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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### MOBILE PHONE VIEWING AND ITS IMPACT ON BEHAVIOUR OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

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#### ABSTRACT

Childhood is the most crucial period in which behaviour can be easily molded. Today children are more exposed to mobile phones and they spend most of the time in using mobile phone than participating in other activities like playing reading and doing homework. In this exploratory study 53% of children spend 0-2 hours on mobile, one third (32%) spend 3-4 hours and 13% spend 5-6 hours. 78.7% parents reported that their children became more confident 76.4% children are comfortable and relaxed while talking to others, 88% of children started neglecting their personal hygiene and 74.2% started showing temper tantrums as perceived by parents due to the influence of mobile phone viewing. Mobile phone plays a role in the change of behavior of children as perceived by parents. There is both positive and negative impact of mobile on children.

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## INTRODUCTION

Mobile phones have numerous benefits. It is an easy method of communication, contact with any person is possible at anytime and anywhere. Mobile phone is exceptionally useful tool that advances personal communication beyond all our expectations (Child alert first for child safety, 2016). But there are negative impacts of mobile phones on the children. Children who use mobile phones have a possibility of developing non-malignant tumor in the brain and ear. The cell phone radiations are carcinogenic to humans. Children absorb more than 60 percent of the radiations into the brain than adults. The developing nervous system of children makes them more vulnerable to this carcinogen as compare to adults. The disturbed brain activity caused by mobile phones could impair children's learning ability and other behavioural problems. It could even affect their mood and ability to learn. Children are addicted to mobile phones. They play games, chat and talk to their friends on their mobile phone all the time. Use of cell phones can lead children to engage in inappropriate behaviours. Texting and sending inappropriate pictures is a growing problem. (Harmful effects of mobile phones on kids, 2016) Although only 35% of children exclusively own a mobile phone this increases to 83% when taking shared ownership into account. Just 16% of child mobile phone users have smartphones. 22% of children and

80% of parents use the calling function only; call frequency is particularly high among children with 64% making six or more calls a day. The use of messaging is popular with 55% of children sending 11 or more messages and nearly 25% of children sending over 50. 44% of child mobile phone users access the internet via mobile phones. 74% of children with access to handsets use apps; this is higher than their parent's usage at 65%. Entertainment apps are used most at 91%, followed by education and learning apps at 60%. 36% of all children who access the internet via their mobile use social networking sites. 30% of children who use social networks have their profile set as open to the public while 35% have set their profile as private. Concerns about children's privacy is lowest among the five countries, 53% of parents are "very concerned or "somewhat concerned" about their children's privacy on mobile phones. 55% of Indian families do not set rules on mobile phone use. (Children's use of mobile phone an international comparison, 2012) Mobile phones are an integral part of children's lives with 87% of children surveyed agreeing that having a mobile phone increases their confidence. The impact that social networking has on children who use these services via their mobile is also apparent, with 94% of children agreeing that they have reinforced relationships with close friends through such services. In addition 89% of children agree that social networking services enable them to build relationships with those friends who are not so close. (Children's use of mobile phone an international comparison, 2013) Result of a study conducted on Chinese young adults

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showed that compared with non addicts, mobile phone addicts or possible mobile phone addicts spent more money and time on mobile phone use and were more vulnerable to have negative emotions. (Chen Li *et al.*, 2016) A study on Swiss adolescents showed that problematic mobile phone use was associated with impaired psychological well-being, impaired parent and school relationships and more behavioural problems but was not related to peer support and social acceptance. (Roser Katharina *et al.*, 2015)

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

An exploratory design was used to assess the mobile phone viewing & its impact on behaviour among school children residing in Adarsh Nagar, an urban area of district Ludhiana, Punjab. 100 Children of age group 6-12 years were selected by convenience sampling technique. The tool for data collection was a structured interview schedule conducted with parents & it had following sections:-

**Part A:** Socio-demographic data

**Part B:** Questionnaire to assess the mobile phone viewing pattern among school children.

**Part C:** Questionnaire to explore the factors influencing mobile phone viewing pattern among school children.

**Part D:** Questionnaire to assess the impact of mobile phone viewing pattern on the behaviour among school children.

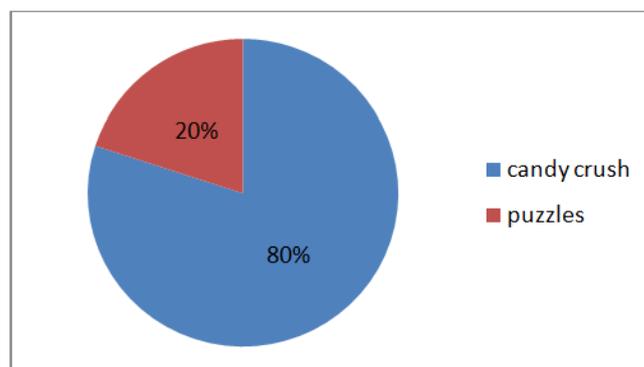
## RESULTS

Out of 100 more than half (55%) of children were in age group of 6-8 years and 45% in age group of 9-12years. Slightly more than half i.e. 58% of children were males and 42% were females. Only 5% of children were single child of their parents and slightly less than half (45%) were having two siblings and 11% had  $\geq 3$  siblings. Most (71%) of the children belonged to Hindu religion and near about 27% belonged to Sikh religion and only 2% belonged to Muslim religion. Most i.e. 88% of the mothers of children were non-working and 12% were working. Fathers of all children i.e. 100% were working. One fourth (25%) of fathers of children were doing private job, less than one fourth (22%) were shopkeeper, 24% were doing labor whereas 24% had their own business and 5% were doing government job. More than half (55%) of children belonged to nuclear family and 45% belonged to joint family. 35% of mothers were educated upto senior secondary, 21% educated upto matric, 18% and 15% were educated upto graduation and elementary respectively, whereas only 11% were illiterate. 31% of fathers were educated upto senior secondary level, 27% upto matric, 19% and 18% were educated upto graduation and elementary respectively, whereas only 5% were illiterate. As per socio-economic status, more than one third (39%) of children belongs to lower middle class III followed by 30% in upper middle class II, 27% in upper lower class IV and only 4% of the families belongs to upper class I. Out of 12 mothers, half of them (50%) were doing private job, one third i.e. 33.33% were shopkeeper and rest of them i.e. 16.67% were doing their own business. Data depicts that out of 100 children almost all of them (97%) were having mobile phones in their houses. From these 97 children, 54.63% use it for texting and sending messages, 71.13% use it for talking with friends, 61.85% for internet majority (91.75%) play games on mobile phone, more than half of them (60.67%) play games for 0-2

hours, one fourth (25.85%) for 3-4 hours, one fifth that is (13.48%) for 5-6 hours.

**Table 1. Distribution of children as per mobile phone viewing pattern**

N=100		
Mobile phone viewing pattern	f	%
Availability of mobile in house	97	97
View mobile phone	97	97
Use mobile phone for texting and sending messages	53	54.63
Use mobile to talk with friends	69	71.13
Use mobile for internet	60	61.85
Play games on mobile phones	89	91.75
Duration of playing games on mobile phone (in hours) (n <sub>2</sub> =89)		
0-2	54	60.67
3-4	23	25.85
5-6	12	13.48



**Fig.1. Distribution of children as per their preference of games on mobile phone. N=89**

**Table 2. Distribution of children as per factors influencing mobile phone viewing pattern**

N=97		
Factors of mobile viewing	f	%
View mobile due to :		
Enjoyment purpose	88	98.87
Educational purpose	46	51.68
Sibling influence	44	49.43
Socialization	32	35.92
Loneliness	21	23.59
Occupied/Engaged parents	15	16.85
Peer pressure	12	13.48

This table depicts that out of 89 children majority of children (98.87%) view mobile for enjoyment purpose, half (51.68%) of them for educational purpose, nearly half (49.43%) of them due to siblings influence, one third (35.92%) due to socialization, one fourth of them (23.59%) due to loneliness, (16.85%) due to occupied/engaged parents and (13.48%) due to peer pressure.

**Table 3. Positive impact of mobile phone viewing on behaviour of children**

n=89*		
Positive impact	f	%
Become confident	70	78.65
Are comfortable and relaxed while talking	68	76.40
Become imaginative and creative	57	64.04

Table 5: depicts that out of total 89, most (78.65%) of parents reported that their children become more confident, (77.52%) children started learning new words and (76.40%) children

become comfortable while talking with other and 64.04% become imaginative and creative by viewing mobile phone and playing games.

**Table 4. Negative impact of mobile phone viewing on behaviour of children n=89**

Negative impact	f	%
Neglects hygiene	79	88.76
Temper tantrum	66	74.15
Short tempered	64	71.91
Impulsive	40	44.94
Argues a lot	35	39.32
Neglect of nutrition	30	33.70
Emotionally weak	28	31.46
Disobey others	26	29.21
Nail biting	19	21.34
Neglect of study and disobey teachers	16	17.97
Occurrence of any physical problem	16	17.97

Table 4: depict that out of 89, majority (88.76%) of parents reported that their children started neglecting their personal hygiene, (74.15%) shows temper tantrum, (71.91%) become short tempered (44.94%) became impulsive while more than one-third that is (39.32%) argues a lot and 33.70% started neglecting their nutrition, more than one fourth (29.21%) disobeys their parents, slightly less than one fourth i.e. (21.34%) do nail biting. 17.97 % children started neglecting their study and disobey teachers and 17.97% suffered from physical problems as perceived by parents.

## DISCUSSION

Results of the study showed that all most all of the children in the school age have access to mobile phones in their home. They use mobile phones for texting and sending messages, calling to friends, and for internet. Time spend on mobile phone is up to 5 hours in some children. The common games played by children is candy crush and various puzzles. Most of the children view mobile for enjoyment purpose, half of them for educational purpose, nearly half of them due to siblings influence, one third due to socialization, one fourth of them due to loneliness, some due to occupied/engaged parents and due to peer pressure. Most of parents reported that their children become more confident and become comfortable and while talking with other. In the negative impact majority of parents reported that their children started neglecting their personal hygiene, shows temper tantrum, become short

tempered (44.94%) became impulsive. Similar finding were reported by Lee *et al.* in his study on middle school children in Korea and results of the study showed that self esteem was lower in the children who use mobile phone in excess. These children were having more impulsive behaviour. (Shoon Hea, Lee 2014) Some of the children argues a lot. A study conducted by Le Chan *et al* on Chinese young adults showed that children who are addict to mobile phones are vulnerable to negative emotions. (Harmful effects of mobile phones on kids, 2016) Some children started neglecting their nutrition and disobeys parents. A Study conducted on Swiss adolescents by Katharina Roser *et al.* concluded that excessive mobile phone use lead to impaired psychological well being, impaired parent and school relationships and more behavioural problems. Some children do nail biting, some started neglecting their study and disobey teachers and a few suffered from physical problems as perceived by parents. (Roser Katharina *et al.*, 2015)

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