

REDUCE SCREEN-TIME FOR TODDLERS


The possibility that increased screen time during early childhood could cause poorer attention later in a child's life is a major concern for both parents and researchers. Earlier studies have suggested links between preschoolers' screen time and difficulties with attention. But there is by no means consensus among the research community that such a relationship exists, and there have been conflicting results. Two studies based on data from the Growing Up in New Zealand longitudinal cohort study may shed some new light on the issue, in the context of interactive media on offer for young children today.

The first study examined whether exceeding two hours of screen time per day for children aged two and almost four predicted symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity at four and a half years. We used the Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire to measure symptoms and found no association between higher levels of screen time and more symptoms.

Higher levels of screen time at the age of two do not result in poorer attention during later childhood. A second study investigated the correlation between screen time and symptoms of inattention or hyperactivity for children at the age of four and a half. Here, screen time and symptoms were measured at the same point in time, in contrast to the longitudinal approach of the first study. We found a significant association between more symptoms and higher levels of screen time. These two findings suggest there is no causal link between screen time and symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity. But instead, parents of children displaying more of these symptoms may allow more screen time. Several factors may be at play, and one is the child's preference. Most children enjoy screen time. For children with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, for instance, peer interactions are often difficult, and screen time may provide a more enjoyable and less stressful alternative.

Children with attention problems could find it hard to concentrate for long periods on pastimes such as reading a book. Screen time, with its bright colours and action, may capture their attention and keep them interested. Children with symptoms of inattention or hyperactivity are typically very active and impulsive and parents may find screen time can help settle and occupy their child for a while. It can also be something that parents and children enjoy doing together. Much of the past research into the potential effects of screen time on children's attention has found associations between higher levels of screen time and poorer attention. Our findings don't imply these past findings have been incorrect, as most of this research has focused on television. Newer screen technologies have been introduced and, arguably, a higher quality of screen time is now possible. For instance, one researcher argues that the features of modern touch-screen devices allow children to interact with them in ways similar to traditional toys, providing children with some of the benefits of traditional play when engaging with digital devices. Interactive digital experiences can have benefits similar to playing with toys. Our findings highlight the importance of considering the changing nature of children's screen time in future research into the potential effects on children's development. It is important to remember that our results do not rule out the possibility that very high levels of screen time or certain types of screen time could have immediate effects on children's attention functions. Nor do our results suggest consistently high levels of screen time are harmless.

On basis of my research, I advise parents to use their judgement about how much screen time is appropriate for their child, and how much may be excessive. The children in our sample were pre-school children (aged 2-4.5). Ministry of Health guidelines recommend less than an hour of screen time per day for this age group. We think this is about right for children of this age. However, in COVID times, when parents are being parents, teachers and employees all at once, it's understandable that they may sometimes allow their children more screen time. Our results may be reassuring to parents because they suggest that if pre-school children end up having more than two hours of screen time per day while under COVID restrictions, it will not lead to long-term attention problems.



OFF 'D' CUFF

Embrace pain to be Happy

Anyone who knows the practice of mindfulness knows that they have to go home to the present moment. When you do that, two things can happen. You might find there are so many conditions of happiness available right here and now. When you breathe in and bring your mind home to your body, you are established in the present moment. You find that there are so many refreshing and healing elements available in the present moment. There are also so many conditions of happiness available in the present moment.

With that awareness, it is easy to generate a feeling of joy and happiness. You can do this in order to nourish yourself with joy and happiness. But sometimes, when you go back to the present moment, you may encounter a painful emotion that is within you. We all have painful feelings or emotions that manifest from time to time. But when it begins to manifest, you don't like to be there so you try to run away, pretending it's not there. So no one is there, to look after the painful feeling. Even if the present moment is unbearable, it is still our only chance to do something in order to calm the pain down and to transform it. But most people don't do that because they are afraid that when they come home to themselves and feel the pain inside, they may be overwhelmed, by suffering. That is why they run away. Or else we escape into the past or future in the hope of forgetting, whereas only the present moment is real.

Most people also try to cover up the suffering inside by the practice of consumption. We read magazines, watch television, find something to eat, listen to music or pick up the phone to talk. We hope that by doing these things, we don't have to confront the suffering in us. And we allow that pain to continue to grow in us. The practice of mindfulness helps us to go home to the present moment, so that we can understand the suffering and find a way to calm it down and transform it. So, the next time you find the present moment not pleasant, do not think that running away from it is the best way. It may be a chance to stay in the moment and look deeply into the nature of your suffering. If you know how to practise mindful breathing or mindful walking, you can generate the energy of mindfulness. This will help you to be strong enough to recognise pain and embrace it tenderly. In a few minutes, you can calm it down. If there are other practitioners practising with you, you can profit from their energy of mindfulness and compassion.

Thich Nhat Hanh

Television: 'Sine qua non' for agricultural development

■ DR PARVEEN KUMAR

The present is an 'information explosion' era. We get information from numerous sources. Among the various sources, Television is one of the greatest inventions of science which revolutionized information and communication among all sectors of human lives including agriculture. The instrument was invented by John L Baird in 1925. This invention has helped the human societies around the world in news broadcast, entertainment, communication, development, disaster management, technology dissemination and various areas from the very beginning of the invention.

Mass Communication Medium: Television is primarily a means of mass communication. Mass media are those channels of communication which can expose large numbers of people to the same information at the same time. Different mass media sources of information like the newspapers, radio and television and modern Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) play an important role in disseminating relevant information well in advance of time to the farming community. Mass media communication is recognized as one of the most important methods in transferring of agricultural technology. Mass communication is targeted for the general people for creating awareness and technology dissemination. These technologies may relate to crops, livestock, fisheries, forestry and meteorological information that have an impact on agricultural development. In agriculture these features are utilized for the dissemination of technologies. Agricultural growth is vital for promoting economic advancement and for ensuring food security for the burgeoning population more so in less developed countries. Since India is an agrarian economy and a developing one, agricultural development is primary necessity for the country's growth and a robust economy. All interventions should thus focus on this issue. So television as the mass media channel is very much essential in agricultural technology dissemination. In recent years, the use of mass media, especially television is increasing the knowledge regarding different aspects of crop and livestock production among the farming community. The television disseminate information in a simple way to understand easy through its different programmes related to agriculture, health, education, industrialization and many other. These agricultural programmes enhance the capacity building of farmers. The information disseminated leads to knowledge enhancement and decision making among farming community. Although the use of ICT based technologies is on the rise in the country but studies reveal that in rural areas mostly farmers still depend on television, newspaper and radio regarding the information about agriculture in rural areas. Even the Food and Agriculture Organization FAO (2001) has recognized that television is the most important medium for communicating information among rural people of developing countries. TV is playing an important role in spreading information and enabling the remote areas people to make decision regarding their farm activities. Such thing usually has been observed in developing countries. Agricultural related programs are still watched by the respondents' as the next priority after news and drama. Television as a communication media has a great potential for influencing farmers to stimulate agricultural development

Supplementing Extension Systems: Agriculture extension system of a country largely determines development of agriculture sector of that particular country. The innovations and technologies generated by research system are carried to the farmers through this extension delivery system. The major strength of extension service is the extension workers who personally work through various extension methods to transfer the technology to the farmers and get them adopted for increased production. The complementary and supplementary tools for extension systems are mass



media like radio, television, mobile phone, internet, result and method demonstration etc. Television today has emerged as a tool having the advantage of both audio and video systems in the same device supplementing and complimenting the efforts of extension systems existing in different countries of the world.

Higher Level of Adoption & Income: A number of research studies conducted by researchers across the globe have reflected that radio and television used by the farmers in different countries to different extent were perceived as effective by the farmers. These had an effective role in improving awareness and increasing level of knowledge of farmers.

The different agricultural programmes and technologies broadcasted through these mass media sources leads to higher level of adoption of such technologies. The farmers were benefitted with increased income and increased marketing opportunities by accessing marketing information from such programmes. In several researches it was revealed that television had a significant role in increasing agricultural knowledge of the farmers. A research carried out to assess the role of television channels on agricultural development in Pakistan showed that television was moderately effective in increasing their agricultural income. Another study carried out in Bangladesh revealed that farmers obtained high production utilizing the agricultural information obtained from television channels. In another study it was found that television was the most effective mass media channel for influencing knowledge increase of the farmers.

Agriculture on Television: India had started in the late sixties (January 26, 1967) telecasting a farm TV programme

popularly known as 'Krishi Darshan' for communicating agricultural information to the farmers on experimental basis in 80 villages of union territory of Delhi. Experiment was successful as substantial improvement was observed in adopting better agricultural practices by the farmers. With the passing of time many more agricultural programmes were added on in this bucket to empower agricultural sector and farming community of our country. DD Kisan is another Indian agriculture 24-hour television channel, which is owned by Doordarshan and was launched on 26 May 2015. The channel is dedicated to agriculture and related sectors, which disseminates real-time inputs to farmers on new farming techniques, water conservation and organic farming among other information.

World Television Day: The first 'World Television Forum' was held on November 21 and 22 in 1996 by the United Nations. Leading media figures met in this forum to discuss the growing significance of television in the rapidly changing world and consider how they might enhance their mutual cooperation. The United Nation leaders recognized that television could bring attention to conflicts, raise awareness of threats to peace and security, and sharpen focus on social and economic issues. Television was acknowledged as a major tool in informing, channeling, and affecting public opinion, having an undoubtable presence and influence on world politics.

Recognizing the all important role of Television in all aspects of individual as well as social life, the UN General Assembly decided to name November 21 as 'World Television Day'. It was not meant to celebrate the object itself, but to celebrate the symbol for communication and globalization in the contemporary world that it represents. The day recognizes that television plays a major role in presenting different issue that affect people. It is a day to renew governments', organizations' and individuals' commitments to support the development of television media in providing unbiased information about important issues and events that affect society. Let us also use the day as an opportunity to discuss media how television promotes and can be further used to augment cultural diversity and a common understanding and its role in social, political and economic development.

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UN resolutions on Kashmir- obsolete

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

Unfortunately Pakistan has once again raked and raised the so called issue of Kashmir in the United Nations Security Council. It has been done by the Pakistan representative unashamedly as that country is not and losing any opportunity to rake the issue of Kashmir in the United Nations. But as usual the Indian response was upright and the Indian representative has said that Pakistan hosts various militant organizations and provides them shelter and these terrorist organizations are proscribed by the United Nations. Pakistan is doing the notorious job of throwing the dust in the eyes of the security council of the United Nations. The Pakistan is raking the issue of Kashmir just to divert the attention of the international community and the United Nations from the home problems of that country. The track record of the Pakistan so far as the state policy of Pakistan is concerned is very bad as in that country united nations proscribed terrorists are being given a free hand by the Pakistani state. Counselor in India's Mission to United Nations Kajal Bhat has said that this is not the first time that Pakistan has raised the issue of Kashmir in the united nations security council but that country is always raking the non issue of Kashmir in this world forum. Pakistan has in fact misused the platform provided by the United Nations to propagate false and malicious propaganda against India and is seeking to divert the attention of the international community from the sad state of affairs in Pakistan where terrorists enjoy a free hand and the minorities are made to suffer. The worst kind of the human rights violations are being committed against the religious minorities in Pakistan but that country is diverting the attention of the United Nations from its domestic conditions. Pakistan in fact is a failed state and hence is raking the issue of Kashmir in the United States but

there are no takers of its view. Indian representative in the United States has slammed Pakistan and has remarked that the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh including the Pak occupied Kashmir is the integral part of India. It is the consistent policy of India that the whole of Jammu and Kashmir including the Pak occupied Kashmir is the inalienable part of India. Thus Pakistan should vacate its occupation of the Indian land. Moreover Pakistan should stop to train, harbor and push terrorists to Jammu and Kashmir. Indian representative Kajal Bhat has said in United Nations that India desires to have good relations with all the neighbors including Pakistan. She has further remarked that Pakistan should stop to aid, train, and fund and export the terrorists to India if she wants to have meaningful dialogue with India. Thus the only condition for the resumption of the dialogue with Pakistan is that the neighboring country should stop to use its soil for the terrorist activities. India has maintained in the United Nations Security Council that the outstanding issue if any will be sorted out as per the Shimla agreement and Lahore Declaration bilaterally. The Indian has further stated that there is no role for the third party intervention on Kashmir and the issue if any can be resolved mutually by the two countries without any third party intervention. Thus for the resolution of the Kashmir issue stoppage of the terrorism and the export of the same and the vacation of the illegally occupied land of Jammu and Kashmir is the very base of holding the dialogue between the two states. However the fact of the matter is that the united nations security council resolutions on Kashmir are redundant and obsolete and are thus impractical given the fact that Pakistan has failed to vacate the illegal occupation of the part of the Jammu and Kashmir which is the base of fulfilling the security council resolution on Kashmir. Thus the Security

Council resolutions on plebiscite, is obsolete and impractical and are very old and thus redundant. The united nations security council resolutions are thus irrelevant and does not hold any ground after seventy five years from 1948 and therefore the two nations cannot bank on these redundant resolutions. Thus plebiscite is out of question and is irrelevant in the present context as much water has flown down the rivers of Jhelum and Chenab and thus the resolutions have become redundant and obsolete and as such cannot be the bases of solving the issue of Kashmir. India has maintained that if anything is to be discussed between India and Pakistan it is the issue of the territory of India which is illegally occupied by the Pakistan and thus Pakistan should vacate its illegal occupation of the territory of India for any meaningful dialogue. Therefore, the security council resolutions are redundant as per the general secretary of the security council in the past has maintained that the resolutions of 1948 do not hold water after the big gap of 75 years. Thus the holding of the plebiscite is impractical as it has become redundant and obsolete and therefore the parties to the dispute should shun their rigid stands and talk in an atmosphere of peace and friendship to solve the festering issue of Kashmir.

The practical solution to the Kashmir crisis is that the line of control should be made the international boarder as neither India nor Pakistan will seceded an inch of the land under their occupation to the other. Therefore the only realistic solution to the problem of Kashmir is that the line of actual control be made a permanent international boarder. This solution has also been advocated by the former chief minister and the chief of the national conference party Dr Farooq Abdullah in the past and he is firm on this view. Therefore the best course for the two countries is that they should recognize the line of actual control as the interna-

tional boarder and show some flexibility and be pragmatic and practical as the united nations resolutions have become obsolete and thus only way to resolve the ticklish issue of Kashmir is the conversion of the line of control in the international boarder. The Indian parliamentary resolution for the vacation of the illegal territory of India by Pakistan is there but the government of India should think in a pragmatic and practical way and pave way for the resolution of the Kashmir problem. Pakistan should also be practical and not harp on the redundant resolution of the plebiscite and instead show some flexibility and show magnanimity and enter into a meaningful dialogue to resolve the issue of Kashmir to the satisfaction of all the stakeholders.

Therefore both the neighboring countries should bend from their stated positions so that the ticklish problem of Kashmir is solved to the satisfaction of the parties concerned. At the same time it should be appreciated that there is no role for the third party intervention in Kashmir but the two countries should find the solution of the Kashmir problem bilaterally in accordance with the Shimla agreement and the Lahore declaration to the satisfaction of both the parties. Therefore Pakistan should stop funding, training and exporting the terrorism to Jammu and Kashmir and enter into a meaningful dialogue for the resolution of the Kashmir problem as the two countries have suffered a lot due to the festering wound of Kashmir and now they should stop their enmity and enter into a meaningful dialogue to resolve the Kashmir issue for all times to come. Since the Security Council resolutions have become redundant and obsolete thus the Pakistan should not harp on these superfluous resolutions about the so called plebiscite but enter into a dialogue to settle Kashmir issue to the satisfaction of the parties concerned.

YOUR COLUMN

Respect your elders

Dear Editor,

An elder is someone with a degree of seniority, and aging is not only a biological process but also a cultural one in many societies. Respecting our elders should be in most cases a courtesy entrenched in every single person. The elders should be treated with respect, dignity and the appreciation that they deserve at all times because most of them have life experiences that we should listen to and learn from. This paper is meant to discuss ways to respect and honour the elders. One way of respecting the elders is having etiquette polite to them. Being respectful to elders is a way of demonstrating respect. Elders should not be addressed by their names unless one is permitted to do so.

The titles sir and madam should be used in cases where their names are not well known. Listening carefully while they are speaking is important, and their questions should be answered respectfully whenever asked with a tone that is calm. Another way of respecting elders is by telling them how much you respect and appreciate them.

Spending time with elders is also a way of expressing recognition and respect to the elders. Elderly people especially those who have retired and no longer have anything to keep them busy tend to get lonely. However, they are still in need of social interactions that will keep them happy and purpose, since good relationships are key to healthy aging. They should be taken out to dinners and picnics, or to watch their favorite sports being played. They should as well be escorted to the social gathering and religious meetings.

Speaking clearly without slang, keeping eye contact and

smiling are also key to showing respect to elder people. As much as your age mates and friends understand when you speak in slang, elders might not comprehend what you say. In their presence speak clearly and louder if that will make them understand you better. Keeping eye contacts while speaking will acknowledge their presence and smiling from time to time will make them happier. Shaking their hands when you meet them is a simple gesture that makes them know you respect them. In conclusion, the elders should be shown a lot of respect and appreciation. The simple things like shaking their hands, listening attentively, answering their questions and keeping eye contact while speaking to them will show them how much you respect and admire them. They need good relationships that are key for healthy aging.

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