



PARENTAL AGREEMENT AND PREDICTORS OF TELEVISION VIEWING PATTERNS IN YOUNG CHILDREN

Paediatrics

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Electronic media creates a virtual world where children get entertained, informed and relaxed but this replaces physical activities and one to one social interactions and in the long run may impede social and emotional development.

AIM: To study the parental agreement and predictors of television viewing patterns in young children.

MATERIAL AND METHODS: An observational descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in schools of Chandigarh, our estimated sample size was 180 children.

RESULTS : Duration of duration TV viewing ($\chi^2=13.82$, $P<0.001$), Parents of children who watched an excessive amount of TV were nearly four times as likely to agree with the statement that the child was watching adult content. Results of the multiple logistic regression analysis revealed that age of the child was the only significant predictor of late age of initiation TV viewing (>2 years).

CONCLUSION: Only one-fifth of the children studied were found to violate the AAP recommendations of no more than 2 hours of daily TV viewing time.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

Technology has become an integral part of human existence. Be it television, computer, mobile, video games, tablets or any other electronic gadgets – electronic media has left a deep imprint on the intricate web of life. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) clearly states that the negative effects of media usage outweigh the positive effects in the development of the young child, particularly for children less than 3 years^[1].

Seeing the significant number of young children, toddlers and infants who are exposed to television regularly, fueled by the widespread belief among people that TV is good for the development of children, it has become increasingly necessary to know repercussions television viewing has on development functioning of children.

Recently revised guidelines by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), for the use of media in children have recommended that there should be no television or access to the internet in the child's bedroom, and media use should be limited to quality programs, and consumption of electronic media should be no more than 2 hours in a day. For children less than 2 years of age TV should be limited and the TV should be kept switched off when no person is watching it and during meal times^[1].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An observational descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in schools of Chandigarh by postgraduate institute of medical education and research, Chandigarh between July 2016 to June 2017. Institutional Ethical Committee (IEC) permission was taken before commencement of data collection. Young children of age range 5 to 8 years were included in the study, children with presence of any chronic neurological/systemic illness and presence of sensory or motor impairment were excluded from our study. Our estimated sample size was 180 children.

One private school was selected from Chandigarh. 220 Children (5 to 8 year of age) meeting the above inclusion criteria were enrolled in the study. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to elicit information on socio-economic and demographic variables from the mothers.

In addition, parents were asked to respond to a specially constructed

questionnaire to measure behavioral and emotional problems which were not measured by the CPMS scale. The parents responded to each statement with responses ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The scale was administered in an interview format^[2].

RESULTS

A cross-sectional prospective study design was adopted and a total of 220 children were enrolled from one private school of Chandigarh. The study was conducted between July 2016 to June 2017. A total of 220 children were enrolled from one private school of Chandigarh.

Table 1 The mean age of the study cohort was 83.80 12.07 months. More than half of the children were girls (53.6%) and the sex ratio was 1:1.16 (male: female).

From **Table no 2** The results indicated that when parents co-viewed TV for less than half the time with their children, they were more likely to watch TV for the longer duration of time (2.04 vs. 1.84 hours), however, the difference was not statistically significant ($t=1.51$, $P=0.132$).

Relatively poorer home environment were nearly three times (2.69) more likely to agree that their child preferred TV over and above outdoor games and play of TV as compared to children with more stimulating home environments ($\chi^2=7.51$, $P<0.023$)(**table 3**).

Table 4. A significant association was found with agreement on this statement and duration of duration TV viewing ($\chi^2=13.82$, $P<0.001$), Parents of children who watched an excessive amount of TV were nearly four times as likely to agree with the statement that the child was watching adult content.

Table 5. A significant association was found with duration of duration TV viewing ($\chi^2=24.26$, $P<0.001$) but not with the quality of the home environment ($\chi^2=3.80$, $P=0.150$).

Table 6. A significant association was found with agreement on this statement and duration of duration TV viewing ($\chi^2=8.89$, $P<0.012$) Parents of children who watched an excessive amount of TV were nearly five and half times as likely to agree with the statement that the child neglects his school work as compared to parents of children who watch 2 hours or less of TV (31.1% vs. 5.7%).

Table 7. Multiple logistic regression analysis revealed that there was no significant predictor of prolonged TV viewing (≥ 2 hours). Overall, this multivariate model was significant ($-2 \log$ Likelihood Ratio is 214.011, a test of chi-square 10.06 and $p=.261$ and test fit to this variable) and it explained nearly 6.2% of total variance in the outcome variable (Pseudo R square 0.062).

DISCUSSION

The main objectives of the study were to examine the Parental agreement and predictors of television viewing patterns in young children Data for Indian children regarding parenting practices with respect to TV viewing is limited, especially for younger children. Previous studies report that a significant proportion of young children watch TV for more than 2 hours/day^[3-5]. Surprisingly, none socio-economic and demographic characteristics were associated with duration of TV viewing and this was further supported by the finding of multiple logistic regression analysis as no significant predictor of prolonged TV viewing (≥ 2 hours) was found.

Age of the child was the only significant predictor of later age of initiation TV viewing. Three fourth of parents were found to co-view TV for less than two hours and only about a quarter of parents reported that they viewed TV with their child for more than 2 hours thereby indicating that very few Indian parents were watching TV with their child for more than the AAP recommended hours. Mukherjee et al reported that two-thirds parents viewed TV together with child irrespective of the content^[4].

Very few parents were found to have any rules about the viewing of the TV for their children. Not surprisingly, many parents reported that their children were watching adult-related TV shows and therefore inappropriate content on TV. In a study conducted on Indian children aged 3 to 11 years, Mukherjee also documented minimal parental restriction and discussion of what content was consumed by children^[4]. Though the findings were not statistically significant, there was a statistical trend, that children watched TV for longer durations when their parents co-viewed TV with them. Studies indicate that children whose parents watch television for a prolonged duration, spend significantly more time watching television^[6-9].

CONCLUSION

Indian parents of young children need to be educated about the judicious practices regarding age of initiation TV viewing and pediatricians and other stakeholders need to educate parents regarding both the positive and negative impact of TV viewing, and encourage children to watch more educational content, have clear rules which limit viewing of adult content, and supervise what children consume from TV.

TABLES AND FIGURE:

Table 1: Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Sample (N=220)

Characteristics	Percentage (n)
Gender	
Boys	46.4 (102)
Girls	53.6 (118)
Age of the Child (Years)	
5-6	18.6 (41)
6-7	40.9 (90)
>7	40.5 (89)
Residence	
Urban	57.3 (126)
Rural	42.7 (94)
Socio-economic status	
Upper	24.1 (53)
Upper middle	72.7 (160)
Lower middle	3.2 (7)
Number of siblings	
No sibling	46.8 (103)
One sibling	47.3 (104)
Two siblings or more	5.9 (13)

Table 7: Multivariate Predictors of Prolonged TV viewing (> 2 hours)

Variable	Base category	Adjusted Odds ratio	95% Confidence Interval	P value
Age in years				
5-6	5-6	0.62	0.19-1.97	0.41
6-7	6-7	1.19	0.55-2.54	0.66
≥ 7				

Total	100 (220)
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Table 2: Co-Viewing and Duration of TV Viewing (daily/hrs)

Co-Viewing of TV by Parents and Children	Duration of TV Viewing (daily/hrs)	t ratio	P Value
	Mean (SD)		
More than half of the time (n=163)	1.84 (0.79)	1.514	0.132
Less than half of the time (n=53)	2.04 (0.90)		

Table 3: Association of parent agreement with “My child prefers watching television more than outdoor games/play” and Duration of TV viewing and Quality of Home Environment

Characteristics	Agree % (n)	Neutral % (n)	Disagree % (n)	χ^2	P Value
Duration of TV Viewing					
≤ 2 hours (N=175)	10.3 (18)	15.4 (27)	74.3 (130)	6.38	0.041
> 2 hours (N=45)	24.4 (11)	11.1 (5)	64.4 (29)		
Quality of Home Environment					
Moderate (N=129)	17.8 (23)	16.3 (21)	65.9 (85)	7.51	0.023
High (N=91)	6.6 (6)	12.1 (11)	81.3 (74)		

Table 4: Association of parent agreement with “My child watches adult programmes” and Duration of TV viewing and Quality of Home Environment

Characteristics	Agree % (n)	Neutral % (n)	Disagree % (n)	χ^2	P Value
Duration of TV Viewing					
≤ 2 hours (N=175)	6.3 (11)	10.3 (18)	83.4 (146)	13.82	0.001
> 2 hours (N=45)	24.4 (11)	4.4 (2)	71.1 (32)		
Quality of Home Environment					
Moderate (N=129)	13.2 (17)	8.5 (11)	78.3 (101)	3.52	0.172
High (N=91)	5.5 (5)	9.9 (9)	84.6 (77)		

Table 5: Association of parent agreement with “My child watches programmes depicting violence” and Duration of TV viewing and Quality of Home Environment

Characteristics	Agree % (n)	Neutral % (n)	Disagree % (n)	χ^2	P Value
Duration of TV Viewing					
≤ 2 hours (N=175)	5.7 (10)	8 (14)	86.3 (151)	24.26	<0.001
> 2 hours (N=45)	31.1 (14)	8.9 (4)	60.0 (27)		
Quality of Home Environment					
Moderate (N=129)	14 (18)	9.3 (12)	76.7 (99)	3.80	0.150
High (N=91)	6.6 (6)	6.6 (6)	86.8 (79)		

Table 6: Association of parent agreement with “My child neglects his school work” and Duration of TV viewing and Quality of Home Environment

Characteristics	Agree % (n)	Neutral % (n)	Disagree % (n)	χ^2	P Value
Duration of TV Viewing					
≤ 2 hours (N=175)	2.9 (5)	7.4 (13)	89.7 (157)	8.89	0.012
> 2 hours (N=45)	4.4 (2)	22.2 (10)	17.4 (33)		
Quality of Home Environment					
Moderate (N=129)	4.7 (6)	13.2 (17)	82.2 (106)	4.99	0.084
High (N=91)	1.1 (1)	6.6 (6)	92.3 (84)		

Gender Male Female	Male	0.89	0.44-1.82	0.757
Residence Rural Urban	Rural	1.147	0.56-2.33	0.71
Family Nuclear Joint	Nuclear	0.80	0.38-1.69	0.56
No of sibling No sibling Have sibling	No sibling	1.47	0.71-3.038	0.29
SES Upper Upper Middle and lower	Upper	1.04	0.45-2.441	0.93
Co-viewing with child Less than half More than Half Never	Less than half More than Half	0.26 0.44	0.03-2.19 0.05-4.01	0.22 0.47
Initiation of TV viewing (age) ≤24months >24 months	≤24 months	0.70	0.27-1.78	0.45
DQ Average or below Above average	Average or below	1.45	0.39-5.32	0.58

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