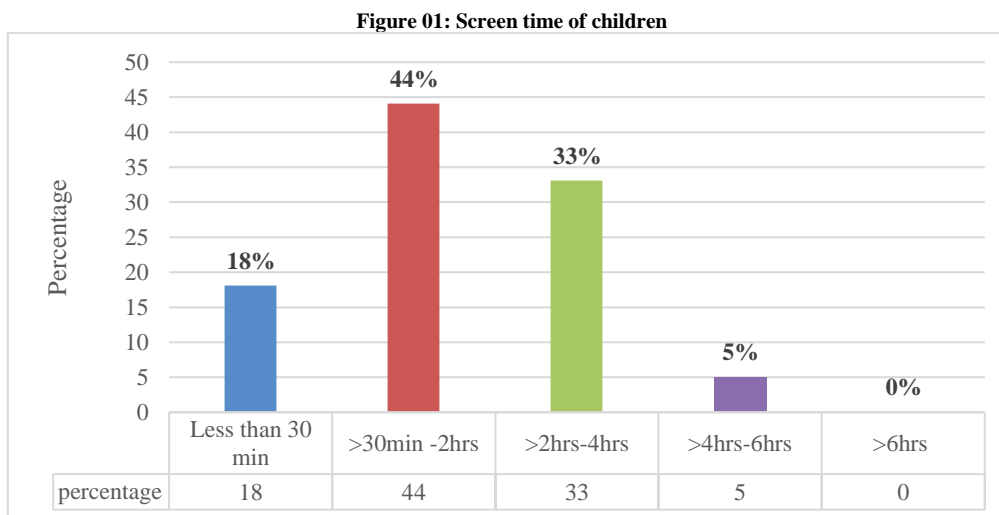


Fig 01: screen time of children. Majority of the children had screen time 30minutes to 2 hours, about 33 percentage of children had less than 2hours to 4 hours, very few five

percentage were had 4hours to 6 hours of screen time.

3. Effect of using electronic media on child well-being

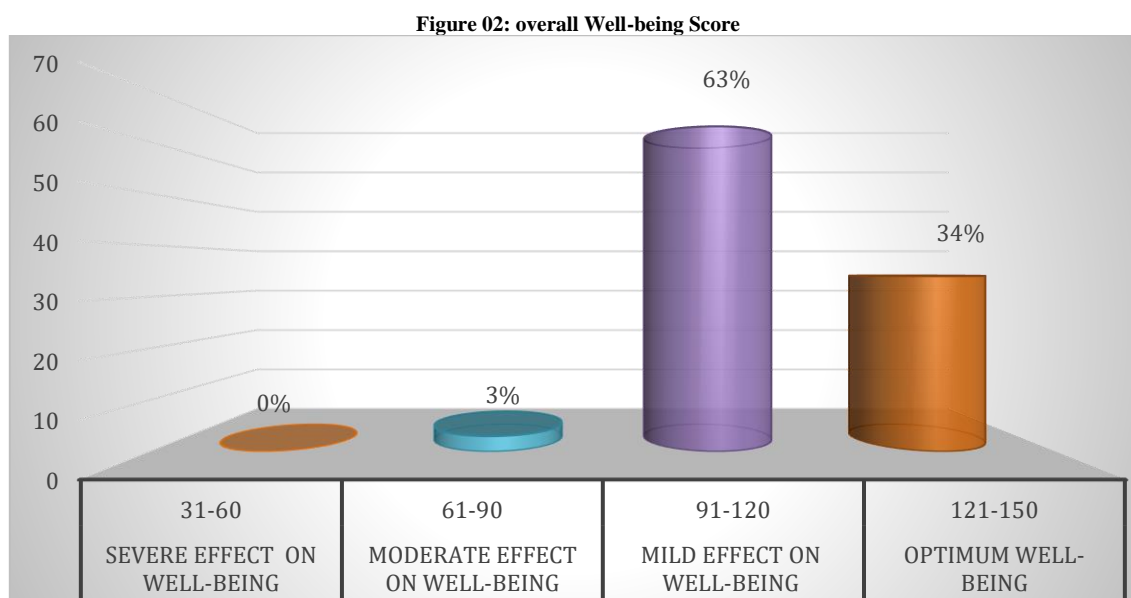


Figure 02 shows that most 63% of mothers perceived that their children had mild effect on well-being, 34% of mothers perceived that their children had optimum well-being and least 3% of the mothers perceived that

their child had moderate effect on well-being. The Mean value of 114.4 and the Mean percentage was 76.26 %. The standard deviation (SD) is 12.10.

4. Association between mothers' perception on effect of using electronic media on child well-being with selected baseline variables.

The following hypothesis were formulated at 0.05 level of significance

H₀1: There will be no significant association between mothers' perception on effect of using electronic media on child well-being with selected baseline variables.

H₁1: There will be significant association between mothers' perception on effect of using electronic media on child well-being with selected baseline variables.

Chi square test was used to find the association between effect of using electronic media on child well-being with selected baseline variables. It gives the calculated value that occupation of mother ($x^2=3.86$), gender of the child ($x^2=5.79$) and purpose of owning personal gadget ($x^2=7.08$) is greater than the table value (3.84) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence null hypothesis was rejected.

DISCUSSION

Among 100 mothers, majority 35% of mothers were in the age group ≤ 40 years, 31% were in the age group 41-45 years and 30% were in age group 46-50 years. Among the mothers, majority 53% of their children are belongs to 8th standard and 47% of their children are belongs to 7th standard. In that equal 50% were male children and 50% were female children. The education status of mother, majority 33% mothers were graduates and 29% of mothers were had high school education, majority 35% of the samples were unemployed.

Mothers reported the usage of electronic media among children most 67% children not had any personal gadgets, majority 59% of children were using gadgets for academic purpose, 22% were for gaming and 19% were using for social networking. Mother reported the screen time majority 44% children had 30 minutes to 2 hours, 33% had >2 hours to 4 hours, lowest 18% were had less than 30 minutes and least 5% were had >4 hours to 6

hours of screen time. Also mothers reported most 82% children use gadgets at evening after school, and least 8% were use late night, and 6% were use early morning before school. Similar study was carried out in California on parents' perceptions of child screen time during the COVID 19 pandemic. The study was conducted among 48 parents and data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis and inductive approach. Study findings revealed that, parents perceived total screen time of children has increased profoundly, it noted that screens were used for both school and recreational purpose. In that more than four hours were spending for recreation. Most parents perceived that screen time has more negative. Also restriction in screen time causes negative responds in children, and parents were concerned with children aren't getting enough physical activities^[12]

Mother's perception regarding effect of using electronic media on their child well-being in this study shows that most 63% of the mothers perceived that their children had mild effect on well-being, 34% of the mothers perceived that their children had optimum well-being and least 3% of the mothers perceived that their child had moderate effect on well-being. Similar findings were reported by a study done in Mangalore, Karnataka India. Were the impact of electronic media on health among adolescents. It was reported as majority 71% of the adolescents had impact on mental health, 68% of them had impact on environmental health, 66% of them had impact on physical health and least 14% of them had impact on social health.^[13] There were similar findings in several studies.^[14]

In this study association between child well-being with selected baseline variables describes that there will be significant association between mothers' perception on effect of using electronic media on child well-being with selected baseline variables, that is occupation of mother, gender of child and purpose of using personal gadgets had signification association.

This study assessed more than one domain of health, that is it covers physical well-being, emotional well-being, social well-being, and coping behaviour. Statistically speaking, this study reveals that most mothers perceived their child had a minimal impact on their overall wellbeing, although it well established that electronic media consumption has a negative impact on children's health. The idea that children can benefit or suffer from using electronic media is one of the most contentious topics. Present study is a descriptive in nature, hence we cannot establish the cause and effect. We can only able to find effects on well-being and the association, it can be considered as a limitation of the study. This study has emphasized the need for intervention to be based on parents and children, for the awareness on effects of electronic media usage.

CONCLUSION

In present study mother's perceived that majority of their child had mild effect on well-being. The findings of the study shed light on importance of educating parents and children on well-being and social relationship. Parents, teachers and school health nurses plays an important role in educating children regarding the ill effect of using electronic media and ensuring healthy lifestyle. The study strongly suggests implementing an organised teaching programme in schools to boost students' well-being and lower their risk of electronic media addiction.

Declaration by Authors

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