



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### A STUDY TO ASSESS THE BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO USAGE OF SMART DEVICES AMONG CHILDREN AS PERCEIVED BY THEIR MOTHERS OF SELECTED AREAS OF CITY LUDHIANA, PUNJAB.

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#### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** At present, there has been exponential rise in the use of smart devices by the population. Children, especially older than 10 years of age are engaged in excessive use of Internet. Screen activities can be beneficial for young people in many ways. For instance, youth's use of social media sites has been found increase new friendships, Interpersonal capabilities and social interaction. It is important to study the various behavioral and emotional problems associated with smart devices usage as studies reports various academic, social, family, emotional issues are being reported due to smart devices usage. **Aim:** To assess the behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart devices among children as perceived by their mothers. **Methodology:** A descriptive research design was used to assess the behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart devices as perceived by their mothers. The study was conducted in Guru Gobind Singh Nagar, Guru Hargobind singh Nagar of Shimlapuri, Ludhiana. A total sample of 300 mothers was selected by purposive sampling technique. The data was collected by using Strengths and difficulties Questionnaire, baseline parent version (by Dr. Robert Goodman 1997) and analyzed as per objectives of study. **Result:** As per the result of study (55%) children had no behavioral and emotional problems, followed by (31%) had abnormal behavior and emotions and only (14%) children were at the verge to develop the behavioral and emotional problems due to usage of smart devices as perceived by their mothers. The significant relationship of behavioral and emotional problems was found with gender of children at  $p > 0.0$ . **Conclusion:** The present study concluded that more than half of children had no behavior and emotional problems. Whereas, (31%) children had behavioral and emotional problems due to use of smart devices.

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## INTRODUCTION

Technology is not a magic but people use it as a magic which possess unlimited magical powers.<sup>14</sup> It has opened up a world of great opportunities but these opportunities come with great risk.<sup>13</sup> From kids to millennials to prior generation, no one can be overlooked if we talk about the serviceability of smart devices and its influence on their manner of living. All of their activities are being generated and accompanied by today's technological structures from learning to keeping informed, smart devices are taking over on the minds of youngsters.<sup>1</sup> Smart devices refers to the electronic gadgets like smart phones, smart television, tablet, laptop and computer which are used in daily activities for the purpose like internet, gaming, communication, watching videos and social networking.

At present, there has been exponential rise in the use of smart devices by the population. Children, especially older than 10 years of age are engaged in excessive use of Internet. Nowadays, adolescents are among the highest users of technology. They are born in era of technology in contrast to previous generations. Adolescents assume that smart devices have become an exceptionally dominant part of everyday life and it helps them to connect with their friends and new upcoming trends in society.<sup>26</sup> Sixty percent of jobs in the market are screen based and children wants to be successful in such an environment.<sup>13</sup> Technology can be beneficial for young people in many ways. For example, social media sites help youth to increase new friendships, interpersonal capabilities and social interaction.

Moreover, studies have also discussed the potential contribution of educational, digital screen-based programs to enhance children's literacy by the guiding of a parent or a care giver. It can be beneficial for children's development.<sup>24</sup> The rapid spread of technology in recent decades has pushed the use of smart devices to become pervasive tool used in everyday life, especially among adolescents. The possibility of being persistently connected with smart devices increases the amount of time adolescents spend online. Web and mobile applications are ubiquitous in many adolescents' lives (Durak, 2018). Research has shown that adolescents use the Internet more frequently (compared to adults) than other generations and in a more multipurpose context. As reported by research evidence, (2022) in The Hindustan Times, Smart devices usage worldwide among 9-16 years children is 76%. India accounts for 7% higher smart device usage than worldwide i.e. 83% and in Punjab, 70% of children are tied up in smart devices activities.<sup>17</sup> Notable differences in children's screen use habits emerge around the age of seven, when the use and interest in digital games, mobile phones and internet increase significantly. From ample review of literature, researchers felt the strong need to assess the children 's behavioral and emotional problems related to the usage of smart devices as perceived by their mothers in the community.

## OBJECTIVES

- To assess the behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of the smart devices among children as perceived by their mothers.
- To determine the relationship of behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart devices as perceived by their mothers with selected socio-demographic variables.
- To prepare and disseminate IEC material on prevention of behavioral and emotional problems among children due to smart devices usage .

**ASSUMPTION:** Children may have behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart devices.

**DELIMITATION:** The study was delimited to 300 mothers of children using smart devices of city Ludhiana, Punjab.

## CRITERIA FOR SAMPLE SELECTION

### Inclusion criteria

#### Mothers of children:

- Aged 8 - 16 years
- Willing to participate in study.
- Only one child of each mother was taken for data collection.
- Able to understand Hindi, Punjabi and English language

### Exclusion criteria

#### Mothers of children:

- Diagnosed with psychiatric illness.
- Not present at the time of data collection at home

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was Non experimental descriptive design. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 300 mothers of children aged 8-16 years. The tool used for data collection was SDQ, baseline parent version (by Robert Goodman). After obtaining informed consent, data was collected through the standardized tool. the descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data.

**DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE:** Data collection was carried out from 28<sup>th</sup> August , 2023 to 2<sup>nd</sup> September,2023. Prior to data collection, Permission was obtained from Ethical committee of institution DMCH Ludhiana to conduct the research study. For data collection 2 Areas (Guru Gobind Singh Nagar and Guru Harkrishan Nagar) were selected by convenience technique. 300 mothers fulfilling inclusion and exclusion criteria by purposive sampling technique were selected. Explanation about the study was given and informed written consent was obtained from mothers. Thereafter, children of selected mother were chosen by lottery method for data collection. Interview technique was used to collect the data. Door to door data collection was done. Average time spent on each subject was 20-25 minutes for data collection. At the end, IEC material on prevention of behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart devices was given to mothers in the form of booklet.

## RESULT AND FINDINGS

The findings reveal that mean score was 20.73 with standard deviation 3.54 had abnormal behaviour and emotions related to usage of smart devices as perceived by their mothers. According to the relationship of behavioral and emotional problems with sociodemographic variable of children. As per gender, the mean score of males was found to be 12.90±6.161 and mean score of females was found to be 2.92±7.190. This difference was statistically significant at the level of  $p > 0.001$ .

**Table 1. Behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart device among children as perceived by their mothers as per SDQ**

BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS	Score	n	N=300	
			Mean ±SD	Mean%
Normal	0-13	165(55%)	7.93 ± 3.51	19.82
Borderline	14-16	42(14%)	15.17 ± 0.88	37.92
Abnormal	17-40	93(31%)	20.73 ± 3.54	51.83

Mean % =32.27%

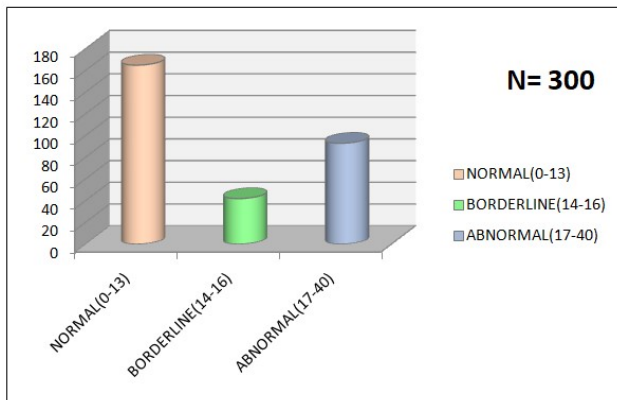
Maximum score =40

Mean± SD =12.9±6.63

Minimum score=00

Table 1: interprets the behavioral and emotional problems among children related to usage of smart devices. As per mean percentage 51.83% children had abnormal behavior and emotions, followed by 37.92% had borderline and 19.82% had normal behavior and emotions. Thus, it can be concluded that nearly, mean percentage 51.83% of the children were having behavioral and emotional problems

Figure 1: illustrates the behavioral and emotional problems among children related to usage of smart devices as perceived by their mothers. The findings revealed that 55% children were had no behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart devices followed by 31% children had abnormal behavioral and emotional problems and 14% children were belong to borderline category of behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart devices as perceived by their mothers.



**Fig. 1. Frequency distribution of Behavioral and Emotional Problems among children related to usage of smart devices as perceived by their mothers**

Hence, it can be concluded that more than half (55%) of children were not having behavioral and emotional problem.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study revealed that more than half i.e. 165 children (55%) did not have any behavioral and emotional problems, 42 children(14%) belonged to borderline category i.e., they had chances of having behavioral and emotional problems and 93 children(31%)were involved under abnormal category i.e., they had behavioral and emotional problems.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study revealed that more than half i.e. 55% did not have any behavioral and emotional problems, 14% children belonged to borderline category i.e., they had chances of having behavioral and emotional problems and 31% children were involved under abnormal category i.e., they had behavioral and emotional problems.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Similar study can be conducted with larger sample size to validate and generalize its findings. A comparative study can be conducted to assess behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart devices between children living in Urban area and Rural area. It is recommended that there is need to assess preventive strategies used by mothers to prevent chances of behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart device in their children and improve out-door activities. A longitudinal study can be conducted on the implementation of preventive strategies used by the mothers to reduce behavioral and emotional problems related to usage of smart devices in their children and improve out-door activities.

## ABBREVIATIONS

SDQ-strength and difficulties questionnaire

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