

**ABSTRACT**

The present study is an attempt to explore the screen time of today's youth. The volume of time youngsters spend on smart devices is popularly known as Screen Time. The increase in the volume of screen time is a rising concern nowadays. Therefore the current paper is an attempt to identify the pattern of screen time usage and its effects on youth. This study is based on a random sample of student respondents from Pune. Tools used for the collection of data were questionnaires and personal interviews. The result of the study revealed the significant rise in screen time usage amongst youth highlighting its physical and psychological effects. Hence it is very important to address this issue urgently.

**Key Words :** Screen Time, Smartphones, Smart Devices, Sedentary Behaviour

**Introduction**

In today's technology world, gadgets have become an integral part of the life the individuals. These gadgets or devices consume a considerable period of time from the routine life of an individual. The amount of time spent on such devices let it be smartphones, computers, television or video games is called Screen Time. This screen time covers all the activities that take place using a screen, such as sending an email, interacting on social networking sites, sending text messages, live streaming on Facebook, editing your photos with filters, reading news, updating your profiles, using online payment systems, checking notifications, playing games. All these activities consume a considerable period of time of the routine schedule of an individual's life. On the basis of the pilot study, a rising volume of screen time has been observed amongst youngsters due to a variety of reasons. This aroused the interest of the researcher in exploring the concept of screen time amongst youth. How the screen time impacts mental health, physical health, well-being of teenagers, the level of exposure to screen time and its effects, all such areas are going through significant research. Some governments have placed regulations on its usage too. Many companies have come up with apps for checking your screen time usage. This helps individuals to understand their screen time usage. Also helps parents to monitor their kid's screen time usage by knowing it, parents can set the limits for screen time usage for themselves and for the kids.

**Literature Review**

Vanderloo, (2014), explored the prevalence of screen-time in childcare and identified the frequency of, and opportunities for, screen-viewing among preschoolers in the unique environment. Found that preschoolers appear to engage in somewhat high levels of screen-viewing while in childcare, particularly within home-based facilities but hardly comment on the usage of screen time amongst youngsters. HuilanXu et al, (2013) in their paper titled 'Associations of Parental Influences with Physical Activity and Screen Time among Young Children: A Systematic Review' investigates associations of parental influences with both Physical Activity and screen time in young children by using six electronic databases. Huilan further suggests that parental support can lead to increased physical activity of the children and controlling the parents' own screen time before children can go a long way in decreasing child screen time of children.

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AlHazzaa et al (2014 ) explored associations between dietary habits and Physical Activity and Screen Time (ST) among Saudi adolescents aged between 15 and 19 years of age and concludes that healthful dietary habits were associated mostly with Physical Activity, whereas sedentary behaviours, negatively impacted upon eating behaviours. The results reported in the present study have important implications for both youth public health policies and intervention programmes. Dubey (201 ) et al have explored the use of screen-based media (SBM) and its effect on child health and also assessed the pattern of SBM use. The research concludes that the study showed a high proportion of adolescents using the SBM for more than the recommended screen time. However, no association was observed between increased screen time and obesity, stress, or poor sleep quality, Engagement of adolescents in high SBM usage calls for the need for immediate attention from the parents as well as the advocacy bodies to regulate the screen time. Reichel (2019) observes how green grass for many kids has been replaced with the Smartphone screen and affects the academic performance of the students.

**Research Gaps Identified from Review of Literature**

Major focus of screen time study is observed for kids, preschoolers and teenagers. The variables studied under this concept are the association between screen time usage and health issues, inattention problems in preschoolers, and association of mobile media devices with expressive language delay in 18 months old children, The available literature hardly comments upon, what should be the recommended screen time for youngsters ranging the age group of 20 to 25 years. Also, these studies are undertaken in countries other than India. Hence the researchers deemed it fit to study the screen time usage amongst youth, and the pattern of screen time usage in order to understand how screen time affects youth.

**Objectives**

The objectives of the study are to study and analyse the pattern of screen time of youth and its effects on the youth today.

**Research Methodology**

The sample comprised 160 respondents in the age group ranging from 20 to 25 years from Pune city. The convenience sampling method has been adopted. Primary data was collected through personal interviews and by administering a formal questionnaire. The secondary data was collected to seek more information on screen time usage from different sources like books, journals, articles, newspapers, unpublished thesis and websites.

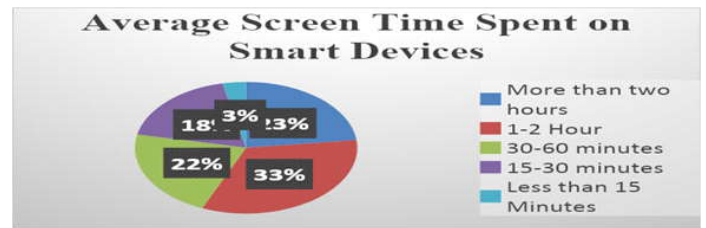
**Data Analysis and Presentation**

**Table 1**

**Average screen time spent on smart devices**

Screen Time	N	Percentage
More than two hours	34	33
1 Hour -2 Hours	49	23
30-60 minutes	32	22
15-30 minutes	27	18
Less than 15 Minutes	5	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100</b>

Source - Primary data



**Figure 1**

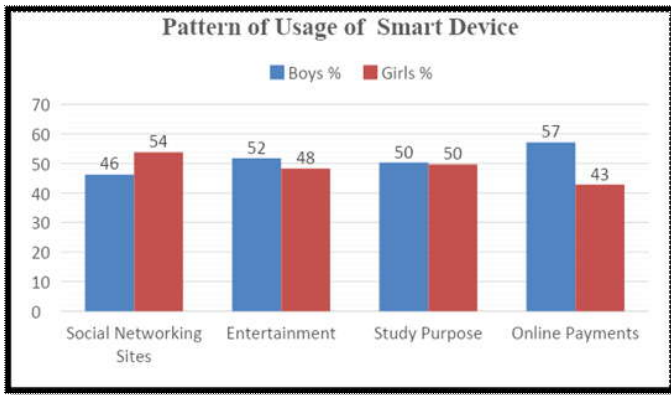
**Average screen time spent on smart devices**

It is observed that the on an average 23% of a youth spent one to two hours a day on smartphones followed by 33% of the respondents spend more than two hours.

**Table 2**

**Gender-wise usage of smart devices and pattern of usage**

Pattern of Usage	Boys	Girls	Total
Social networking	68	79	147
Entertainment	81	66	147
Study Purpose	74	73	147
Online Payments	84	63	147



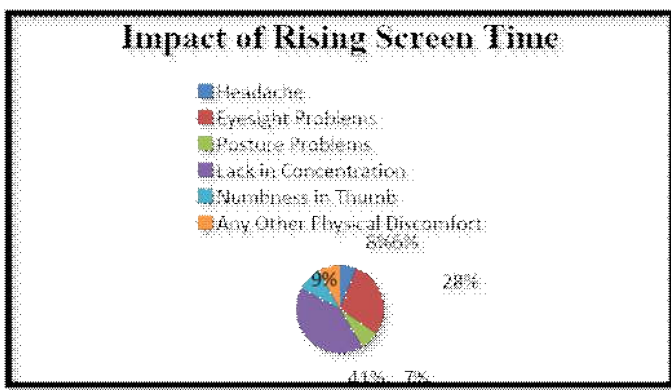
**Figure 2: Pattern of usage of smart devices**

The pattern of usage of smart device for various purposes is more or less same for girls and boys.

**Table 3**

**Effects of higher screen time usage in youth.**

Impact of Rising Screen Time	N	Percentage
Headache	9	6%
Eyesight Problems	41	28%
Posture Problems	11	7%
Lack in Concentration	61	42%
Numbness in Thumb	13	9%
Any Other Physical and Mental Discomfort	12	8%



**Figure 3 : Impact of higher screen time usage**

42% of respondents have reported the problem of lack of concentration followed by eyesight problem as reported by 28% of respondents.

**Findings**

(i) It has been observed that on an average 33% of youth spent one to two hours a day on

smartphones followed by 23% of the respondents spend more than two hours. It implies that youngsters spend a considerable amount of time on screen time.

- (ii) The screen time activities of youth include using social networking sites such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram/ Snapchat, secondly watching offline videos games like PS4 and Firestick, in addition to that in spare time they watch Television / Smart TV Netflix, Amazon prime, Hotstar, Voot, YouTube, along with certain apps like Tik Tok, gaana, wynk, spotify and dating sites.
- (iii) Considerable time is spent on using Net banking / Paytm, Google pay, Online shopping / Food delivery apps, etc and also for formal use like Emails, LinkedIn, News Applications, Study Purposes Byju's, Wikipedia, etc.
- (iv) It has been observed that the pattern of screen time usage is more or less same in girls and boys
- (v) 54% of the respondents mentioned that, they do check the notifications as soon as they receive, it implies that more attention is given to the smart device than the other work they are doing at an instance.
- (vi) 65% of the total respondents expressed that they feel anxious in case of losing or misplacing their phone or laptop as these devices hold their personal information and important data.
- (vii) 74% out of total respondents check their mobile phones/ smart devices frequently for staying updated with the outside world.
- (viii) 42% of respondents have reported the problem of lack of concentration followed by eyesight problems as reported by 28% of respondents. Almost 30% of respondents mentioned that they face physical and psychological discomfort like neck pain, dizziness, and headache, weight gain because of excess usage of laptops mobile phones as these devices emit harmful radiation.

## Suggestions

The following are the suggestions offered as per discussion with doctors, counselors, parents, and teachers:

- i) The youngsters are required to prioritize their life goals and should make changes for a better lifestyle.
- ii) Youth should set limits for their screen time usage, Screen time should be restricted to a maximum of 1.5 hours in a day.
- iii) NO SCREEN HOURS should be practiced on certain occasions/days.
- iv) During lunch and dinner, strictly no screen usage should be adopted so that a person can concentrate on the food and quality time with family or friends.
- v) Social gatherings should be preferred over Social networking
- vi) Youth should focus on getting advantage of the smart devices and technology rather than being addicted to the same
- vii) Youth should incorporate physical training into their schedule which will lead them towards more physical fitness.
- viii) Shutdown time for smart devices should be followed strictly. At least two hours before bed, all smart devices need to be switched off.

## Conclusion

Smartphone's and gazettes have become the need of an hour in today's tech-savvy world. The Smartphone has fascinated everyone, right from a six-month-old baby to senior citizens! The current paper focuses on screen time usage amongst youth and its ill effects. It has been observed that, smart devices as replaced almost many other instruments and devices from routine life. Such as TV, Radio, Alarm clock, Wristwatch, Battery, Newspaper, Calendar, and Diaries for to-do lists and for maintaining your contact lists, Games, Letters, Desktops, Cameras, and Recorders to name a few. Therefore smart devices have taken a charge of the entire life of an individual. It is very oblivious for a person to check the screen every now and then for some other purpose.

The paper concludes that the pattern of screen time usage is spread over certain categories such as the use of social media networking sites, for study purposes, for entertainment, and for sake of online payments. Secondly, the paper also concludes that screen time affects the users significantly, the problem of lack of concentration followed by eyesight problems they face physical discomfort like neck pain, dizziness, and headache numbness in thumb because of excess usage of laptops smartphones as these devices emit harmful radiations. Respondents also expressed it affects their psychological and emotional health considerably. Hence the study highlights how Screen Time in youth is a rising concern nowadays.

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