

# A Study on Screen Addiction among Adolescents

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**Abstract:** In today's world the use of screens has been increased widely among all people without any age barriers. Even the toddlers are using screens for various purposes. The over usage of screens among all the people will lead to various physical problems as well as psychological problems too. Physical problems like backache, headache, poor nutrition, dry eyes, poor personal hygiene and the psychological problems like depression, anxiety, boredom with routine tasks and so on. In case of adolescents some are disinterested in studies, and other life activities. The paper was mainly focused among adolescents, and also the screen usage level and withdrawal symptoms among adolescents.

**Keywords:** Screens, addiction, withdrawal, symptoms, psychological problems, adolescents

## 1. Introduction

Screens like television, mobile phones, laptop etc... it becomes a part of everyone's day to day life. Nobody can live without the screens. In case of teens they are mostly using mobile phones and when they get bored on mobiles they will change to television, laptop etc... and at the same time when we look among the elderly peoples they mostly use televisions. And because of this they are not getting time to spend among the families, friends and so on.

Addiction can be defined as incapability to stop a particular activity, consuming drug or substance that causing psychological and physical harm. When a person experiences addiction, they are not able to control it and they starts to be dependent on it to cope with their daily life.

There are different types of addiction like alcohol addiction, drug addiction, food addiction, screen addiction.

Common symbols of addiction includes impaired control over substances or behavior, preoccupation with substance or behavior and continued use despite consequences. Habits and patterns connected with addiction are typically characterized by immediate gratification that is short term reward and coupled with delayed deleterious effects that is long term costs. The word addiction is misused frequently to refer to other compulsive behaviors or disorders, particularly dependence. One of the important distinction between drug addiction and dependence is that drug dependence is a disorder in which cessation of drug use results in an unpleasant state of withdrawal, which can lead to further drug use. Addiction can occur in the absence of dependence, and dependence can occur in the absence of addiction, although the two often occur

together.

The use of screen become an uncontrollable fact among the people which affects the daily functioning of a personlike in their social relationship, physical health and emotional well-being, productivity. People with addictive disorders can be aware about their problems but when they wish to get it they have to and it is very difficult for them to stop.

### *Types of Screens*

- *Mobile*

One of the major screen is mobile. In today's world majority of the people have mobiles and they are using it. And it is mostly use among the adolescents and toddlers and everything can be access with in one touch.

- *Computers/laptops*

This electronic device also played an important role among person's life. Computer is not easy to carry but at the same time laptops are easy to carry and also for transportation because it is a portable one. In between the travel children, teens and even adults use this.

- *Tablet*

Like laptops, tablet is also easy to carry because it is also a portable device. In the present scenario, children mostly use tab for playing games.

- *Television*

It is one of the telecommunication media used for convey movie images. Kids use this to watch cartoons and animated series, teens use this for watching movies, sports and elder people mainly the non-working women's use this to watch teleserials.

### *Adolescence*

In simple words adolescence means "to grow up", it is a transitional stage of both physical and psychological development. From the different aspects or subject related the term adolescence is viewed as transformation or change period between childhood and adulthood, whose cultural purpose is the preparation of children for adult roles.

There are three stages of adolescence:

- Early adolescence (age from 10-13)
- Middle adolescence (age from 14-17)
- Late adolescence (age from 18-21)

### Screen addiction and adolescents

The development of technology grow faster in each day. This helps the adolescents to access to every corner of the

world that is everything can be access in their hand. Because of screen addiction the adolescents face a lot of problems like lack of sleep, disorganized in family and society and more above when they are in front screens they are not aware about the things which happen around them and they fail to face problems and even they are do not know how to solve those problems.

#### *Withdrawal*

The term withdrawal is defined as the onset of symptoms, both the physical and mental, when a substance or any other behavioral activities is reduced or not given to the body. The symptoms must also origin significant distress, impairment, or problems in a social, occupational, or other area that the person functions in. Withdrawal symptom is one of the indicators of dependence syndrome.

Almost every people are using screens that is mobile phones, laptops, tablets etc... The life without screens are not even imagine for teens as well as adults. And the number of people taking treatment for screen addiction has been increased widely, especially the children and teens.

The common withdrawal symptoms are:

- Depression
- Restlessness
- Changing moods
- Anxiety
- Fatigue

Withdrawal responses towards screens

- *Depression*

The life time task of depression in males is 8-12% and in females is 20-26%. However, the life time risk of major depression is about 8%. The most important feature is the sadness of mood or loss of interest or pleasure in almost all activities, present throughout the day. The depressed mood varies little from day to day and is often not responsive to the environmental stimuli. Children and youth who are excessively using the screen will get depressed if they didn't get the screen when they need or when someone took away from them.

- *Disobedience*

The word disobedience means not obeying the rules or instructions which is given to people by an elders or authority figure. Screens and disobedience have a wide relationship that is when the children are using the screens they are not aware about the surroundings; they are in their own world. When parents ask them to shut off the screens or to do any other works which is assigned by parents like to buy something from shops they will not hear those words. They will sometimes misbehave to them and this will happen whenever an elders told them to do something.

- *Aggressiveness*

It means the person will have a violent behavior. In case of screens and adolescents, when the parents ask them to put off the screens (mobile phones, tabs etc...) or when it take away from them they will get aggressive, they will start to hurt them like slapping them, or destroying the things etc... and it's very difficult for them to control their aggressiveness. They will also

get frustrated.

- *Restlessness*

Restlessness can be one of the withdrawal response among adolescents. It is because when the screens are not with them they feel restless, they feel difficulty in focusing, organizing or managing time in doing activities. They will be so distracted from other activities. This can cause different psychiatric problems like generalized anxiety disorder, attention deficit disorder, bipolar disorder.

- *Lack of sleep*

Teens who using the screens excessively does not have proper sleep. When they are in front of screens they are not aware about the time. After reaching from school or college they will start to use till when they feel sleep. Some teens will be always be online or using screens even in midnights. And these will lead to other physical problems.

#### *Psychological problems*

- Bipolar and mood disorder
- ADHD
- Specific learning disability
- Sleep disorder

## **2. Review of literature**

*Jan Van den Bulck (2003)* defines that sleep disturbances have been affect the life of young children and adolescents. They are using phones when they go to bed and confirm that they do not miss any incoming calls or messages. The threat to healthy sleep pattern is more important than the warning posed by entertainment media. It mainly appear to influence time to bed, while mobile phones seem to lead to interrupted sleep.

*Gillespie et.al (2002)* defined the excessive use of computers and electronic devices may adopt the kinds of sustained and awkward postures that are associated with musculoskeletal disorders. And will also adversely effect on developing children including visual, neurological and physical changes.

*Margaret D. Weiss et al (2011)* defined that there is a relation between internet and offline video games and psychiatric disorders, especially ADHD, and also includes obesity, aggression and poor school outcome. Time spent on these games may also worsen ADHD symptoms, if it is indirectly then through the loss of time spent on more developmentally challenging tasks.

*Susan Baer et.al (2012)* defined that teens use screens about 4.5 hours per day. There are many negative impacts associated with screen time like obesity, metabolic syndrome, musculoskeletal pain and sleep problems. Youth addiction scores with functional and emotional impairment.

*Kadir Demirci et.al (2015)* defined that smartphone over use leads to depression, anxiety and sleep quality. Teens displaying high depression and anxiety, this should be attentively monitored for smartphone addiction. Depression and anxiety are the mediators between the smartphone over use and sleep quality.

Steve Sussman et al. (2013) defined that watching television excessively lead to increased aggression, attention and cognitive deficits, sleep difficulties, avoidance of relationship maintenance and lower life satisfaction. And found that television addiction is associated with addictions to alcohol, caffeine, cigarettes, chocolate etc... An average amount of population suffers from television addiction and it possible that addictive process that arises during childhood and adolescence with other problem behavior such as tobacco use.

Carmen Peiro-Velert et. al (2014) defined that boys consume more passive videogames, including using computers, mobile phones while girls use mobile phones to communicate others. Academic performance is directly related to sleep time and inversely related to overall sedentary screen media usage.

Xiaoyan Wu et. al (2015) defined that majority of the students have psychological problems such as anxiety, depression and psychopathological symptoms and this is positively correlated with the screen time and low physical activity reduced the prevalence of mental health problems and poor sleep quality. Poor sleep is associated with poor mental health and screen time has been a cause of insufficient and low quality sleep.

### 3. Methodology

This paper follows quantitative study method it is used to quantify behaviors, opinions, attitudes and so on. Research design used is descriptive study, it describes the sample as expressive by the respondents. It helps to know the characteristics of certain groups such as age, standard of studying, area of residence etc... The sampling method which is used here is convenient sampling. Tools used for the data collection is questionnaire which comprises personal profile, screen usage level and withdrawal symptoms. 106 samples were collected.

The data were collected from the school students and college students. Primary data were collected from the adolescents and secondary data were collected from various books, journals, articles used for the data collection. SPSS software were used for the analysis.

### 4. Results

For this paper, the data was collected among the adolescents. Total of 36 questions were included which were related to level of screen usage and withdrawal symptoms. 39.6% of the respondents were belongs to the age group from 15-16 and the females were more among them. The respondents were more belongs to the nuclear family and they are from rural area. The major findings from the data collection which are related to the level of screen usage, respondents 39.6% use their screens for a long time and 46.2% have not taken any decisions for time limit in using screens. 40.6% of the respondents get relaxed and feel happy when they are in front of screens. At the same time 49.1% of the respondents sometimes uses the screens unlimitedly. When they didn't get the screens to use 26.4% of them moderately gets disturbs when someone irritates them. And also

51.9% think that it will provide all the information which needed for them. Above all 32.1% of the respondents get aggressive when someone took away their phone while using.

49.1% are moderately using screens and 70.8% of the respondents are having withdrawal symptoms moderately.

Table 1  
Level of screen usage among adolescents

Screen usage	Frequency	Percentage
High	27	25.5
Moderate	52	49.1
Low	27	25.5
Total	106	100.0

The above table shows that 49.1% of the adolescents are moderately having screen usage. While, 25.5% of the adolescents equally having the screen usage in high and in low level.

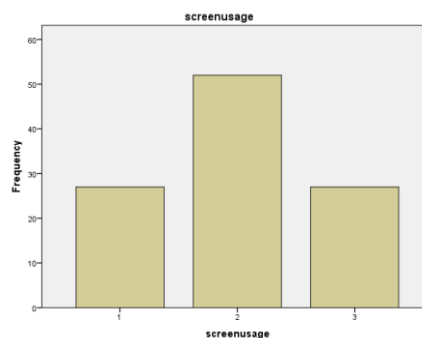


Fig. 1. Level of screen usage among adolescents

Table 2  
Withdrawal symptoms among adolescents

Withdrawal symptoms	Frequency	Percentage
High	16	15.1
Moderate	75	70.8
Low	15	14.2
Total	106	100.0

The above table shows that 70.8% of the adolescents having withdrawal symptoms moderately. 15.1% of the adolescents having in high level and 14.2% of the adolescents having withdrawal symptoms in low level.

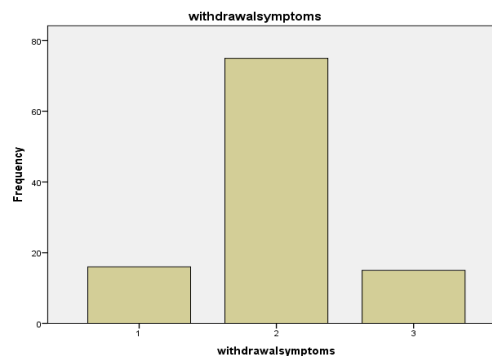


Fig. 2. Withdrawal symptoms among adolescents

Table 3  
Correlation between screen usage and withdrawal symptoms

		Screen usage raw	Withdrawal symptoms raw
Screen Usage Raw	Pearson correlation	1	.435
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	106	106
Withdrawal Symptoms Raw	Pearson correlation	.435	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	106	106

**Conclusion**

The usage of screens has been found among all people without any age limits. Without these screens people are not able to live out their life. The researcher focused on screen addiction among adolescents. Excessive use of screens affects the adolescents in their studies and also in their daily activities. Now a days, many of children and adolescents taking treatment for the screen addiction and different studies have shown that it is very difficult to treat the screen addicts than the drug addicts.

Study was an attempt to assess the screen addiction among adolescents, this was mainly focused among adolescents regarding their usage of screens and withdrawal symptoms. From the above research the researcher found that when the usage of screen increased the withdrawal symptoms also

increased that is when the screen usage increase they will spontaneously have addicted to screens and when they are not getting to use the screens they will get aggressive, depressed and stressed.

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