

Influence of Cartoon Shows on Behaviour of Kids in India

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Abstract

Cartoons and kids are inseparable since the invent of cartoon characters. It has been the favorite pastime of children since then. With time cartoon shows are not just an hour of content during prime time but a number of channels dedicated to such shows 24 x 7. Also, it is available everywhere- television, movies, internet, comics etc. this uninterrupted abundance has turned out to be a major influence on various aspects of kids' day to day life and has thus been of interest for a lot of researchers over the past few years. Most of these researches have been done in big cities of the world and some major cities of India as well. Though there are a lot of researches done on cartoons and kids, this research aims at establishing the influence that cartoon has on kids in a tier II city Jodhpur, Rajasthan. The research was done through a survey done on 112 mothers of children aged between 2-13 years. The analysis shows major influence of cartoon shows on kids behaviour which is both positive as well as negative in nature.

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1. Introduction

The world of cartoon is a whole new world for children. All their imagination comes to life when they watch cartoon characters do things which they are not able to do in their real life. It's amazing for them to see with their naked eyes what they have been only dreaming of. The colorful background, fast changing frames, animated characters and their superpowers collectively grasp the attention of children and keep them overwhelmingly indulged into them for long durations without getting bored with relatively less mental ability to differentiate between fiction and reality, children start believing in everything they say and do and it

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then becomes difficult to make them believe otherwise. Parents also encourage the kids to watch these shows to divert their attention and keep them busy for some time so that they can complete their tasks. Moreover, cartoons are everywhere now. Children do not necessarily need to sit in front of television to watch cartoons, they are available all over internet and through it on the small mobile devices which is well within the reach of the children. With so much of easy access, it is difficult to keep them away from their favorite cartoons. Such kind of unfiltered information with almost no supervision had led them interpret it all in their own ways. Some of them might be positive or knowledge imparting bit there are many around with negative information and kids are not to be blamed to take up all of it with the same ease with their inquisitive minds and sharp but immature brains.

There is a strong impact of cartoon shows on school going children which can be seen in their lifestyle, dressing, aggressive and violent behaviour and their language. 80% of kids spend their time in watching cartoons most of whom spend 1-3 hours daily in their leisure time. Due to this influence on children, they like the dresses/accessories belonging/influenced by their favorite cartoons. Due to their tender minds, children try to imitate actions performed by different characters. Violence is an integral part of cartoons of comedy genre also. Even in the comedy shows, characters fight with each other which is liked by kids and they fight with their classmates after watching them. (Hasan & Daniyal, 2013)

Research shows that cartoons affect children psychologically. They not just change their behaviour towards aggression, but also change their language which is considered to be an integral part of their culture. Children these days seek cartoon as a source of entertainment rather than other physical activities. This may impact their physical health in long run as well. (Yousaf, Shehzad & Hasan, 2015)

The concept of cartoon was introduced with humor to lighten the emotions but continuous display of fights and aggression reinforces it even further. Cartoons display negative emotions like anger, jealousy, anxiety, fear etc. and non-social pattern (like rivalry, non-sharing, non-cooperation, selfishness etc.) which are transferred to the children. (Rajawat, 2017)

Systematic studies on effect of television on children clearly state that heavy exposure to cable television is one of the causes of moral declining cartoon programs affect children of all ages, genders, at all socio-economic levels and all levels of intelligence. (Rai et. Al., 2016)

2. Research Method

This research in an exploratory study done on 112 mothers of children aged between 2-13 years in Jodhpur city, Rajasthan (India) through random sampling method. A questionnaire was used to collect data from the sample which was self-administered.

The data collected during the survey was then analyzed to find the behavioural changes children undergo after watching cartoon shows. Various factors which result in the changes were found out. SPSS .20 was used to analyze the data and to find relation between these factors and how children respond to them. Descriptive statistics and chi-square methods were used to analyze qualitative data collected during the survey.

3. Results and Analysis

What is the source of watching cartoon shows?

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Q2	a. Television	78	44.8%	69.6%
	b. Internet	48	27.6%	42.9%
	c. Movies	22	12.6%	19.6%
	d. Pre-downloaded videos	26	14.9%	23.2%

Total	174	100.0%	155.4%
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The most common source of watching cartoon shows is television (69.6%) followed by Internet (56.4%), Pre-downloaded videos (23.2%) and movies (19.6%)

What is the duration in a day for which the child watches cartoon shows?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid less than 30 minutes	14	12.5	12.5	12.5
30 minutes -1 hour	32	28.6	28.6	41.1
1 hour- 1.5 hours	36	32.1	32.1	73.2
1.5 hours - 2 hours	22	19.6	19.6	92.9
1.5 hours - 2 hours	8	7.1	7.1	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

32.1% children watch cartoon shows for at least 1-1.5 hours every day and 28.6% watch it between 30min-1hour. Very few (7.1%) children watch cartoon shows for more than 2 hours.

Do you encourage your child to watch cartoon shows?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Always	18	16.1	16.1	16.1
Sometimes	50	44.6	44.6	60.7
Occasionally	38	33.9	33.9	94.6
Never	6	5.4	5.4	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

Most of the parents encourage their children to watch cartoon shows sometimes (44.6%) or occasionally (33.9%). Only 5.4% say that they have never encouraged their child to watch cartoons.

When do you mostly encourage the child to watch cartoons?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
a. Fixed Duration of a day	32	28.6	28.6	28.6
b. When you are busy with some work	40	35.7	35.7	64.3
c. When there are guests at home	6	5.4	5.4	69.7
d. When you are away from home and you want to keep, the child occupied	12	10.7	10.7	80.4
e. When they are not eating food	16	14.3	14.3	94.7
f. When you are tired and the child seeks your attention	6	5.4	5.4	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

Maximum parents (35%) encourage their children to watch cartoons when they are busy with some work. 28.6% do it for a fixed duration of the day while 14.3% give in when they are not eating their food. 10.7% parents encourage the child when they are away and want to keep the child busy.

What kind of cartoon does the child generally watch?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Action	24	21.4	21.4	21.4
Comedy	52	46.4	46.4	67.9
Fantasy	28	25.0	25.0	92.9
Science-fiction	6	5.4	5.4	98.2
Any other	2	1.8	1.8	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

46.4% children prefer watching comedy shows while fantasy (25%) is the next one preferred. 21.4% like watching action shows and only 5.4% children like science-fiction.

Which is the child's favourite cartoon character?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Doremon	50	44.6	44.6	44.6
Pokemon	8	7.1	7.1	51.8
ChotaBheem	22	19.6	19.6	71.4
Shin Chan	6	5.4	5.4	76.8
Mighty Raju	6	5.4	5.4	82.1
Ben Ten	2	1.8	1.8	83.9
Tom & Jerry	8	7.1	7.1	91.1
Any other	10	8.9	8.9	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

Doremon is the most favorite among children with 44.6% prefer watching it. Chotabheem is the favorite with 19.6% children preferring it followed by Tom & Jerry and Pokemon with 7.1% children preferring both.

Do you think the child prefers watching cartoons over indoor games?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	76	67.9	67.9	67.9
No	36	32.1	32.1	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

67.9% parents feel that their children prefer cartoon shows over indoor games.

Do you think the child prefers cartoon shows over outdoor games with their friends?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	48	42.9	42.9	42.9
No	64	57.1	57.1	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

42.9% parents think that children prefer cartoon shows over outdoor games with their friends.

Does the habit of watching cartoons affect the social well-being of your children?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	62	55.4	55.4	55.4
No	50	44.6	44.6	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

55.4% parents think that watching cartoons have affected the social well-being of their children.

Do you think the child's behaviour has changed due to watching a certain cartoon show over a period of time?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	62	55.4	55.4	55.4
No	50	44.6	44.6	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

55.4% parents feel that the behavior of the child has changed due to watching certain cartoon show over a period of time.

What kind of impact do you think cartoon character has on children?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Positive	42	37.5	37.5	37.5
Negative	18	16.1	16.1	53.6
Neutral	26	23.2	23.2	76.8

Both Positive & Negative	26	23.2	23.2	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

37.5% parents think cartoons have positive impact over children. 23.2% have a neutral view about it while the same number of parents also think that the impact is both positive as well as negative. 16.1% think the impact is only negative.

From the following, choose the appropriate option with respect to the impact you think cartoon has on your child.

A. Technology Savvy

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	34	30.4	30.4	30.4
Agree	54	48.2	48.2	78.6
Neutral	16	14.3	14.3	92.9
Disagree	6	5.4	5.4	98.2
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8	1.8	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

78.6% parents agree on the fact that cartoon shows have made their children Technology Savvy, 14.8% are of a neutral opinion. Only 7.2% parents disagreed with the same.

B. Aggression

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	14	12.5	12.5	12.5
Agree	50	44.6	44.6	57.1
Neutral	30	26.8	26.8	83.9
Disagree	10	8.9	8.9	92.9
Strongly Disagree	8	7.1	7.1	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

57.1% parents think their kids have become aggressive after watching cartoons while 26.8% are neutral about it. Only 16% parents disagree on the same.

C. Knowledge on Adult topics

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	12	10.7	10.7	10.7
Agree	24	21.4	21.4	32.1
Neutral	38	33.9	33.9	66.1
Disagree	34	30.4	30.4	96.4
Strongly Disagree	4	3.6	3.6	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

32% parents think that cartoons have given some knowledge on adult topics to their children. 33.6% disagree with it and 33.9% are neutral on the statement.

D. Good eating habits

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	16	14.3	14.3	14.3
Agree	52	46.4	46.4	60.7
Neutral	24	21.4	21.4	82.1
Disagree	20	17.9	17.9	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

60.7% parents agree that cartoons have helped in inculcating good eating habits among their children. 21.4% are neutral about it while only 17.9% disagree with it.

E. Animated talking

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	26	23.2	23.2	23.2
	Agree	62	55.4	55.4	78.6
	Neutral	10	8.9	8.9	87.5
	Disagree	10	8.9	8.9	96.4
	Strongly Disagree	4	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	112	100.0	100.0	

88.6 % parents feel that kids have developed a habit of animated talking after watching cartoon shows, only 12.5% parents disagree.

F. Day dreaming

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	16	14.3	14.3	14.3
	Agree	42	37.5	37.5	51.8
	Neutral	28	25.0	25.0	76.8
	Disagree	18	16.1	16.1	92.9
	Strongly Disagree	8	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	112	100.0	100.0	

51.8% parents agree that children have started day dreaming due to continuous exposure to cartoon shows while 25% are neutral about it. 23% disagree on the same.

G. Improved General knowledge

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	32	28.6	28.6	28.6
	Agree	50	44.6	44.6	73.2
	Neutral	18	16.1	16.1	89.3
	Disagree	8	7.1	7.1	96.4
	Strongly Disagree	4	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	112	100.0	100.0	

73.2% parents feel that the general knowledge of their children has improved due to watching cartoon shows. Only 10.7 disagree with it and 16.1% are neutral.

H. Self- defence techniques

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	24	21.4	21.4	21.4
	Agree	46	41.1	41.1	62.5
	Neutral	34	30.4	30.4	92.9
	Disagree	8	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	112	100.0	100.0	

62.5% parents think that the child has learnt some self-defense techniques due to cartoon shows. 30.4% parents are neutral on it while only 7.1% parents disagree completely on the same.

I. Value of friendship

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	12	10.7	10.7	10.7
	Agree	80	71.4	71.4	82.1
	Neutral	18	16.1	16.1	98.2

Disagree	2	1.8	1.8	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

82% parents think that children have understood value of friendship due to cartoon shows depicting the same through characters. 16.1% parents are neutral on it and only 1.8% disagree on it.

J. Knowledge on Social issues

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	18	16.1	16.1	16.1
Agree	46	41.1	41.1	57.1
Neutral	36	32.1	32.1	89.3
Disagree	10	8.9	8.9	98.2
Strongly Disagree	2	1.8	1.8	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

57% parents agree that children have gained knowledge on social issues through cartoon shows and 32.1% are neutral on it. Only 10.6% parents disagree on the same.

K. Knowledge on Environmental issues

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	12	10.7	10.7	10.7
Agree	58	51.8	51.8	62.5
Neutral	22	19.6	19.6	82.1
Disagree	20	17.9	17.9	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

62.5% parents believe that cartoon shows have added to the knowledge of children on environmental issues. 19.6% parents have a neutral opinion and 17.9% disagree with it.

L. Understanding Emotions like happiness, sadness, fear etc

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	30	26.8	26.8	26.8
Agree	72	64.3	64.3	91.1
Neutral	4	3.6	3.6	94.6
Disagree	2	1.8	1.8	96.4
Strongly Disagree	4	3.6	3.6	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

91% parents are of the opinion that children have an understanding of emotions like happiness, sadness, fear etc. due to their depiction in cartoon shows. Only 5% parents disagree on the same.

M. Improved Creative skills

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	30	26.8	26.8	26.8
Agree	60	53.6	53.6	80.4
Neutral	12	10.7	10.7	91.1
Disagree	10	8.9	8.9	100.0
Total	112	100.0	100.0	

More than 80% parents agree on improved creative skills of their children due to cartoon shows. Only about 9% disagreed on it.

N. Improved Thinking Skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	34	30.4	30.4	30.4
	Agree	50	44.6	44.6	75.0
	Neutral	22	19.6	19.6	94.6
	Disagree	4	3.6	3.6	98.2
	Strongly Disagree	2	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	112	100.0	100.0	

75% parents think that the thinking skills of their children have improved due to cartoon shows. 19.6% parents have a neutral opinion on it while 5.4% disagree on the same.

O. Improved Communication Skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	36	32.1	32.1	32.1
	Agree	54	48.2	48.2	80.4
	Neutral	14	12.5	12.5	92.9
	Disagree	6	5.4	5.4	98.2
	Strongly Disagree	2	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	112	100.0	100.0	

More than 80% of parents agree on improved communication skills of their children after watching cartoon shows. 12.5% parents are neutral and only 7.2% parents disagree with it.

What is the duration in a day for which the child watches cartoon shows? * Working Parents Cross tabulation

		Working Parents			Total
		Mother	Father	Both	
3. What is the duration in a day for which the child watches cartoon shows?	less than 30 minutes	0	10	4	14
	30 minutes -1 hour	4	18	10	32
	1 hour- 1.5 hours	0	26	10	36
	1.5 hours - 2 hours	0	12	10	22
	More than 2 hours	0	4	4	8
Total		4	70	38	112

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.404 ^a	8	.099
Likelihood Ratio	13.297	8	.102
N of Valid Cases	112		

While the chi square test suggests no clear relationship between working parents and number of hours child watches cartoon shows in a day, crosstab shows that cases where both parents are working, children are prone to watch cartoons for longer durations as compared to single parent working families (26.2% children of both parent working families watch cartoons for 1.5-2hours against 17% in single working parent.10.5% of both parents working families watch cartoon over 2 hours as compared to only 5.7% of single working parent families.).

What is the duration in a day for which the child watches cartoon shows? * Family Type Cross tabulation

		Family Type		Total
		Nuclear	Joint	
3. What is the duration in a day for which the child watches cartoon	less than 30 minutes	8.0%	16.1%	12.5%
	30 minutes -1 hour	44.0%	16.1%	28.6%

shows?	1 hour- 1.5 hours	20.0%	41.9%	32.1%
	1.5 hours - 2 hours	24.0%	16.1%	19.6%
	More than 2 hours	4.0%	9.7%	7.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.254 ^a	4	.004
Likelihood Ratio	15.621	4	.004
N of Valid Cases	112		

Chi square test of cross-tabulation between the duration in a day for which child watches cartoon shows and Family type shows signification relationship between both. Most children in nuclear families (44%) watch television for 30minutes-1hour while most of them in joint families (42%) watch them for 1-1.5 hours.

What kind of cartoon does the child generally watch? * Sex Of Children Cross tabulation

		Sex Of Children		Total
		Male	Female	
6. What kind of cartoon does the child generally watch?	Action	28.6%	17.1%	21.4%
	Comedy	52.4%	42.9%	46.4%
	Fantasy	14.3%	31.4%	25.0%
	Science-fiction	4.8%	5.7%	5.4%
	Any Other	0.0%	2.9%	1.8%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.443 ^a	4	.168
Likelihood Ratio	7.333	4	.119
N of Valid Cases	112		

Since the value of chi square test is less than .5 it clearly suggests that there is significant relationship between the type of cartoon show and gender of the child. While the most preferred by both male & female is comedy, boys prefer action next to comedy while girls prefer fantasy.

Do you think the child prefers cartoon shows over outdoor games with their friends? * Sex Of Children Cross tabulation

		Sex Of Children		Total
		Male	Female	
9. Do you think the child prefers cartoon shows over outdoor games with their friends?	Yes	57.1%	34.3%	42.9%
	No	42.9%	65.7%	57.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.600 ^a	1	.018		
Continuity Correction ^b	4.706	1	.030		
Likelihood Ratio	5.599	1	.018		
Fisher's Exact Test				.029	.015
N of Valid Cases	112				

Chi Square test clearly indicates significant relationship between gender of child and preference towards outdoor games. While most boys (57%) prefer cartoon shows over outdoor games, most girls (65.7%) prefer outdoor games with friends over cartoon shows.

Do you think the child prefers watching cartoons over indoor games? * Sex Of Children Cross tabulation

		Sex Of Children		Total
		Male	Female	
8. Do you think the child prefers watching cartoons over indoor games?	Yes	76.2%	62.9%	67.9%
	No	23.8%	37.1%	32.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.140 ^a	1	.144		
Continuity Correction	1.572	1	.210		
Likelihood Ratio	2.194	1	.139		
Fisher's Exact Test				.210	.104
N of Valid Cases	112				

Chi square test suggests significant relationship between gender of child and preference towards indoor games. Although both boys and girls prefer cartoon shows over indoor games, boys prefer cartoon shows more (76.2%)

Findings

- The most common source of watching cartoon shows is television followed by internet and most children watch cartoon shows for 1-1.5Hours in a day.
- Most of the parents have encouraged the child to watch cartoon shows at some point of time. While some of them do it for a fixed duration of a day, the most common reason for this encouragement by parents is when they are busy with some work.
- Most preferred genre of cartoon amongst kids (both boys & girls) is comedy followed by fantasy in girls and action in boys. The most favorite cartoon show is Doremon followed by ChotaBheem.
- Children prefer cartoon shows over both Indoor as well as outdoor games. Also, most boys prefer cartoon shows over outdoor games while most girls prefer outdoor games with friends over cartoon shows. This is also against the general notion that boys prefer to stay outside while girls' preference is towards indoor activities.
- Parents have observed change in behaviour of kids after watching cartoon shows and think that their social well-being is also affected by it.
- Most parents think that cartoons either have only positive impact on children or both positive as well as negative impact on them. The results of factors which have an impact on kids due to watching cartoons also prove the same:
 - ✓ Most parents think that there are positive changes in kids like Improved general knowledge, learning self-defense techniques, understanding value of friendship, knowledge on social and environmental issues and understanding of human emotions.
 - ✓ Parents have also agreed upon the improvement of various skills among kids like Creative skills, Thinking skills and Communication skills. Also, parents think cartoons have made their child techno savvy which is the call of the day.
 - ✓ Majority of parents think that kids have also learnt good eating habits due to cartoons.
 - ✓ Apart from all the positive influences cartoons have on children, most parents agreed that the children have become aggressive and gained knowledge on adult topics due to exposure to cartoons. Majority parents also agreed that kids have developed animated talking habits and day dreaming due to cartoon shows.
- More children in both parents working families watch cartoons for more than 1.5 hour in a day as compared to single parent working families.
- Children in joint families watch cartoons for longer durations as compared to nuclear families.

4. Conclusion

The results of research clearly show that cartoons have behavioural impact on children. Although most studies suggest that their impacts are negative, the results of the study show that though there are negative effects of watching cartoon shows on kids, there are many positive effects of the same which cannot be ignored. Along with behavioural changes like aggression, animated talking and day dreaming; children have found to be improved upon various skills like creative, thinking and communication skills. Parents have also

observed positive changes like improved General Knowledge, self-defense techniques, value of friendship, knowledge on social & environmental issues and human emotions. Cartoons also have made them techno savvy and learnt good eating habits. The major problem area is that children prefer cartoon shows over indoor and outdoor (specially boys) activities. This may impact their physical well-being over a period of time and make them unhealthy. This may also affect their social well-being which is also substantiated by the parents as per the study.

Cartoons have a lot of positive impact on children and may be very beneficial in teaching them positive habits and skills effortlessly but it needs to be monitored by the parents since it is difficult for kids to differentiate between good and bad content. Exposure to cartoon for a fixed duration of a day. Under adult supervision may not just significantly reduce the harmful effects but also help them in learning good habits and skills and turn out to be a win-win situation for all the stakeholders.

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