A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF SCREEN TIME ON THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LIFE OF STUDENTS

Dr. Shadab Paloji

Associate Professor, St. Xavier's Institute Of Education, Mumbai.

Abstract

Education is one of the key factors in building a good nation (Baiyere & Li, 2016). The Covid19 virus outbreak which made the entire globe face a storm, brought a new perspective about the role of technology. The technological development and the internet had changed the lives of people immensely and had also brought a huge change in various fields. But during the pandemic, a lot of changes happened especially in the education system across the world. E-learning was found to be a significant tool for effectively continuing the teaching-learning process during the lockdown. It has been supplying a solution to the learners who are unable to access the traditional means of education due to the present pandemic situation and the lockdown. (Nagata, Abdel, & Gabriel, 2020) The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus had caused a sudden interruption in the functioning of schools, colleges, universities, and other institutions. Amid these tough times, teachers began utilizing e-learning platforms to impart education to the students. (Soni, 2020). Teacher Education is an integral part of the educational system. It is intimately connected with society and is conditioned by the ethos, culture, and character of a nation. The constitutional goals, the directive principles of the state policy, the socio-economic problems and the growth of knowledge, the emerging expectations and the changes operating in education, etc. call for a suitable response from a futuristic education system and provide the perspective within which teacher education programme need to be viewed. India has a large system of education. There are many schools (primary, secondary, higher secondary) and teacher education institutions to cater to the need of education. When India got freedom, the then existing educational system was accepted as such because it was assumed that ending it abruptly could be chaotic. Though, today the scenario is quite different, and a rigorous deliberation is required in the field of teacher education.

Keywords: *Pandemic, Online Education, Social health, Emotional Health*

Introduction

E-learning refers to a learning system that is conducted via electronic media. Lectures have been also taken through WeChat, by sharing audio-visual videos through e-mails, by different online teaching apps like Zoom, Superstar, G-suite cloud meeting and so on. The development in technologies has offered a favourable domain for teaching-learning processes. Due to ongoing of COVID-19 an increased number of students are found to use the learning platform and apps. Some of the platforms are already set up like ED-TECH and G-Suite as they are available for reasonable prices and are easy to access. (Naik, Madolli, Melagiri, Davanageri, & Hiremath, 2017).

The lockdown and social-distancing recommendations led to higher overall screen time among children and adolescents for the duration of the enforcement of these restrictions. These will have to be periodically re-established to control future COVID-19 recurrences. Excessive screen time is associated with cardiovascular disease risk factors such as obesity, high blood pressure, and insulin resistance because it increases sedentary time and is associated with snacking. (Soni, 2020)

Objectives Of The Study

- To study the screen time of secondary school students.
- To study the effects of excessive screen time on the social life of secondary school students
- To study the effects of excessive screen time on the emotional life of secondary school students

Screen time can be defined as activities done by students in front of an electronic screen, such as watching TV, working on a computer or mobile phone, attending online-classes, or playing video games.

According to research it is best for young children to interact with others face to face. This is how they learn about non-verbal cues, eye contact, body language and other social and communication skills. Social interaction includes not only conversations but also the identification and understanding of nonverbal cues. These cues, including facial expression, tone of voice and eye contact, provide valuable information when interacting with others. In fact, those that better understand these cues tend to have better social success and stronger peer relationships. People learn these cues with experience throughout childhood and gradually integrate them into any social interaction. However, the availability of screen-based media and its broad use such as video games, computers, tablets, smart phones, and televisions may be decreasing the amount of social interaction in children. An individual learns social cues first from their interaction with family which consist of parents, siblings, and other relatives if any. It is currently that they learn to predict skill in affective labelling of facial expressions and understanding of emotions. As the individual grows older, their focus shifts from family to unrelated peers, whom they usually meet in school or at another social setup.

According to the research conducted by DeWeese (2014) because of the exposure to screen time, students are lesser connected to their peers and family in-person because of technology. The researcher found out that 93% of students in their adolescence respond to texts quickly or instantaneously once receiving a text resulting in anxiety about their performance in social media and other social realms. They are continuously disturbed while with friends and family and text other friends who are currently not with them. In a social setup 95% of students check their phones at once when bored. According to the experimental research conducted by (Uhls, et al., 2014), students who were away from screens for five days with many opportunities for in-person interaction improved significantly in reading facial emotion compared to those in the control group, who experienced their normal media exposure during an equivalent five-day period. Following were the data collected from around 50 secondary school children across the suburbs of Mumbai (from Bandra to Borivali) . the standards that children studied in ranged from 6th to eighth standard. Findings of the study:

Item 1 – usage of any electronic gadget for attending class during pandemic. Around 85% i.e., the majority of students used mobile phones for attending the classes.

Item 2 – The **time spent daily on any electronic devices** 35.3 % spent around 4 hours on an average, rest a

little less or more.

Item-3 - 70% of the students felt that there has been a **drastic increase in the time you spend with electronic devices for various purposes excluding online classes.** This would be because of the studying and assignments which have become online and also as the students have more access to electronic devices, they tend surf the internet or social media more. But 14.7% of students disagree to the drastic increase in the screen time while none of the students strongly disagreed to the same

Item 4 – the **time spent with the family** has reduced and 38.2% that is the majority get only between 4 to 6 hours with the family and a surprising result shows 20.6% students get only 2 to 4 hrs which is too less for social interactions.

Item 5 – 61.8% of students said that they **time spent with their friend** everyday while 23.5% of students said that they spend three days in a week with their friends. 2.9% of students said that they spend time with friends only once a week and the same percent said that they spend time only once a month while 8.8% said that they spend only some time with their friends throughout the year. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown students hardly have time to spend with their friends. the mode is offline and online both

Item 6 - 52.9% of students agreed that they repeatedly checked for notifications on any electronic devices while 14.7% strongly agreed that they do the same. 29.4% of students disagreed to regularly checking their devices for notifications while only 2.9% strongly disagreed to it.

The students in an interview said that they felt lost if the device especially mobile was not with them, the reason could be that the electronic devices have become a part of their lives as means of studying, entertainment, etc.

Item 7 - A survey conducted by the Education Ministry of India says that almost 70% students are happy with digital classes during Covid-19. However, this study shows a result which emphasizes that 40% students disagree while 20% strongly disagree to liking online classes more than regular offline school. Only 10% of the students strongly agree to liking online classes more than regular offline school.

Item 8 - 45% of the students do not find WhatsApp and Facebook to be as efficient as calling up a friend and/or meeting in person. Only 10% of the adolescent students find Facebook and WhatsApp better for communicating with a friend. This implies that majority of the sample is keener towards a one-to-one conversation than a conversation through WhatsApp or Facebook especially with friends.

Item 9 - Adolescent students are strongly inclined towards playing on the ground with their friends rather than on the phone (with a strong 55% agreeing). A study also suggests that adolescent boys spend more time playing sports than adolescent girls. This also shows how the sample could be more inclined towards outdoor games than.

Item 10 - 50% of the sample population agrees to be missing school activities and 35% strongly agree for the same. Only a 5% of the sample population strongly disagrees to missing the school activities. In the opinion of the researcher, this may imply that the students are still looking to socialize through school activities and may not be getting enough opportunities to improve their social health.

Item 11 - At times I feel sad, but do not know the reason for the same. This item focuses on only one emotion. The results of this item are very mixed. Which means that the sample population is mixed in terms of the effect

of the variables. The highest values show both disagreement and agreement equally (40%) to the emotional understanding of oneself. The researcher opines that some part of the population shows a sign of deteriorating emotional health. 7.5% of the sample population disagrees to not understanding emotions of oneself.

Item 12 - This item focuses on another emotion (frustration) which shows connection to online classes as well. 55%, disagrees to getting irritated and frustrated with the online classes. However, 7.5% and 22.5% of the sample population strongly agrees and agrees respectively to getting frustrated and irritated during online classes. The researcher opines that there some students who are affected emotionally by online classes.

Item 13 - **Communicate feelings to friends.** There is almost equal proportion of agreement (42.5%) and disagreement (45%) in the response when it comes to communicating one's feelings to one's friends. A small number of sample (2.5%) strongly disagrees to being able to communicate one's own feelings to one's friends. In the researcher's opinion, the data shows a strong possibility of poor emotional health of some adolescent students.

Item 14 - Item 17: **Like/ dislike for online the classroom**. 47.5% and 42.5%, agree and strongly agree respectively, to go back to offline setting of the school. Whereas a small part of the sample population disagrees and strongly disagree (5% each) to not wanting to go back in the offline setting. The researcher opines that majority of the students are willing to socialize more but may be feeling helpless considering the conditions. 55% of the students say that they are still comfortable with face-toface interactions. However, 5% and 27.5% of the sample population have forgotten how it is like to speak to a group of people, face-to-face. The researcher opines that some percentage of the sample population may be developing poor social health.

The data obtained can be divided into emotional health and social health which are the two dependent variables of the study. The data obtained shows that both the variables do show some relationship to screen-time. The sample population taken, includes majority of the adolescent students who use their digital screens in between 1 to 3 hours per day, which is the recommended hours as per research. Only a part of the population uses digital screens for more than 3 hours. Most of the sample population doesn't show deteriorating social health. However, this cannot be said to be true for emotional health of the sample.

In one of the studies done [RORL2] it is found that children today can find it more difficult to understand and manage their emotions and that today children get lesser opportunities to practice their socializing and emotional skills. This is, in a way, shown through this study. Studies have shown that emotional health is linked to sleep and thus better-quality sleep can help in reducing the effects of screen time on emotional health. Sleeping for a good 7 to 8 hours is extremely important for adolescents. Also, supplying a support system to the adolescent for venting out their emotions and providing opportunities for socializing, while maintaining social distancing, can go a long way to help improve social and emotional health

The online lectures and screen-time due to the Covid-19 pandemic does have an impact on the social health of students. The data above show that the social life of students with their family has been affected due to the increased time spent on electronic devices or in front of screen. Students spend time with people of their age only to play online games or to discuss their homework and there is less interaction for other purposes. This can really make learning social cues for students difficult in the future as it is in this age that they learn empathy,

intuition, etc. by interacting with their peers. While interacting with people in an online mode, people tend to miss social cues or emotions and therefore fail to understand them. If this form of interaction continues, students when in future must interact with face to face might find it difficult to express themselves and also understand the position of the other.

Online interactions have their own evils. It is through social media that students try to interact and there is a sort of competition to prove oneself based on certain set standards. These standards cannot include everyone which causes insecurity among the young minds. The situation now that we are in due to the pandemic cannot be ignored but parents and teachers can be more vigilant while letting students interact through online mode and try to talk to monitor the changes that the students are going through

According to the research conducted the researcher is of the opinion that due to the covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown, students had to attend their schools in an online mode and therefore eliminating screen-time completely is impossible. Moreover, in this age of technology it is nearly impossible for people be it adults or children to avoid using electronic devices. With electronic devices around, students can get anxious about the notifications and the changes happening around the world. It is necessary that they remain informed about the world around, but excess exposure can cause other psychological and social problems in young children and therefore teachers and guardians should be vigilant about the kind of information that their children are exposed and if it appropriate for their age.

Human beings are social animals and therefore cannot refrain from social interaction. In the situation which we are in currently has led to children failing to have situations of personal contact and social interaction. But it is possible for everyone to understand the drawbacks on the social life of young children due to the excess use of electronic devices and try to engage them in ways where they can have face-to-face interaction with people their age. This is how they can learn about social cues and emotions and use them while interacting with other individuals.

Conclusion:

Curriculum development is a continuous process and demands systems approach. Merely by periodic summative evaluations, implementation of the curriculum cannot be assured. It needs a system view to look at all the components simultaneously like curriculum structure, curriculum content, teacher training, support materials, and evaluation strategies. Children between the age of twelve and fifteen form a major population and the future generation of this world. It is necessary that they develop social skills right from an early age so that they can live in harmony. Thus, there is a dire need for students to be exposed to social interactions and learn about emotions like empathy and social cues.

Parents can refer to this research to understand the exposure of students to screen and to understand how it can have drastic effect on their ward's social life. Teachers can who are an important stakeholder can refer to this research and plan the timetable and their teaching techniques in such a way that the students have adequate gaps between their online sessions so that they have time to spend with their family and friends. Policymakers can refer to this research and understand that the future of this world need to have an all-round development so as to have a bright future. For this they can make policies during this pandemic regulating the online school time.

Curriculum can be developed considering the social development of the students and make provisions where students can have a balance of online and offline sessions.

Bibliography

Baiyere, A., & Li, H. (2016). Application of a virtual collaborative environment in a teaching case.

DeWeese, K.L. (2014). Screen Time, How Much Is Too Much? The Social and Emotional Costs of Technology on the Adolescent Brain.

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/definition/random-sampling

https://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1025&context=mzw

https://www.thh.nhs.uk/documents/_Departments/Research/InfoSheets/16_sampling_research.pdf

Nagata, J., Abdel, M., & Gabriel, K. (2020). Screen time for children and adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Naik, P., Madolli, S., Melagiri, L., Davanageri, P., & Hiremath, S. (2017). E-Learning based on Cloud-computing. International Journal of Engineering Science.

Owan, Valentine & Bassey, Bassey. (2019). Data Management Practices in Educational Research. 10.13140/RG.2.2.16819.04647.

Soni, V. D. (2020). Global Impact of E-learning during COVID 19.

Uhls, Y. T., Michikyan, M., Morris, J., Gracia, D., Small, G. W., Zgorou, E., &

Greenfield, P. M. (2014). Five days at outdoor education camp without screen improves teen skills with nonverbal emotion cues. Computers in Human Behaviour, Vol.39, 387-Izard, Carroll E. and Trentacosta, Christopher J.. "Emotional development". Encyclopedia Britannica, 2 Nov. 2020,

https://www.britannica.com/science/emotional-development.

Oregon Health & Science University. (2015, October 5). Face-to-face socializing more powerful than phone calls, emails in guarding against depression: Phone calls, digital communications less able to lower depression risk. ScienceDaily from

www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/10/151005080109.htm

https://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/article?contentid=643&language=english retrieved on 14th April 2021

https://www.encyclopedia.com/education/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and maps/social-health retrieved on 30th March 2021, Parent, J., Sanders, W., & Forehand, R. (2016). Youth Screen Time and Behavioral Health

The Role of Sleep Duration and Disturbances. Journal of developmental and behavioral pediatrics: JDBP,37(4), 277–284. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/ PMC4851593/

Jack Peat, July 24, 2017, Screen time hindering emotional intelligence of children, https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/lifestyle/screen-time-hindering-emotional-intelligencechildren-52725/, retrieved on 30th March 2021

https://www.winchesterhospital.org/healthlibrary/article?id=907792#:~:text=Previous%20studies%20have%20found%20that,teens%20recognized%20nonverbal%20emotional%20cues. , retrieved on 13th April 2021

Educreator Research Journal

Original Research Article

Jeremy Marty-Dugas, Daniel Smilek, The relations between smartphone use, mood, and flow experience, Personality and Individual Differences, Volume 164, 2020, 109966, ISSN 0191-8869, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2020.109966.

https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0191886920301550; Panwar Kanika, Internet Use among Tweens and Teens: Threats, Risks and Concerns, Explorations, ISS e-journal, Vol. 4 (1), April 2020, pp. 92-118, Published by Indian Sociological Society,

http://app.insoso.org/ISS_journal/Repository/5_Kanika_Panwar.pdf, retrieved on 13th April 2021

Iannotti, R.J., Janssen, I., Haug, E. et al. Interrelationships of adolescent physical activity, screen-based sedentary behaviour, and social and psychological health. Int J Public Health 54, 191–198 (2009). https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00038-009-5410