



## TO IDENTIFY THE RISK FACTORS LEADING TO INITIATION OF GADGET USE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY IN A TERTIARY CARE HOSPITAL

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### ABSTRACT

Gadgets are popular in children and as likely in elders. It's really surprising a 2 year old baby can and knows how to use a gadget, similar to how a kid knows to use a feeding bottle. In 2013 Daily mail reported that 29% of the toddlers can easily use the gadgets and remaining 70% are master by primary school age.

Too much gadget use could lead to speech or language delay, hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, learning problems, childhood depression and negative impact on character.

A lot of research has been done on this type of phenomena; this paper describes the factors leading to initiation of gadget use in children as well as the the attitude of parents towards it.

**Materials and Methods:** It is an observational study conducted at Pediatric Opd of MGM MCH Aurangabad from 1<sup>st</sup> October –31<sup>st</sup> December.

**Results:** From our statistical analysis of 200 patients it was observed that the maximum age for onset of gadget use was between 13 months-24 months(46.5%). The reason for initiation of gadget use was for feeding purposes (45%). Mobile was the commonest used gadget in children (58.5%). It was also observed that there was a direct correlation between social status and the use of gadget in children.

### KEYWORDS :

#### INTRODUCTION

The Modern technology is updated on a regular basis to ease human life. But along with its pros it has its cons too.

There have been various research done in the recent times over the influence of gadget use in children. It has been studied that children who are more indulged in gadget use lead to a poor social skill and interpersonal relationships. They have decreased development in the cognitive function domains along with language milestones.

Many researchers have studied that children spend average of their time on different gadgets like telephone, radio, TV, games, Xbox, iPod and stereo system [1]. Kids use gadgets for various purposes like playing games, watching videos, listening songs, chatting with their friends, browsing different websites.

They spend most of their time in these activities and don't pay attention to their posture, screen brightness, and screen distance from their eyes which ultimately affect their vision and health.

Staring at electronic screen continuously for long time causes distress [2]. Kids suffer various problems like eye irritation or have difficulty to focus for a while. In this era, we can't keep ourselves or our children away from these devices so we can try to minimize the impact of these devices on our children.

It's really surprising a 2 year old baby can and knows how to use a gadget, similar to how a kid knows to use a feeding bottle. A study has been conducted in USA on kids and result shows 1 out of 3 children can use a tablet or phone before they even talk? In 2013 Daily mail reported that 29% of the toddlers can easily use the gadgets and remaining 70% are master by primary school age.

According to the USA Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, an average child spends about 8 hours a day watching electronic screens. As they are growing older the use of gadgets also increases. Too much gadget use can also affect the long-term vision problem [3]. Plus chance of myopia also increases in children when they spend about 8 hours daily on gadgets.

When people use electronic screens, they blink less. On an average, a person blinks about 15 times in a minute. Due to the high attention required while using an electronic screen, this rate can drop to less than 5 times in a minute.

Too much gadget use could lead to speech or language delay, hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, learning problems, childhood depression and negative impact on character.[4]

A lot of research has been done on this type of phenomena; this paper describes the factors leading to initiation of gadget use in children as well as the the attitude of parents towards it.

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To identify the risk factors leading to initiation of use of gadgets in preschool children

#### Objectives:

To evaluate the attitude of parents towards gadget use

To learn regarding modifiable factors which could be prevented

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

It is an observational study conducted at Pediatric Vaccination Out patient department of MGMIHS Aurangabad, between October 2018 to December 2018. A questionnaire was prepared and circulated to the 200 parents of children between ages of 6 months to 5 years. Children with intellectual disabilities This questionnaire focused on the age of beginning of gadget use, type of gadget, duration of use and parents attitude towards it.

#### RESULTS

From our statistical analysis of 200 patients it was observed that the maximum age for onset of gadget use was between 13 months-24 months(46.5%). The reason for initiation of gadget use was for feeding purposes (45%). Mobile was the commonest used gadget in children (58.5%). It can be proved from our study that according to kuppuswamy classification children belonging to upper class and upper middle class were the highest in number. Therefore a correlation can be formed between the socioeconomic status and the usage of gadgets in children.

#### DISCUSSION

From our study it could be concluded that among 200 children 41(20.5%) were living with grandparents. And among them only 16 (34%) used gadgets more than two hours a day. The rest 67% used gadgets for a lesser duration. Hence it could be said that children belonging to working parents had higher prevalence of use of gadget but those living with grandparents had lower. It was also

found that 100% of parents believed that giving gadgets to children was harmful but only 12% tried to refrain the child from using it and gave certain punishments if they used it for more than a certain time limit. So the basic 92% of children threw a tantrum when a gadget was taken away. Rest 8% were weaned off it by buying new toys. It was also found that children who started going to school were given a time duration for studying. And if they achieve it then were given gadget to play as a "token of appreciation"

### CONCLUSION

The ill effects of gadget use by children has been a trending topic in the research field. Our paper covers just tip of the iceberg of complex issues at hand. The track if traced back denotes that parents are responsible for leading this kind of habit in a growing child. If there is proper counseling done to the parents regarding the effects of misusing a gadget, it may decrease its use in preschoolers.

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