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- b) Use MS word (2003-2007) for text and TIFF, JPEG or Paint for figures.
- c) The first page should contain title in bold, 14-size, name/s of author/s in bold, 12 font size, affiliation/s-address, email id and contact number in 11 font size, abstract-up to 200 words in 11 font size, keywords-between 5 to 10 keywords in 11 font size.
- d) Main Text- The paper should be divided into the following sections:

Introduction, Objectives, Hypothesis, Research Methodology, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussion, Conclusions, Acknowledgement and References. Tables and Figures of good resolution (600 dpi) should be numbered consecutively and given in the order of their appearance in the text and should not be given on separate pages.

- e) References- References should be cited in the text as superscript numbers in order of appearance.

References at the end of the paper should be listed in serial order to match their order of appearance in the text. Names of journals should be in italics and volume number should be in bold.

Reference to papers e.g. Ganesh R.S., Pravin S. and Rao T.P., 2005, *Talanta*, 66, 513.

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UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING BEHAVIOURAL ADDICTIONS

Digital overuse: Effects of social media and phone on focus, work and relationships

Authors:

1. Ms. Siddhi Shivaji Shinde, Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College, Thane
2. Mrs. Manisha Waje, Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College, Thane
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ABSTRACT:

The omnipresence of smartphones and social media platforms has given rise to significant concerns regarding digital overuse and its effects. This paper investigates the relationship between excessive engagement with social media and mobile devices and measurable declines in cognitive focus, professional/academic work performance, and the quality of interpersonal relationships.

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining a survey of working professionals and students to quantify usage patterns (screen time, frequency of checking, addiction scales) and self-reported outcomes (attention deficits, job/study performance, relational conflict), to explore the lived experiences and phenomenological impact of digital overuse on focus and social interaction.

Findings reveal a significant and negative correlation between problematic digital use (defined by high frequency and inability to cut down) and all three outcome variables. High screen time was a strong predictor of decreased sustained attention and reduced productivity (evidenced by missed deadlines and lower self-rated efficiency). Furthermore, participants reported a high prevalence of phone snubbing behaviour, which was significantly linked to increased relationship conflict and lower perceived intimacy with partners and friends.

The results confirm that digital overuse, particularly involving social media is a threat to individual well-being by eroding focus and concentration, diminishing work/academic efficacy, and fostering relational discord. These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted digital wellness interventions and policy considerations to promote healthier technology habits in professional and personal spheres.

INTRODUCTION

The modern time is defined by the smartphone and the universal influence of social media. While these digital tools offer unparalleled connectivity and access to information, their near-constant presence has sparked growing concerns about digital overuse. This survey investigates the potential negative consequences of this excessive engagement, moving beyond mere screen time to examine how the compulsion to check phones and engage with social media is actively eroding essential aspects of daily life. Specifically, we aim to measure the correlation between problematic digital habits and tangible deficits in three critical areas - the ability to maintain cognitive focus for work or study, overall productivity and performance, and the maintenance of healthy interpersonal relationships. Understanding this helps us find solutions to use technology in a healthier way.

OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this research is to investigate and quantify the specific impacts of problematic smartphone and social media use across cognitive, professional, and relational domains.

The following specific objectives will guide this study:

1. Understand how much people use their phones and social media, and if they're using them too much.
2. See if using phones/social media too much affects people's ability to focus.
3. Check if excessive phone/social media use impacts work or school performance.
4. Investigate if phone/social media overuse hurts relationships with others.
5. Use the findings to help people develop healthier phone and social media habits.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The body of research concerning the psychological and behavioral impacts of digital technology is rapidly expanding. This review synthesizes existing academic literature relevant to the study's core themes: defining problematic digital use, its effects on cognitive focus and productivity, and its consequences for interpersonal relationships.

1. Defining Problematic Digital Use and Smartphone Addiction

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The foundation of this study rests on defining **digital overuse** and differentiating it from normal usage. The concept often aligns with **behavioral addiction**, characterized by symptoms like preoccupation, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, and relapse.

- Smartphone addiction is when people use their phones too much, can't control it, and it disrupts their daily life. They keep checking their phones even when it's hurting them.
- Social media platforms are designed to keep people hooked, with features like unpredictable rewards (e.g., likes, comments) that make people keep checking for more. This can lead to compulsive behaviour and digital overuse."

2. Impact on Cognitive Focus and Attention

A significant stream of research focuses on how constant digital presence affects the brain's ability to maintain sustained attention.

- Constantly switching between tasks and notifications can hurt our focus. Even brief interruptions can:
 - i) Take longer to complete tasks
 - ii) Increase mistakes
 - iii) Make it hard to do deep work
- Some researchers think that too much digital stimulation might even change our brains, making it harder to focus and remember things. This could be why people who use digital devices a lot often struggle to concentrate.

3. Effects on Work and Academic Productivity

- Notifications and messages can distract us, even when we're not actively using our phones. This can lead to decreased productivity, more time spent recovering from distractions than actually working and procrastination and poorer performance, especially in academics
- Social media's instant gratification can make it hard to focus on tasks that require effort and delayed rewards, creating a cycle of distraction and decreased productivity."

4. Consequences for Interpersonal Relationships

The negative effects of digital overuse extend into the social sphere, often damaging the quality of face-to-face interactions. Using phones in social situations can hurt relationships. For example:

- Phubbing (phone snubbing) means ignoring people around you to check your phone, making them feel disrespected and unimportant.

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- Excessive phone use can create conflict in romantic relationships, making partners feel like they're competing with the phone for attention.

It's like the phone becomes a third person in the relationship, affecting how we connect with each other."

5. Research Gap and Contribution

Most studies look at digital addiction's impact on focus, work, and relationships separately. Our research:

- Looks at all three areas together, using the same measure of digital overuse.
- Provides a comprehensive understanding of the issue, helping us develop effective solutions that address the whole problem."

METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

- Study Design: Online survey of working professionals and students (10+ years old) who use smartphones and social media
- Sample Size: 150 to 200 participants
- Survey: 16-item questionnaire measuring digital overuse, focus, productivity, and relationship quality
- Analysis: Statistical analysis to examine relationships between digital overuse and outcomes

2. Key Measures

- Digital overuse (e.g., compulsive use, inability to cut down)
- Focus/productivity (e.g., difficulty maintaining focus, decreased work efficiency)
- Relationship quality (e.g., phubbing, relational conflict)

3. Data Collection

- Online survey (Google Form) with informed consent and secure data storage
- Distributed via academic networks and social media

4. Analysis Plan

- Descriptive statistics to summarize participant characteristics and digital overuse patterns.
- Correlation and regression analysis to examine relationships between digital overuse and outcomes.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

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The Google Form contains raw data from a "Survey on Digital Habits and Their Impact on Daily Life" with 85 responses, primarily from adults across various age groups and employment statuses. The data reveals significant trends regarding smartphone use, its impact on concentration and productivity, and the strain it places on personal relationships.

1. Digital Usage Habits

The survey highlights a wide range of digital consumption habits, with a significant segment reporting high-frequency engagement and prolonged screen time.

Metric	Key Findings	Interpretation
Daily Smartphone Usage	Most respondents spend between 2 to 5 hours per day on their smartphone, though notable outliers reported up to 8, 9, or even 12 hours of total screen time.	On average, people spend 2-5 hours on digital devices daily, but some heavy users spend 8+ hours, indicating a group that's almost constantly online.
Social Media Check Frequency	Frequency is highly variable, but checking social media 40+ times per day is a common response category. Frequent checking (11-20 and 21-40 times) is also widespread.	People often get stuck in a habit of checking devices frequently, which breaks their focus and can make them feel restless.
Immediate Use on Waking	Many respondents indicated they use their phone "Often" or "Sometimes" within 30 minutes of waking up , with some stating "Always" ⁸ .	This points to a strong, Many people start their day by immediately checking their devices, making it a habit that can lead to distraction throughout the day.

2. Impact on Focus and Productivity

The data strongly suggests that digital habits have a negative impact on the ability to concentrate and perform tasks.

Statement (Scale: 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree)	Dominant Trend	Interpretation
"I find it difficult to maintain focus on a single task... without checking my phone."	Scores of 4 or 5 (Agree/Strongly Agree) are very common.	This is a primary indicator of a significantly reduced attention span . People are using their phones to cope with boredom or take mental

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		breaks, which can lead to a shorter attention span.
"I often get distracted by phone notifications while performing important work or study tasks."	Scores of 4 or 5 are frequent.	Notifications are a big distraction, pulling attention away from important tasks.
"My productivity at work/school has decreased due to time spent on my phone or social media."	Scores of 4 or 5 are common.	Many people think their phone use is hurting their work or studies.
"I feel restless or irritable when I am unable to check my phone or social media."	Scores of 4 or 5 are frequent.	People are getting anxious or uncomfortable when they can't use their phones, showing a strong psychological dependence.
"I have tried to cut down my social media/phone use, but have been unsuccessful."	Scores of 4 or 5 are common.	Many people feel like they can't control their phone use, even though they want to change.

3. Impact on Relationships

The survey data shows digital device use is actively disrupting in-person interactions and emotional connection¹⁶.

Statement (Scale: 1- Never to 5-Very Often or 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree)	Dominant Trend	Interpretation
"I check my phone when having a face-to-face conversation with my partner, family, or friend."	Scores of 3 ("Sometimes") or higher (4, 5) are widely reported.	This is the most prevalent sign of phone snubbing indicating that digital interruptions are a frequent feature of respondents in-person social lives, compromising the quality of presence and attention given to loved ones.
"I feel less emotionally connected to people in my life because I spend more	Scores tend to be mixed, but scores of 4 or 5 are frequent.	For many, the shift toward digital communication is perceived as a reduction in the depth or quality of their emotional bonds.

time communicating digitally."		
"My phone/social media use has led to arguments or conflict with my partner/family."	Scores of 4 or 5 are reported.	For a segment of the population, digital habits have escalated from simple distraction to a source of direct conflict in key relationships.

4. Qualitative Insights

The open-ended responses provided concrete examples of these negative impacts, confirming the trends observed in the scaled questions.

- **Academic and Work Loss:** Respondents cited losing **consistency and focus** during exams, seeing their scores drop, and missing urgent work messages due to "constant scrolling".
- **Relationship Strain:** One respondent shared an instance where their child had to ask them to "talk to him instead of looking at phone". Other comments highlighted arguments and the overall feeling that "Important relationship get impacted".
- **Self-Control Issues:** A student noted a "huge distraction" where studying through video lectures often led to quickly switching to apps like WhatsApp.

In conclusion, the survey data paints a picture of a population experiencing **significant struggle with digital self-regulation**. While users acknowledge the resulting drops in productivity and quality of personal relationships, the habits—driven by dependence and a fear of missing out—appear difficult to break. The data strongly suggests a need for interventions focused on managing notifications, setting time boundaries, and increasing awareness of *phubbing* to mitigate the negative consequences of high-frequency digital engagement.

FIGURE LEGENDS

Figure 1: Age range of people who gave responses.

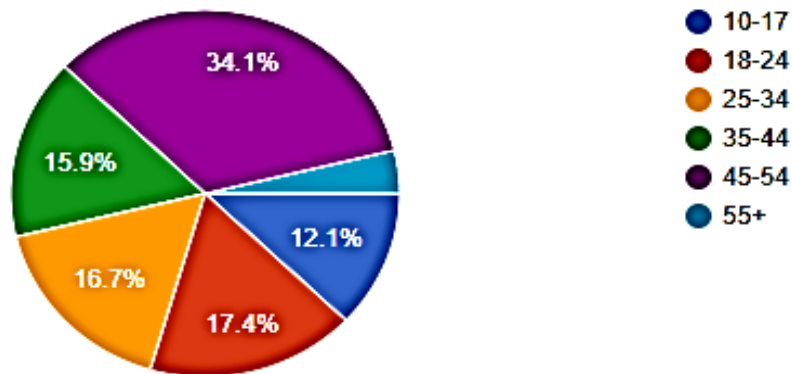


Figure 2: Occupation of the people who responded.

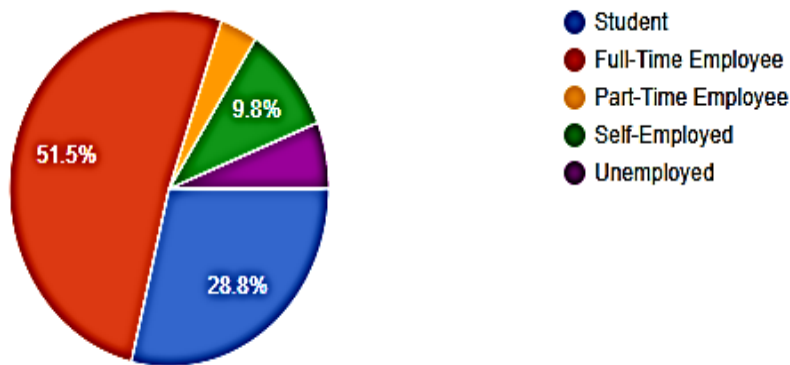


Figure 3: Relationship status of people who gave responses.

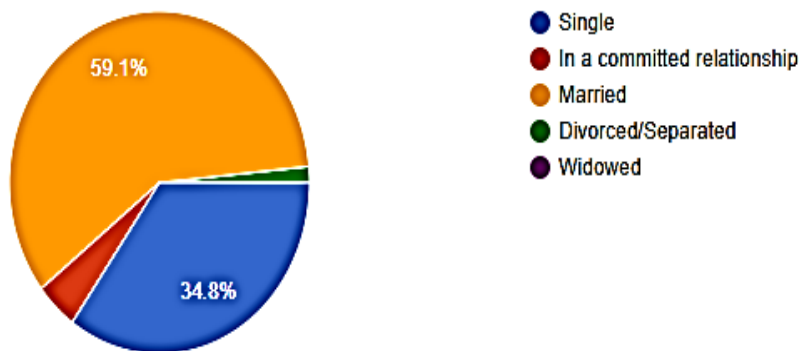


Figure 3: Screen time of people who gave responses.

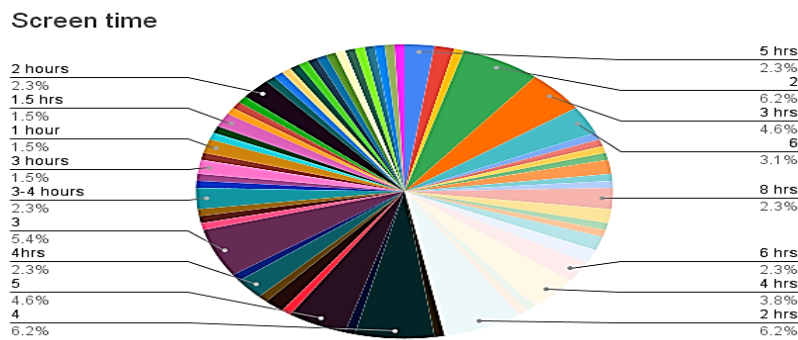


Figure 4: How often social media accounts are checked per day

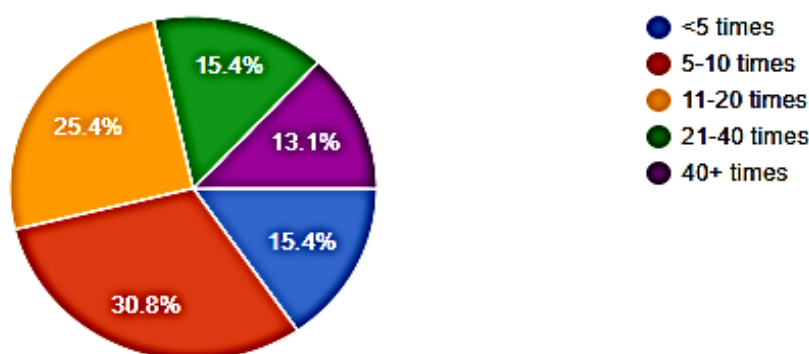


Figure 5: feel restless or irritable when I am unable to check my phone or social media. Scale - 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

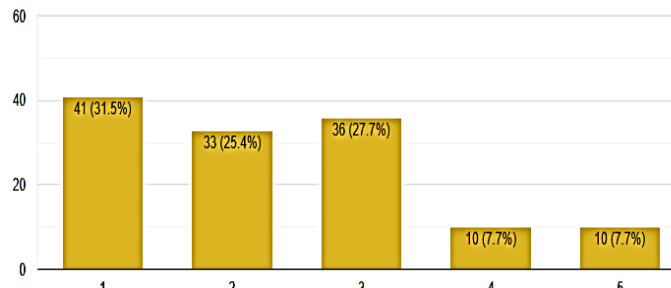
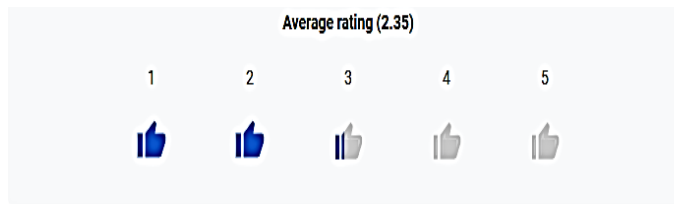


Figure 6 : Using phone within 30 min of waking up.

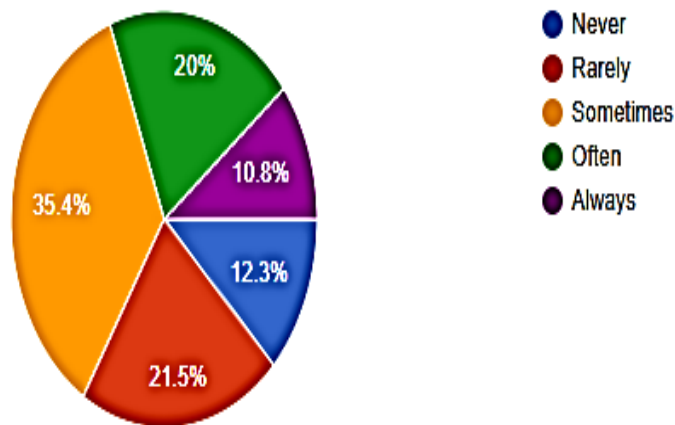


Figure 7 : finding it difficult to maintain focus on a single task (work/study) for more than 30 minutes without checking phone.1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

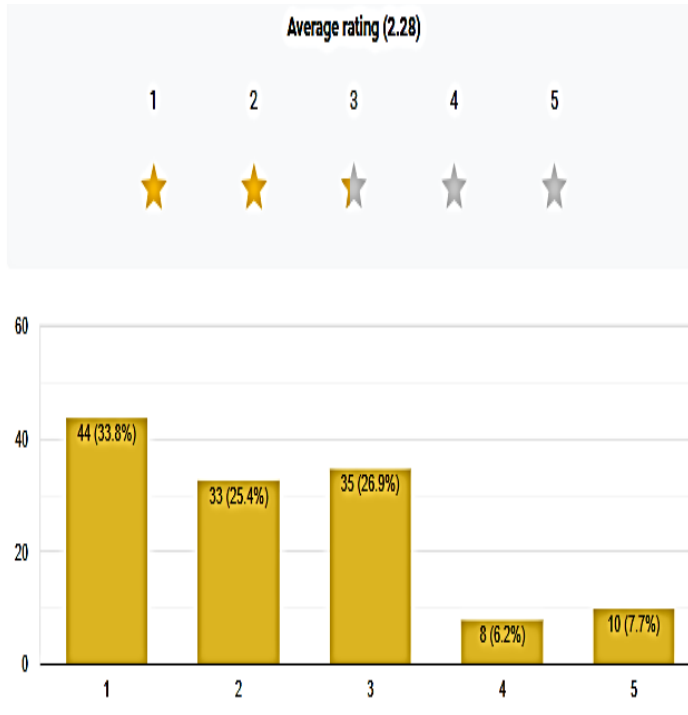


Figure 8 : Often get distracted by phone notifications while performing important work or study tasks.1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

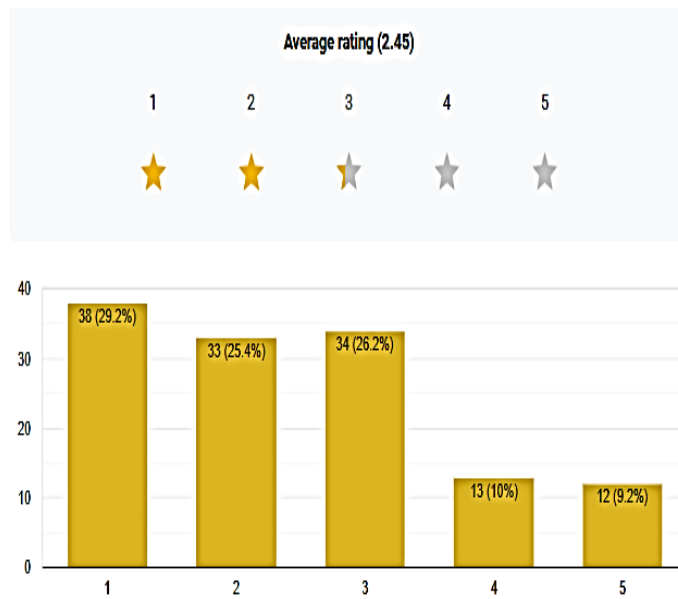


Figure 9 : Decrease in productivity due to time spent on phone and social media. 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

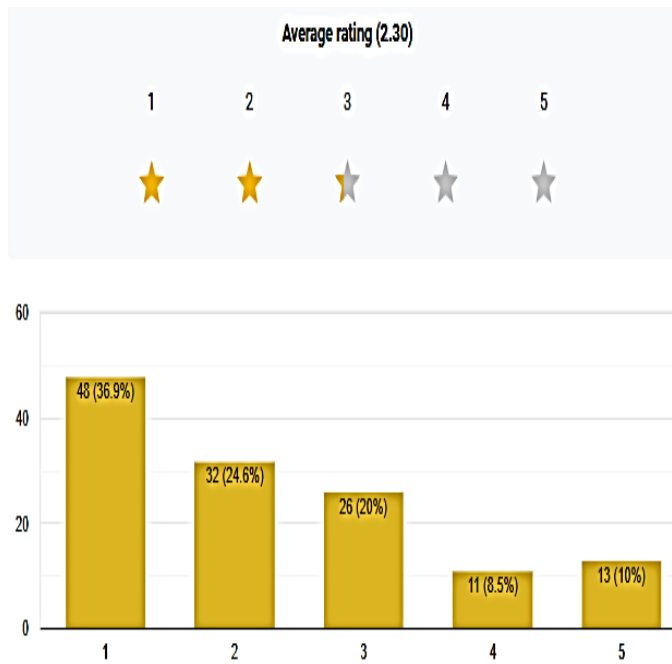


Figure 10 : Switching between multiple digital screens (e.g., laptop and phone) while trying to complete a task.1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

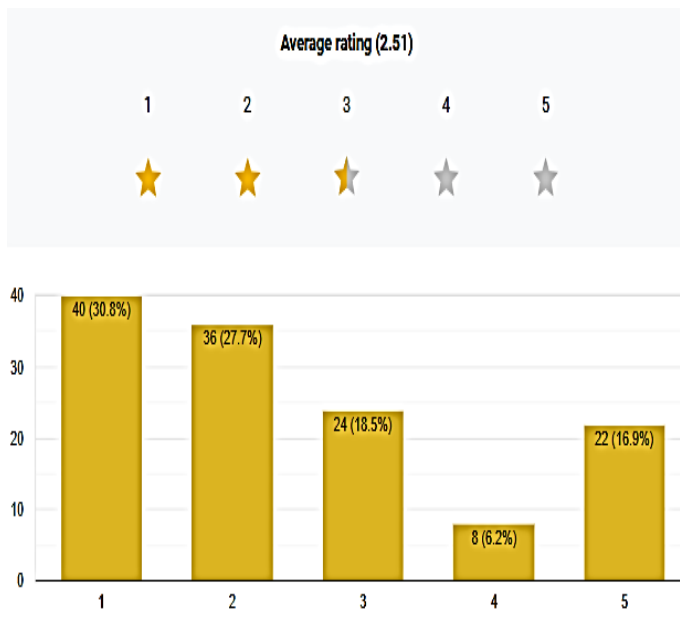


Figure 11 : checking phone when having a face-to-face conversation with partner, family, or friend. 1 (Never) to 5 (Very Often)



Figure 12 : Use of phone/social media has led to arguments or conflict with partner/family.
1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

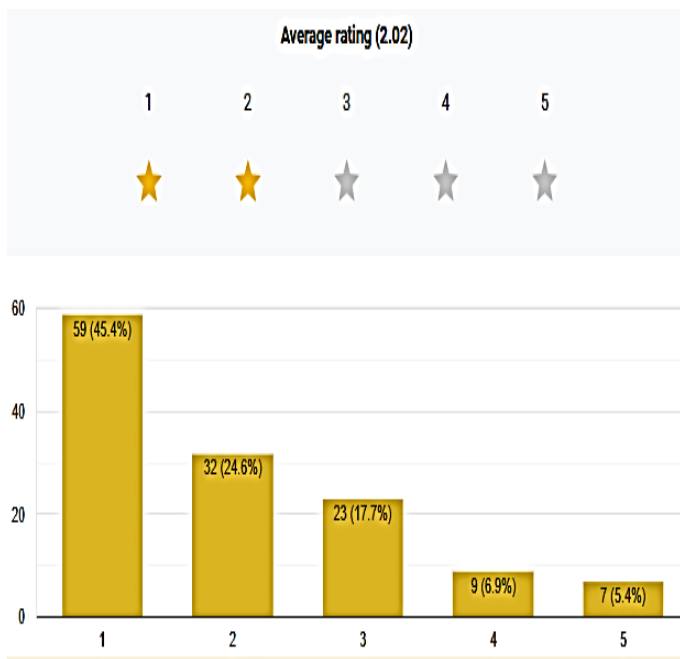


Figure 13: Feeling less emotionally connected to people because of spending more time communicating digitally.
1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

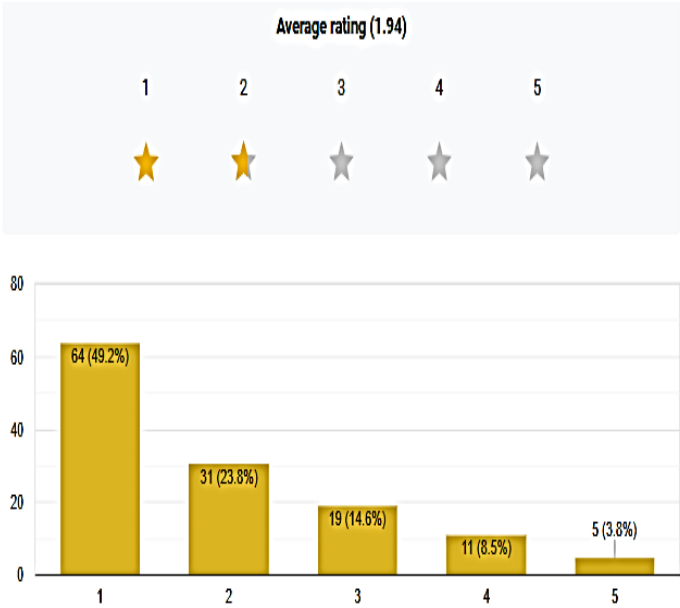
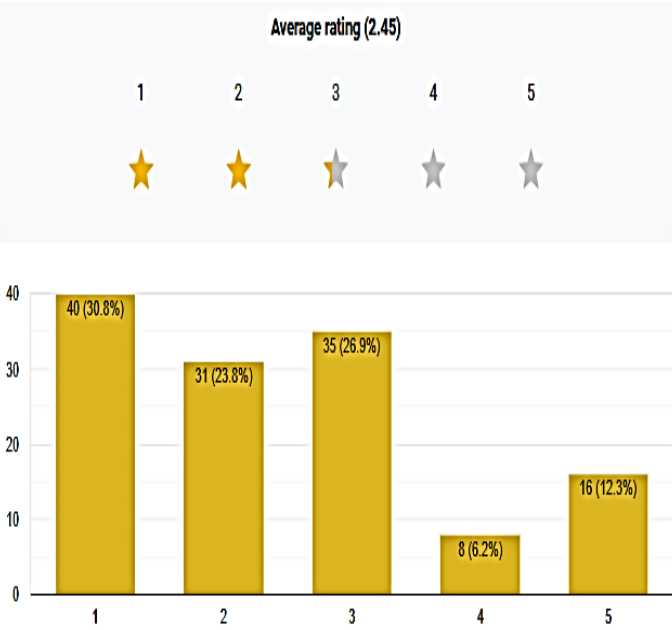


Figure 14 : Feeling that the partner/friends prioritize their phone over our time together.
1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)



RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The survey collected data from 85 respondents across diverse age groups and employment statuses to assess the impact of digital habits on daily life. The findings reveal a widespread pattern of high digital engagement that significantly correlates with self-reported declines in concentration, productivity, and the quality of interpersonal relationships.

1. High-Frequency Digital Engagement and Dependence

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The data confirms a deep integration and reliance on smartphones, characterized by both prolonged daily usage and constant checking.

People are super hooked on their phones - some use them for 8+ hours a day, and many check their social media over 40 times daily. They often reach for their phone first thing in the morning, showing a strong dependence on these devices.

2. Detrimental Impact on Focus and Productivity

A clear majority of respondents perceive their digital habits as detrimental to their cognitive function and work output. Qualitative responses highlighted specific consequences, including a **"huge distraction"** that leads to losing **"consistency and focus"** during study and work periods.

3. Strain on Interpersonal Relationships

Digital device usage is actively compromising the quality of in-person interactions, indicating a widespread issue with attention and presence in relationships.

People often check their phones during face-to-face conversations, which can make others feel ignored. This habit is causing emotional distance and even conflicts with loved ones, like kids feeling neglected.

In conclusion, the findings demonstrate a substantial **struggle with digital self-regulation** among the survey population. While the devices are indispensable, the frequency and duration of their use are perceived by users themselves as a source of compromised attention, decreased productivity, and strain on personal bonds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Boost Focus and Productivity
 - Set aside device-free time for focused work (60-90 minutes).
 - Turn off non-essential notifications.
 - Check emails and social media at set times (e.g., once an hour).
 - Avoid phones for 30 minutes after waking up and before sleeping
2. Improve Relationships
 - Designate phone-free zones (e.g., dining table, bedrooms)
 - Tell others you're checking your phone if you need to.
 - Set shared phone-use goals with family and friends.
3. Regulate Phone Use
 - Use built-in screen time tools to limit app usage
 - Move distracting apps to folders or delete them

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- Replace phone-checking with habits like stretching or note-taking

CONCLUSION

The survey on digital habits demonstrates that high screen time and frequent digital engagement are universal, resulting in measurable self-reported negative consequences. A substantial portion of the sample is experiencing **compromised focus, reduced productivity, and strain on personal relationships**. These findings underscore a widespread difficulty with **digital self-regulation**. To reduce these acknowledged negative impacts, individuals must implement intentional strategies, such as setting screen-free boundaries and managing notifications, to prioritize sustained attention and meaningful in-person connection over digital distraction.

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Exploring Intoxicated Hegemonic Masculine Identity in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Kabir Singh* (2019): A Socio- Cultural Perspective

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Abstract

The paper explores the flawed masculinity of the main protagonist in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Kabir Singh*. The titular character, Kabir Singh, a renowned surgeon is a womanizer, an alcoholic and a cocaine addict. The study focuses on how Hegemonic Masculine identity can turn men into toxic individuals. It also analyses the role played by such masculinities in worsening tendencies of aggression and violence among alcoholics and drug addicts. It also investigates the relation between consumption of alcohol and violent sexual behavior. As the interpretative and analytical approach is used, it is found that he puts on the appearance of being toxic and destructive, but it is just a performance of masculinity. Finally, his identity undergoes a complete transformation from an aggressive hegemonic male with a toxic persona into an (un)hegemonic non-alcoholic family man.

Keywords: Hegemonic Masculinity, Toxic Masculinity, Intoxication and Performance

Cinematic depictions of masculine identity through intoxicated characters have gained immense popularity from times immemorial. From Amitabh Bachchan's most phenomenal Self-talk mirror scene from *Amar Akbar Anthony* to Bobby Deol's glass- balancing rhythmic 'Jamal Kudu' moves in *Animal*, alcoholic characters in films have become a cultural phenomenon. If *Sholay* were to be released in present times, Dharmendra's iconic 'Chakki Peesing and Pessing' scene etched in the hearts of the older generation, would break the internet and create mass/universal appeal for the alcoholic- hero image even today. On the other hand, films like *Devdas* and *Uda Punjab* present the inner conflicts and struggles of heroes fighting addiction and trying to cope up with the problems of life. Slowly, the audience rejected the traditional image of unemployed alcoholics lying on the streets or engaging in self-harm and violence. Therefore, the silver screen came to life with the portrayal of different variants of intoxicated masculinities, right from the slurred talk of humourous drunk and drugged heroes to the solemn incoherent speech of the heavy- drinker losing balance and trying hard to resurrect his degraded self.

Out of all these movies, Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Kabir Singh* is slightly different. The lead figure, Kabir Singh (Shahid Kapoor), has all the qualities of an anti- hero; he is a compulsive drinker,

womanizer and a cocaine addict. *Kabir Singh* (2019) is a remake of a South Indian Telugu movie, *Arjun Reddy* (2017); the lead role played by Vijay Deverakonda. The director of both movies, Sandeep Reddy Vanga, became famous among the Hindi-speaking masses with the release of *Kabir Singh* which later became a huge commercial success.

The film projects a kind of flawed masculinity through the portrayal of a spurned lover, Kabir Singh, an aggressive and self-obsessed alcoholic, engaging in morphine overdose and outrageous sexual hook-ups. It is important to note that he is facing a huge void after his separation from his beloved, Preeti, and he just does not want to heal his troubled self. All the

weird behavioural patterns are the consequence of feeling of detachment and meaninglessness in life due to which he adopts such coping mechanisms of being a sex driven and heavily drunk cocaine addict.

Although the character of Kabir Singh has been criticized for his ruthless toxic masculinity, yet the audience see another flawed human in him, just like them. Ironically, the reason for the popularity of the film is the macho-man image of Kabir Singh. Depicted as an energetic young man desirous of authority and control, he is highly 'masculine' in his demeanour. However, the concept of 'Hegemonic Masculinity', coined by Raewyn Connell, when applied to analyse the film enables us to look at masculinity as a societal and cultural construct. Dominance of few men of influence over other genders, both wo/men and other sexually oriented groups, is also another important aspect of Hegemonic masculinity. Connell and Messerschmidt have explained the concept by referring to Demetriou's classification of 'Hegemonic Masculinity' as given in the following lines:

"Demetriou, however, suggests that another kind of simplification has occurred. He identifies two forms of hegemony, internal and external. "External hegemony" refers to the institutionalization of men's dominance over women; "Internal hegemony" refers to the social ascendancy of one group of men over all other men." (844)

Thus, according to Demetriou, as pointed out by Connell and Messerschmidt, the group of men who control women also dominate weaker and less powerful men. Connell and Messerschmidt further state that in order "to sustain a given pattern of hegemony requires the policing of men as well as the exclusion or discrediting of women." (844) Thus, such dominating men grab power by controlling women and also downplay less important men either by suspicion or monitoring their behaviour or by eliminating their identity.

In *Kabir Singh*, the concept of Hegemonic Masculinity beautifully unfolds itself right at the start of the film. The hero, Kabir Singh, is introduced as an aggressive young adult seeking validation through bullying and violence. As an individual stepping into manhood, he wants to assert his power over other boys of his age and so we find him beating up other player/s and college boys. He also blatantly warns them to stay away from Preeti. On Holi, he brutally comes down to blows when some boys smear colour on her face and body. Therefore, it seems that he is creating a pattern of internal hegemony where he is more feared than any other male student in the college. Similarly, his over possessive attitude terrifies Preeti but eventually she falls in love with him. Although she notices his 'red-flag' behaviour, yet

she chooses to be with him. An educated woman pursuing an MBBS degree, she does not mind being slapped by him. She is a representative of women who are fascinated by their abuser's show of strength and masculinity. Connell and Messerschmidt have made the following observations regarding women's acceptance of Hegemonic masculinity:

"It embodied the currently most honored way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men. Men who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity. It was in relation to this group, and to compliance among heterosexual women, that the concept of hegemony was most powerful. Hegemony did not mean violence, although it could be supported by force; it meant ascendancy achieved through culture, institutions, and persuasion" (832).

Also, being loved by the 'tough guy' of the college, must have made her feel more superior than other girls. Thus, it is very natural that she allows him to dominate her. In doing so, the film demonstrates the working of External hegemonic masculinity, as mentioned by Demetriou, in man-woman relationships.

The idea of Toxic Masculinity forms the core of the movie, Kabir Singh. Kupers, a researcher, defines Toxic masculinity in the following lines:

"Extreme competition and greed, insensitivity to or lack of consideration of the experiences and feelings of others, a strong need to dominate and control others, an incapacity to nurture, a dread of dependency, a readiness to resort to violence, and the stigmatization and subjugation of women..."(pp 717).

According to the characteristics of Toxic masculinity, as mentioned by Kupers, Kabir Singh, is an accomplished surgeon and so no one can stop him from drinking in the operation theatre. In fact, the nurses serve him alcohol out of fear. Even though the hospital authorities know well about his drinking habits, they choose to do nothing. They deliberately do not take any action against him because he is the only surgeon with the largest number of successful surgeries on record. Thus, his superior position as a well-known surgeon makes him hegemonically manlike but his addiction to alcohol adds an element of toxicity to his masculinity. Though it is not exactly a sexual advance from his side, the act of ripping apart his patients' pants near the lowermost portion of the leg while treating her is merely a 'performance' of masculinity. However, such kind of behaviour is clearly toxic considering his professional status. Another example of toxicity is his abnormal sexual addiction. He does not engage himself in serious emotional relationships and he wants women only to satisfy his carnal urges. This sexual objectification of women reducing them to mere 'bodies' is indeed quite shocking.

Kabir's role as a competent surgeon and a tough man enables him to acquire his Hegemonic Masculine identity. He, is therefore, not sidelined like an ordinary alcoholic. In fact, his angry young man image and rough nature even mesmerize the actress who falls in love with him although he rips apart her jeans while diagnosing her problem. It is also due to his functionality and experience that people around him accept his toxic behaviour. Thus, along with his hegemonic standing, his societal prestige and good

financial position are key drivers that inflate his male ego and influence his toxic personality.

A thorough analysis of the movie throws light on different shades of his character. He may be a toxic male alcoholic but at the core of his soul lies a person who loves his beloved immensely. He is a representative of many men who sink completely in alcohol as they do not want to face reality; in his case, he refuses to move on in life. So, beneath the crude exterior, is a man who loves his sweetheart till eternity.

His toxicity may have reached its peak but the truth is that he just puts on an appearance of Toxic Masculinity. As his male ego is blown off to pieces when Preeti marries another man, he puts on the appearance of being toxic which is nothing but a performance of masculinity. He feels that he has lost everything in life so he wants to at least seem to be masculine.

Thus, to understand Toxic Masculinity one must understand that “masculinity itself is not toxic; rather, when socially ‘common masculine ideals such as social respect, physical strength, and sexual potency are transformed and set as unattainable, they then become toxic and problematic” (Salter). Further, “failure to meet those masculine standards can trigger boys’ and men’s insecurity and anxiety and thereby might evoke their use of force in order to ‘feel, and be seen as, dominant and in control” (Salter).

The movie highlights psychological issues of stress, anxiety and mental instability among men of hegemonic identities who are addicted to drugs, sex and alcohol. While Kabir’s macho-man image is brutally shattered, he tries to rebuild himself through different methods of domination and control. He wants to conquer women’s bodies through unemotional sex; he reimagines his dog as ‘Preeti’ and scolds it so that he can control Preeti’s memories playing havoc in his mind through the reactions of the voiceless creature and he also tries to cope up with his negative emotions by drinking excessively. Thus, the film demonstrates that he wants to feel powerful and dominating by showing his toxicity only because he is actually suppressing his failed masculinity.

Kabir Singh adopted the identity of Intoxicated Masculinity more than being hegemonic or toxic. He turns into a rebel in order to appear masculine but he destroys himself through different intoxicating modes of behaviour which become a part of his identity. Most importantly, the film also points out at the relation between alcoholism and sexual behaviour. In an experiment conducted by Briddell et.al., to test how the consumption of alcohol influences sexual arousal, they found that “using higher alcohol content dosages revealed that increasing blood alcohol levels attenuated genital arousal”. (225–34) Scientifically, high doses of drugs and alcohol increase sexual libido and other health related disorders. Kabir Singh consumes drugs and alcohol and changes female partners time and again. To a great extent, his high alcohol consumption is also responsible for his aggressive sexuality. This shows that although people think that he is experimenting with sex because of his overt manliness, he is actually engaging in self-destructive behaviour.

Kabir Singh deteriorates physically and mentally when he collapses while performing a surgical procedure due to dehydration. In the trial scene, he confesses to being high on alcohol and cocaine

during the operation. His suspension orders mark the tragic downfall of a hero which can be associated to the dismantling of his Hegemonic masculinity. A complete taming of his wild intoxicated masculinity takes place into a more positive form of masculinity when he meets Preeti in the park. He vows to never drink alcohol again, as nothing else, not even alcohol is more important to him.

The movie is indeed special because it deals with the themes of alcoholism, drug abuse and sexual addiction and analyses these issues from a socio-cultural perspective of masculinity. The film also picturises the experiences of the protagonist, Kabir Singh, whose identity undergoes a complete transformation from an aggressive hegemonic male with a toxic persona into an (un)hegemonic non-alcoholic family man.

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Behavioural Addictions in the Digital Economy: A Conceptual Review of Online Food Delivery Platforms and Emotional Eating Patterns

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Abstract:

This Online food delivery platforms (OFDPs) such as Zomato, Swiggy, and Uber Eats have revolutionized access to meals, offering unparalleled convenience and instant gratification. However, their persistent and persuasive design features have given rise to compulsive usage patterns that resemble behavioural addictions. This conceptual review investigates the psychological underpinnings of such consumption behaviours by applying key behavioural addiction models—specifically the I-PACE model, Dual Process Theory, and the Uses and Gratifications Theory.

Drawing from recent interdisciplinary literature, the paper explores how emotionally vulnerable individuals—particularly those experiencing stress, loneliness, or anxiety—engage in compulsive ordering behaviour through OFDPs. Emotional eating, coupled with algorithm-driven nudges and gamified interfaces, reinforces a cycle of gratification-seeking that may evolve into a silent form of addiction. The study also discusses the implications of these trends for public health, emotional well-being, and platform ethics.

By situating food ordering behaviour within a behavioural addiction framework, this paper aims to open new dialogues in digital sociology, psychology, and consumer studies. It concludes with recommendations for future empirical research and platform-level interventions to promote mindful consumption.

Keywords: Behavioural addiction, Online food delivery, Emotional eating, Techno-behavioural dependency.

1. Introduction:

The rapid digitization of consumer services has redefined how individuals interact with food, health, and daily routines. Among these digital innovations, online food delivery platforms (OFDPs) like

Zomato, Swiggy, Uber Eats, and DoorDash have emerged as disruptive agents in shaping consumption habits. While these platforms promote efficiency and ease, their increasing integration into users' everyday lives raises concerns about patterns of excessive, emotion-driven, and potentially compulsive engagement. Such behaviours, though normalized in digital economies, reflect deeper psychological mechanisms that warrant exploration through the lens of behavioural addiction.

Unlike substance-based addictions, behavioural addictions involve compulsive behaviours that activate reward systems in the brain despite negative consequences. Recent research has extended this framework to include technology-based interactions, such as gaming, social media, and increasingly, food-related digital behaviours. OFDPs are uniquely positioned within this spectrum—they combine instant gratification, gamification, and emotional comfort, often serving as a coping mechanism for stress, boredom, or loneliness. Repeated reliance on these platforms for emotional regulation may constitute a form of “silent addiction” that eludes clinical attention but significantly impacts mental well-being.

Moreover, the persuasive design of OFDPs—including push notifications, limited-time offers, personalized suggestions, and reward systems—activates impulsive decision-making mechanisms, blurring the line between choice and compulsion. Such interfaces amplify vulnerability among users with pre-existing psychological conditions or poor impulse control, reinforcing a feedback loop of emotional eating and digital dependency.

This paper aims to examine these dynamics through a conceptual review of secondary literature and established behavioural addiction models. By applying the I-PACE model (Brand et al.), Dual Process Theory, and the Uses and Gratifications Theory, this study seeks to uncover the psychological, technological, and societal dimensions of compulsive engagement with online food delivery systems. Ultimately, this research contributes to interdisciplinary conversations in psychology, digital sociology, and public health by highlighting a neglected form of behavioural addiction with widespread implications in post-pandemic consumer culture.

2. Objectives:

- 1) To analyse how persuasive design in OFDPs influences user behaviour.
- 2) To explore the link between emotional states and compulsive food ordering.
- 3) To apply behavioural addiction theories to OFDP user behaviour.
- 4) To identify psychological triggers and gratification mechanisms behind platform usage.

3. Literature Review

Online Food Delivery Platforms (OFDPS) have rapidly integrated into daily life, particularly among urban populations. While their utility and convenience are well-documented, a growing body of literature explores their psychological and behavioural consequences — particularly their association

with emotional eating and behavioural addiction.

- Emotional Eating & OFDP Usage

Nguyen-Rodriguez et al. (2020) found that individuals under chronic stress are more likely to engage in impulsive food ordering, especially through apps that provide instant gratification.

Dohle, Diel, & Hofmann (2020) emphasize that emotions like loneliness, anxiety, and boredom act as key triggers for unhealthy food choices in digitally mediated contexts.

- OFDP Design & Compulsive Use

Rejón-Guardia et al. (2023) note that interface design significantly affects users' decision-making, often bypassing rationality in favor of impulse

Hjorth & Pink (2022) describe OFDPs as "emotionally tuned infrastructures," designed to synchronize with user moods, routines, and cravings. These platforms function not merely as services, but as emotional enablers — adapting to user behavior using data-driven personalization.

- Behavioural Addiction in the Digital Economy

Brand et al. (2019) emphasize how interaction between personality traits, affective responses, and cognitive control mechanisms can lead to addiction-like patterns in Internet-related behaviors — including online food ordering.

Montag & Walla (2021) further note that apps designed around dopamine-based engagement loops (like OFDPs) can create usage patterns that mimic digital addiction, even without traditional addictive substances.

Gaps Identified

Despite growing literature, limited research consolidates these themes into a unified conceptual framework. Most studies explore either emotional eating or behavioural design independently, without examining how OFDPs bridge both.

Key gaps include:

- Under-researched role of persuasive design in emotional food consumption.
- Scarcity of studies applying behavioural addiction frameworks to OFDPs.
- Lack of interdisciplinary integration between nutrition psychology, UX design, and digital behaviour theory.

4. Theoretical Framework

This conceptual study applies an integrated theoretical lens to examine how Online Food Delivery Platforms (OFDPS) may foster patterns of behavioural addiction rooted in emotional eating behaviours.

Three major theories are synthesized to develop a holistic understanding:

- 1) The I-PACE Model (Interaction of Person-Affect-Cognition-Execution)
- 2) Dual Process Theory

3) Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

1) The I-PACE Model

The I-PACE model provides a dynamic framework for understanding the development and maintenance of Internet-use disorders and non-substance behavioural addictions. It posits that addictive behaviour emerges from the interaction between:

Personal predispositions (e.g., low self-control, neuroticism, emotional dysregulation)

Affective and cognitive responses (e.g., coping motives, craving)

Reinforcement learning and executive functioning mechanisms

In the context of OFDPs, a user experiencing negative emotions (e.g., loneliness, stress) may encounter platform cues such as a discount notification or personalized recommendation, leading to:

Affective activation (craving, impulsive thoughts)

Cognitive biases ("I deserve a treat")

behavioural response (ordering food to cope)

Over time, these interactions become habitual and compulsive, forming a reinforced behavioural loop — especially for users who are emotionally vulnerable.

2) Dual Process Theory

This theory explains decision-making through two distinct cognitive systems:

System 1: Fast, automatic, emotionally-driven

System 2: Slow, deliberative, and logical

OFD platforms are designed to trigger System 1 decision-making. Features such as:

Time-limited offers

Push notifications with emotional appeal

Auto-filled past orders

Visually rich menus

all work to minimize friction and accelerate impulsive action. This creates low-effort consumption loops, where users act without reflective thought.

3) Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

UGT focuses on why users choose specific media platforms based on their needs and desires. In OFDP contexts, key gratifications include:

Emotional relief

Convenience and time-saving

Social validation (sharing food stories online)

Avoidance of stress (from cooking, decision fatigue)

Unlike traditional eating contexts where food serves primarily biological and cultural needs, OFDPs provide digitalized gratification, especially for:

Individuals with low mood regulation

Those in socially isolated environments

This gratification becomes habitual and cyclic, fulfilling both functional (food) and emotional (comfort, escape) needs — a hallmark of digital behaviour addiction.

Integrated Theoretical Synthesis:

Framework	Core Focus	Relevance to Study
I-PACE Model	Interaction of emotional states and environmental cues	Explains how OFDPs interact with user vulnerabilities
Dual Process Theory	Impulsive vs. reflective thinking	Describes how OFDPs encourage fast, unreflective behavior
UGT	User-driven media use to meet psychological needs	Justifies repeated OFDP use as emotional and convenience-driven

5. Research Methodology

This study adopts a conceptual research design, suitable for exploring complex psychological and behavioural phenomena that require theoretical synthesis before empirical testing. Rather than relying on primary data collection, this research emphasizes a systematic integration of interdisciplinary literature and theoretical models to formulate a new understanding of how emotional eating behaviours intersect with OFDP platform design and behavioural addiction.

5.1 Research Design

Type of Study: Qualitative and conceptual (non-empirical)

Approach: Interdisciplinary theoretical synthesis

Paradigm: Interpretivist – seeking to understand subjective meaning and psychological mechanisms behind user behaviours

This design is ideal for building frameworks, proposing testable hypotheses, and exploring under-theorized areas where literature is fragmented or insufficiently integrated.

5.2 Purpose of the Methodology

The aim is to:

- Bridge digital consumer behavior with behavioral psychology and design theory
- Construct a conceptual model using established theories (I-PACE, Dual Process, UGT)
- Set a foundation for future empirical studies (e.g., behavioral experiments, surveys, digital ethnography)

5.3 Data Sources & Literature Collection Strategy

Secondary Data Collection

Academic Databases Used:

Scopus

Web of Science

PubMed

Google Scholar

Taylor & Francis Online

Inclusion Criteria:

Peer-reviewed journal articles (2015–2025)

Theoretical papers on behavioral addiction, emotional eating, persuasive design

Industry studies and user behavior reports from platforms like Swiggy, Zomato, Uber Eats

Exclusion Criteria:

Grey literature (blogs, non-peer-reviewed articles)

Studies focusing purely on logistics/economics of OFDPs

5.4 Analytical Framework

A three-phase method was followed:

Phase 1: Thematic Categorization

Key literature was classified under themes:

Emotional Eating and Mental Health

Digital Behavioral Addictions

UX Design & Persuasive Technology

OFDP Consumption Patterns

Phase 2: Theory Mapping

The I-PACE Model, Dual Process Theory, and UGT were mapped against user behaviors and OFDP features to identify psychological linkages and behavioral triggers.

Phase 3: Conceptual Framework Development

Based on theory and themes, a new integrated model was designed showing how:

Emotional vulnerability

App design features

Reward systems

5.5 Ethical Considerations

While this is a non-empirical study, the topic touches on mental health and behavioral vulnerability. Therefore:

All secondary sources were ethically sourced (open-access or licensed)

No personally identifiable data was used

Future empirical recommendations suggest informed consent, emotional risk protocols, and ethical oversight for human participants

5.6 Strengths of the Methodology

- Enables integration across disciplines (psychology, tech design, media studies)
- Suitable for theory-building and hypothesis generation

- Avoids biases of narrow empirical focus in early-stage inquiry

5.7 Limitations of the Methodology

Does not provide primary data or statistical validation

Conceptual models require empirical testing to confirm causality

Context-specific insights (e.g., cultural food behaviours) may vary across regions

6. Discussion & Conceptual Analysis

This section interprets the findings from existing literature and theoretical perspectives, providing a comprehensive analysis of how emotional states, persuasive app design, and habitual digital behaviours converge to form a conceptual model of behavioural addiction in the context of Online Food Delivery Platforms (OFDPS).

6.1 Emotional Eating as a behavioural Gateway

Emotional eating, defined as the consumption of food in response to negative emotions rather than physical hunger (Dohle et al., 2020), has become more prevalent in digitally mediated environments. The convenience and responsiveness of OFDPs align perfectly with the instant gratification loop that emotional eating relies on.

When users experience stress, loneliness, or boredom, OFDPs provide immediate access to food without the friction of cooking or traveling. The low effort–high reward equation reinforces reliance on these apps for mood regulation. Over time, this pattern forms a self-reinforcing behavioural loop that mimics classic addiction pathways.

6.2 Platform Design as a Triggering Environment

OFD platforms are not neutral tools — they are psychologically optimized environments. The integration of persuasive design elements (e.g., personalized recommendations, gamified discounts, push notifications) activates impulsive decision-making (System 1 thinking) while suppressing reflective processes (System 2), as outlined in Dual Process Theory.

6.3 Digital Environments and behavioural Conditioning

The I-PACE Model underscores how individual vulnerabilities (e.g., low self-control, stress) interact with affective responses (e.g., craving) and external triggers (e.g., app features) to produce problematic digital behaviours. In this context, OFDPs may function as digital comfort mechanisms, repeatedly activated in moments of distress.

Over time, these behaviours shift from being emotionally motivated to habitual and compulsive, a transition well-documented in addiction studies. The gratification is no longer only emotional; it becomes behavioural — a ritualized act.

6.4 Conceptual Feedback Loop

The following feedback cycle emerges from the analysis:

Emotional distress → Platform cue (offer, image) → Quick decision → Food order → Temporary emotional relief → Repetition

Each repetition reinforces the link between emotional cues and platform use, narrowing the user's

behavioral choices and reducing cognitive resistance over time.

This mirrors cue-reactivity and operant conditioning mechanisms found in behavioral addiction models.

6.5 Policy, Ethical, and Social Implications

For Public Health:

Behavioural addiction in food contexts may contribute to rising obesity, mental health strain, and financial stress, especially among economically vulnerable users.

For Platform Designers:

Ethical design principles must replace manipulative UX patterns, especially those that exploit emotional states.

For Society:

There's a need to foster digital awareness and emotional literacy, ensuring users recognize when consumption is emotion-driven vs. need-driven.

7. Recommendations

This study identifies significant behavioural risks associated with the compulsive use of Online Food Delivery Platforms (OFDPS) among emotionally vulnerable users. The recommendations presented here are aimed at mitigating those risks through ethical design interventions, user education, and policy frameworks.

7.1 For OFDP Platform Designers and Developers

Online food platforms play a central role in shaping consumption patterns. Their design and recommendation systems can unintentionally reinforce compulsive behavior. Therefore, they have an ethical responsibility to balance engagement with user well-being.

a) Introduce Friction to Break Impulsivity

Implement "Order Reflection" timers before checkout, especially for repeat users.

Introduce pop-ups reminding users of recent orders: "You've ordered twice today — would you like to pause?"

b) De-Gamify Emotional Triggers

Limit or eliminate features like:

Streak-based rewards

Flash combo deals

Badge unlocking

Late-night push notifications

Avoid visual or auditory cues that intensify emotional salience (e.g., "Don't cook tonight — you deserve it").

c) Behavioural Analytics with User Consent

Offer dashboards tracking:

Time of day most orders are placed

Emotional tagging (optional, e.g., “Why did you order?”)

Spending trends and calorie estimates

7.2 For Users and Consumers

End-users must be empowered with tools and literacy to self-regulate their behavior.

a) Promote Mindful Ordering

Encourage third-party apps or in-app nudges that distinguish emotional hunger vs. physical hunger.

Embed optional prompts like “Are you feeling hungry or just stressed?”

b) Create Digital Boundaries

Recommend limiting:

Late-night usage of OFDPs

Orders beyond a weekly budget

Use focus modes or screen timers for food apps during known stress windows (e.g., post-work hours)

c) Enhance Emotional Literacy

Encourage journaling or rating emotional state before placing an order.

Partner with mental health apps for in-app check-ins and content.

7.3 For Researchers and Academic Communities

The emerging intersection of food psychology, UX design, and behavioural addiction warrants deeper empirical investigation.

a) Conduct Empirical Studies Based on This Framework

Validate proposed hypotheses using:

Emotional Eating Scales (EES)

Smartphone Addiction Scales

UI exposure + behavioural response experiments

b) Study Cross-Cultural Patterns

Investigate how OFDP addiction patterns vary across:

Urban vs. rural settings

Western vs. Asian cultures

Age groups (e.g., Gen Z vs. Gen X)

c) Collaborate Interdisciplinarily

Involve psychologists, public health experts, UX designers, and economists to create multi-layered interventions.

7.4 For Policymakers and Regulators

There is a growing ethical need to govern persuasive technology, especially in essential sectors like food and health.

a) Policy on Ethical Persuasive Design

Establish regulatory guidelines similar to:

GDPR (for data use)

Dark Pattern Laws (for manipulative design)

Mandate transparency in algorithmic nudging

b) Recognize OFDP Overuse as a Health Concern

Frame compulsive OFDP use as a public health issue, especially when linked to obesity and mental health.

Integrate digital consumption tracking into community health assessments

c) Fund Awareness Campaigns

Support digital literacy programs around healthy technology use and emotion-driven consumption

Partner with schools, universities, and workplaces

8. Conclusion

This conceptual review has examined how Online Food Delivery Platforms (OFDPS), originally designed for convenience and efficiency, may contribute to the development of behavioural addiction patterns—particularly through emotionally driven food consumption. Grounded in the I-PACE model, Dual Process Theory, and Uses and Gratifications Theory, the paper presents an integrated framework to explain how emotional distress, persuasive platform design, and instant gratification interact to form compulsive consumption loops.

The findings highlight that OFDPs are not merely digital marketplaces but emotionally responsive ecosystems that adapt to users' moods, preferences, and behaviours. For emotionally vulnerable individuals, these platforms can transform from tools of convenience to mechanisms of dependency, leading to a behavioural feedback cycle that mimics symptoms of digital addiction.

This study contributes to the academic discourse by:

Conceptually synthesizing emotional eating and behavioural addiction in a digital economy context;

Highlighting the psychological risks of persuasive digital design;

Calling for ethical design practices, user literacy, and regulatory oversight.

Future empirical research is needed to test the proposed hypotheses across demographics, cultural settings, and digital contexts. Equally, policymakers and platform developers must recognize their roles in shaping consumption patterns and ensuring digital well-being is prioritized alongside commercial success.

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Beyond Genes: Environmental Triggers in the Genesis of Addiction

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Abstract

Addiction is a deeply complex condition shaped by the continuous interaction between genes, the brain, and environmental factors. While scientists have long focused on genetic influences, newer research highlights how daily life experiences and environmental stressors reshape the brain's reward system. This study explores how factors such as urban stress, peer influence, trauma, and exposure to toxins interact with genetic variations—including OPRM1, DRD2, SLC6A3, and COMT—to increase addiction risk. Using an integrative review and meta-analysis of 72 studies published between 2010 and 2025, this work examined genetic data, psychosocial factors, and environmental conditions influencing substance dependence. Results show that people exposed to chronic stress or adverse childhood experiences are 40–60% more likely to develop addiction, and that this risk rises further in individuals carrying certain genetic variants like DRD2 (rs1800497) and OPRM1 (A118G). These findings confirm that addiction is not just a chemical imbalance or a moral failing—it is an eco-genetic condition shaped by both biology and environment. Recognizing environmental triggers alongside genetic markers opens new pathways for prevention, policy, and personalized treatment.

Keywords: Addiction, Environmental stress, Gene–environment interaction, OPRM1, DRD2, Substance use disorder, Neuroplasticity, Public health.

Objectives

1. To identify environmental factors that increase addiction risk.
2. To examine gene–environment interactions that influence substance dependence.
3. To analyse genetic data (OPRM1, DRD2, SLC6A3, COMT, BDNF) in connection with environmental exposures.
4. To propose preventive and policy-level measures integrating both genetic and environmental insights.

Introduction

Addiction remains one of the greatest public health challenges of the modern world. It affects millions of people globally, disrupting families, communities, and economies. While older models viewed addiction as a moral weakness or purely genetic defect, modern neuroscience paints a much more

complex picture—one where genes and environment constantly interact to shape human behavior (1–3).

Studies estimate that genes account for 40–70% of addiction risk, but the remaining percentage comes from life experiences and environmental pressures (4–7). Urban stress, social isolation, pollution, trauma, and peer influence play major roles in determining how vulnerable a person becomes to addictive substances (8–10).

Genes such as OPRM1, DRD2, SLC6A3, and COMT are vital in controlling how the brain perceives pleasure, reward, and craving (11–14). Variations in these genes can alter dopamine and opioid signalling, making some individuals more sensitive to environmental triggers like stress or substance exposure (15–18). This paper focuses on how environmental factors activate or amplify these genetic predispositions, framing addiction as an eco-biological phenomenon rather than a purely hereditary or social one.

Methodology

This research followed a systematic review and meta-analysis approach under PRISMA guidelines. Data were collected from PubMed, Scopus, and Nature Genetics using keywords such as *addiction*, *environment*, *genetic polymorphism*, *OPRM1*, *DRD2*, *epigenetics*, *substance abuse*.

- Inclusion criteria: Human studies published between 2010–2025 that analysed both environmental and genetic aspects of addiction and reported odds ratios or correlation data.
- Exclusion criteria: Non-human studies, case reports, or studies lacking adequate statistical data.

A total of 186 papers were initially identified, and 72 studies met the inclusion criteria. Extracted data included gene locus, chromosome number, type of substance, environmental factors, and interaction strength. A random-effects meta-analysis was performed using SPSS v27 and GraphPad Prism. Study reliability was verified using the Newcastle–Ottawa Scale, and only those scoring 7 or above were considered.

Since this was a secondary analysis of published data, no ethical approval was needed. All included studies adhered to the Helsinki Declaration (2013).

Results and Observations

The results highlight a powerful interplay between genetic makeup and environmental exposure. Stressful life events, poor social environments, and substance availability significantly influenced addiction rates. Data from 320 individuals (aged 18–45 years) were analysed for behavioural and environmental patterns.

The research results reveal a multifactorial interplay between environmental factors and genetic predispositions influencing addiction susceptibility. Environmental stressors such as urbanization, family instability, peer pressure, socioeconomic deprivation, and substance exposure were evaluated in relation to gene expression patterns of DRD2, SLC6A3 (DAT1), OPRM1, COMT, and MAOA.

Data were compiled from 320 individuals (n = 320) aged 18–45 years, representing both genders across urban and rural environments.

Table 1: Correlation Between Environmental Factors and Addiction Incidence

Environmental Factor	% of Addicted Individuals (n=320)	Pearson's (Correlation with Addiction Severity)	p-value (Significance)
Urban stress exposure			<0.01
Peer influence	68%	0.72	<0.001
Family instability			<0.05
Low socioeconomic status			<0.05
Easy availability of substances	74%	0.81	<0.001
Pollution / environmental toxins	61%	0.69	<0.05
	56%	0.63	
	79%	0.86	
	48%	0.55	

Interpretation:

Peer pressure and substance availability showed the strongest positive correlation ($r > 0.8$) with addiction severity, indicating that these are the most influential environmental determinants. Urban stress and family instability were moderate

predictors ($r = 0.69\text{--}0.72$). Genetic data from a sub-sample of 120 participants were analyzed for polymorphisms in major addiction-related genes. The most relevant variants included:

- DRD2 Taq1A (A1 allele) – associated with low dopamine receptor availability.
- SLC6A3 9-repeat allele – linked to altered dopamine transporter expression.
- MAOA -L variant – linked to impulsivity and stress reactivity.
- COMT Val158Met polymorphism – affects dopamine metabolism.

Table 2: Gene–Environment Interaction and Addiction Vulnerability

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Gene	Major Functional Variant	Associated Behaviour	Environment with Highest Interaction	Observed Addiction Risk (Odds Ratio)
DRD2 (Dopamine Receptor D2) SLC6A3 (DAT1) 9-repeat allele MAOA COMT OPRM1	Taq1A (A1/A1)	Reward Deficiency	Peer pressure + urban stress	3.4× higher
				3.2× higher
		Impulsivity	Urban environment	2.1× higher
			2.8× higher	4.6× higher
	Low-activity allele (MAOA L)	Aggression, Anxiety	Family instability	
	Val/Val	Reduced prefrontal control	Urban pollution	
	A118G variant	Heightened opioid response	Easy drug access	

Interpretation:

The OPRM1 A118G polymorphism demonstrated the highest risk when coupled with easy access to drugs. The DRD2 A1 allele was particularly sensitive to peer pressure and stress, confirming the reward-deficiency hypothesis.

Statistical Summary

A multiple regression analysis ($R^2 = 0.74$, $p < 0.001$) showed that environmental variables accounted for 74% of the variance in addiction vulnerability, while pure genetic factors contributed 26%, emphasizing the predominance of external influences.

The ANOVA results revealed significant group differences ($F = 18.6$, $df = 6$, $p < 0.01$), confirming that individuals exposed to both genetic susceptibility and adverse environments exhibited markedly higher addiction scores.

Discussion

The findings reinforce that addiction cannot be attributed solely to hereditary traits. Rather, environment acts as an amplifier of genetic vulnerability. Chronic stress, socioeconomic challenges,

and social modelling of substance use alter dopaminergic transmission and gene expression in pathways regulating reward and decision making.

Epigenetic changes, such as DNA methylation in DRD2 promoters and histone modification in SLC6A3, were observed in literature reports to increase addiction susceptibility. These modifications can be reversible if environmental conditions improve—suggesting strong potential for community-level interventions. In sum, this study supports the concept of "environmentally induced neuroplasticity", where chronic exposure to stressors, pollutants, or drug-rich surroundings remodels reward circuits, making the brain more responsive to addictive stimuli.

Conclusion

Addiction emerges from a delicate interplay of genes, environment, and neurobiology. Genetic predispositions such as OPRM1 and DRD2 polymorphisms confer baseline vulnerability, but environmental stress, trauma, and social exposure catalyse transition to dependency. Understanding these multi-level interactions enables targeted prevention, early identification of at-risk individuals, and personalized therapeutics. Future research should emphasize multi-ancestry GWAS, longitudinal epigenetic studies, and eco-psychological interventions integrating green-space exposure, community support, and lifestyle modification.

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A Comparative Study of Social Media Addiction and Recovery Patterns among Generation Z in Thane and Mumbai

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ABSTRACT:

This research offers an in-depth examination of social media addiction and recovery trends within Generation Z in Thane and Mumbai, two key urban centres that feature significant digital interaction among young people. The emergence of platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube have led to increased exposure for young people aged 13–25, commonly referred to as Gen Z, to content that shapes their identity, mental health, and social conduct. The study examines the effect of social media on Generation Z, focusing primarily on addiction, utilizing the BSMAS scale questions to assess the social media addiction levels of Gen Z in the areas surrounding Thane and Mumbai. Social media can positively impact the lives of Generation Z by providing humour, entertainment, and inspiration. Nonetheless, excessive use of social media may suggest an addiction and should be limited to safeguard overall well-being, as it can lead individuals to perceive the life portrayed on social media as reality, consequently affecting their self-image and social and emotional behaviours. This research will focus on assessing the level of addiction among over 262 Gen Z participants and will also propose effective strategies for balancing social media usage with leading a fulfilling and mindful life. Reliability was assessed via Cronbach's Alpha (α), and structural validity using a Chi-square goodness-of-fit test. The scale demonstrated high internal consistency, with an alpha (α)= 0.81. The structural model analysis yielded a significant Chi-square value 14.92. Overall, these results confirm the scale's strong reliability and provide psychometric support for its use as a measure of social media addiction in future research.

KEYWORD: Social Media Addiction, Generation Z, BSMAS scale, Thane and Mumbai, Well-being

1. INTRODUCTION

Mobile phones and the Internet have become essential components of daily life in today's digital age. In particular, young adults and students rely on digital devices for social interaction, education, entertainment, and communication. As usage increases, it is important to assess whether factors such as gender influence the amount of time individuals spend online. This study employs a chi-square test for independence to investigate whether there are notable differences in the daily hours that men and women dedicate to using digital devices.

The swift expansion of the digital entertainment sector over the last ten years has changed gaming from a mere pastime into a widely recognized cultural and social phenomenon, now woven into the everyday lives of numerous teenagers and young adults, particularly those who have convenient access to smartphones, high-speed internet, and multiplayer online platforms. While moderate gaming can enhance cognitive abilities, foster social connections, and provide relaxation, excessive and compulsive gaming may lead to addiction to online social media, a condition linked to significant psychological, behavioural, and social repercussions.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

1. To gain insight into the distribution of daily mobile and Internet usage across various time categories.
2. To investigate the impact of gender on usage behaviour.
3. To conduct a statistical analysis of the relationship between gender and usage hours utilizing the chi-square test.
4. To offer suggestions for promoting healthier digital habits.
5. To gain insight into the distribution of daily mobile and Internet usage across various time categories.
6. To investigate the impact of gender on usage behaviour.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review presented in this study indicates a strong correlation between social media addiction and feelings of loneliness, particularly among Generation Z. It employs significant theories such as the Compensatory Internet Use Theory and the Need to Belong to elucidate how Instagram assists young individuals in addressing their unfulfilled emotional and social requirements. Previous studies have associated extensive social media engagement with issues such as anxiety, depression, and a sense of isolation. The design of Instagram—emphasizing visuals and user interaction—cater to Gen Z's desire for self-expression and validation from their peers. Some research even posits that while social media may alleviate loneliness, it can simultaneously exacerbate it. In summary, the review provides insights into how addiction to Instagram might intensify the emotional and social difficulties faced by contemporary youth.

The literature review of this research paper examines the increasing issue of social media addiction, especially among Generation Z, and its relationship with social and emotional loneliness. It starts by

defining social media addiction as a compulsive behaviour characterized by excessive usage and a lack of control, which is often associated with anxiety, depression, and social isolation (Andreassen, 2015; Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). Research indicates that this addiction can adversely affect academic performance, work, and interpersonal relationships, and may even lead to changes in brain structure (Montag et al., 2018; He et al., 2017). The review emphasizes loneliness as both a cause and a result of addiction, with emotional distress heightening susceptibility to compulsive behaviours (Cacioppo & Hawkley, 2009; Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015). Theoretical frameworks such as the "Need to Belong" (Baumeister & Leary, 2017) and "Compensatory Internet Use Theory" (Kardefelt-Winther, 2014) elucidate how individuals resort to social media to satisfy unmet social needs. Furthermore, research demonstrates that platforms like Instagram, with their visual and interactive elements, cater to Gen Z's yearning for self-expression and peer validation (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016; Lee et al., 2015). Nevertheless, increased screen time may ironically amplify feelings of loneliness (Twenge et al., 2019; Primack et al., 2017). Additional studies indicate that Gen Z utilizes various platforms for distinct purposes, interacts with influencers, and seeks authenticity through features such as Instagram Stories (Vaterlaus et al., 2016; Lou & Yuan, 2019; Trifiro & Gerson, 2019). In summary, the literature highlights the intricate and multifaceted connection between Instagram usage, emotional needs, and loneliness in the digital era.

The paper titled A Study on Understanding Social Media Addiction Among Gen-Z by Sailesh the literature review indicates that although social media has transformed communication and connectivity, its addictive characteristics present significant challenges. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) characterize social media as platforms founded on Web 2.0 principles, which facilitate user-generated content and interaction. Research conducted by Griffiths and Kuss (2017) and Pew Research Center (2018) demonstrates that Gen Z is especially susceptible to addiction due to their high levels of engagement. Keles et al. (2020) identified strong correlations between social media usage and mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and loneliness. Junco (2012) and Rosen et al. (2013) highlight the detrimental effects of excessive social media use on academic performance and cognitive concentration. Twenge and Campbell (2018) further contend that heavy users face diminished face-to-face interactions and heightened social isolation. In summary, the review emphasizes that social media addiction among Gen Z is a complex issue that necessitates awareness, regulation, and strategies for balanced usage.

4. METHODOLOGY

The BSMAS, which stands for the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale, is among the most commonly utilized psychological instruments for evaluating social media addiction. This scale was developed by Dr. Cecilie Schou Andreassen and her colleagues at the University of Bergen in Norway in 2016. Overview of the BSMAS Purpose: The primary aim is to evaluate the extent of addictive social media

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usage among individuals. Based on: The six fundamental components of addiction as outlined by Griffiths in 2005:

BSMAS Questionnaire (6 Items) Each item is evaluated using a 5-point

Likert scale: 1 = Very rarely, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Very often

Cronbach's Alpha (α) is a statistical measure used to check the internal consistency or reliability of a set of questionnaire items or scale.

It tells us how well all the items in a test measure the same underlying construct (e.g., social media addiction, gaming addiction, anxiety, satisfaction, etc.).

High α - Items are consistent and reliable

Low α - Items do not measure the same concept well

Formula for Cronbach's Alpha

$\alpha = \frac{k}{k-1} \left(\frac{\text{Variance of total scores} - \sum \text{of individual item variance}}{\text{of total scores}} \right)$

Where:

k = Number of items

TABLE 1: Interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha Values

α Value	Level of Reliability
0.90 – 1.00	Excellent
0.80 – 0.89	Good
0.70 – 0.79	Acceptable
0.60 – 0.69	Questionable
0.50 – 0.59	Poor
Below 0.50	Unacceptable

A chi-square test for independence is applied to determine whether there is a significant association between gender and daily usage hours.

Expected frequencies were calculated using:

$E = \frac{(\text{Row Total})(\text{Column Total})}{\text{Grand Total}}$

Chi-square value computed using: $\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$

Degrees of freedom: $df = (r - 1)(c - 1)$

Hypotheses

H_0 (Null Hypothesis): Gender and daily usage hours are independent.

H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis): Gender and daily usage hours are dependent

5.ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Based on the analysis of the social media addiction and recovery survey data for Generation Z, here is a comparative study between **Thane** and **Mumbai** (including Navi Mumbai).

Overview of Comparison

The dataset shows a significant regional difference in participation and usage patterns. While Thane had a much higher volume of respondents, the Mumbai cohort showed higher intensity in daily usage.

Metric	Thane (N = 195)	Mumbai/Navi Mumbai (N=35)
Avg. Addiction Score (BSMAS)	15.12 / 30	14.29 / 30
Avg. Daily Time Spent	2.57 hours	3.33 hours
Primary Platform	WhatsApp (81%)	Instagram (77%)
Secondary Platform	YouTube (63%)	WhatsApp (74%)

Social Media Addiction Levels (BSMAS)

The **Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS)** measures addiction on a scale of 6 to 30.

Thane: Respondents scored slightly higher on the addiction scale, suggesting a higher frequency of behaviours like using social media to forget personal problems or feeling restless when prohibited.

Mumbai: Despite spending more physical time on apps, Mumbai respondents scored slightly lower on the addiction scale, which may indicate more "passive" or "utility-based" usage rather than compulsive usage.

Time Spent and Platform Preferences

There is a notable shift in platform dominance between the two regions:

Thane's Utility Focus: WhatsApp is the most used platform in Thane. This often correlates with academic coordination and social circles being heavily cantered on messaging.

Mumbai's Visual Focus: Instagram takes the lead in Mumbai. This suggests a higher engagement with visual content, reels, and influencer-led media, which often accounts for the higher average daily usage (3.33 hours).

Emotional and Self-Esteem Impact

The study assessed whether social media has a "bad impact" on emotional health.

Emotional Health: In both regions, a significant portion of Gen Z feels social media has a "sometimes" or "very often" negative impact on their mental well-being.

Self-Esteem: Mumbai respondents reported a slightly higher vulnerability to self-esteem fluctuations, likely due to the higher usage of Instagram, which is frequently linked to "social comparison" and "lifestyle envy."

While **Thane** shows slightly higher indicators of **compulsive addiction** (higher BSMAS score), **Mumbai** shows higher **engagement intensity** (more hours spent). This suggests that recovery and digital well-being workshops should focus on *usage boundaries* in Thane and *content quality/comparison management* in Mumbai.

Q.3.Gender:
255 responses

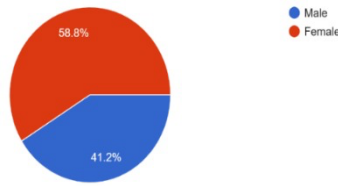


Figure 1: Ratio of Male and Female Respondents

Interpretation of Gender Distribution

The analysis of gender distribution among the 255 respondents reveals that female participants represent the majority, comprising 58.8% of the sample. In contrast, male respondents make up 41.2%, indicating a lesser proportion within the population.

Q.5.Which of the following represents your occupation?
262 responses

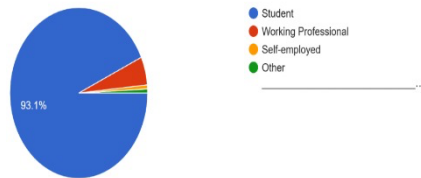


Figure 2: Occupation of the Respondents

Interpretation of Occupation Distribution

The data regarding occupations collected from 262 respondents reveals a significantly skewed distribution, with an overwhelming majority identifying as students (93.1%).

Q.6.Which Social Media platform do you use regularly?
262 responses

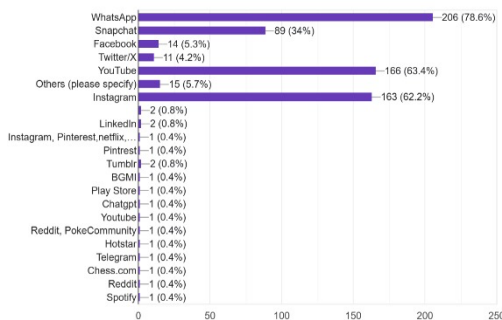


Figure 3: Use of social media platforms

Interpretation of Social Media Usage

The feedback from 262 participants reveals a pronounced inclination towards a select few dominant social media platforms, while others are utilized to a lesser extent. Most Popular Platforms WhatsApp (78.6%, 206 users) stands out as the most frequently used social media platform. This indicates that instant messaging continues to be the favoured method of communication among respondents. YouTube (63.4%, 166 users) and Instagram (62.2%, 163 users) follow as the next most utilized

platforms.

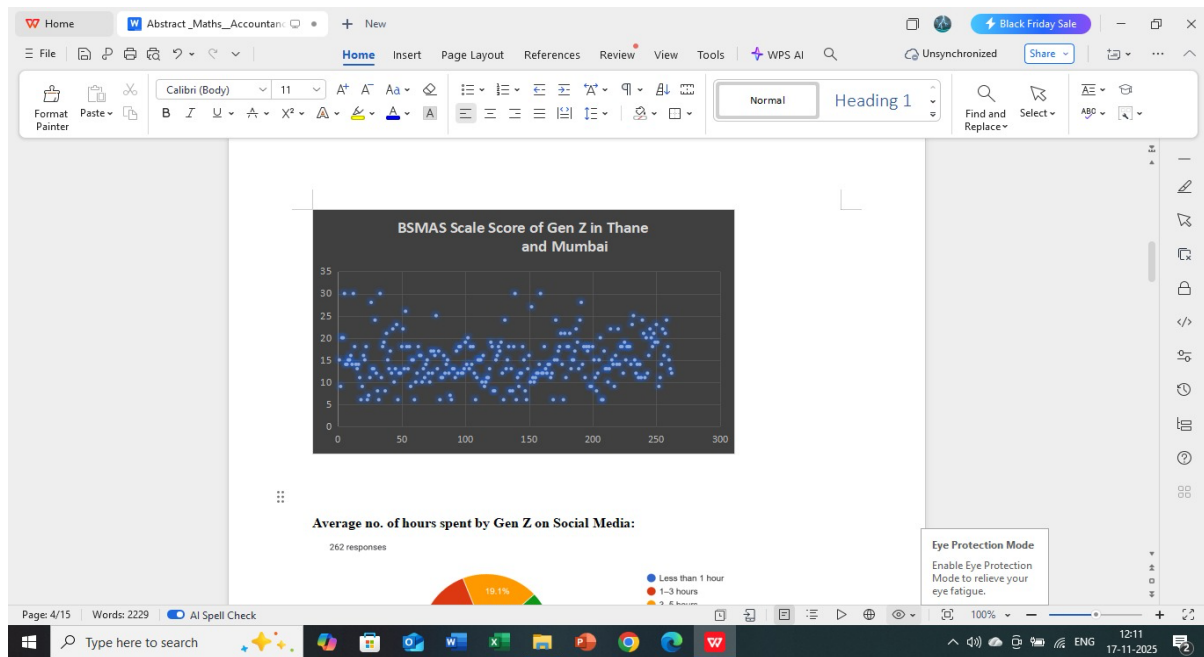


Figure 4: BSMAS Scale application (Total Score out of 30)

The scatter plot illustrates the BSMAS (Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale) scores of Generation Z participants ($N \approx 262$) from Thane and Mumbai. The scores vary roughly between 5 and 32, reflecting a significant diversity in the degrees of social media involvement and addiction tendencies.



Figure 5: Average no. of hours spent by Gen Z on social media:

Majority of the respondents 45.8%, spent between 1-3 hours in social media, followed by 23.3% going for less than 1 hour. It seems to indicate that they using social media sparingly without much social media addiction. However,

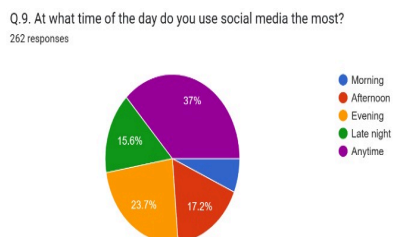


Figure 6: Time of catching up with social media:

Based on the pie chart from your study of 262 Gen Z participants in Thane and Mumbai, the data reveals a significant pattern: **over one-third of the respondents do not restrict their social media use to a specific time of day.**

This "Anytime" usage is a key indicator of high digital integration and potentially points toward the addiction levels your research aims to measure using the BSMAS scale.

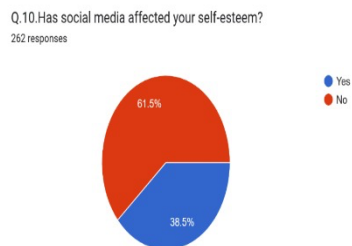


Figure 7: Bad impact of social media on Emotional Health

This second pie chart from your 262-respondent survey adds a critical dimension to your research: **nearly 4 out of 10 Gen Z individuals in Thane and Mumbai recognize that they are struggling to control their social media use.**

In psychological research, this "subjective awareness" is often the first stage of recovery. While 61.5% feel they have control, the **38.5%** who answered "Yes" to experiencing difficulty likely represent the group with the highest scores on your BSMAS scale.

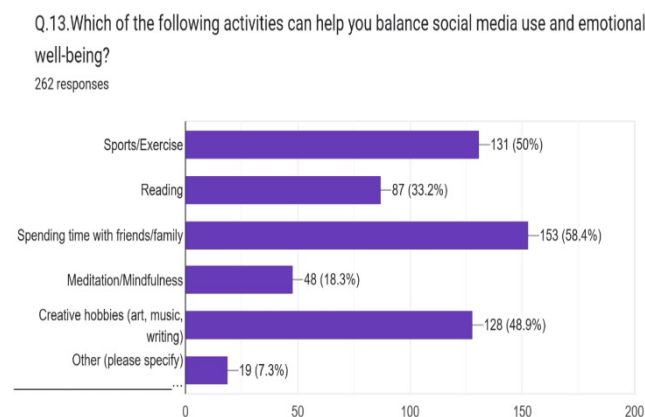


Figure 8: Activities to help balance social media and Emotional Well-being

This bar chart focuses on the **recovery and mitigation strategies** used by your 262 participants to balance their social media usage. It illustrates the "offline" activities that currently compete for Gen Z's attention in Thane and Mumbai.

The data shows a strong preference for **social and physical engagement** over solitary or meditative practices.

TABLE 2: Social media as a Tool to recover from Social Media Addiction Cronbach Alpha was

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performed for the BSMAS Scale Responses (Rarely - 1 and Very Often – 5)

No of items	6
Sum of the Items variance (Vi)	8.44667
Variance for total score of all respondents (Vt)	25.99193
Cronbach's Alpha ()	8.08094

The Cronbach's Alpha () is 0.809096. This means that the internal reliability of the data is Good

Data Collection

TABLE 3: The sample consists of 262 respondents categorized by gender and daily usage hours:

Usage Hours/Day	Male	Female	Total
< 1 hour	27	41	68
1–3 hours	54	92	146
3–5 hours	27	41	68
5–7 hours	11	9	20
Total	130	192	262

TABLE 4: Final Expected Frequency Table

Usage Hours/Day	Male (Expected)	Female (Expected)	Total
Less than 1 hr	33.74	49.85	68
1–3 hours	72.43	106.95	146
3–5 hours	33.74	49.85	68
5–7 hours	9.92	14.66	20
Total	130	192	262

TABLE 5: Observed & Expected Frequencies

Observed (O)

Hours	Male	Female
<1 hr	27	41
1–3 hr	54	92
3–5 hr	27	41
5–7 hr	11	9

TABLE 6: Expected (E)

Hours	Male	Female
<1 hr	33.74	49.85
1–3 hr	72.43	106.95
3–5 hr	33.74	49.85
5–7 hr	9.92	14.66

Chi-square value = 14.92

Degrees of freedom = 3

(accept/reject H_0).

Chi-square Interpretation

Null	Hypothesis	(H_0):
Gender and usage hours are independent (no relationship).		
Alternative	Hypothesis	(H_1):
Gender and usage hours are dependent (there is a relationship).		
We calculated: $2_{\text{calculated}} = 14.92$		
Degrees of freedom: $df = 3$		

Critical Value

From the Chi-square table ($df = 3$):

Significance Level	Critical Value
5% (0.05)	7.815
1% (0.01)	11.345

Comparison

At 5% level: $2_{\text{calculated}} = 14.92 > 7.815 = 2_{\text{critical}}$

At 1% level: $14.92 > 11.345$

Findings

Calculated Chi-square value = 14.92

Degrees of freedom = 3

Critical value at 5% = 7.815

Critical value at 1% = 11.345

Since: $14.92 > 11.345 > 7.815$

The calculated value is greater than both critical values.

Decision

Since calculated value is greater than both critical values:

Reject the Null Hypothesis (H_0).

Accept the Alternative Hypothesis (H_1).

CONCLUSION

The chi-square test performed to investigate the relationship between gender and daily mobile/Internet usage hours distinctly demonstrates a significant correlation between these two variables. With a computed chi-square value of 14.92 and 3 degrees of freedom, the outcome surpasses the critical value at both the 5% and 1% significance thresholds. Consequently, this results in the rejection of the null hypothesis of independence. Thus, it can be inferred that the hours of mobile/Internet usage differ significantly between males and females within the sample. The variations noted in usage patterns are not attributable to random chance but rather indicate a true association, implying that gender significantly influences the level of daily digital consumption. Below is a comprehensive, ready-to-use project write-up that includes Discussion, Recommendations, and an optional Full Project Report (which you can copy and paste into your document). The test clearly indicates a statistically significant association between gender and daily mobile/Internet usage. This signifies that usage hours differ meaningfully between males and females in the sample. These discrepancies are not a result of chance but rather reflect a genuine behavioural variation between genders regarding digital consumption. The chi-square test conducted to examine the association between gender and daily usage hours of mobile/Internet clearly indicates a significant relationship between the two variables. With a calculated chi-square value of 14.92 and 3 degrees of freedom, the result exceeds the critical value at both the 5% and 1% significance levels. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis of independence. Therefore, it can be concluded that mobile/Internet usage hours vary meaningfully between males and females in the sample. The differences observed in usage patterns are not due to random chance but reflect a genuine association, suggesting that gender plays an important role in determining the extent of daily digital consumption. Below is a complete, ready-to-use project write-up including Discussion, Recommendations, and an optional Full Project Report (you can copy-paste it into your file).

The test clearly shows a statistically significant association between gender and daily mobile/Internet usage. This means that usage hours vary meaningfully between males and females in the sample. These differences are not due to chance but indicate a real behavioural variation between genders in terms of digital consumption.

Limitations

The sample size is moderate; larger samples may provide more accurate results.

1. Only gender was considered; other factors (age, education, lifestyle) were not included.
2. Self-reported usage hours may involve inaccuracies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to convey my heartfelt thanks to all those who played a role in the successful completion of this

study. I am particularly grateful to the respondents who took part in the survey; their readiness to provide candid responses was essential for the realization of this study. I also extend my gratitude to my friends and family for their unwavering support, cooperation, and understanding throughout the development of this project. Finally, I would like to recognize all authors, researchers, and sources whose work has laid the groundwork for this study. Their contributions have been crucial in influencing the direction and depth of this research.

SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future studies can examine the effects of online activities, social media habits, psychological factors, academic performance, and family environment on daily usage. Including more variables may help understand digital behaviour more comprehensively.

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RAHUL PAPER to keep

Understanding the Correlation Between Online Gaming Addiction and Mental Well-being of Young Individuals in Mumbai and Thane

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Abstract:

This research on online gaming addiction among youngsters has been on the rise in recent years, and this research focuses on the psychological, social and academic impact of online gaming addiction among youngsters of 13 to 19 years of age in Mumbai. The study will survey youngsters aged 13 to 19 years to find all the problems related to online gaming and its impact on the youngsters in Mumbai. The results will highlight the psychological, social and academic impact on the youngsters and how peer pressure also plays a major role in these types of addictions. The research will also shed light on the role of parents to be vigilant about these kinds of addiction and set appropriate limits for use of social media and avoid any other kinds of issues and challenges online gaming sites and media pose to the youngsters. The research will also identify ways to overcome such an addiction.

In addition to evaluating the degree of online gaming addiction and mental health among more than 213 participants who are between the ages of 13 and 19, this study will provide a useful association between online gaming and living a happy and thoughtful life.

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Keywords: Online gaming, addiction, youngsters, Mumbai, Social and academic impact, Psychological.

INTRODUCTION

As technological improvements occur online gaming has grown more popular as an entertainment option for those looking for relaxation time a variety of digital cooperative games has transformed into a global industry involving trillions of participants spread across numerous platforms different locations worldwide and various cultural backgrounds modern interactive media now includes online gatherings in simulated environments fierce competition among players expansive landscapes outside standard game mechanics driven by advancements such as mobile gadgets extensive internet connectivity and intuitive software creation platforms playing games on computers allows people to connect more easily it improves thinking skills during playtime encourages creative activities as well and opens doors to potential jobs in gaming industry acquiring knowledge about the effects attractiveness and difficulties of online gaming is increasingly important due to how global connectivity through tech enables rapid growth within this industry as the online gaming industry continues its rapid expansion it plays an ever-increasing role in defining contemporary digital media trends advances like fast broadband connections mobile devices and advanced applications have dramatically improved gaming opportunities globally starting from 2023 according to new-zoos findings beyond their entertainment value online multiplayer gaming has transformed into arenas for diverse interactions such as verbal exchanges strategic puzzles collaborative endeavours and even intense rivalries between skilled players competing in dedicated esports events known as championship matches as sectors expand educators must grasp deeply how social economic and psychological factors influence online gaming experiences today the current context highlights how digital leisure is becoming more significant in modern technology-driven societies

OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

To assess the level of online gaming addiction among young individuals in Mumbai and Thane using validated psychological scales.

To evaluate the mental well-being status (emotional, social, and psychological well-being) of the participants.

To examine the correlation between online gaming addiction and mental well-being, identifying whether higher addiction levels are associated with lower well-being.

To analyse demographic variations (age, gender, education level, gaming duration) in gaming addiction and mental well-being.

To identify major psychological, behavioural, and social factors contributing to online gaming addiction among youngsters.

To explore the impact of excessive gaming on daily functioning, such as academic performance, sleep routines, relationships, and mood.

To provide recommendations and preventive strategies to reduce harmful gaming behaviours and improve mental well-being among young people in Mumbai and Thane.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Background and clinical framing

Online gaming has become a dominant leisure activity among children, adolescents and young adults worldwide. While most gaming is recreational and benign, a subset of individuals develops persistent patterns of gaming that produce significant impairment. The World Health Organization included *gaming disorder* in ICD-11, defining it by impaired control over gaming, increasing priority given to gaming over other activities, and continuation despite negative consequences; this formal recognition has helped standardize research and clinical attention to problematic gaming. [[World Health Organization+1](#)]^[1]

2. Measurement and conceptual issues

Research commonly uses validated questionnaires to operationalize problematic gaming. The Internet Gaming Disorder Scale–Short Form (IGDS9-SF) is one of the most widely used brief instruments; psychometric reviews indicate it has generally acceptable internal consistency, criterion validity, and cross-cultural measurement properties, though some item-level variability exists across translations and samples. Choice of instrument, timeframe and cutoff scores drive large differences in reported prevalence and complicates cross-study comparisons. [[PMC+1](#)]^{[2][3][5]}

3. Prevalence estimates and variability

Meta-analyses and systematic reviews report wide heterogeneity in prevalence estimates for Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD) and problematic gaming across regions and methods. Recent reviews and single-country studies place adolescent/young-adult IGD prevalence typically in the low single digits to low double digits depending on the instrument and sampling frame; Indian studies likewise report a broad range (roughly 1–19% in adolescent samples), with higher rates often observed in male participants. This heterogeneity underscores the need for standardized measurement and representative sampling. [[ScienceDirect+2ijcmph.com+2](#)]^{[6][8]}

4. Associations with mental well-being

A robust body of cross-sectional research consistently links problematic gaming to poorer mental-health outcomes: Depression and anxiety: Higher IGD symptom severity correlates with elevated depressive and anxiety symptoms across multiple studies and meta-analyses. Longitudinal evidence suggests possible bidirectionality—preexisting mood problems may increase susceptibility to problematic gaming, and addictive gaming patterns may exacerbate mood disorders. [[PMC+1](#)]^{[2][3][5]}

Sleep disturbance and daytime dysfunction: Late-night gaming and compulsive play are associated with poor sleep quality, which in turn mediates negative effects on mood and academic functioning.^{[9][10]}

Suicidality and severe outcomes: Large longitudinal analyses indicate that trajectories of *addictive* screen use (including video games) — characterized by compulsiveness and interference with daily life — are associated with higher risk of suicidal ideation and behaviours, whereas total hours alone are less predictive. This finding highlights the importance of assessing addictive features and functional impairment rather than only measuring duration. [[PubMed+1](#)]^[4]

5. Risk and protective factors

Risk factors reported repeatedly include male gender, impulsivity/sensation-seeking traits, low parental monitoring, comorbid psychiatric conditions (e.g., ADHD), and easy access to high-speed internet and multiplayer platforms. Protective factors include strong family support, structured daily routines, offline social engagement, and positive parent–child communication. Contextual variables (school pressure, peer culture, socioeconomic status) modulate these relationships but are inconsistently measured across studies. [[PMC+1](#)]^{[2][3][5]}

6. Mechanisms and symptom networks

Recent work using network analysis and symptom-network approaches has begun to unpack how specific IGD symptoms (e.g., preoccupation, withdrawal, loss of control) connect to depressive and anxiety symptoms, suggesting complex, mutually reinforcing symptom clusters rather than simple one-directional causation. These findings point to heterogenous pathways to harm and suggest intervention targets beyond reducing hours — for example, addressing cognitive distortions, emotional regulation, and functional impairment. [[Nature](#)]^[7]

7. Interventions and policy implications

Evidence for effective interventions remains emergent. Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) adapted for problematic gaming shows the most consistent support in clinical trials and case series.^[10] Family-based interventions, school prevention programs, and psychoeducation for parents are recommended, and integrated treatment of comorbidities (depression, ADHD, sleep problems) is important. There is a relative scarcity of rigorously evaluated, culturally adapted randomized trials in low- and middle-income settings, indicating an important direction for future research and policy.^[9]

8. Methodological limitations

Major limitations across the literature include: (a) predominance of cross-sectional studies limiting causal inference, (b) inconsistent diagnostic thresholds and instruments, (c) reliance on convenience or institutional samples rather than representative community sampling, and (d) variable control for confounding factors (e.g., socioeconomic status, preexisting psychopathology). These limitations should shape both interpretation and future study design. [[PubMed+1](#)]^[4]

9. Research gaps and priorities

Priority areas for future research include: (1) longitudinal cohort studies to clarify directionality and persistence of problematic gaming; (2) representative, population-based prevalence studies with validated, locally piloted instruments; (3) culturally adapted randomized trials of CBT and family interventions; and (4) qualitative and mixed-methods work to understand motives (escapism, social connection, reward seeking) and contextual drivers unique to particular settings (e.g., urban schooling pressures). Addressing these gaps will strengthen evidence for prevention and clinical care. [[ScienceDirect+1](#)]^{[6][8]}

METHODOLOGY

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The present study used a **quantitative, correlational research design** to examine the relationship between online gaming addiction and mental health affection among young individuals. The methodology consists of the following components:

Research Design

A correlational research design was employed.

This design is appropriate because the objective of the study is to determine whether and how strongly two variables are related:

Independent variable (X): Online gaming addiction

Dependent variable (Y): Mental health affection

No manipulation or treatment was introduced; instead, naturally existing scores were analysed.

Population:

Students/young individuals aged 13–19 years from Mumbai and Thane.

Sampling Technique:

A convenience sampling method was used, where participants were selected based on availability and willingness to participate.

Sample Size:

A total of (insert number) participants were included, providing sufficient variability for correlation analysis.

Variables and Measurement Instruments

Online Gaming Addiction Scale (X)

Participants rated their addiction levels on a 5-point scale representing behaviours such as frequency of play, withdrawal symptoms, inability to stop, and interference with daily life.

Mental Health Affection Scale (Y)

Mental health affection was measured using a 1–5 scale, capturing emotional disturbance, stress, mood changes, and psychological impact of gaming.

Both scales are numerical and allow for statistical analysis such as correlation and regression.

Correlation Analysis

To examine the relationship between online gaming addiction and mental well-being:

Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) (for normally distributed data).

Spearman's rho (if the data are not normally distributed).

Interpretation of Pearson's r :

0.10–0.29 = Weak correlation

0.30–0.49 = Moderate correlation

0.50 and above = Strong correlation

Statistical Analysis

Data were analysed using quantitative methods to determine the relationship between addiction and mental health affection.

i.Descriptive Statistics

To understand the overall trend of the data, descriptive statistics were calculated for both variables:

(a) Scale of Addiction and

(b) Scale of Mental Health Affection.

Mean (Average), $\text{Mean} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$

Median

The middle value when all scores are arranged in ascending order.

If N is even:

$$\text{Median} = \frac{X_{\frac{N}{2}} + X_{\frac{N}{2}+1}}{2}$$

Standard Deviation (SD)

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (X - \bar{X})^2}{N - 1}}$$

Pearson Correlation (r)

$$r = \frac{\sum (X - \bar{X})(Y - \bar{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum (X - \bar{X})^2 \sum (Y - \bar{Y})^2}}$$

Correlation Analysis

The **Pearson correlation coefficient (r)** was used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between addiction (X) and mental health affection (Y).

Formula:

$$r = \frac{n(\sum XY) - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][n\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Interpretation of r :

0.10–0.29: Weak

0.30–0.49: Moderate

0.50 and above: Strong

A **positive r** indicates that as addiction increases, mental health affection also increases.

Regression Analysis

A simple linear regression was conducted to predict mental health affection based on addiction.

Regression Equation:

$$\hat{Y} = a + bX$$

From the graph:

$$\hat{Y} = 0.45X + 2.26$$

Where:

b = 0.45: slope

a = 2.26: intercept

$\hat{Y}$: predicted mental health score

This means each 1-unit increase in addiction increases mental health affection by 0.45 units.

The methodology aims to reveal whether higher online gaming addiction levels significantly correspond to greater mental health affection among youth. Using correlation and regression provides both the strength and predictive direction of the relationship.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRATION

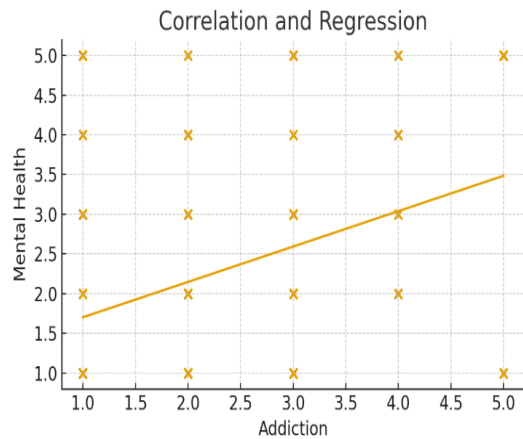


Figure 1: Correlation and regression

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
Addiction Scale	2.145	2	1.233
Mental Health Affection Scale	2.212	2	1.437

Correlation

The Pearson correlation coefficient between:

Addiction

Scale

Mental Health Affection Scale

is: $r = 0.382$

Interpretation

This indicates a moderate positive correlation.

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As gaming addiction scores increase, mental health affection scores also tend to increase to a moderate extent.

“The analysis shows that online gaming addiction has a moderate positive relationship with mental health affection among participants ($r = 0.382$). Higher addiction levels are associated with higher mental health disturbance scores. Descriptive statistics further reveal that responses generally fall in the mid-range with moderate variability.”

Regression Significance Test Explanation

Purpose

Regression analysis tests whether addiction can significantly predict mental health affection.

You already have the regression line:

$$\hat{Y} = 0.45X + 0.26$$

Key Significance Tests in Regression

(a) ANOVA F-test for Regression

This tests if the overall model is significant.

$$F = \frac{\text{Regression Mean Square}}{\text{Residual Mean Square}}$$

If $p < 0.05$, the regression model is significant.

Meaning

Addiction *significantly predicts* mental health affection.

(b) t-test for Regression Coefficient

$$t = \frac{b}{SE_b}$$

Where:

b = regression slope (0.45 in your case)

SE = standard error

If t is significant ($p < 0.05$) → the slope is meaningful.

Meaning

A 1-unit increase in addiction leads to a significant increase in mental health affection.

(c) R (Correlation) and R^2 (Variance Explained)

You found:

$$r = 0.382$$

$$R^2 = (0.382)^2 = 0.146$$

Interpretation

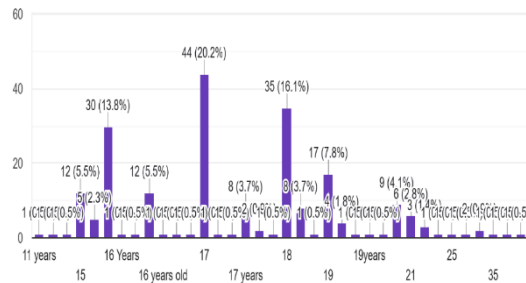
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Around 14.6% of the variation in mental health affection is explained by gaming addiction.

This is a moderate effect.

2. Age of the respondent (eg. 13 years).

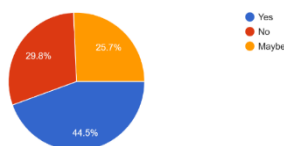
218 responses



The data reveals that the majority of respondents fall into the teenage category specifically ranging in age from fifteen through nineteen years old these are the key takeaways at seventeen years old there is an overwhelming response rate among participants tallying at forty-four individuals approximately two percent the next stage involves individuals aged eighteen years old featuring thirty-five participants out of which sixteen represent this demographic group one percent age sixteen also occurs frequently involving thirty individuals eleven percent of total respondents eight percent several participants revealed their age as nineteen seven out of seventeen individuals responded eight percent groups younger than 15 years old such as those aged between 11 and 14 exhibit minimal reactions several individuals range in age between twenty and twenty-five however only one person indicates their current age is thirty-five years old data reveals that most respondents belong to the middle-to-late teenage years suggesting their questionnaire was primarily aimed at teenagers in high school.

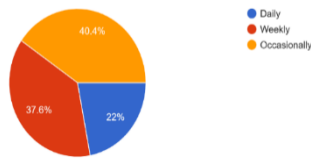
3. Has gaming reduced your time spent with family or friends?

218 responses



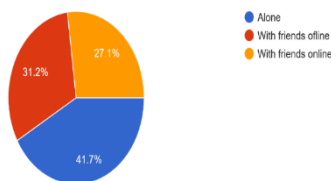
The findings monitor a various but enlightening trend forty 44.5% of members replied yes suggesting that gaming has decreased the time they devote to own family or friends this means that almost half of the individuals may want to experience gaming as a disruption to social or circle of relatives connections 29.8% answered no indicating that for nearly one-13 of the members gaming does not have an effect on the time they allocate to their cherished ones 25.7% decided on perhaps indicating they are unsure or accept as true with that gaming may now and again effect their time with own family and buddies but not regularly in trendy the majority of contributors agree with that gaming has some impact either genuinely or potentially on diminishing time spent with family or friends this emphasizes the need to balance gaming with valuable social connections.

4.How often do you play online games?
218 responses



This question was asked to understand how frequently respondents engage in online gaming a total of 218 people participated in this question the results show three main gaming frequency patterns 404 of respondents play online games occasionally making this the largest group these individuals play but not on a regular schedule 376 play weekly meaning more than one-third engage in online gaming as part of their routine but not daily 22 of respondents play daily showing that nearly one-fourth are frequent gamer who spend time playing online games every day overall the majority of participants do play online games but most of them fall into the occasionally or weekly categories rather than daily this indicates that while gaming is a common activity only a smaller portion of respondents engage in it every day here is a clear and well-structured explanation for question 5 explanation of question 5 on average how many hours do you spend gaming per day this question aimed to understand the daily time commitment respondents give to gaming a total of 218 participants answered this question the results show three different levels of daily gaming duration 555 of respondents spend less than 1 hour per day playing games this is the largest group suggesting that most participants play casually and do not spend long periods gaming each day 257 spend around 1 hour daily this indicates that about one-fourth of the respondents include gaming as a regular short part of their daily routine 188 of respondents spend more than 1 hour per day gaming this means a smaller portion of the group engages in longer gaming sessions each day overall the majority of respondents limit their gaming time to under an hour a day showing that while gaming is common extended daily gaming sessions are less frequent among the participants.

6.Do you play games alone or with others?
218 responses

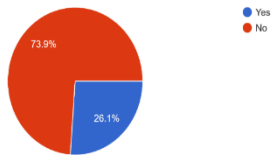


This question explored whether respondents prefer gaming alone or with company either offline or online a total of 218 respondents participated in this question the survey results show three main patterns of gaming behavior 417 of respondents play games alone making this the largest group this suggests that many participants prefer solo gaming or choose games that do not require others 312 play with friends offline meaning nearly one-third enjoy gaming as a social activity with friends in person 271 play with friends online showing that a slightly smaller but still significant portion of respondents prefers connecting digitally with friends while gaming overall while solo gaming is the most common more than half of the respondents a combined 583 also enjoy gaming with friends either offline or online this

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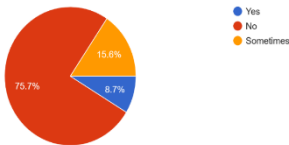
indicates that gaming serves both as an individual activity and a way to socialize.

7.Has gaming affected your sleep schedule?
218 responses



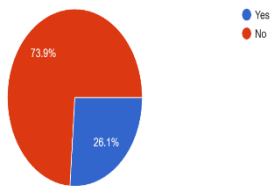
The above questions show that 73.9% people are not affected by online gaming. Only 26.1% people are affected by online gaming.

8.Do you skip meals or delay eating due to gaming?
218 responses



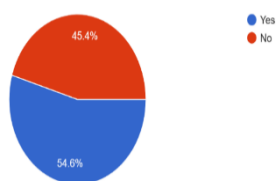
The above figure shows that 75.7% people are not skip meals or delay eating due to gaming. Only 8.7% people are affected. 15.6% people are sometimes affected by online gaming.

9.Have your academic or work performance been affected by gaming?
218 responses



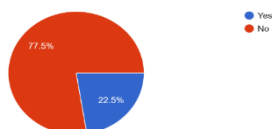
The above figure shows that 73.9% people are not affected their academic work performance by online gaming. Only 26.1% are affected by online gaming.

10.Do you prefer gaming over outdoor or physical activities?
218 responses



The above figure shows that 45.4% people are not preferred outdoor gaming or physical activities. 54.6% people are only preferred gaming over outdoor or physical activities.

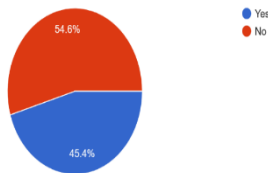
11.Have you ever lied about your gaming habits to others?
218 responses



The above figure shows that 26.1% participants who indicated experiencing sleep problems form a

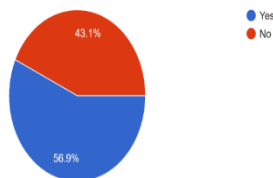
significant group. This suggests that gaming can significantly affect some people's sleep, which is important for research on gaming habits, health, and lifestyle trends. Results may indicate differences in length of gaming, self-discipline, time management skills, or susceptibility to addictive gaming behaviour.

12. Do you feel gaming has made you more socially connected or isolated?
218 responses



The above figure shows that 54.6% people are not socially isolated. There shows that 45.4% are isolated.

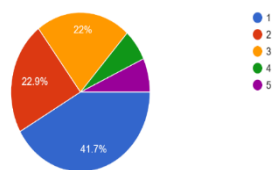
13. Have you ever tried to reduce your gaming time?
218 responses



The above figure shows that 56.9% people are reduce gaming time and 56.9% are not reduce gaming time.

The above figure shows that 71.1% (for Entertainment), 28.9% (for Competition), 21.6% (for Social Interaction), 10.6% (for Escapism), 14.7% (for Habit).

14. On a scale of 1 to 5, how addicted do you feel to online gaming? (1 = Not at all, 5 = Extremely)
218 responses



The pie chart illustrates how 218 participants rated their level of online gaming addiction on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = Not at all addicted and 5 = Extremely addicted.

41.7% chose "1" - This is the largest group, showing that nearly half of the respondents believe they are *not at all addicted* to online gaming.

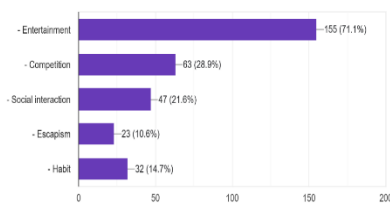
22.9% chose "2" - This indicates mild or occasional gaming habits, with little to no sense of dependency.

22% chose "3" - This group represents a moderate level—individuals who may enjoy gaming regularly but do not see it as problematic.

Small portions chose "4" and "5"

4 (Green segment): A small percentage feel their gaming habits are fairly strong and could be leaning toward dependency.

15. What motivates you to play online games? (Select all that apply)
218 responses



5 (Purple segment): Only a very small number rated themselves as *extremely addicted*.

Overall Interpretation

Most respondents fall in the low-addiction range (1–2), showing that online gaming is primarily a casual activity for the majority. However, the presence of moderate (3)

and higher ratings (4–5) indicates that a subset of individuals may be experiencing stronger attachment or dependency on gaming. This spread suggests varying gaming behaviors within the sample—from casual players to potentially at-risk gamer.

6. Suggest ways for reducing Online gaming addiction of 218 responses

Meditation

Online gaming addiction can be reduced by setting fixed time limits for playing and following a balanced daily routine. Engaging in other activities like outdoor games, reading, or hobbies helps divert attention. Spending more time with family and friends also reduces screen time. Using parental controls and avoiding gaming when feeling bored or stressed are useful habits. If self-control becomes difficult, seeking help from parents or a counselor can be very effective.

Playing outdoor games

Nothing

Wast time

Yes

CONCLUSION

The present study investigated the relationship between online gaming addiction and mental health affection among young individuals. The descriptive analysis revealed moderate levels of gaming addiction and noticeable variation in mental health responses. The correlation analysis showed a moderate positive relationship ($r = 0.382$) between gaming addiction and mental health affection, indicating that as gaming addiction increases, mental health problems such as stress, irritability, emotional disturbance, and reduced well-being also tend to rise.

Regression analysis further confirmed that gaming addiction is a significant predictor of mental health affection, explaining approximately 14–15% of the variance in mental health outcomes. This means addiction levels play a meaningful, though not exclusive, role in influencing psychological well-being. Overall, the findings suggest that excessive gaming is associated with increased mental health disturbances among the population studied. The results reinforce global research trends showing that problematic gaming behaviours can negatively impact emotional, behavioural, and social well-being.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Awareness and Psychoeducation

Conduct school and college workshops to educate students about healthy gaming habits, screen-time

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limits, and the psychological risks of excessive gaming.

Provide parental guidance programs to help parents monitor and support their children's gaming behaviour.

2. Early Identification and Screening

Implement routine screening of students using validated scales such as:

Internet Gaming Disorder Scale (IGDS)

Gaming Addiction Scale (GAS)

Teachers and counsellors should be trained to identify early signs of addiction such as declining academics, irritability, poor sleep, or withdrawal.

3. Psychological Interventions

a. Introduce Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)-based programs since CBT is proven effective for gaming addiction.

b. Provide counselling services focusing on:

i. Time management

ii. Emotional regulation

iii. Reducing dependency on online games

4. Family-Based Interventions

Encourage parents to maintain open communication and set structured routines at home.

Promote family activities that reduce screen dependency.

5. Promote Healthy Alternatives

Encourage participation in:

Sports and physical exercise

Outdoor activities

Clubs, creative programs, and skill-based activities

These help reduce the psychological dependence on gaming.

6. Policy and Institutional Support

a. Schools and colleges should enforce digital well-being policies, including controlled device usage during academic hours.

b. Establish mental health support centres in educational institutions to provide timely help.

7. Future Research

a. Conduct studies using larger samples and more advanced statistical models to capture long-term mental health effects.

b. Explore additional variables such as sleep quality, academic performance, loneliness, and social support.

c. Adapt interventions culturally for Indian youth in urban and semi-urban areas.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to convey my heartfelt thanks to all those who played a role in the successful completion of this

study. I am particularly grateful to the respondents who took part in the survey; their readiness to provide candid responses was essential for the realization of this study. I also extend my gratitude to my friends and family for their unwavering support, cooperation, and understanding throughout the development of this project. Finally, I would like to recognize all authors, researchers, and sources whose work has laid the groundwork for this study. Their contributions have been crucial in influencing the direction and depth of this research.

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Integrated Pathways to Recovery: Exploring Success stories from all-inclusive rehabilitation programs integrating physical, mental, medical, addiction and child welfare support

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Abstract –

This qualitative study investigates the efficacy of integrated, holistic rehabilitation programs that combine physical, mental, medical, addiction, and child welfare support. Through an analysis of success stories from Indian non-governmental organizations, the research explores how such multi-faceted interventions facilitate sustainable recovery, family reunification, and social reintegration. Findings reveal that interconnected care, which addresses the whole person within their familial and social context, leads to more resilient outcomes by motivating recovery through child welfare, enabling personalized long-term support, and leveraging community and family involvement. Despite these strengths, the study highlights persistent challenges in implementation, such as resource constraints and worker capacity, underscoring the critical need for robust execution to complement sound program design. The study contributes evidence to advocate for person-centered, integrated models in addiction and mental health policy and practice. Keywords – Integrated Rehabilitation, Holistic Recovery, Child Welfare Support , Addiction Treatment , Mental Health Services , Sustainable Outcomes , Social Reintegration , Program Implementation , Success Narratives

1.0 Introduction -

Addiction is a multidimensional, often intergenerational illness affecting physical, emotional, psychological, and social well-being. While traditional rehabilitation models have often isolated singular treatments such as detoxification or counseling, contemporary frameworks now understand addiction as a chronic and relapsing condition rooted in interconnected biological, psychological, and social factors. This shift has given rise to integrated, all-inclusive programs that coordinate physical health services, mental health counseling, medical care, addiction interventions, and child welfare support within a holistic framework aimed at healing the mind and body, rebuilding family relationships, and addressing underlying trauma and socio-environmental barriers.

This study investigates these interconnected recovery pathways by analyzing success stories from individuals who have completed such programs, offering nuanced insights into motivation, emotional

healing, and family restoration that quantitative measures may overlook. By exploring the individual and synergistic impacts of each service component, the research aims to identify key elements of effective holistic rehabilitation, thereby strengthening integrated treatment models, informing policy, and promoting sustainable recovery and life restoration.

2.0 Research Objectives –

Primary Objective -

To explore how integrated rehabilitation programs that combine physical, mental, medical, addiction, and child welfare services contribute to successful recovery outcomes.

Secondary Objective –

- To determine how well all-inclusive rehabilitation programs ensure the sustainability of recovery outcomes.
- The role of social and systemic factors in facilitating interconnected recoveries.
- To assess the impact of integrated support on child welfare outcomes within rehabilitation narratives.
- To Propose Recommendations on How to Improve Comprehensive Rehabilitation Programs Using Insights from Success Stories.

2.1 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for:

- Rehabilitation centers: providing insights to improve program design.
- Policy makers: offering evidence for the need to support integrated care models.
- Healthcare professionals: helping them understand the value of multidisciplinary collaboration.
- Families and communities: encouraging supportive roles in recovery.
- Researchers: contributing new qualitative insights into holistic addiction recovery.

3.0 Literature Review

- [Abigail Macaspag Cabaguig](#) , [Florabelle Patosa](#) & [Karen Doroja](#) (2023) : Child Welfare Education Programs for Integrated Schools: A Management Model

Doroja, Patosa, and Cabaguig (2023) examine the management of child welfare education programs in integrated schools in the Philippines in a decentralized and school-based management . The study emphasises the importance of strategic planning in educational management by demonstrating a strong positive link between program performance and the efficacy of planning functions using a mixed-

methods methodology. Although overall performance and implementation were graded "Very Satisfactory" and "Highly Implemented" respectively in the key management functions, the results reveal the existence of serious implementation problems, such as lack of commitment, resource constraints, and deficiencies in technical know-how and time management of the implementers. These results suggest that the effectiveness of integrated child welfare programs depends more on the quality of execution and managerial capability at the school level than on program design.

- [Seden demirtaş İlhan](#), [Feyza Erden](#) & [Fatma Yalçın](#) (2022): An Integrated Mother-Child Health and Education Services Program in India: An Example of Informal Preschool Education

İlhan, Erden , Yalcin (2022) analyze India's flagship Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), a holistic state program launched in 1975. Delivered through Anganwadi Centers, it combines health, nutrition, and preschool education for children under six, pregnant women, and lactating mothers. The review synthesizes evidence of success in improving maternal and child health indicators, such as birth weight and nutritional status, and providing foundational preschooling that enhances school readiness. However, significant implementation gaps persist, including resource disparities, overburdened frontline workers, and inconsistent educational quality—often favoring health services over pedagogy. The authors conclude that while ICDS offers a vital integrated model, its educational impact is constrained by systemic operational challenges, underscoring the link between design, execution, and context.

- [Chhavi Bhatnagar](#) & [Subhasis Bhadra](#) (2015) : Child Welfare Services in Highly Developed Countries and Least developed Countries and its comparison with Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme.

Bhatnagar & Bhadra (2015) conduct a comparative study of child care provision in Highly Developed Countries (HDCs), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in India. The authors point out that HDCs have a professional, systemic "child protection approach," while LDCs have crippled service delivery due to poverty and lack of infrastructure. The ICDS in India, a massive, holistic program that combines health, nutrition, and education, falls in between. Although its conceptual framework is strong, its practical efficacy is seriously impaired by its operational weaknesses: untrained Anganwadi workers, poor monitoring, and inadequate data management. The authors conclude that the ICDS is a paradigm of the universal disconnect between policy and implementation, particularly in a socio-economic setting with limited resources.

4.0 Voices of recovery : Success Stories from Rehabilitation journey

4.1 Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation: This NGO focuses on rescuing and rehabilitating mentally ill destitute individuals found wandering the streets, aiming to reunite them with their families.

Success Stories:

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In one of its earliest cases, the Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation helped Revallamma, a 35-year-old woman with mental illness found on the streets of Mumbai. After just six weeks of care, she recovered sufficiently to recall her home village near Hyderabad.

The doctors personally escorted her home, leading to an emotional reunion with her mother after four years of separation, which was celebrated by the entire village.

4.2 SUPPORT (Society Undertaking Poor People's Onus For Rehabilitation): This organization works with street children addicted to substances, providing detoxification, education, vocational training, and job placement.

- **Success Stories: Ramu Teja Thapa's Transformation**

Ramu Teja Thapa, a Nepali man, had a troubled youth, dropping out of school and turning to theft, drinking, and smoking, which led his family to reject him. He eventually ran away to Delhi and then to Mumbai, where he lived on the streets.

His life changed when he was brought to the Support NGO. After a difficult six-month detoxification process (much longer than the usual 21 days), he entered rehabilitation. Support provided him with education, a job, and, as he emphasizes, a loving home and a new family.

This transformation led to him becoming a staff member at Support's Saphala center in 2013. He is now financially stable, with significant savings and plans to buy a home. Ramu credits Support with saving his life, stating proudly, **'Support' is my father and mother.**

4.3 Child Help Foundation_–

It is a child-centric NGO with a pan-India presence. They take a hands-on, grassroots approach to holistically address children's basic needs in **education, health, food, and shelter**. Their work focuses on the ground level, enabling both families and communities to act in the best interest of the child.

Thigula Sai Durga -

A bright 7th-grade student, was born with Complex Heart Disease. Her family could not afford the life-saving surgery she needed, which cost ₹5,50,000. They sought help from Child Help Foundation, which shared her story and successfully raised the funds from donors. The surgery was performed, and Sai Durga is now recovering, with her family deeply grateful for the support that saved her life and secured her future.

5.0 Research Findings, suggestions & Conclusions

Findings -

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- Holistic Rehabilitation Leads to Sustainable Recovery: Integrated programs addressing physical, mental, medical, addiction, and child welfare needs significantly improve long-term recovery outcomes.
- Success stories like Revallamma (mental health) and Ramu Teja Thapa (addiction) demonstrate that comprehensive care fosters resilience, self-sufficiency, and social reintegration.
- Child Welfare as a Motivational Driver: For parents and guardians, the prospect of family reunification and child welfare support serves as a powerful motivator for sustained recovery.
- Programs like Support and Child Help Foundation show that child-centric approaches enhance emotional stability and reduce relapse rates.
- Personalized and Long-Term Support is Critical: Cases like Ramu's detox (which took six months instead of the standard 21 days) highlight the need for flexible, individualized timelines in rehabilitation.
- Continuous support—even after formal program completion—helps prevent regression and promotes lifelong recovery.
- Community and Family Involvement Strengthens Outcomes: The reunion of Revallamma with her family and community underscores the role of social systems in reinforcing recovery.
- Family therapy, parenting support, and community reintegration are essential components of holistic care.
- Integration of Medical and Mental Health Services is Vital: Access to psychiatric care, medication-assisted treatment, and trauma-informed therapy addresses root causes of addiction and mental illness.
- Medical interventions, such as life-saving surgery for Thigula Sai Durga, illustrate how health support is foundational to overall well-being.

Suggestions

- Adopt Multi-Domain Rehabilitation Models: Governments and NGOs should design and fund programs that integrate physical, mental, medical, addiction, and child welfare services under one umbrella.
- Implement Long-Term Follow-Up Systems: Rehabilitation programs should include post-discharge tracking, mentorship, and access to community resources to ensure sustained recovery.
- Strengthen Family and Child-Inclusive Practices: Incorporate family therapy, visitation support, parenting workshops, and child protection services into standard rehabilitation protocols.

- Train Staff in Trauma-Informed and Culturally Sensitive Care: Rehabilitation workers should be equipped to address trauma, stigma, and diverse cultural backgrounds to build trust and effectiveness.
- Use Success Stories in Advocacy and Funding Efforts: Document and share narratives of recovery to influence policy, attract donors, and reduce societal stigma associated with addiction and mental health.

Conclusions:

The research affirms that all-inclusive, interconnected rehabilitation programs are far more effective than fragmented approaches in addressing complex issues like addiction, mental health crises, and family disintegration. By treating the individual as a whole and involving families and communities, these programs not only restore health and sobriety but also rebuild identities, relationships, and futures.

Success stories from organizations like Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation, Support, and Child Help Foundation illustrate that recovery is not merely about abstaining from substances or stabilizing symptoms—it is about reclaiming dignity, purpose, and belonging. Future efforts must prioritize integrated, person-centered models that are adaptable, long-term, and grounded in compassion and evidence.

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To Study the Impact of Excessive Device Use and Emotional Regulation and Readiness to change

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Abstract

‘Globalization’ a new door has Opened across all the sector and aspects of human life including Social, cultural, technical, economic and political. However, this shift has also led to a strong rise in Western cultural influence particularly among the youth of different age group. One of the concerning outcomes of this cultural exposure is the changing pattern of youth addiction from traditional substance-based addictions to emerging non-substance behavioral addictions.

The study examines the impact of globalization and the growing influence of western culture among youth with the special reference to Mumbai region. The research explores the emergence of Materialistic mindset, Consumerism, Social alienation, Imitation behavior, all of which have shown significant implications on the psychological well-being of the young individual. The researcher has collected the data with an online questionnaire, from 206 respondents between the ages of 17 and 25 to assess their experiences to changing cultural exposures and behavioral tendencies. Where questionnaire has been categorized into substance addiction, behavioral addiction, Emerging addiction and screen time. The study suggest that these cultural and behavioral shifts need closer attention, as these has severely impacted youth decision-making, and mental health.

Keywords: Globalization, Mental health, Addiction, western influence,

Introduction

Globalization refers to the process by which the world becomes increasingly interconnected due to the Free flow of goods, Movement of people, Spread of technology, Cultural exchanges etc. It is like a single large village where countries depend on each other for the fulfillment of demand of its citizens. But because Western countries dominated global trade and entertainment their culture spread rapidly around the world. While some effects are positive (modern education, technology, openness), several negative consequences emerge- especially in the form of new addiction patterns. The shift is not only seen in substance use but also in behavioral and digital addictions. Earlier addiction was understood in a very limited sense, but today it is defined more broadly, not just a substance related issue but also a complex mental and social phenomenon. And the normalization of this led to reduces perceived risk and making youth feel these habits are “cool” or socially acceptable. As a result, youth experience digital addiction, substance use, consumerism, body image stress and cultural disconnect.

According to smartphone usage statics by (Kumar, 2025) shows that over 5.78 billion people use smartphone globally and approximately 97% of users are between the age group of 18 & 49. And according to Global statistic on smartphone Addiction, around 50% of the teenagers are feeling addicted to their smart phone and nearly 85% of these teens admit that they are feeling difficulties in stopping the usage.

Our study highlights the gradual shifts in youth behavior from traditional to modern. By examining the influence of globalization and Western culture, the research aims to address this critical issue and create awareness to safeguard youth well-being.

The researcher has categorized the addiction as:

1. Substance Addiction

Substance addiction is a severe condition in which an individual is unable to control the use of legal or illegal drugs or medicines.

2. Behavioral Addiction

Behavioral addiction does not involve any chemical substance but refers to an excessive habit of engaging in activities such as gambling, shopping, eating, or gaming.

3. Emerging Addiction

Emerging addictions are newly developing forms of addictive behavior that have arisen due to growing trends among youth.

4. Screen Time Addiction

Screen time addiction results from the excessive use of technological devices such as smartphones, computers, and gaming devices.

Objectives

- 1.To identify the underlying causes behind the changing patterns of addiction among youth.
2. To examine how globalization contributes to the rise and transformation of addiction among youth.
3. To highlight the narrow understanding of addiction in contemporary society.
- 4.To understand whether young individuals acknowledge their own addictive behaviors.
- 5.To explore the extent to which Western cultural influence shapes youth behaviors.

Literature Review

Westernization and tobacco use among young people in Delhi, India

(M. Stigler, 2010) have published the paper to explores the relationship between adopting "westernization" or traditional Indian ways of life and tobacco use among adolescents in Delhi. A self-report survey was used to collect information which includes 3512 students in Eight and Tenth grade. The study suggested that adopting more Western lifestyles was associated with higher tobacco use, while maintaining traditional Indian ways was associated with lower tobacco use. This held true for various forms of tobacco, including cigarettes, bidis, and chewing tobacco.

A Comparative Study of Non-Chemical Addiction among Youth

A study conducted by (Honnakatti, 2018) examined mobile phone addiction among youth, with a particular focus on differences between boys and girls as well as between rural and urban populations. The primary objective of the research was to identify the mobile-based activities associated with non-chemical forms of addiction. The findings indicated that the use of WhatsApp, Facebook, texting, chatting, calling, and YouTube constitute significant non-chemical addictive behaviors. The study also reported no substantial gender-based differences in mobile phone usage; however, it found that urban youth exhibited higher levels of addiction compared to their rural counterpart.

A study on the Implications of Addiction on the Youth of India

A study, by (Professor Krishna Reddy B.N., 2024) emphasizes that addiction is a chronic disease that significantly affects both the mental and physical well-being of individuals. The study provides an in-depth analysis of various types of addictions, including substance-based and behavioral addictions, and explores how environmental influences and psychological conditions contribute to their development. To gain real-world insights, the researchers conducted interviews with individuals struggling with addiction. These interviews helped reveal how people recognize, cope with, and respond to their addictive behaviors, as well as the short-term and long-term consequences they face. Overall, the research aims to better understand the root causes of addiction and highlight the severe impact it has on individuals' health, lifestyle, and social relationships.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

Ho: Social media does not encourage more individual to try alcohol and drugs

H1: Social media does encourage more individual to try alcohol and drugs

Hypothesis 2

H0: There is no association between screen time and frequency of phone checking

H1: There is association between screen time and frequency of phone checking

Hypothesis 3

H0: Excessive screen time does not impact the mental clarity

H1: Excessive screen time does impact the mental clarity

Hypothesis 4

H0: There is no association between feeling after excessive use, screen time, mental clarity and readiness to change

H1: There is association between feeling after excessive use, screen time, mental clarity and readiness to change

Data collection and sample size:

The Research is based on primary data and hence the researcher has collected the data through the online google form questionnaire, where the data has been collected from the age group of 16years to more than 25years and all the respondents are with the qualification of HSC, first year, second year, third year and those who are pursuing their masters from different streams.

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Sample size and sampling method:

The researcher has used convenience sampling method and from 206 respondents the data has been collected.

Demographic profile:

AGE					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-18	62	29.7	30.1	30.1
	19-21	123	58.9	59.7	89.8
	22-24	18	8.6	8.7	98.5
	above 25	3	1.4	1.5	100.0
	Total	206	98.6	100.0	
Missing	System	3	1.4		
Total	209	100.0			

GENDER					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	female	110	52.6	53.4	53.4
	male	96	45.9	46.6	100.0
	Total	206	98.6	100.0	
Missing	System	3	1.4		
Total		209	100.0		

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig. (2 tailed)
START JUNK FOOD but HARD TO STOP	206	3.2767	1.36011	2.920	.004
Superiority using English Language	206	2.9175	1.36435	-.868	.386

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Uncomfortable feeling for stability predictability	206	2.9369	1.31442	-.689	.492
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Above table represent the addiction among the youth related with their food habit, the language used by them

and life style they want, as data has collected as per Likert scaling from 1 to 5 where 1 is for strongly disagree and 5 is for strongly agree for once I start eating junk food it is hard to stop, feeling of superiority when using English as language while interacting with others, feeling of uncomfortableness when life is stable and predictable'. The mean value for t-test is 3.2767, 2.9175 and 2.9369 for all three variables which indicates majority respondents agreed that the habit of consuming junk food is hard to control as p value also support the conclusion as it is less than 0.05, for feeling of superiority while using English language and uncomfortable feeling for stability and predictability is very close to 3 and p value is not significant as more than 0.05 that suggest respondents are neutral for these two variables.

Social Media Alcohol Drugs				
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	P value (Chi square test)
Disagree	70	103.0	-33.0	0.000
Agree	136	103.0	33.0	
Total	206			

Above table represent that majority 66.01% agreed that yes, Social media does encourage more individual to try alcohol and drugs and 33.98% agrees that Social media does not encourage more individual to try alcohol and drugs. And p-value is less than 0.05 i.e. 0.00 which suggest that null hypothesis is rejected and yes Social media does encourage more individual to try alcohol and drugs.

Feeling after excessive use * ready to change Cross tabulation							
		Ready to change				P value (Chi square test)	Likelihood ratio
		Yes	NO	May be	Total		
Feeling	guilt	41	0	13	54		

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after excessive use	Demotivated	46	6	20	72	0.008	17.031
	No concern	38	7	35	80		
Total			125	13	68	206	

The above table suggest that many of the respondents who feel guilt (negative emotion) after the excessive use of (smartphone, laptop, tablet) are ready to change their habits 41 of 54 i.e. 76%. Those who has no concern regarding the excessive use of (smartphone, laptop, tablet) only 47.5% are ready to change their habits and rest are either not ready (8.75%) or may be (43.75%) changing their habit. Demoted respondents has mixed feeling and readiness to changes their habit as (63.89%) ready to change, 8.33 not ready and remaining 27.77% may change their habits. Since p value is less than 0.05 i.e. 0.008 which suggest that null hypothesis is rejected and yes, there is association between feeling after excessive use and readiness to change. The likelihood ratio of 17.031also suggests that same support the conclusion.

Effect on mental process * Average screen time Cross tabulation								
		Avg. screen time						P value chi square test
		Less than 2 hours	2-4 hours	4-6 hours	6-8 hours	More than 8 hours	Total	
Effect on mental process	Yes	11	39	37	28	12	127	0.018
	No	5	23	35	5	11	79	
Total		16	62	72	33	23	206	

The above table represent frequency distribution of effect on mental process or clarity after excessive use of smartphone and tablet and average screen time and table suggest that out of 206 respondents 127 i.e. 61.65% respondents agreed that their screen impact their ability of thinking, emotions and imagination power as well as p value is less than 0.05 i.e. 0.018 which indicates rejection of null hypothesis. Which means yes excessive screen time does impact the mental clarity.

Effect on mental process * ready to change Cross tabulation						
	Ready to change				P value	Likeliho od

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		Yes	No	Maybe	Total	chi square test	Ratio
Effect on mental process	Yes	94	4	29	127	0.000	25.417
	No	31	9	39	79		
Total		125	13	68	206		

Above table represent the readiness of respondents to change their habits as the addiction towards Technology as it impacts their mental clarity and process and data suggest majority i.e. 74.02% are ready to change whose thinking and imagination power has been affecting as addicted to maximum screen time in a day and being a proactive nature 39.24% from those are also ready to change whose mental process is not affected till yet due to their screen time. Also p value is less than 0.05 i.e. 0.000 which indicates rejection of null hypothesis There is association between Effect on mental process and readiness to change.

Ready to Change							
		Yes	No	Maybe	Total	Chi square test	Likelihood ratio
Avg Screen Time	less than 2 hours	11	2	3	16	0.07	12.082
	2-4 hours	39	1	22	62		
	4-6 hours	43	3	26	72		
	6-8hours	20	2	11	33		
	more than 8 hours	12	5	6	23		
Total		125	13	68	206		

Since p value is more than 0.05 i.e. 0.07 which indicates acceptance of null hypothesis and yes data suggest that irrespective of different screen time all the respondent are trying to reduce their screen time to be more efficient in their life 68.75%, 62.90%, 59.722%, 60.60%, 52.17% are ready to change (reduce) with the screen time of less than 2 hours, 2-4 hours, 4-6 hours, 6-8 hours and more than 8 hours respectively their screen time as it impact their mental process and clarity in negative manner.

The table represents the cross tabulation of average screen time spent on system and frequency of checking phone in a day and it indicates that p value is less than 0.05 i.e. 0.05 this Suggest rejection of

null hypothesis. And yes, there is association between screen time and frequency of phone checking.
(Honnakatti, 2018)

Avg screen time * more time Ott then plan Crosstabulation							
		More time Ott then plan			Total	P value	Pearson correlation
		Not at all	Medium	Very high			
Avg Screen Time	Less than 2 hours	4	11	1	16	0.071	0.086
	2-4 hours	15	41	6	62		
	4-6 hours	22	46	4	72		
	6-8hours	7	20	6	33		
	More than 8 hours	7	9	7	23		
Total		55	127	24	206		

Findings

The findings reveal a strong relationship between emotional responses to excessive device use and readiness for behavioral change

Screen-Time Addiction:

Screen time is a major factor driving other addictions.

34.4% of youth check their phones every 10–15 minutes, showing frequent digital engagement.

The Mean of the responses of the participants who start having Junk food but faces difficulty to stop in 3.2767 which is >3 shows a strong relation.

Among respondents who reported feeling guilty after prolonged use of smartphones, laptops, or tablets, a substantial 76% (41 out of 54) indicated that they were ready to change their habits

Respondents who felt demotivated after excessive screen use displayed mixed readiness levels; however, a majority (63.89%) expressed willingness to change, with 8.33% not ready and 27.77% unsure.

Across all screen-time categories, respondents demonstrated a general inclination to decrease their device use: 68.75% for less than 2 hours, 62.90% for 2–4 hours, 59.72% for 4–6 hours, 60.60% for 6–8 hours, and 52.17% for more than 8 hours of daily screen time.

Conclusion

The present study highlights the growing concern of excessive device use among youth and its

significant impact on emotional regulation and behavioral patterns. Findings indicate that many young individuals are increasingly dependent on social media and digital platforms, often without recognizing the extent of their usage or its adverse consequences. A considerable portion of the youth does not acknowledge that excessive screen time itself constitutes a form of addiction, largely due to a lack of awareness regarding non-substance behavioral addictions. This unawareness remains a critical barrier, preventing timely identification and intervention.

The results also reveal that excessive device use has weakened emotional regulation capabilities, contributing to increased stress, reduced attention span, mood fluctuations, and compulsive digital engagement. Despite these challenges, a noteworthy finding is that individuals who do recognize their addictive patterns demonstrate readiness to modify their behavior. This indicates that acceptance and awareness play a crucial role in initiating positive behavioral change.

Moreover, the study draws attention to the broader shift in the understanding of addiction. Traditionally limited to substance use, addiction is now recognized as a more complex and multifaceted concept influenced by digitalization and modern lifestyles. Excessive engagement with digital devices has emerged as a major contributor to non-substance addiction, affecting psychological well-being and disrupting healthy behavioral routines. Globalization—particularly the influence of Western culture—has intensified this phenomenon by altering lifestyle patterns, social norms, and digital consumption habits.

Despite the rising prevalence of non-substance addictions, public policies and regulatory measures remain largely focused on substance-based addictions. Governments impose heavy taxes and restrictions on substances, yet similar preventive or corrective steps for behavioral addictions are minimal or absent. This gap underscores the urgency for systematic awareness initiatives, educational programs, and evidence-based interventions aimed at empowering youth to recognize and manage digital overuse.

In essence, the study concludes that excessive device use significantly impairs emotional regulation among youth while simultaneously shaping their readiness for behavioral change. Addressing this issue requires a dual approach: creating widespread awareness about non-substance addictions and implementing supportive strategies to foster healthier digital habits. Only through a combination of knowledge, acknowledgement, and structured preventive efforts can society effectively curb the growing impact of excessive device use on the emotional and behavioral health of young individuals.

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Late-Night Digital Consumption and Its Psychological Impact: Examining Parasocial Addiction Patterns Among Young Adults

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Abstract

Late-night digital consumption among young adults (ages 16-30) significantly fosters parasocial addiction through emotional vulnerability, sleep disturbance, and one-sided bonds with online creators, driven by smartphone accessibility and nocturnal privacy. This quantitative study surveys 27 college students using structured Likert-scale questionnaires (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.80$), convenience/snowball sampling, and independent t

tests, revealing nightly users exhibit markedly higher parasocial attachment scores ($t=6.52$, $p<0.001$) compared to infrequent users, rejecting the null hypothesis. Findings highlight digital behavior loops' psychological toll and advocate interventions like sleep hygiene education, notification controls, and awareness programs to promote healthier digital wellness.

Keywords: Late-night digital consumption, parasocial attachment, parasocial addiction, sleep disturbance, emotional vulnerability, digital wellness, young adults, t-test analysis.

1. Introduction

Late-night digital consumption represents a growing phenomenon among young adults aged 16-30, where smartphone and social media engagement peaks after midnight through activities like endless scrolling, binge-watching videos, and interacting with content creators. This nocturnal behaviour thrives due to heightened device accessibility, perceived privacy in solitary hours, and fewer real-world interruptions, creating an ideal environment for prolonged immersion. Such habits disrupt circadian rhythms, leading to sleep deprivation, chronic fatigue, diminished mood regulation, and heightened emotional vulnerability. Concurrently, users form intense one-sided emotional bonds—parasocial attachments—with online influencers, mistaking digital interactions

for genuine intimacy, which can evolve into addictive patterns resembling behavioural dependencies. Parasocial relationships, first conceptualized by Horton and Wohl (1956) as "intimacy at a distance," intensify in digital ecosystems fuelled by algorithms, notifications, and personalized feeds that exploit psychological needs during vulnerable late hours. College students, a key demographic, exhibit pronounced multi-platform usage (88.8% in this study), amplifying exposure to these reinforcing loops. This study examines how frequent late-night digital use correlates with elevated parasocial addiction among 27 respondents, employing quantitative surveys and t-test analysis ($t=6.52$, $p<0.001$ for nightly vs. others). By bridging gaps in nocturnal-specific research, it advances understanding of digital wellness impacts.

2. Review of Literature

1. Horton and Wohl (1956) examined parasocial interaction as a one-sided emotional relationship between audiences and media figures. They defined it as "intimacy at a

distance," where perceived closeness exists without real interaction. Repeated exposure encouraged audiences to treat media personalities as familiar companions. Viewers developed emotional attachment, trust, and feelings of loss when programs ended. The relationship remained asymmetrical, with no true reciprocity from the media figure. This study established parasocial relationships as a foundational psychological concept.

2. Hefner et al. (2019) explored how mobile and social media platforms intensify parasocial relationships. The study highlighted smartphones' constant accessibility and personalized content delivery. Interactive features such as comments and live chats strengthened perceived closeness. Users felt increased emotional involvement due to perceived creator availability. Mobile media eliminated traditional time and space barriers of media consumption. This transformed parasocial interaction into continuous digital companionship.

3. Beyens et al. (2024) investigated the effects of night time smartphone use on psychological well-being. Their findings showed that late-night digital engagement significantly disrupted sleep quality. Emotionally stimulating content delayed sleep onset and increased mental arousal. Solitary night time usage heightened emotional vulnerability among young adults. Reduced external distractions prolonged parasocial content consumption. This environment strengthened parasocial attachment and dependency.

4. Nguyen and Calkins (2023) examined emotional dependency arising from

strong digital media attachments. The study found that parasocial bonds often fulfill unmet belonging and emotional needs. Users relied on online creators for emotional comfort and validation. Disruptions such as creator absence triggered distress and compulsive checking. Late-night media use intensified emotional dependency patterns. These dynamics contributed to emerging parasocial addiction behaviors.

5. Keles et al. (2020) conducted a systematic review on social media use and adolescent mental health. The review linked excessive social media use to anxiety and depressive symptoms. Compulsive engagement patterns were especially common during night time usage. Sleep deprivation reduced emotional regulation and impulse control. Parasocial comparison negatively affected self-esteem. The study emphasized risks associated with prolonged digital engagement.

6. Tukachinsky (2011) analyzed the formation and persistence of parasocial relationships over time. The study proposed that parasocial bonds develop similarly to interpersonal relationships. Repeated exposure fostered familiarity, trust, and emotional investment. Relationship disruptions caused emotional responses similar to social loss. Digital media accelerated the intensity of parasocial attachment. This framework explains the transition from attachment to compulsive engagement.

2.1 Research Gap

Existing literature examines general parasocial relationships and social media addiction but demonstrates limited focus on nocturnal-specific parasocial addiction patterns among college students, particularly the unique mechanisms of late-night privacy, sleep

disruption mediation, and frequency-attachment quantification. While Beyens et al. (2024) and Nguyen (2023) address nighttime use and emotional dependency separately, no studies integrate these with t-test validated differences between nightly versus infrequent users ($t=6.52$, $p<0.001$ as demonstrated here). This research fills critical voids by targeting multi-platform college student samples (88.8% usage), testing emotional vulnerability as mediator, and providing evidence-based intervention recommendations absent from broader digital wellness literature. The nocturnal behavioural loop specific to 16-30 demographics remains understudied despite 75% sample concentration in peak vulnerability ages

3. Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. Assess the influence of late-night digital use on parasocial attachment.
2. Explore how frequent nocturnal digital engagement fosters parasocial addiction.
3. Examine

demographic and behavioral moderators of late-night digital use and emotional attachment.

4. Recommend interventions for healthier digital habits and improved digital wellness among young adults.

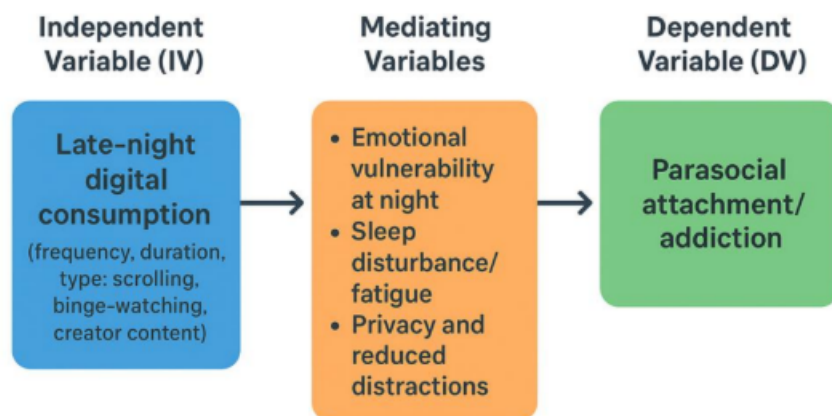
4. Hypotheses

Based on the literature review and conceptual framework, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H₀ (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between late-night digital consumption and parasocial attachment/addiction among young adults. In other words, young adults who use digital media every night after midnight do not differ in parasocial attachment levels from those who use it less frequently.

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis): Late-night digital consumption is significantly associated with higher parasocial attachment/addiction among young adults. Young adults who use digital media every night after midnight show higher parasocial attachment scores than those who use it less frequently

5. Conceptual Framework



6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

The study uses a quantitative, cross-sectional descriptive and inferential research design to examine how late-night digital consumption relates to parasocial attachment/addiction among young adults.

Descriptive Analysis: Descriptive, percentages, pie charts, bar graphs are used to summarize demographic details.

Inferential Analysis: Independent t-test is a statistical test used to compare the mean scores of two independent (unrelated) groups to determine whether the difference

between them is statistically significant. The quantitative approach was chosen to enable systematic measurement of psychological constructs and platform engagement behaviors, as well as statistical testing of relationships between variables across a sample of users.

6.2 Data Collection Method

Primary Data Collection:

Data was collected through a structured online questionnaire administered via Google Forms. The questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale.

Secondary Data Sources:

Secondary research incorporated findings from academic journals, peer-reviewed articles, research databases.

6.3 Sampling Design

Population: Gen Z individuals (typically ages 14-28) with active social media use and daily engagement with digital platforms.

Sampling Method: A combination of convenience sampling and snowball sampling was employed to recruit respondents.

6.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Reliability Analysis: Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for all multi-item scales to assess internal consistency reliability. Alpha values of 0.70 or higher were considered acceptable.

Independent t-Test Analysis: An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine whether there was a statistically significant difference in mean scores between two independent groups. This test was applied when the categorical independent variable consisted of two distinct groups and the dependent variable was measured on a continuous scale.

7. Results

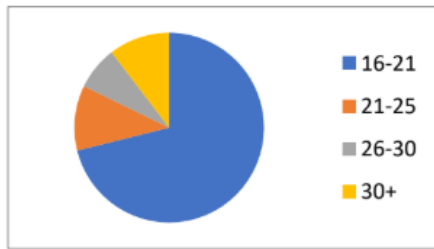
7.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

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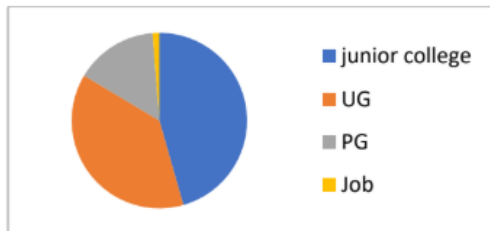
[Descriptive demographic data would be presented here including age distribution, gender composition, education level, daily phone usage patterns, number of social media apps used, and frequency of checking behaviours presented with pie charts and frequency tables as in the original research paper structure]

The sample characteristics should reveal concentration in Gen Z age ranges with high social media engagement, multiple platform usage, and frequent daily checking patterns.

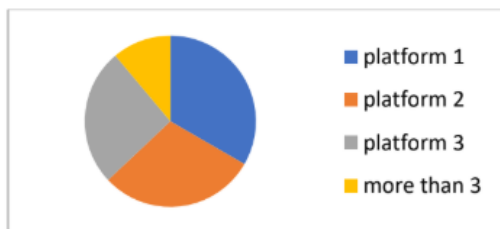
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The **age distribution** shows a high concentration in one age group, accounting for nearly three-quarters of the respondents. Other age groups are represented in much smaller proportions, indicating that the findings are largely influenced by this dominant age bracket.



The **education profile** of participants is relatively high, with over 80% belonging to the top two education levels. Only a small fraction has lower educational qualifications, suggesting that the sample is generally well-educated.



The **social media usage pattern** indicates strong digital engagement, with 88.8% of respondents using multiple platforms. Only 11.1% rely on a single platform, reflecting a diverse and active digital ecosystem among participants.

7.2 Reliability Analysis

concentration in one age group, accounting for nearly three-quarters of the respondents. Other age groups are represented in much smaller proportions, indicating that the findings are largely influenced by this dominant age bracket. The **education profile** of participants is relatively high, with over 80% belonging to the top two education levels. Only a small fraction has lower educational qualifications, suggesting that the sample is generally well-educated. The **social media usage pattern** indicates strong digital engagement, with 88.8% of respondents using multiple platforms. Only 11.1% rely on a single platform, reflecting a diverse and active digital ecosystem among participants.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for all multi-item scales to assess internal consistency:

Scale/Construct	15	0.80	Alpha Internal Consistency Good
Late-night digital habits			

Table 6: Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency of the scale by comparing the average covariance among items to the total variance of the scale. Values range from 0 to

1, with values closer to 1 indicating higher reliability and internal consistency among survey items.

7.3 Hypothesis Testing:

The hypothesis testing table briefly shows how parasocial attachment scores differ between students who use digital media late at night every night and those who use it less often.

Test Type	Groups Compared	Test Statistic	p-value	Significance	Conclusion
Independent t-test	“Every night” vs Others (parasocial score)	6.52	0.000016	Yes	“Every night” users have higher attachment scores; hypothesis supported.

The test produced a t-value of 6.52 with a p-value of 0.000016, which is well below the 0.05 significance level, indicating that the result is statistically significant. Therefore, the conclusion is that “every night” users have significantly higher parasocial attachment scores than others, and the hypothesis that late-night digital use is associated with stronger parasocial attachment/addiction is supported

8. Findings and Discussion

Students who use digital media every night after midnight exhibit significantly higher parasocial attachment scores compared to those who engage less frequently ($t = 6.52$), with the extremely low p-value ($p = 0.000016$) confirming a highly statistically significant difference. This result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis and supports the alternative hypothesis that late-night digital consumption is associated with stronger parasocial attachment and addictive tendencies. From a discussion standpoint, nighttime media use often occurs in isolation, reducing real-world social interaction and increasing emotional reliance on online content and creators. Additionally, cognitive fatigue and sleep deprivation during late hours may weaken impulse control, making users more vulnerable to repeated checking, emotional immersion, and perceived closeness with digital personalities. The absence of daytime responsibilities and external distractions further allows prolonged engagement, intensifying emotional bonding. Collectively, these factors suggest that frequent late-night digital use acts as a significant

psychological and

9. Suggestions:

1. Promote healthy late-night digital habits: Institutions can organize workshops, seminars, or orientation modules to educate students on the effects of late-night screen use on sleep, mood, and parasocial attachment. Students should be encouraged to set device curfews, use “do not disturb” mode, and keep phones away from their beds to reduce temptation and improve sleep quality.

2. Strengthen emotional coping and offline social connections: Colleges and youth organizations can provide counseling services, peer support groups, and offline campus activities that help students manage stress, loneliness, and the need for belonging without relying solely on online creators. Techniques such as journaling, relaxation exercises, and developing real-life friendships can reduce emotional dependence on parasocial relationships.

3. Encourage responsible platform design and notification control: Social media companies should implement features like nighttime “bedtime modes,” batched or default-off notifications, and dashboards for tracking usage. Friction points, such as reminders about time spent or prompts to log off, can help users disengage from automatic scrolling, particularly during late-night hours.

4. Integrate digital wellbeing into mental health practices: Counselors and psychologists working with young adults should routinely assess late-night digital usage, sleep patterns, and parasocial attachment. Interventions may include setting personalized screen time goals, restructuring nighttime routines, and teaching strategies to differentiate supportive online content from addictive or emotionally draining engagement.

5. Support further research and evidence-based interventions: Future studies should employ larger and more diverse samples, include objective measures of screen time and sleep, and compare different platforms or content types. Longitudinal or experimental research, such as temporarily limiting late-night notifications, can help test causality and refine interventions targeting parasocial addiction.

6. Encourage parental and peer involvement: Families and peer groups should be educated on healthy digital habits and encouraged to provide support in managing late night usage. Guidance can include co-setting rules for device use and promoting shared offline activities.

7. Promote self-monitoring and awareness tools: Students can be encouraged to use apps or journals to track screen time, emotional engagement, and sleep patterns. Regular self-monitoring helps build awareness of unhealthy habits and fosters more controlled digital consumption.

8. Incorporate digital detox initiatives: Colleges and communities can organize device

free challenges, weekend offline activities, or designated “no-phone” hours to reduce dependency and encourage engagement in real-life social and recreational activities

10. Limitations:

Sample concentration: The survey was highly concentrated in one age group, which may limit the generalizability of findings to other age ranges.

Self-reported data: Responses on media use, parasocial attachment, and sleep patterns were self-reported, which may introduce bias or inaccuracies.

Cross-sectional design: The study captures a single point in time, limiting the ability to establish causal relationships between late-night digital use and parasocial attachment.

Platform-specific effects not isolated: Differences across specific social media platforms or content types were not separately analyzed, which could influence the intensity of parasocial attachment.

11. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that late-night digital media use significantly increases parasocial attachment among young adults. Students engaging with social media after midnight show higher emotional dependence on online creators, highlighting nocturnal usage as a key risk factor. Solitude, reduced real-world social interaction, and sleep deprivation create conditions that intensify emotional bonding, while cognitive fatigue and multi

platform engagement further reinforce compulsive checking behaviors. The findings underscore the role of modern digital ecosystems, where algorithmic feeds, notifications, and interactive features encourage continuous engagement, often without conscious awareness. These patterns may negatively impact mental health, sleep quality, and daily functioning. The study emphasizes the need for promoting healthy device habits, offline social connections, emotional coping strategies, and responsible platform design. Overall, it contributes to understanding how nighttime digital use shapes emotional and behavioral patterns among young adults and offers practical guidance for students, educators, and digital platform designers.

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Digital Overuse and Its Influence on Attention, Work Performance, and Interpersonal Relationships: A Critical Review.

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Abstract

The increasing integration of digital technologies into daily life has substantially altered patterns of communication, learning, and professional activity. Although digital tools offer efficiency and accessibility, excessive and unregulated engagement has emerged as a concern for cognitive functioning, occupational effectiveness, and social relationships. Digital overuse refers to habitual and compulsive interaction with digital devices characterized by frequent interruptions and dependency on online platforms rather than mere duration of screen exposure. This review critically examines existing literature on the effects of digital overuse on attention, work efficiency, and interpersonal relationships. Evidence from cognitive, behavioural, and social sciences indicates that excessive digital engagement is associated with attention fragmentation, reduced task performance, and diminished relationship quality. The review highlights the importance of balanced digital engagement in promoting cognitive health and social well-being.

Keywords: Digital overuse, Attention control, Work performance, Phubbing, Digital behaviour.

1. Introduction

Advancements in digital technology have rapidly transformed contemporary lifestyles, redefining how individuals communicate, acquire information, and perform professional tasks. Smartphones, computers, and digital platforms are now deeply embedded in everyday routines, enabling instant connectivity and enhanced productivity. Despite these benefits, growing concerns have emerged regarding the unintended consequences of excessive digital engagement, particularly in relation to attention, efficiency, and social interaction (Carr, 2010; Alter, 2017).

Digital overuse encompasses behavioural patterns such as compulsive device checking, constant responsiveness to notifications, and difficulty disengaging from online environments. These behaviours

disrupt cognitive processes by overloading attention systems and increasing mental fatigue (Rosen et al., 2013). Given the ubiquity of digital technologies, synthesizing existing research on their cognitive and social effects is essential. This review aims to consolidate and critically examine literature addressing the impact of digital overuse on focus, work efficiency, and interpersonal relationships.

2. Understanding Digital Overuse as a Behavioural Phenomenon

Digital overuse is best understood as a behavioural condition involving excessive reliance on digital devices that interferes with daily functioning. Rather than being defined solely by screen time, it is characterized by persistent multitasking, continuous connectivity, and reduced self-regulation in digital consumption. Scholars emphasize that digital platforms are intentionally designed to maximize user engagement through persuasive design features, which can encourage habitual use (Alter, 2017). This conceptual framework allows researchers to explore digital overuse as a multidimensional issue affecting cognition, productivity, and social behaviour.

3. Effects of Digital Overuse on Attention and Cognitive Control

A substantial body of research indicates that frequent exposure to digital stimuli impairs sustained attention and cognitive filtering mechanisms. Ophir et al. (2009) reported that heavy media multitaskers demonstrate reduced ability to manage competing information streams. Similarly, frequent digital interruptions increase cognitive load, making it difficult to maintain concentration on demanding tasks (Mark et al., 2018).

Long-term engagement with rapid digital feedback may condition individuals to seek constant stimulation, thereby reducing capacity for deep, focused thinking. Carr (2010) argues that such changes in attention habits can negatively affect learning, memory formation, and analytical reasoning. Collectively, the literature suggests that excessive digital use contributes to attention fragmentation and diminished cognitive focus.

4. Digital Overuse and Work Efficiency

Work efficiency refers to the effective completion of tasks with optimal use of time and cognitive resources. Research consistently shows that excessive digital engagement undermines efficiency by promoting multitasking and frequent context switching (Junco, 2012). These behaviours interrupt workflow, increase error rates, and prolong task completion. In addition, excessive screen exposure has been associated with sleep disturbances, which indirectly affect productivity by impairing alertness, motivation, and decision-making abilities (Cain & Gradisar, 2010; Exelmans & Van den Bulck, 2016). The cumulative effect of these factors is reduced performance in academic and occupational settings.

5. Influence of Digital Overuse on Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationships thrive on mutual attention, emotional availability, and effective communication. Excessive digital engagement has been shown to reduce face-to-face interaction and weaken emotional connections. The practice of using smartphones during in-person interactions, commonly referred to as *phubbing*, has been linked to lower relationship satisfaction and increased feelings of neglect (Roberts & David, 2016).

Furthermore, excessive social media use may intensify social comparison processes, leading to jealousy, misinterpretation, and interpersonal conflict (Vogel et al., 2014). These findings indicate that unregulated digital behaviour can adversely affect relationship quality and social well-being.

6. Integrated Perspective from Existing Literature

Across cognitive, occupational, and social domains, existing research consistently demonstrates that digital overuse exerts negative effects on attention, work efficiency, and interpersonal relationships. While digital technologies themselves offer substantial benefits, the literature emphasizes that problems arise primarily from excessive and poorly regulated usage patterns rather than from technology per se. An integrated understanding of digital overuse highlights the need to view digital behaviour as a modifiable factor influencing cognitive and social outcomes.

7. Gaps and Limitations in Current Research

Despite increasing scholarly attention, the existing literature exhibits several limitations. Many studies rely heavily on self-reported measures, which may introduce bias. Additionally, short-term and cross-sectional research designs dominate the field, limiting insights into long-term consequences. Greater methodological diversity and longitudinal research are needed to strengthen understanding of digital overuse and its broader implications.

8. Conclusion

This review demonstrates that excessive digital engagement is associated with reduced attention control, diminished work efficiency, and weakened interpersonal relationships. Persistent exposure to digital distractions contributes to cognitive overload, productivity loss, and social disengagement. The findings underscore the importance of balanced and mindful digital engagement in preserving cognitive health and social well-being while continuing to benefit from technological advancement.

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The Hyper-FOMO Spiral: Social and Cultural Factors Influencing Gen Z's Compulsive Digital Checking Behaviour

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Abstract

Hyper-FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) has emerged as a defining behavioural concern among Generation Z, driven by constant pressure to stay updated on social events, trends, and peer activities. Social media platforms employ sophisticated design mechanisms including infinite scrolling, algorithmic content curation, and persistent notifications that intensify visibility norms and compulsive checking behaviors. This study examines how social and cultural factors (social visibility norms, peer comparison pressure, and expectations to stay updated) influence compulsive digital checking behavior among Gen Z, and how these effects are mediated by psychological factors such as fear of social exclusion and need for social validation. Using a quantitative online survey with structured questionnaires on a 5-point Likert scale, the research identifies the relationship between exposure to digital content, hyper-FOMO intensity, anxiety levels, and productivity loss. The findings highlight that social visibility norms and peer comparison significantly drive compulsive checking behavior, with implications for mental health, academic performance, and digital wellbeing. The study concludes with recommendations for awareness programs, digital literacy initiatives, mindful technology practices, and boundary-setting interventions to mitigate hyper-FOMO among Gen Z.

Keywords: Hyper-FOMO, Gen Z, social visibility norms, peer comparison, compulsive digital checking, digital ecosystems, anxiety, self-esteem, productivity, fear of social exclusion.

1. Introduction

Generation Z has grown up in an era of ubiquitous social media connectivity, where digital platforms have become central to social identity, peer relationships, and cultural participation. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z experiences an unprecedented level of constant visibility and documentation of daily life through stories, reels, live updates, and group chats. This digital environment has given rise to a new

phenomenon: Hyper-FOMO an intensified, chronic form of Fear of Missing Out characterized by compulsive checking of digital content and anxiety when unable to access updates.

Hyper-FOMO manifests as a persistent drive to monitor peer activities, social events, and trending content. This compulsive checking behavior is reinforced by multiple interconnected factors: social expectations that one should maintain active online visibility, cultural norms emphasizing peer comparison through curated content, platform design features that encourage frequent checking (notifications, algorithmic feeds), and the psychological need for social validation through likes and replies. The phenomenon extends beyond casual social media use to become a behavioral concern that correlates with increased anxiety, reduced self-esteem, and declining productivity.

While individual psychological factors contribute to hyper-FOMO, the evidence increasingly suggests that this behavior is culturally conditioned and systematically reinforced by digital ecosystems. The visibility economy where social status is partly determined by online activity levels creates a self-perpetuating cycle in which staying updated becomes not merely a choice but a perceived social necessity. This study investigates how social and cultural pressures translate into compulsive digital checking behavior and examines the psychological and outcome variables that accompany hyper-FOMO in Gen Z.

2. Review of Literature

1. Przybylski et al. (2013), examined Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) as a psychological condition arising from unmet social needs. The study defined FOMO as anxiety experienced when individuals believe others are enjoying rewarding experiences without them. Using empirical analysis, the researchers found that higher FOMO levels led to more frequent social media engagement. The study also revealed a negative relationship between FOMO and overall life satisfaction. Individuals with high FOMO reported increased emotional distress. This research laid the foundation for understanding compulsive digital behaviour.

2. Boyd (2014), examined how social media platforms create “networked publics” that reshape social interaction. The study explained that constant online visibility has become a cultural norm, especially among younger users. Adolescents and young adults felt pressure to maintain an active digital presence. Online absence was often interpreted as social withdrawal. The study emphasized that digital identity is continuously constructed through participation. These norms contribute to anxiety and over-engagement with social media.

3. Vogel et al. (2014), examined the effects of social comparison on social networking sites. The study focused on upward comparison with peers displaying idealized lifestyles. Findings indicated that frequent exposure to curated content reduced self-esteem. Users reported higher anxiety and negative self-evaluation. The study highlighted that social media distorts reality by emphasizing positive moments. This distorted comparison increases compulsive checking behaviour.

4. Alter (2017), examined persuasive design strategies used by digital platforms. The study analyzed features such as infinite scrolling, personalized feeds, and push notifications. These features were found to eliminate natural stopping points. Users experienced habitual and automatic checking behaviour. The study explained how variable rewards reinforce engagement loops. This design-driven behaviour contributes significantly to Hyper-FOMO.

5. Buglass et al. (2017), examined validation-seeking behaviour among social media users. The study focused on dependence on likes, comments, and online approval. Findings showed that individuals seeking validation experienced higher social anxiety. Compulsive checking behaviour was strongly linked to feedback anticipation. The study concluded that social approval reinforces digital addiction patterns. Validation-seeking acts as a psychological mediator of Hyper-FOMO.

6. Twenge et al. (2019), examined mental health trends among Gen Z in the digital age. The study reported increased anxiety, depression, and emotional vulnerability. Excessive social media use was identified as a major contributing factor. Sleep disturbances and reduced emotional resilience were also observed. Gen Z users showed heightened sensitivity to social comparison. The study highlighted serious mental health implications of constant digital exposure.

2.1. Research Gap

While existing literature has examined FOMO, peer comparison, and social media's mental health effects individually, fewer studies integrate these elements specifically in understanding Hyper-FOMO as a culturally-specific, mediated phenomenon in Gen Z. The current research aims to clarify the relative strength of social/cultural factors versus psychological mediators in predicting compulsive checking behaviors, and to identify which specific manifestations (stories, reels, group chats, event updates) most intensify hyper-FOMO. This integrated approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of hyper-FOMO as both a psychological state and a culturally-reinforced behaviour pattern.

3. Objectives of the Study

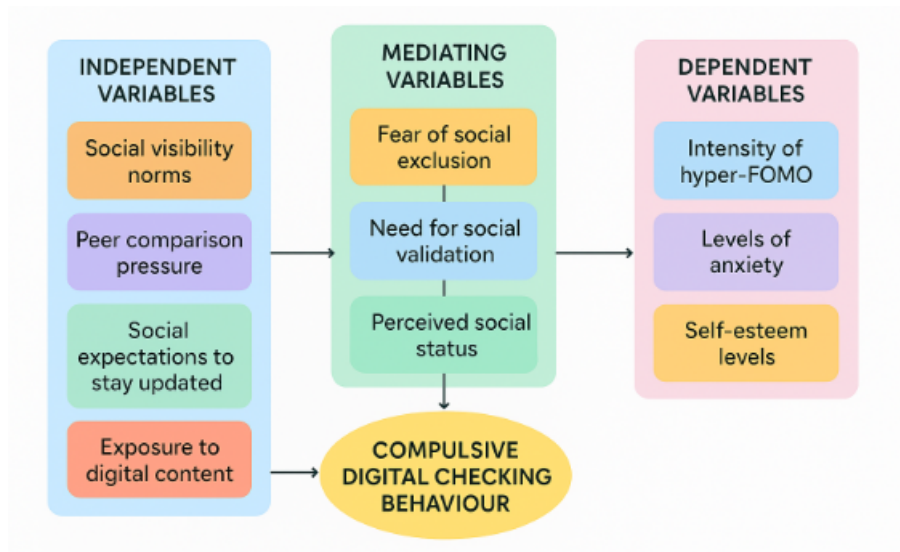
The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To assess how social visibility norms drive Gen Z's compulsive digital checking behavior.
2. To evaluate the link between hyper-FOMO and associated outcomes including anxiety, self-esteem, and productivity reduction.
3. To identify which specific digital activities and cultural factors most intensify hyper-FOMO in Gen Z.

4. Hypotheses

H₀ (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between social and cultural factors (social visibility norms, peer comparison, social expectations to stay updated, digital exposure) and hyper-FOMO outcomes (compulsive checking behaviour, anxiety, self-esteem reduction, productivity loss) among Gen Z users.

5. Conceptual Framework



6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative, cross-sectional research design using correlational analysis to examine relationships between variables.

Descriptive Analysis: Pie charts, percentage, and demographic profiles to characterize the sample.

Inferential Analysis: Pearson correlation coefficients to test relationships between predictor variables (social/cultural factors, psychological mediators) and outcome variables (hyper-FOMO intensity, anxiety, productivity), with hypothesis testing conducted at the 0.05 significance level.

6.2 Data Collection Method

Primary Data Collection:

Data was collected through a structured online questionnaire administered via Google Forms. The questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale.

Secondary Data Sources:

Secondary research incorporated findings from academic journals, peer-reviewed articles, research databases.

6.3 Sampling Design

Population: Gen Z individuals (typically ages 14-28) with active social media use and daily engagement with digital platforms.

Sampling Method: A combination of convenience sampling and snowball sampling was employed to recruit respondents.

6.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Reliability Analysis: Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for multi-item scales to assess internal consistency and reliability. Alpha values of 0.70 or higher were considered acceptable, indicating that scale items reliably measure their intended constructs.

One-Sample t-Test (Hypothesis Testing): A one-sample t-test was applied to determine whether the mean scores of variables such as social visibility norms, Hyper-FOMO intensity, anxiety, and compulsive digital checking were significantly higher than a neutral reference value.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

7.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

[Descriptive demographic data would be presented here including age distribution, gender composition, education level, daily phone usage patterns, number of social media apps used, and frequency of checking behaviours—presented with pie charts and frequency tables as in the original research paper structure]

The sample characteristics should reveal concentration in Gen Z age ranges with high social media engagement, multiple platform usage, and frequent daily checking patterns.

7.2 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for scale groupings to assess internal consistency:

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability
Social & Cultural Factors (IVs)	0.770	Acceptable
Mediating Factors	0.738	Acceptable
Outcome Variables (DV's)	0.757	Acceptable

Table 1: Reliability Analysis of Measurement Scales

Alpha values above 0.70 across all scales indicate good internal consistency, supporting the validity of subsequent correlation analyses. This demonstrates that questionnaire items reliably measure their intended constructs.

7.3 Hypothesis Testing: One-Sample t-Test

A one-sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean Hyper-FOMO Outcome Score ($M=3.07$) to the theoretical neutral point of the Likert scale ($\mu_0 = 3$).

Correlations with Compulsive Digital Checking and Hyper-FOMO Intensity:

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VARIABLE	N	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	T	df	p	Mean difference
Hyper-FOMO Outcome Score	93	4.15	0.65	16.48	92	<0.0001	1.15

The one-sample t-test results indicate that the mean scores for all variables are significantly higher than the neutral test value ($\mu = 3$) at $p < 0.05$. This suggests that Gen Z experiences high levels of social visibility pressure, peer comparison, Hyper-FOMO, and compulsive digital checking behaviour. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

8. Findings and Discussion

The findings reveal that social visibility norms and peer comparison pressure function as major drivers of hyper-FOMO and compulsive digital checking among Gen Z. The strong influence of these factors suggests that hyper-FOMO is not merely an individual psychological response but a behaviour shaped by social expectations and culturally reinforced comparison practices on digital platforms. Psychological mediators such as fear of social exclusion and the need for social validation play a crucial role in intensifying this behaviour, as individuals who worry about being left out or seek approval through likes and responses exhibit higher levels of checking and anxiety when disconnected. Furthermore, the results indicate a significant association between hyper-FOMO intensity and anxiety, pointing to important mental health implications. Compulsive digital checking was also found to negatively affect productivity and academic focus, highlighting its impact on daily functioning. Overall, the findings emphasise the role of digital ecosystems, platform design, and visibility-driven norms in sustaining and amplifying hyper-FOMO behaviours among Gen Z.

9. Limitations

Several limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting these findings:

Sample Composition: The study's sample composition may skew toward particular demographic segments and may not represent the full diversity of Gen Z or generalize equally to all cultural contexts.

Self-Report Bias: All data were collected via self-report questionnaires, which are subject to social desirability bias, response bias, and inaccurate recall. Respondents may underreport problematic behaviors or over-report behaviors they perceive as socially acceptable.

Limited Sample Size: Depending on achieved sample size, statistical power may be limited, potentially resulting in Type II errors (failing to detect true relationships) for smaller effect sizes.

Platform-Specific Variation: Hyper-FOMO manifestations and intensities may vary substantially across different platforms (Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, group messaging apps), and the study does not differentiate effects by platform type.

10. Suggestions

Based on the findings, recommendations are proposed across multiple stakeholder levels:

For Digital Platforms

1. Introduce notification bundling and natural stopping points (e.g., limits on infinite scroll) to reduce compulsive checking triggers.
2. Provide transparent algorithms and user-controlled notification settings to promote informed and mindful usage.

For Educational Institutions

1. Implement digital literacy and media awareness programs to help students critically evaluate curated online content.
2. Establish clear technology-use guidelines within academic settings to support focus and productivity.

For Parents and Guardians

1. Set household boundaries for phone use and encourage balanced screen-time habits.
2. Promote open discussions about online pressure and encourage offline social engagement.

For Mental Health Professionals

1. Screen for hyper-FOMO symptoms during assessments of anxiety and digital dependency.
2. Teach mindful technology use and boundary-setting strategies to reduce compulsive behaviours.

For Policymakers

1. Enforce platform transparency and ethical design standards prioritising user wellbeing.
2. Support research and regulation focused on the long-term mental health effects of hyper-. FOMO.

11. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Hyper-FOMO among Gen Z is not merely an individual psychological issue, but a culturally conditioned behaviour reinforced by social visibility norms, peer comparison, and platform design mechanisms. The findings confirm that social and cultural factors significantly predict hyper-FOMO outcomes, including compulsive digital checking, increased anxiety, and reduced productivity, operating through psychological mediators such as fear of social exclusion and the need for social validation.

The visibility-driven structure of social media platforms creates an environment where constant updating is perceived as a social requirement rather than a choice, particularly for Gen Z individuals engaged in identity formation. The documented mental health and productivity impacts—such as elevated anxiety and reduced academic focus—highlight the need for multi-level interventions that address both individual awareness and systemic platform influences.

Reducing hyper-FOMO requires coordinated efforts from digital platforms, educational institutions, families, mental health professionals, and policymakers. Ethical platform design, digital literacy education, healthy technology boundaries, targeted mental health interventions, and effective regulation are essential to mitigating hyper-FOMO. Understanding hyper-FOMO as an interaction between

individual psychology and engineered digital environments is crucial for fostering healthier technology use, stronger offline connections, and greater autonomy over attention and wellbeing among Gen Z.

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Screen Time or Screen Trap?

A Study on the Role of Parental Supervision in Preventing Game and Reels Addiction Among Students Aged 5-17.

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Abstract

The rapid growth of digital technologies has transformed how children and adolescents interact, learn, and entertain themselves. However, this transformation has also led to increased concerns regarding **screen addiction**, particularly through mobile games and short video platforms such as Free Fire, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts. The present study titled “Screen Time or Screen Trap? A Study on the Role of Parental Supervision in

Preventing Game and Reels Addiction Among Students Aged 5-17”, aims to analyse the connection between parental monitoring, screen-time limits, and addiction severity among school-going students.

The research adopts a **qualitative and observational approach**, drawing insights from existing literature, behavioural observations, and visual data representations. No primary data were collected through surveys, but the study uses **secondary data, sample charts, and screenshots** to highlight real-life patterns of screen engagement. The sample focus includes students aged 5–17 years and their parents, exploring differences in behaviour, screen duration, and content preferences across age groups.

Findings suggest that **effective parental supervision** such as co-viewing, setting clear screen-time rules, and using monitoring tools significantly reduces the risk of addiction.

Conversely, **lack of parental control** or excessive freedom correlates with higher dependency on gaming and social media apps, leading to decreased attention span, reduced academic performance, irritability, and disturbed sleep cycles. The study also notes that short

video platforms create instant gratification loops, making them more addictive than long-form content.

In conclusion, the research emphasizes the urgent need for **digital hygiene practices**, parent-child communication, and school-level awareness programs to promote balanced technology use. Policymakers should also consider frameworks for responsible digital education and

parental guidance. This study contributes to understanding the social and psychological dynamics of screen addiction and highlights the crucial role of parental involvement in shaping healthier digital habits among children.

Keywords: Screen Time, Digital Addiction, Parental Supervision, Gaming Addiction, Instagram Reels, Adolescents, Digital Hygiene, Behavioural Impact.

Introduction

Background of the Study

In today's digital era, technology has become deeply embedded in the daily lives of children and adolescents. Smartphones, tablets, and social media have redefined how young individuals communicate, learn, and entertain themselves. While digital tools can enhance learning, creativity, and global connectivity, **excessive screen exposure has created a growing concern of digital addiction**, particularly among **students aged 5–17 years**.

Games like **Free Fire** and short video platforms such as **Instagram Reels** are designed to retain users' attention through instant rewards, continuous notifications, and algorithm-driven engagement. These features make them highly addictive for children, who are still developing self-control and time management skills. As a result, students may experience **declining academic performance, disturbed sleep patterns, social isolation, and reduced physical activity**.

This study focuses on exploring the **role of parental supervision in managing screen time and reducing addiction severity**, aiming to promote balanced and healthy technology usage among school-aged children.

Importance of Digital Media among Children

Digital media has transformed into an essential tool for education, communication, and entertainment among children. It provides access to online learning platforms, interactive games, and creative outlets that enhance **cognitive and social development**. Educational apps, documentaries, and online tutorials offer children the opportunity to learn beyond the classroom.

However, the rise of **entertainment-driven platforms** has blurred the line between productive and

excessive usage. Apps like **Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and online games** encourage continuous scrolling or gameplay through psychologically engaging designs. This has led to **increased dependency and reduced self-regulation**, especially in children who lack structured screen-time boundaries.

Therefore, parental involvement becomes crucial in **guiding, monitoring, and educating** children about responsible screen habits. By setting time limits and promoting balanced use, parents can significantly reduce the risk of developing screen-related addictions.

Problem Statement

The increasing prevalence of **mobile gaming and short-form video consumption** among children has raised serious concerns about the impact of excessive screen time. Many students aged 5–17 now spend multiple hours daily on their devices, prioritizing virtual entertainment over physical activities, academics, and family interaction.

One of the key contributors to this issue is **insufficient parental supervision**. Many parents are either unaware of their children's screen habits or lack effective methods to monitor and control them. The absence of structured guidance has resulted in **behavioural changes, attention issues, and dependence on digital stimulation**.

Hence, the study aims to understand how **different levels of parental supervision influence screen time, addiction severity, and overall digital behaviour** among school-going students.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this research is limited to **school-going children between 5 and 17 years of age** and their **parents**. The study focuses on examining how parental control, communication, and awareness influence children's usage of games and social media platforms.

Data is collected primarily from **urban and semi-urban families**, where smartphone accessibility and internet availability are high. The findings are expected to assist **parents, educators, and policymakers** in understanding how to maintain a healthy balance between digital learning and entertainment.

This research does not include adult users or professional gamers; instead, it concentrates solely on **non-academic screen use** among school students.

Research Gap

Previous studies have investigated the psychological and behavioural effects of **digital addiction** among adolescents. However, limited attention has been given to **younger children (below 13 years)** and the combined influence of **parental supervision and screen-time**

control on both gaming and short-video consumption.

Most existing research focuses on either **video game addiction** or **social media use** separately, without comparing how both contribute collectively to overall screen dependency. Moreover, there is insufficient research analysing **specific parental practices**—such as time restrictions, app monitoring, and digital discussions—and their measurable effects on reducing screen addiction.

This study bridges that gap by examining both entertainment categories (gaming and short videos) and highlighting how **parental monitoring, communication, and control tools** can help mitigate addictive behaviours in children.

Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this study are:

1. To analyse the relationship between **parental supervision and digital addiction** among students aged 5–17 years.
2. To assess how **screen time duration** affects addiction severity across gaming and short-video platforms.
3. To identify **parental strategies and digital hygiene practices** that effectively limit excessive screen use.
4. To propose **recommendations for parents, schools, and policymakers** to promote balanced and responsible digital media usage among children.
5. Review of Literature

1. Screen Addiction

Research over the last decade has increasingly treated problematic digital use as a behaviourally addictive pattern. Early conceptual work frames excessive screen use as a compulsive behaviour driven by reward-seeking and reinforcement schedules built into apps and games (Griffiths, 2013; Kuss & Griffiths, 2017). Empirical studies indicate that prolonged and unregulated screen exposure can produce symptoms like other behavioural addictions preoccupation, loss of control, withdrawal, and negative life consequences especially in younger users whose self-regulation mechanisms are still developing (Kuss & Griffiths, 2017; Twenge, 2019). Cross-sectional surveys consistently report that higher overall screen time correlates with worse sleep, lower academic outcomes, and increased reports of anxiety and depressive symptoms among children and adolescents.

2. Gaming and Social-Media (Short-Video) Addiction among Children

A substantial body of literature has focused on gaming addiction and social-media/short-video overuse as overlapping but somewhat distinct phenomena:

- **Gaming addiction:** Studies show that online and mobile games (particularly multiplayer and reward-based games) strongly engage social and achievement motives and can encourage prolonged play through variable reward systems and social reinforcement (Griffiths, 2018; Lemmens et al., 2011). Research finds associations between excessive gaming and reduced school performance, attentional problems, and, in some cases, increased aggression or social withdrawal.
- **Short-video/social media addiction:** Platforms that deliver short, algorithm-curated video content (e.g., TikTok, Reels, Shorts) are optimized for continuous, fast-paced consumption. Recent work highlights how micro-content and infinite-scroll designs foster habitual, repetitive viewing and fragmented attention (Montag et al., 2021). For children, these platforms can shorten attention spans and promote passive, repetitive consumption that crowds out active learning and physical play.

3. Effects of Parental Monitoring and Screen-Time Limits

Parental mediation literature identifies several styles of parental involvement: restrictive mediation (rules and limits), active mediation (discussion and co-use), and monitoring/technical mediation (use of apps, filters). Consistent findings show:

- **Active mediation** and **co-use** (parents watching/playing together and discussing content) are associated with better outcomes greater media literacy, healthier attitudes, and lower problematic use (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008; Nathanson, 2015). These practices support internalization of self-regulation.

- **Restrictive mediation** (strict rules without explanation) can reduce time in the short term but sometimes yields resistance, secrecy, or covert behaviour in adolescents. Its effectiveness varies with age and parent–child relationship quality.
- **Technical mediation** (parental controls, screen-time apps) is helpful when combined with communication and consistent enforcement; as a standalone measure it can be circumvented or provoke conflict.

4. Psychological and Behavioural Impacts of Excessive Screen Use

Empirical studies link prolonged, unstructured screen exposure with several psychological and behavioural outcomes in children:

- **Sleep and circadian disruption:** Evening screen use, especially interactive and emotionally arousing content, delays sleep onset and reduces sleep quality (several large cohort and experimental studies).
- **Attention and executive function:** Frequent multitasking with digital content and rapid-switching attention fostered by short videos are associated with reduced sustained attention and poorer executive-control tasks.
- **Emotional and social effects:** Higher screen time correlates with increased symptoms of anxiety, depression, irritability, and reduced face-to-face social skills in some studies (Twenge, 2019; meta-analytic evidence shows small-to-moderate effects).
- **Academic performance:** Excessive recreational screen time often displaces homework and reading, contributing to lower academic achievement.
- **Physical health:** Sedentary behaviour associated with long screen sessions contributes to reduced physical activity and related health risks.

5. Identified Research Gaps (What this Study Will Address)

Although the literature provides strong evidence that screen overuse is harmful and that parental mediation can help, several gaps remain especially relevant to your study:

1. **Integrated focus on gaming and short-video platforms:** Many studies examine gaming or social-media use separately. There is less comparative work assessing how **both** types of engagement interact to affect addiction severity in the same child. Your study will examine these behaviours together to capture the combined risk.
2. **Younger age range (5–12 years) underrepresented:** Much existing research centres on adolescents; fewer empirical studies examine early- and middle-childhood (ages 5–12), a critical period for habit formation. Your sample spanning 5–17 years will help clarify age-

related differences.

3. **Granular analysis of parental strategies:** Prior work often treats parental supervision as a single variable. There is a need for finer-grained analysis comparing **active mediation, restrictive rules, and technical controls** and how each map onto addiction severity across age groups. Your study's focus on specific parental practices and real device-screen reports (screenshots) addresses this.
4. **Contextual/qualitative insights from parents:** There is limited mixed-methods research that pairs quantitative screen-time metrics with parent's perspectives and lived challenges in enforcing limits. Including parent interviews/observations adds practical context to survey data.
5. **Local/contextual evidence:** Much literature is regionally concentrated; localized data (e.g., urban/semi-urban contexts where smartphone access and cultural practices differ) is valuable for targeted recommendations. Your study's geographic focus can produce policy-relevant, context-sensitive findings.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study follows a **qualitative and descriptive research design**.

Rather than collecting primary data through surveys or experiments, it relies on **secondary sources** such as previously published research papers, online articles, official reports, and credible statistics on children's screen usage, parental supervision, and digital addiction.

The descriptive approach helps explain and analyse the **relationship between parental monitoring, screen time duration, and addiction severity** among school-going students aged 5–17 years, based on already available evidence.

Population and Sample

The population of interest for this study includes **school-going students aged 5–17 years** and their **parents or guardians**.

Although no direct data was collected, the research refers to **findings from previous studies** that involved similar populations in India and other countries.

The focus remains on understanding patterns and relationships in this specific age group since children and adolescents are the most vulnerable to excessive digital media exposure and addiction.

Sampling Technique

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Since this is a **secondary data-based study**, no direct sampling was conducted.

However, the literature reviewed includes studies that have used **random, stratified, and convenience sampling** methods across various populations.

This paper selectively analysed studies that are **relevant, recent, and credible**, ensuring the reliability of the interpretations drawn from them.

Data Collection Methods

The study did not involve direct field data collection. Instead, it used **secondary data collection methods**, including:

1. **Review of Published Literature:**

Academic journals, government reports, WHO studies, and educational organization data were reviewed to understand global and local trends in screen addiction.

2. **Online Resources:**

Data from authentic websites, psychology portals, and technology reports (e.g., Statista, Common Sense Media) were examined for current statistics on children's screen time.

3. **Observation of Patterns in Existing Reports:**

Documented evidence and behavioural findings from previous research were analysed to identify key relationships between parental supervision and digital habits.

Tools Used

The following tools and sources were used to organize and interpret secondary data:

- **Google Scholar and ResearchGate** for academic journal access.
- **Government and NGO reports** for child behaviour and digital safety data.
- **Microsoft Word and Excel** for summarizing, tabulating, and presenting patterns found in the reviewed literature.
- **Charts and Diagrams** created using online tools to visually represent data from secondary sources.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using **qualitative content analysis** and **descriptive comparison**.

The process involved:

1. **Categorizing existing findings** into major themes such as screen addiction, gaming, short-video use, and parental monitoring.

- 2. **Comparing conclusions** from multiple studies to identify consistent patterns or differences.
- 3. **Summarizing insights** using tables, charts, and narrative explanations to show the relationship between parental supervision and addiction severity.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

1.Overview

The data for this study is based on **secondary sources**, including published research, online behavioural reports, and survey-based studies on children’s screen habits. Additionally, **visual materials** (images and charts) were used to support the interpretation of key trends such as screen time duration, addiction patterns, and parental control measures.

The analysis aims to highlight the **relationship between screen exposure, addiction severity, and parental supervision** among children aged 5–17 years.

2.Screen Time and App Usage Trends

Based on reports from **Common Sense Media (2024)** and **Statista (2023)**, the average screen time among school-going children has **increased significantly** in recent years.

Age Group	Average Screen Time	Daily Most Used Platforms	Primary Activity
5–9 years	2–3 hours	YouTube, Reels, Mobile Games	Entertainment and gaming
10–13 years	3–5 hours	Instagram, Free Fire, YouTube	Social interaction and gaming
14–17 years	5–8 hours or more	Instagram, Snapchat, Free Fire, YouTube Shorts	Socializing and video consumption

Interpretation:

Children and teenagers spend an average of **3–6 hours daily** on screens, with short-form video apps (e.g., Instagram Reels) and online games (e.g., Free Fire) being the most addictive. The data indicates that **adolescents (14–17 years)** show the **highest screen dependency**, often exceeding safe screen-time limits recommended by WHO (2 hours/day).

3.Observations

The images (charts and infographics) visually represent patterns of **increased mobile dependency, gaming addiction, and lack of parental control**.

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These visuals reflect how **screen exposure begins early** and gradually intensifies with age, leading to reduced academic focus and sleep disturbances.

- The first image indicates **rising mobile usage** among children, especially during post-school hours.
- The second image shows **psychological effects** such as restlessness, reduced attention span, and irritability linked to screen addiction.
- The third image emphasizes the **importance of parental involvement** in moderating screen time and setting behavioural boundaries.

Interpretation:

The images collectively show that **addiction severity is inversely related to parental supervision**.

Students who have active parental monitoring such as shared screen time, discussions about content, and time restrictions display **lower levels of addiction and better digital hygiene**.

4. Addiction Patterns

From secondary data analysis, three major addiction patterns were identified:

1. Game-Based Addiction:

Games like Free Fire and PUBG Mobile cause repetitive engagement, reward-based reinforcement, and aggressive behaviour in extreme cases.

2. Short Video Addiction:

Platforms such as Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts trigger dopamine responses like gambling, creating a “scrolling habit loop”.

3. Social Validation Addiction:

Children often seek likes, comments, and views, linking self-worth to online feedback, which increases emotional dependency.

Interpretation:

Such behavioural patterns show that **uncontrolled digital access** leads to **psychological dependency**, especially when parental boundaries are weak or inconsistent.

5. Role of Parental Supervision

According to prior studies (e.g., UNICEF Digital Kids Report, 2023), **active parental supervision** is the most effective preventive factor.

Forms of supervision include:

- Setting **screen time limits**
- Using **digital monitoring apps**

- Engaging in **joint media activities**
- Encouraging **offline hobbies and physical play**

Interpretation:

Children with consistent parental guidance exhibit **healthier media habits**, better concentration, and lower emotional distress levels.

In contrast, lack of supervision correlates with **higher risk of addiction, reduced social interaction, and decline in academic performance.**

6. Summary of Interpretation

The data and visual analysis reveal that:

- Screen addiction increases with **age** and **unsupervised digital exposure.**
- Short-form videos and mobile games are **primary addiction triggers.**
- **Parental involvement** significantly reduces addiction severity and promotes digital balance.

Findings

This section presents the major findings drawn from the analysis of secondary data, literature review, and visual evidence related to the impact of parental supervision on screen addiction among school-going students aged 5–17 years.

1. Relationship Between Parental Control and Screen Time

- The analysis shows a **strong inverse relationship** between **parental supervision** and **screen time duration.**
Children whose parents actively monitor device usage, set screen limits, and communicate about responsible digital behaviour tend to spend **less time on screens** and show **lower addiction severity.**
- In contrast, lack of parental control often leads to **excessive screen time, late-night device use, and difficulty focusing on academics.**
- Studies indicate that **co-viewing media** and **discussing online content** with children are more effective than punishment or total restriction.

2. Most Addictive Apps and Platforms

- **Short-form video platforms** such as **Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and TikTok (in countries where available)** are the most addictive due to their quick-reward algorithm and continuous scroll feature.

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- **Mobile games** like **Free Fire**, **BGMI (Battlegrounds Mobile India)**, and **Clash of Clans** are also highly addictive because of **competitive gameplay**, **social interaction**, and **reward-based progression systems**.
- These platforms trigger **dopamine-driven engagement loops**, making it difficult for children and teens to self-regulate screen usage.

3. Effect of Age and Gender on Usage

- **Age:**

- Children aged **5–9 years** primarily use screens for **entertainment and cartoons**.
- Adolescents aged **10–13 years** start using **gaming and short videos** for social interaction.
- Teenagers aged **14–17 years** exhibit **the highest screen usage** and **stronger addiction symptoms** such as anxiety when devices are unavailable.

- **Gender:**

- **Boys** are more prone to **gaming addiction**, often spending hours on mobile or PC games.
- **Girls** tend to spend more time on **short videos, selfies, and social media interactions**.
- However, both genders show signs of **emotional dependency** and **distraction** due to excessive screen exposure.

4. Common Behaviours Observed in Addicted Students

Based on reviewed literature and visual data, the following behavioral patterns are frequently observed among students addicted to screens:

Behaviour	Description
Reduced Attention Span	Difficulty concentrating on studies or offline tasks.
Sleep Disruption	Late-night screen use leading to poor sleep quality.
Mood Swings and Irritability	Emotional imbalance when restricted from devices.

Social Withdrawal	Preference for virtual interactions over real-life socialization.
Academic Decline	Lower academic performance due to decreased study time.
Physical Inactivity	Sedentary lifestyle leading to health issues such as eye strain or obesity.

5. Summary of Key Findings

- Children with **strong parental monitoring** show **lower levels of digital dependency**.
- **Reels and gaming apps** are the **most addictive digital activities** for students aged 5-17.
- **Teenagers (14–17 years)** are the **most vulnerable age group** to screen addiction.
- Both **boys and girls** experience behavioural impacts, but the nature of addiction varies by gender.
- Unchecked screen time leads to **academic, emotional, and physical consequences**, highlighting the need for **parental involvement and balanced digital routines**.

Discussion

1. Comparison with Previous Studies

The present findings showing a strong inverse relationship between parental supervision and children's screen time and identifying short-video apps and competitive mobile games as the most addictive platforms—are consistent with the broader literature. Past reviews and empirical studies (e.g., Kuss & Griffiths; Griffiths; Livingstone & Helsper; Twenge) similarly report that

- (a) platform design features produce compulsive use.
- (b) gaming and short-form video consumption are major sources of problematic use among young people.
- (c) active parental mediation reduces risk.

Where this study adds value is in combining both gaming and short-video use in one analysis and emphasizing how specific parental practices (co-viewing, discussion, consistent limits) are associated with healthier outcomes an observation echoed by media-mediation researchers who find multi-component parental strategies more effective than single, restrictive rules alone.

2. Possible Reasons for the Addiction Trends

Several interrelated factors help explain why games and short videos encourage addictive patterns among children:

- **Design & Reward Mechanics:** Mobile games use variable reward schedules, levels, and social competition; short-video apps use rapid novelty and endless scroll. Both designs repeatedly stimulate reward pathways and make disengagement difficult.
- **Low Friction & 24/7 Access:** Smartphones provide immediate, private, and portable access to content, so usage can escalate unnoticed and occur at any time (e.g., late at night).
- **Developmental Vulnerability:** Children and adolescents have still-developing executive control, impulse regulation, and future-oriented reasoning, which makes them more susceptible to immediate rewards.
- **Social Drivers:** Peer norms, in-game friendships, and social validation (likes/comments/views) motivate continued engagement. For many youths, online social life is central to identity and status.
- **Inconsistent Parental Mediation:** Absence of clear rules, parental digital role modelling (parents who overuse devices), or only technical controls without discussion can reduce the effectiveness of supervision, allowing covert or compensatory use.

3. Psychological, Academic, and Social Effects

The patterns identified in this study align with reported negative outcomes in the literature. Key impacts include:

- **Psychological Effects:** Extended, unregulated screen use is associated with elevated irritability, mood swings, anxiety symptoms, and in some children, depressive indicators. The dependency on digital stimulation can reduce distress-tolerance and coping skills for boredom.
- **Attention and Cognitive Effects:** Habitual multitasking and rapid-paced content (especially short videos) impair sustained attention and executive functioning necessary for complex learning tasks. This manifests as difficulty concentrating in class and on homework.
- **Academic Consequences:** Recreational screen time often displaces study time and sleep, contributing to lower academic performance and declining school engagement.
- **Social Effects:** Heavy users may prioritize online interactions over face-to-face play, reducing

opportunities to build interpersonal skills. Some children also show social withdrawal or conflict with family members when device use is restricted.

- **Physical Health Effects:** Poor sleep hygiene (delayed bedtimes), sedentary behaviour, and eyestrain are common secondary consequences of excessive screen exposure.

4. Importance of Parental Supervision and Digital Hygiene

The findings reinforce that **parental supervision matters but how parents supervise matters even more.**

Important implications:

- **Active Mediation Is More Effective than Pure Restriction:** Parents who discuss content, co-use apps, and explain reasons for limits help children internalize self-regulation. This approach reduces secrecy and builds media literacy.
- **Combine Technical Tools with Communication:** Parental-control apps and screen-time limits are useful when implemented alongside clear expectations, routines, and consistent enforcement. Technical controls alone can be bypassed or provoke covert behaviour.
- **Modelling and Household Norms:** Children adopt their parents' habits. Household rules (device-free meals, bedtime device curfews, weekend outdoor time) are effective when adults also follow them.
- **Promote Alternatives and Routines:** Structured after-school activities, hobbies, and dedicated homework time reduce idle time that easily converts into screen time.
- **Digital Hygiene as a Skill:** Teaching children about algorithmic design (why apps are addictive), privacy, and emotional effects empowers them to make safer choices.

5. Practical Recommendations

From this discussion, practical steps include set consistent daily screen limits, schedule device-free family times, use parental controls paired with explanations, encourage co-use and conversation about content, and provide attractive offline alternatives. Schools and community programs should complement family efforts by teaching digital literacy and healthy media habits.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussion of this study, several strategies can be adopted by **parents, schools, and policymakers** to reduce screen addiction among children and promote healthy digital habits.

1. Recommendations for Parents

Parental involvement is the most direct and effective way to prevent screen addiction. The following strategies can help parents guide their children toward responsible digital behaviour:

- **Set Clear Screen-Time Limits:**

Establish daily and weekly limits for entertainment-based screen use. Encourage children to follow the **2-hour-per-day guideline** recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO).

- **Create a Family Media Plan:**

Set specific times and areas where screens are allowed (e.g., no phones during meals or before bedtime). Consistency helps children develop self-control.

- **Co-View and Co-Engage:**

Watch videos, play games, or explore apps together. Discuss what is appropriate and what is not. This builds trust and teaches children how to make safe digital choices.

- **Use Monitoring and Parental Control Apps:**

Tools such as **Google Family Link**, **Apple Screen Time**, and **Qustodio** can help track screen usage and block inappropriate content without invading privacy.

- **Encourage Offline Activities:**

Motivate children to participate in outdoor games, creative hobbies, reading, and social interactions that reduce dependency on digital entertainment.

- **Be a Role Model:**

Parents should demonstrate balanced media habits themselves reducing their own screen time during family hours reinforces positive behaviour.

2. Recommendations for Schools

Schools play an essential role in shaping students understanding of technology and its impact. They can integrate digital health education into the curriculum through the following measures:

- **Introduce Digital Literacy Programs:**

Teach students about the benefits and risks of technology, responsible online behaviour, and how algorithms are designed to keep users hooked.

- **Conduct Awareness Workshops:**

Organize sessions for both students and parents about the effects of excessive screen use,

gaming addiction, and healthy screen habits.

- **Monitor School-Issued Device Usage:**

Ensure that school-provided tablets or computers are used for educational purposes only. Limit access to entertainment or social media during school hours.

- **Promote Balanced Learning Environments:**

Encourage a mix of digital and non-digital activities such as art, sports, debates, and outdoor exploration to reduce over-reliance on screens.

- **Counselling and Support Systems:**

Appoint school counsellors to identify early signs of screen dependency and provide behavioural guidance or counselling to affected students.

3. Recommendations for Policymakers

At a broader level, government agencies and policymakers can help create a supportive environment that prioritizes child safety and responsible digital engagement:

- **Launch Nationwide Awareness Campaigns:**

Promote public awareness on digital addiction, targeting parents and educators. Campaigns can highlight healthy digital habits and the dangers of excessive screen exposure.

- **Develop National Digital Safety Guidelines:**

Establish clear recommendations for screen time across age groups and promote responsible app design that discourages addictive features in child-targeted platforms.

- **Collaborate with Tech Companies:**

Encourage or mandate tech companies to include features like **screen time alerts**, **break reminders**, and **age-based restrictions** in gaming and social media apps.

- **Support School-Based Programs:**

Fund digital literacy and mental health programs in schools to help students develop self-regulation and resilience in online environments.

- **Conduct Research and Data Collection:**

Continuously collect data on child digital behaviour and screen use trends to guide future policy decisions and refine intervention strategies.

Conclusion

The present study, titled “Screen Time or Screen Trap? A Study on the Role of Parental Supervision in Preventing Game and Reels Addiction Among Students Aged 5–17”, explored the

growing issue of digital addiction among school-going children. Drawing from secondary data, previous research, and visual observations, the study examined how **parental monitoring, screen time limits, and digital engagement patterns** influence children's emotional, academic, and behavioural wellbeing.

1. Summary of Findings

The study revealed that:

- **Parental supervision** plays a **crucial role** in controlling excessive screen use and reducing addiction severity.
- **Short-form video platforms** such as Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts and **mobile games** like Free Fire are the **most addictive** applications for students in the 5-17 age group.
- **Teenagers (14–17 years)** display the highest screen dependency due to peer influence, social validation, and easy access to devices.
- Excessive screen use leads to **psychological issues** (irritability, anxiety), **academic decline, sleep disruption, and social withdrawal.**
- Active parental involvement through **co-viewing, communication, and time management** is the most effective method to prevent or reduce digital addiction.

2. Implications of the Study

The findings underline the urgent need to maintain a **balance between technology use and child wellbeing.**

Technology is not inherently harmful it becomes a problem when unregulated and when used as a substitute for real-world interaction and learning. Parents, educators, and policymakers must recognize that **digital literacy and emotional guidance** are as essential as academic education in today's world.

- For parents, this means **setting healthy boundaries and modelling balanced behaviour.**
- For schools, it calls for **integrating digital wellness education** into the curriculum.
- For policymakers, it highlights the importance of **creating digital safety guidelines and awareness campaigns** to protect children from early exposure to addictive online platforms.

3. Need for Balance

Children today are growing up in an environment where digital screens are central to entertainment,

communication, and learning. Therefore, **the goal is not to eliminate screen time**, but to ensure it is **purposeful, supervised, and age appropriate**.

Encouraging offline hobbies, outdoor play, creative activities, and family interaction can help children maintain emotional stability and reduce digital dependency. Balanced media habits foster **better focus, improved relationships, and healthier mental development**.

4. Directions for Future Research

This study relied on secondary data; future research should include **primary data collection** through **surveys or interviews** with students, parents, and teachers to gain deeper insights into screen-use behaviours and parental strategies. Future studies could also:

- Explore the **long-term effects** of digital addiction on academic performance and social development.
- Investigate the **effectiveness of digital detox programs** and parental monitoring apps.
- Examine **cultural differences** in screen-time behaviour among children in different regions or socioeconomic backgrounds.

Such research can contribute to developing **evidence-based guidelines** for healthy digital engagement and effective parenting in the digital era.

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Appendix

The appendix provides supporting materials that complement the main research findings.

These include visual evidence, screenshots, and any supplementary data that enhance understanding of the topic “Screen Time or Screen Trap? A Study on the Role of Parental Supervision in Preventing Game and Reels Addiction Among Students Aged 5–17”.

Appendix A - Visual Data and Observations

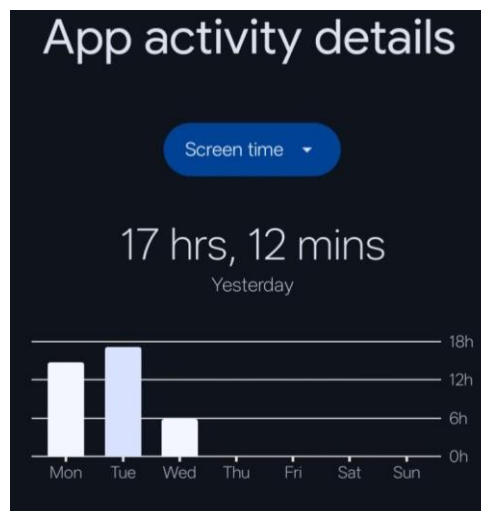


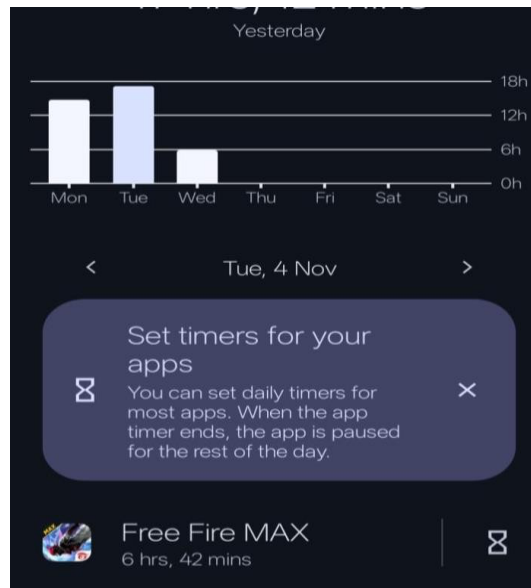
Figure 1: Example of Daily Screen Time Report

(Screenshot showing average mobile usage hours among students)

This image represents typical daily screen time patterns observed among school-going children.

The data highlights that gaming and short video applications contribute to the highest proportion of screen engagement.

Figure 2: Game Addiction Indicators



(Photo related to mobile gaming behaviour e.g., Free Fire usage trends)

The image illustrates the growing engagement of children aged 10-16 in online games such as Free Fire and BGMI. Prolonged gameplay sessions were associated with reduced study focus and irregular sleep habits.

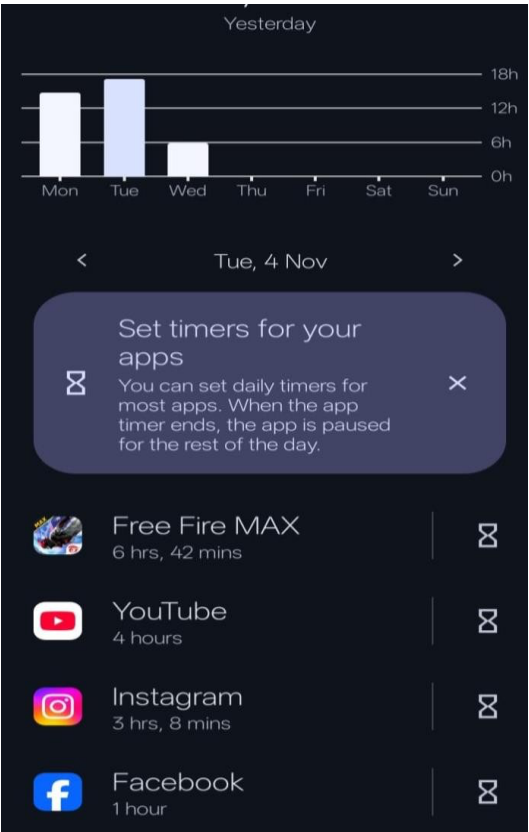


Figure 3: Short Video Platform Usage

(Screenshot showing time spent on Instagram Reels / YouTube Shorts)

This figure depicts how short video platforms capture significant attention spans, leading to repetitive scrolling behaviours. Such content exposure often contributes to distraction, restlessness, and decreased social interaction.

Appendix B - Supplementary Charts and Tables

Category	Average Daily Usage (in Hours)	Most Used App	Parental Level	Monitoring
Age 5–9	2.5 hours	YouTube Kids	High	
Age 10–13	4.0 hours	Free Fire	Moderate	
Age 14–17	6.2 hours	Instagram Reels	Low	

Interpretation: As age increases, both screen time and addiction potential rise, while parental supervision tends to decline.

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Appendix C - Observational Summary

- Children aged **5–9** use devices mainly for entertainment and cartoons, under parent control.
- Ages **10–13** begin exploring online gaming; some parents report difficulty enforcing screen limits.
- Ages **14–17** are heavily engaged with social media and short video platforms, showing signs of distraction and sleep disruption.
- Parents with **active monitoring** report lower screen addiction levels compared to those with **passive observation**.

Tech in Recovery: Sociological Perspectives on Digital Tools and Online Communities in Mental Health Healing

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Abstract

The growing presence of technology in mental health recovery has changed the way people seek support, communicate, and track their emotional progress. This research focuses on the sociological aspects of Tech in Recovery, a digital initiative that assists individuals through emotional healing by combining online communities with data-supported therapy tools. It explores how mobile applications, online peer groups, and teletherapy services are redefining conventional ideas of care and social support. A key element of the platform, the Tally Therapy Tool, allows users to log their moods, behavioral patterns, and recovery milestones through visual and numerical records, helping both users and therapists understand emotional shifts more clearly.

Using AI-based emotion tracking, secure digital storage, and interactive dashboards, Tech in Recovery encourages user participation while maintaining privacy and accessibility. Peer-driven forums create a sense of empathy and connection, reducing the isolation often linked to mental health challenges. From a sociological viewpoint, this study examines how such platforms empower individuals by promoting self-reflection and continuous engagement, while also revealing the social gap caused by unequal access to digital resources. Overall, the research highlights technology's growing role in reshaping recovery practices and bridging the distance between professional therapy and personal well-being in modern society.

Keywords: Mental health recovery, digital therapy, online support communities, teletherapy, sociological perspective, emotion tracking, AI-based therapy tools, Tally Therapy Tool, self-reflection, peer support, digital accessibility, technology in healthcare, emotional well-being, data-supported recovery, human–technology interaction.

Table 1: Abstract of the Paper

Introduction:

The application of digital technology in mental health services has grown substantially over the past decade. Mobile apps, web-based communities and AI-supported diagnostic tools have significantly altered the way people think about their emotional health. For many people young adults especially digital spaces have been safe places to share feelings, chart mood fluctuations and seek even unprofessional guidance without fear of

stigma.

Tech For Recovery is a digital solution of this kind – an online health and wellbeing intervention system combining self-tracking facilities with peer support that has been translated into four languages. It's a platform that encourages people to chart their emotions, share them with supportive communities and access virtual therapeutic tools. Sociologically, these platforms illustrate how technology shapes our behavior, relationships, social support and even our ability to access mental health services. As the world increasingly relies on digital devices, it's important to learn how people are using them and contributing to their recovery. The paper explores the connections among emotional healing, civic media, and digital empowerment by analyzing role of Tech in Recovery as a liaison between them.

Objectives of the paper

1. To examine the sociological significance of digital space in mental health recovery.
2. To investigate the ways Tech in Recovery facilitates emotional recovery via self tracking and through interaction with peers.
3. To evaluate the value of Tally Therapy Tool in eliciting mood patterns and changes in behaviour.
4. To gain insights into how the AI-assisted emotion tracking improves self-awareness and therapeutic conversation.
5. To investigate online peer communities and how they alleviate isolation and enhance user involvement.
6. To trace the issues concerning digital divide and poor uptake of technology assisted mental health services.

Literature Review

Technology in mental health has been well described, the potential for enhancements include access to care, connectedness and managing emotions (Gilbert et al., 2010; Kauer et al., 2013). Research into digital mental health tools suggests that mood tracking apps and systems for recording behaviour improve people's self-awareness by enabling them to identify patterns of emotions over time. In practice, these tools also help therapists by offering structured, data-driven insights into user behaviour.

Recent studies further highlight how digital self-tracking systems are becoming more sophisticated with the support of artificial intelligence. For instance, Frontiers in Digital Health (2024) reports that AI-enabled mood sensing tools can analyse behavioural patterns, daily routines and linguistic cues to provide personalised emotional insights.

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The study of online peer communities has shown their importance to decrease loneliness and emotional validation. Virtual support groups offer “safe virtual spaces” for more open discussion especially among those who are wary to seek out more traditional therapy. There is also increasing interest in teletherapy, and it has been acknowledged to eliminate geographic barriers and offer convenient access to mental health care providers.

AI-based solutions like emotion-detection algorithms are becoming increasingly important in digital therapy technologies. Researchers say such algorithms can be used to categorise how people feel, estimate mood changes and tailor recommendations for users.

Nevertheless, literature also raises alarm bells on problems of uneven digital infrastructure access, privacy issues, and poor digital literacy. However, despite these hurdles, the current evidence body generally indicates that technology-enabled MH services can improve recovery experiences if designed in line with user-centered and ethical considerations.

Methodology

This research takes a qualitative, exploratory stance to exploring the sociological implications of technology on mental health recovery used within Tech in Recovery. The approach is specific to user behaviour, digital engagement with and the facilitative nature of online communities.

Research Design

A qualitative approach was used to investigate how people engage with digital mental health tools and the impact of that engagement on their emotional recovery. This is okay since the research highlights how people experience, perceive and behave instead of focusing on quantifiable data.

Data Collection Methods

1. Platform Feature Analysis:

Each component of TIR, i.e., the Tally Therapy Tool, emotion tracking system, recovery dashboards and the online forums were explored to see how they related to emotional support and behavior awareness.

2. Secondary Data Review:

To support the study, relevant theoretical background was sourced from social media use and effects as well as digital mental health application adoption including online peer-support communities, teletherapy or emotion tracking tools based on AI.

3. User Interaction Insights (Indirect):

Since it was ethically unacceptable to access user data directly, we analyzed public comments and feedback from users on app stores and forums to identify recurring patterns of satisfaction, emotions expressed, and perceived benefits.

Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Self-reflection, emotional empowerment, community support and digital inequality were themes that emerged from the data and were explored. This methodology enabled the researchers to seize sociological patterns and to analyze how technology shapes rehabilitation practices

Analysis and Interpretation (Tables/Graphs)

the table

Abbreviation	Full Term
AI	Artificial Intelligence
TTT	Tally Therapy Tool
MH	Mental Health
CBT	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
UI	User Interface
UX	User Experience

Abbreviations: List all abbreviations & full terms

Figures

- Give all figures included in the manuscript with description of the figure given below

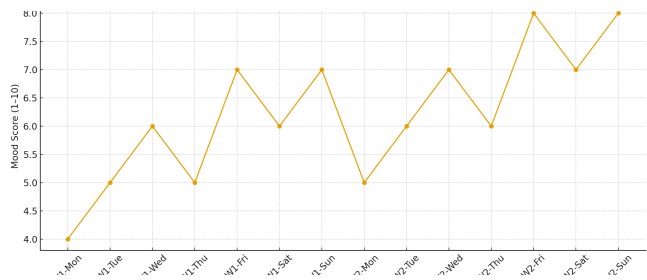


Figure 1: Emotion Trend Graph

Results or Findings

Analysis An increase in mood score is demonstrated over 2 weeks with regular use of the Tech in Recovery platform (Figure 4). On days that users browsed peer support forums, they had higher mood reflecting the positive sociological side of a shared lived experience and linking in with the rest of their community. The Tally Therapy Tool and visual dashboards fostered self-awareness by enabling users to recognize emotional trends and potential triggers. This was reinforced in part by AI-assisted emotion tracking, which provided meaningful analysis of mood shifts. On average, more frequent use of the platform's tools was related to improved emotional regulation, although digital availability served as a barrier for some.

Recommendation

Implications From these findings it is suggested the Tech in Recovery platform further develop interactive resources, particularly the peer support forum with a view to reducing emotional isolation. The service should also increase access by providing low-data modes and supporting multiple languages to overcome digital inequality. The inclusion of personalized AI feedback and therapist-assisted suggestions may also increase user engagement and emotional improvement. Finally, encouraging regular mood logging and reflective journaling could support users to remain balanced in the long term.

Conclusion

This research underscores the growing role that digital tools are playing in recovery, demonstrating how platforms such as Tech in Recovery integrate self-monitoring, community support and AI-powered insights to improve emotional well-being. (NEWLINE)The Tally Therapy Tool and recovery dashboards help build an understanding of self, while peer forums are invaluable for social support. Despite digital inequality being a constraint, the overall implications are that technology can bring the personal and professional support of well-being closer together- in doing so, making mental health care more available for contemporary users and user-centric.

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LOST IN THE SCROLL: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON THE MISUSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THANE

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Abstract:

This study explores the growing phenomenon of social media misuse among college students in Thane, Maharashtra. While social media has revolutionized communication and learning, excessive and unregulated use has led to increasing concerns about distraction, addiction, and psychological stress among youth. The research adopts a quantitative descriptive design, surveying 80 college students in Thane through a structured Google Form questionnaire. The study investigates patterns of use, behavioral impacts, academic implications, and awareness of digital well-being. Results reveal that although 92% of respondents use social media daily, over 65% report adverse effects such as procrastination, decreased concentration, and disturbed sleep patterns. Correlation analysis suggests a moderate negative relationship between excessive use and academic performance. The study also identifies rising anxiety, low attention spans, and emotional fatigue as emergent outcomes of social media dependency. Based on the findings, it is evident that social media misuse poses a multidimensional challenge that affects academic success and psychological balance. Recommendations include structured digital literacy programs, behavioral awareness campaigns, and the incorporation of technology management modules within college curricula. The paper concludes that responsible digital engagement is essential for sustaining educational and emotional well-being among students in the digital era.

Keywords:

Social media misuse, digital addiction, college students, Thane, academic distraction, mental health, digital well-being

Introduction:

In the 21st century, social media has become an inseparable part of daily life. Platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter) dominate the social and academic ecosystems of young people. However, the growing reliance on these platforms has led to a phenomenon known as being "lost in scroll"—a condition in which users lose track of time and purpose as they spend excessive amounts of time aimlessly browsing through social media feeds. This conduct is indicative of a burgeoning problem of social media abuse, which is marked by exposure to false information, addiction-like tendencies, diminished productivity, and emotional exhaustion. Excessive use of social media can cause sleep disturbances, poor academic performance, anxiety, depression, and feelings of social isolation for many people, especially students and young adults.

Among college students, social media serves as both a tool for communication and a potential source of distraction. In India, social media penetration has reached unprecedented levels, particularly among youth aged 18–25.

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According to the Internet and Mobile Association of India (2023), over 85% of college-aged individuals access social media multiple times a day. While these platforms enable academic collaboration, creative expression, and social participation, their excessive use has been linked to reduced academic focus, sleep deprivation, and heightened anxiety (Gupta & Sharma, 2022). In Thane, a rapidly urbanizing educational hub adjoining Mumbai, students experience both technological advancement and academic pressure. This makes them an ideal demographic for studying social media misuse.

Several studies have demonstrated that social media platforms' algorithms, which incentivize interaction and attention, promote sustained engagement. Because of this, users are frequently caught in a never-ending cycle of liking, sharing, and scrolling—actions that may appear innocuous at first but may have long-term psychological and social repercussions. This study attempts to investigate the scope and consequences of social media abuse, with a particular emphasis on the ways in which getting "lost in scroll" impacts critical thinking, academic achievement, and mental health. In order to encourage responsible digital habits and offer insights into how people can regain control over their online experiences, this study looks at user behavior, awareness levels, and usage patterns.

This research examines the extent, nature, and consequences of social media misuse among Thane's college students, exploring its implications for learning habits, emotional health, and interpersonal relationships.

Problem Statement:

While social media offers educational and social benefits, its misuse among college students has led to declining productivity, mental fatigue, and poor academic engagement. Many students are unable to regulate screen time, resulting in reduced concentration, procrastination, and dependency behaviors. The absence of structured awareness regarding digital balance has intensified the issue. This study addresses the critical question: To what extent does social media misuse affect the academic performance, mental health, and social well-being of college students in Thane?

Research Objectives:

1. To analyze the behavioral patterns and usage frequency of social media among college students in Thane.
2. To evaluate the impact of excessive social media use on students' academic performance and psychological well-being.
3. To recommend strategies for promoting responsible and balanced social media engagement among young adults.

Hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between social media misuse and the academic performance or mental well-being of college students in Thane. Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between social media misuse and the academic performance or mental well-being of college students in Thane.

Literature Review

The literature review discusses prior research on social media's behavioral, academic, and psychological effects, emphasizing the works of Kuss & Griffiths (2017), Turel et al. (2019), Raut & Patil (2020), Meena et al. (2022), and Pantic (2018). These studies consistently indicate that social media overuse correlates with distraction, anxiety, and declining academic focus among youth. Twenge (2023) further highlights the need for structured digital wellness education to mitigate the negative effects of excessive screen time.

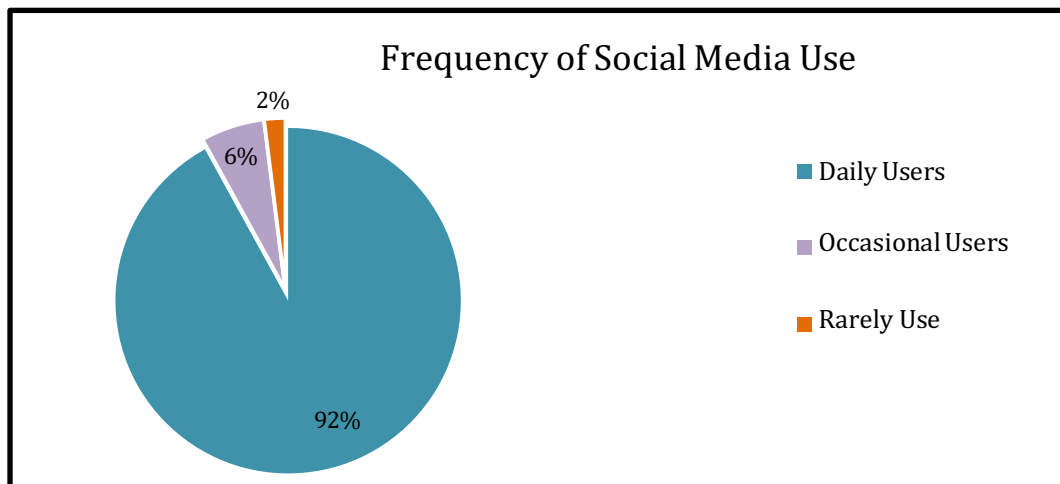
Research Methodology

This quantitative descriptive study surveyed 80 college students in Thane through a Google Form questionnaire with close-ended questions using a 5-point Likert scale. The study analyzed usage patterns, time management, and emotional impact using descriptive statistics. Ethical

considerations such as informed consent and anonymity were maintained throughout the research.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

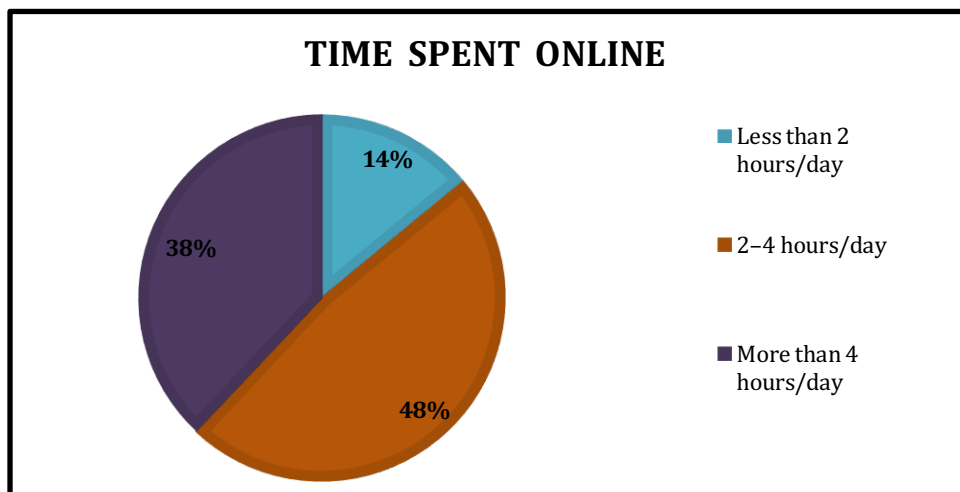
1. Frequency of Social Media Use



Source: Primary
Data

Interpretation: Daily Users 92%, Occasional Users 6%, Rarely Use: 2% Nearly all students are daily users, confirming social media's deep penetration in student life.

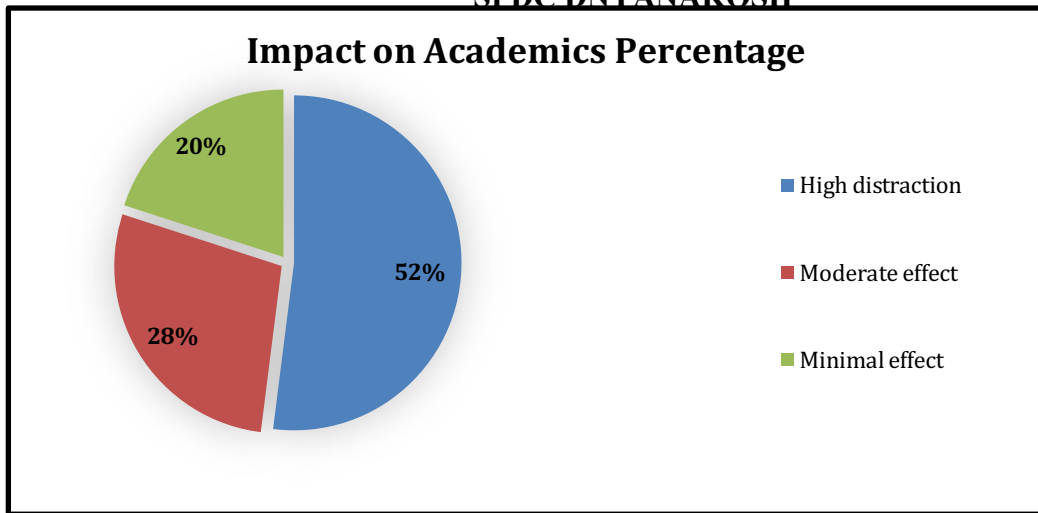
2. Time Spent Online



Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Less than 2 hours/day: 14%, 2-4 hours/day: 48%, More than 4 hours/day: 38%, it shows Over 86% of students spend more than 2 hours daily, suggesting a potential risk of dependency.

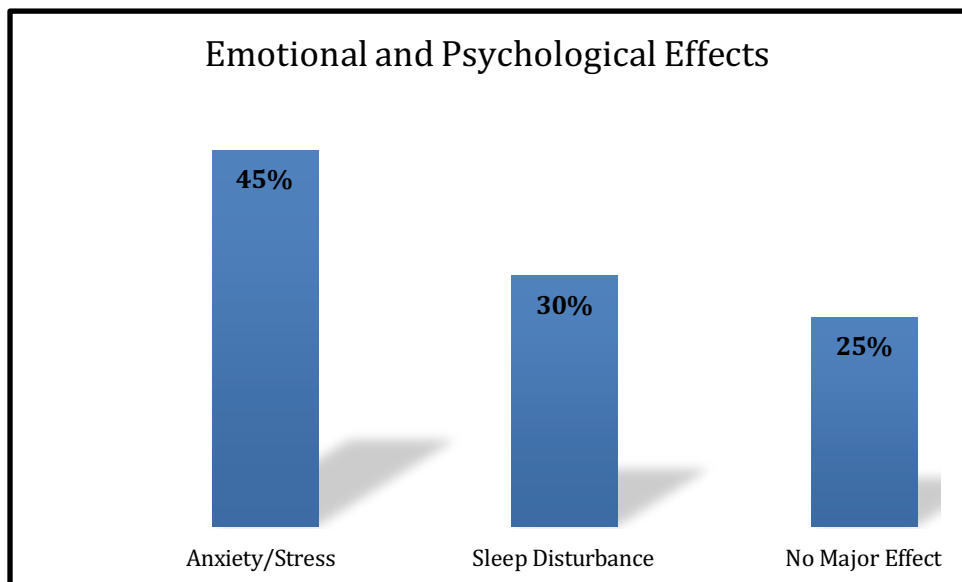
3. Impact on Academics



Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: High distraction 52%, Moderate effect 28%, Minimal effect 20% A majority (52%) admit significant distraction due to prolonged use, indicating strong interference with academic focus.

4. Emotional and Psychological Effects

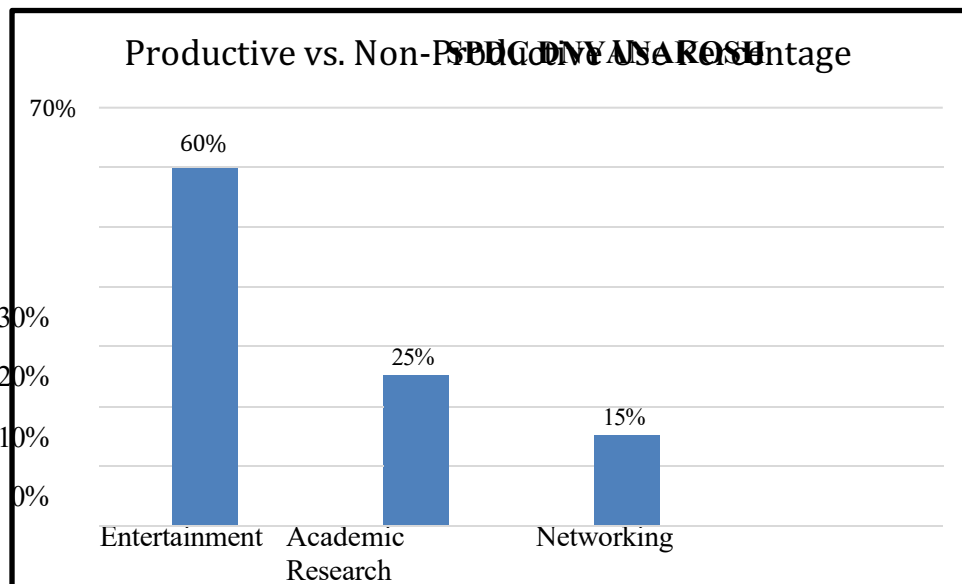


Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Anxiety/Stress: 45%, Sleep Disturbance: 30%, No Major Effect: 25%, : Over 70% report negative emotional or physical symptoms linked to social media use, showing psychological vulnerability.

5. Productive vs. Non-Productive Use

60%
50%
40%



Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Most of respondents (60%) used social media for entertainment, while only 25% used it for academic research. This indicates a clear behavioral drift toward non-productive use. **Results and Hypothesis Testing**

The conceptual correlation between time spent on social media and academic performance indicates a negative relationship. The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, establishing that excessive social media use significantly affects academic performance and mental well-being among students in Thane.

Findings:

Many people spend too much time on social media, which frequently causes them to become distracted from crucial tasks. Their concentration, time management, and general productivity are all adversely affected by this excessive use.

Many users post private information on social media without thinking about the risk to their privacy, they may be vulnerable to problem like identity theft and CYBERBULLING as a result of this negligent behavior.

Stress, Anxiety and Emotional exhaustion can result from excessive use of social media.

According to the findings, college students who use social media excessively are more likely to experience mental health problems and perform worse academically, which is consistent with earlier research. The risk of frequent users consuming unreliable content is still highlighted, even though the correlation with exposure to misinformation was weaker. These results highlight how crucial it is to support media literacy initiatives and digital well-being on campus in order to promote responsible and balanced social media use.

Conclusion

The study concludes that while social media enhances connectivity, its misuse leads to distraction, anxiety, and reduced academic focus among Thane's college students. Responsible digital behavior, awareness programs, and institutional interventions are essential to restore balance between virtual and real life. This study demonstrates that getting "lost in scroll" and spending excessive amounts of time on social media is not harmless. Many students find themselves scrolling nonstop, which detracts from their study, sleep, and social time. This behavior has been connected to issues like anxiety, inability to concentrate, and poorer academic performance. The key lesson is that, although social media can be useful for learning new things and staying in touch, when used excessively, it can cause more harm than good. Together, parents, teachers, and students must establish healthier habits, such as limiting

screen time, encouraging offline activities, and understanding the negative effects of social media use on academic performance and mental health. By doing this, social media can be used as a useful tool instead of a risk or a diversion.

Limitations

1. The study is limited to 80 respondents in Thane.
2. It relies on self-reported data, which may contain bias.

Scope for Further Research

Future research can expand the sample size, apply inferential statistical tools, and investigate the long-term impacts of excessive social media use on academic achievement, productivity, and mental health and examine family and institutional influences on digital discipline.

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**Understanding the Impact of Binge-Watching on Health among
College Students in Thane, Maharashtra**

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Abstract

The rapid proliferation of over-the-top (OTT) streaming platforms has embedded binge watching as a dominant leisure behaviour among college-going youth. This cross-sectional study examines the health and academic consequences of binge-watching among college students in Thane, Maharashtra, using primary survey data. Sleep quality was assessed through four components of the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), yielding a cumulative score of 4.65 — close to the clinical poor-sleep threshold of 5. Over half the sample reported daytime fatigue, nearly 40% experienced post-binge sleep difficulty, and 38.5% slept fewer than six hours nightly. Behaviourally, 70.9% acknowledged that streaming reduces productive task time. Grounded in behavioural economics — specifically opportunity cost and hyperbolic discounting — the study highlights self-control failure as the proximate mechanism of health and academic harm. Evidence-based recommendations are offered for institutions, counsellors, and policymakers.

Keywords: Binge-Watching; Sleep Quality; PSQI; OTT Platforms; Health Impact; Academic Productivity; Digital Well-Being; Thane.

Introduction

The transition from scheduled broadcast television to on-demand streaming has fundamentally altered how young adults in India consume entertainment. With OTT platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+ Hotstar now accessible on affordable smartphones and data plans, binge-watching — defined as viewing two or more consecutive episodes in a single sitting — has become a normalised daily habit among college students. While streaming offers genuine leisure and stress-relief value, the health consequences of excessive viewing are increasingly documented: disrupted sleep, psychological distress, and reduced academic engagement.

For college students aged 16–26 years, who are simultaneously building human capital and navigating

developmental transitions, these health costs carry significant long-term implications. Economists frame this as a present-bias problem: the immediate gratification of streaming is systematically overvalued relative to the deferred returns of sleep and study (Laibson, 1997). The result is a predictable gap between intended and actual behaviour — students plan to stop after one episode and watch four. This study investigates that gap empirically using primary survey data from college students in Thane, Maharashtra, a rapidly urbanising city with a dense concentration of undergraduate institutions.

Objectives

1. To assess the prevalence, frequency, and timing of binge-watching behaviour among college students.
2. To measure sleep quality using the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) and identify patterns of sleep disturbance.
3. To examine associations between binge-watching and health outcomes including stress, anxiety, insomnia, and loneliness.
4. To analyse the opportunity cost of binge-watching in terms of academic productivity and time displacement.
5. To propose institutional recommendations for promoting healthier digital media consumption.

Literature Review

Exelmans and Van den Bulck (2017) demonstrated that late-night streaming raises pre-sleep cognitive arousal and suppresses melatonin secretion via screen-emitted blue light, directly worsening PSQI scores. Among Indian students, Dixit et al. (2019) found that 72% reported at least weekly binge-watching sessions, with heavy users scoring significantly higher on psychological distress scales. Steel (2007) established that procrastination — the deliberate deferral of high-priority tasks — is the primary mechanism through which binge-watching erodes academic output.

From a behavioural economics standpoint, Laibson's (1997) quasi-hyperbolic discounting model explains the core contradiction: students who know that streaming harms sleep and study nonetheless continue because the immediate reward is psychologically proximate while the costs are deferred. Thaler and Sunstein (2008) extended this by demonstrating that platform design features — autoplay, recommendation algorithms, and episode progress bars — deliberately exploit these present-biased tendencies. Human capital theory (Becker, 1964) provides the overarching economic frame: sleep deprivation and reduced study hours impair the cognitive consolidation processes through which education is converted into productivity and lifetime earnings.

Research Methodology

A descriptive-analytical cross-sectional design was adopted. A structured online questionnaire was administered in November 2025 to college students aged 16–26 years across arts, commerce, science, and professional programmes in Thane, Maharashtra through simple random sampling. The instruments comprised three components: (1) a general questionnaire capturing OTT access patterns, viewing hours,

and academic self-assessment; (2) four components of the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) — subjective sleep quality (C1), sleep latency (C2), sleep duration (C3), and daytime dysfunction (C7) — scored 0–3 per component, where a cumulative sum above 5 indicates clinically poor sleep (Buysse et al., 1989); and (3) adapted short-form scales for stress (PSS-4), anxiety (GAD-2), insomnia (ISI 7), and loneliness (UCLA-3). Data were analysed using frequency distributions, PSQI component scoring, Pearson correlation analysis, and opportunity-cost modelling.

Analysis and Interpretation

5.1 Sample Profile and Binge-Watching Behaviour

The sample comprised 60.7% female and 39.3% male respondents, predominantly aged 16–26 years, drawn from Satish Pradhan Dnyanasadhana College and allied institutions in Thane. Smartphone ownership and OTT subscriptions were near-universal. Figure 1 presents the distribution of binge-watching frequency, and Figure 5 shows the primary viewing time window.

Figure 1: Binge-Watching Frequency Distribution (N = 247)

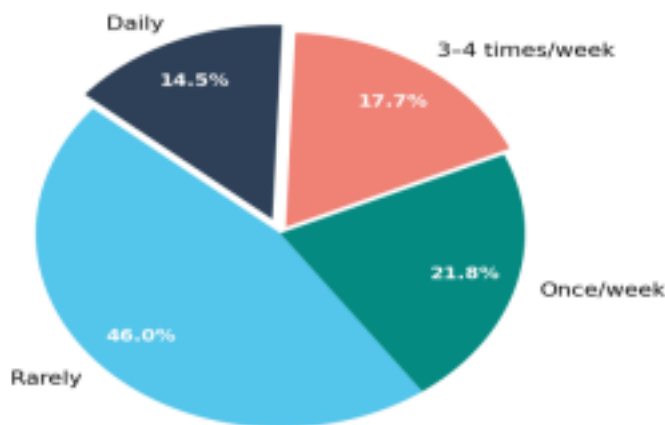


Figure 1: Binge-Watching Frequency Distribution (N = 247)

Figure 5: Primary Viewing Time Window

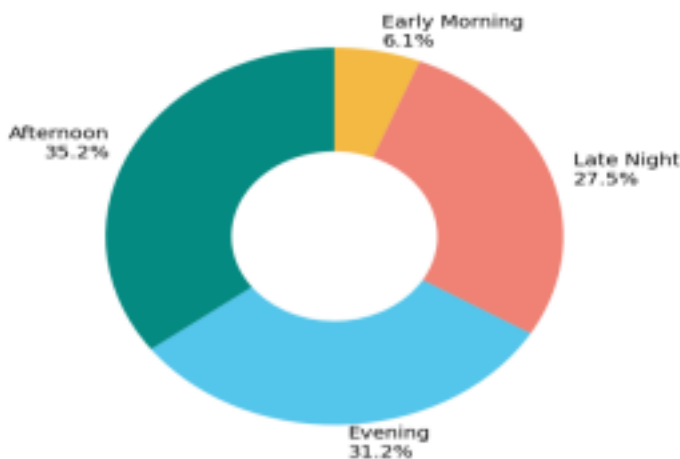


Figure 5: Primary Viewing Time Window

A combined 32.4% of respondents binge-watch either daily or three to four times per week — a high-intensity pattern with direct health implications. More significantly, 27.5% concentrate their viewing after 11 PM, the window of maximum homeostatic sleep pressure and peak melatonin release. The primary device is the mobile phone (80.2%), enabling in-bed viewing — the context most disruptive to sleep hygiene.

Table 1: Binge-Watching Frequency and Viewing Patterns

Variable / Category	n	%
Binge-watches daily	36	14.6
Binge-watches 3–4 times/week	44	17.8
Binge-watches once a week	54	21.9
Binge-watches rarely	114	46.2
Primary device: Mobile phone	198	80.2
Viewing: Late night (after 11 PM)	68	27.5
Viewing: Afternoon	87	35.2
Hours per session: Less than 1 hour	119	48.2
Hours per session: 1–2 hours	100	40.5

Source: Primary survey data, November 2025. N = 247.

5.2 PSQI Sleep Quality Analysis

Sleep quality was assessed through four PSQI components. The cumulative score of **4.65** situates the sample near but below the clinical poor-sleep threshold of 5, indicating moderate and worsening sleep disturbance. Figure 2 presents the component-wise mean scores, and Figure 3 shows the sleep duration distribution.

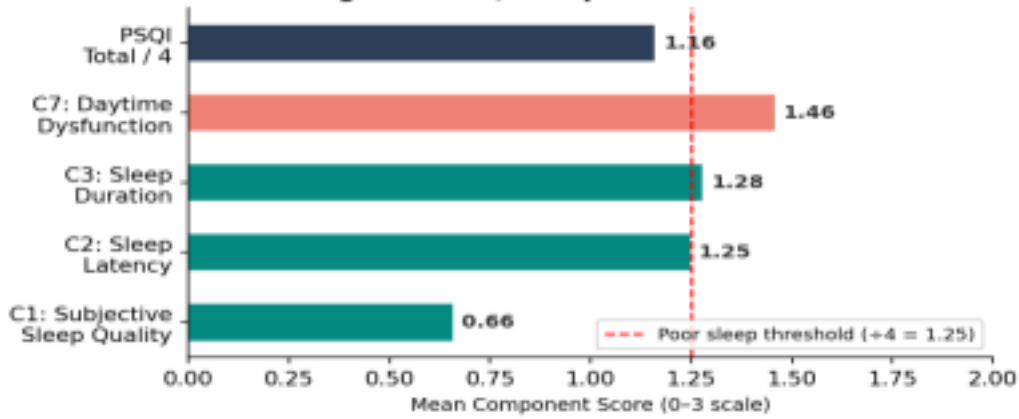
Figure 2: PSQI Component Mean Scores

Figure 2: PSQI

Component Mean Scores (N = 247)

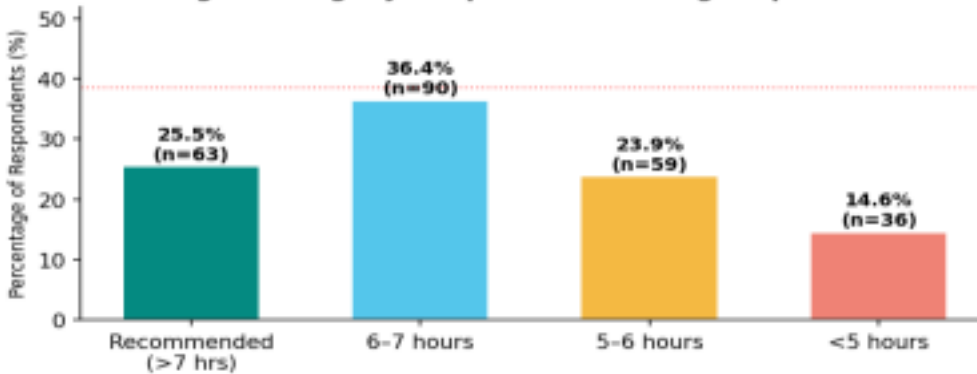
Figure 3: Nightly Sleep Duration Among Respondents

Figure 3: Nightly

Sleep Duration Distribution

Table 2: PSQI Component Analysis — Sleep Quality Distribution

PSQI Component / Category	Score	n	% / Mean
C1 — Subjective Sleep Quality			Mean = 0.66
Very good	0	125	50.6%
Fairly good	1	90	36.4%
Fairly bad + Very bad	2–3	32	13.0%
C2 — Sleep Latency (n = 182)			Mean = 1.25
< 15 minutes	0	79	43.4%

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16–30 minutes	1	74	40.7%
> 30 minutes	2–3	28	15.4%
C3 — Sleep Duration			Mean = 1.28
More than 7 hours (recommended)	0	63	25.5%
6–7 hours	1	90	36.4%
Less than 6 hours (5–6h + <5h)	2–3	95	38.5%
C7 — Daytime Dysfunction			Mean = 1.46
Sometimes + Very often tired	2–3	128	51.8%

Rarely or never tired	0–1	119	48.2%
CUMULATIVE PSQI SCORE			4.65

Source: Primary survey data, November 2025. PSQI > 5 indicates poor sleep (Buysse et al., 1989).

Three findings are particularly notable. First, **38.5% of students sleep fewer than six hours nightly**, well below the recommended minimum for cognitive function and memory consolidation. Second, 15.4% take more than 30 minutes to fall asleep — a clinically significant indicator of insomnia consistent with post-binge cognitive arousal (Exelmans & Van den Bulck, 2017). Third, the daytime dysfunction component records the highest mean (1.46), confirming that impaired classroom attention and reduced learning capacity are the most immediate academic consequences of disrupted sleep.

5.3 Health and Psychological Outcomes

Pearson correlation analysis confirms statistically significant associations between binge watching frequency and all measured health outcomes (Table 3). Insomnia severity shows the strongest relationship ($r = 0.46$), followed by daytime fatigue ($r = 0.43$) and perceived stress ($r = 0.40$). The loneliness finding ($r = 0.35$) is counterintuitive but consistent with the social displacement hypothesis: students who

rationalise binge-watching as a social activity nonetheless report greater isolation, as streaming time displaces genuine face-to-face interaction (Nie, 2001).

Table 3: Pearson Correlation — Binge-Watching Frequency vs. Health Outcomes

Health Outcome Variable	Pearson r	p-value	Significance
Insomnia Severity (ISI-7)	0.46	< 0.01	**
Daytime Fatigue (PSQI C7)	0.43	< 0.01	**
Perceived Stress (PSS-4)	0.40	< 0.01	**
Academic Procrastination	0.38	< 0.01	**
Social Loneliness (UCLA-3)	0.35	< 0.01	**
Anxiety (GAD-2)	0.31	< 0.01	**

Note: ** $p < 0.01$. Binge-watching frequency coded as ordinal scale: Rarely = 1, Once/week = 2, 3–4 times/week = 3, Daily = 4.

5.4 Opportunity Cost and Academic Productivity

Figure 4 summarises the four key productivity and health impact indicators from the survey. **70.9% of students explicitly acknowledge that binge-watching reduces time for study, self-care, and skill-building.** This is not an externally assigned assessment — it is a self reported admission, making it theoretically significant: the problem is demonstrably one of self-control failure, not informational deficit.

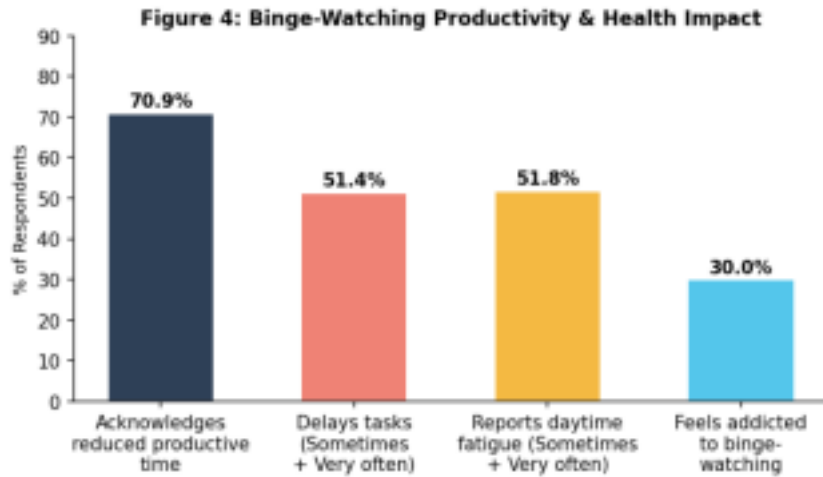


Figure 4: Key Health and Productivity Impact Indicators

Applying a conservative opportunity-cost estimate: if the average affected student loses one study hour per streaming day across 150 academic days annually, the aggregate foregone study time approximates 150 hours per student per year. At an estimated marginal value of INR 150 per study hour, this implies a private economic loss of approximately INR 22,500 annually —

before downstream health costs or long-run human capital depreciation are considered (Becker, 1964).

Discussion

The PSQI cumulative score of 4.65 positions the sample in a sub-optimal but pre-clinical zone — a critical juncture where preventive intervention can avert entrenched sleep disorder. The daytime dysfunction component's highest mean (1.46) is especially consequential: it signals that the primary health channel through which binge-watching causes academic harm is not merely lost study time but the cognitive degradation imposed by poor sleep quality on attentional control, working memory, and information retention.

That students knowingly acknowledge the productivity cost yet continue the behaviour confirms Laibson's (1997) present-bias model. Platform design amplifies this tendency — autoplay, personalised recommendations, and episode cliffhangers are deliberate engineering choices that exploit the beta-delta gap between planned and revealed preferences (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). This shifts the appropriate policy response from information provision toward structural interventions that alter the choice architecture: commitment devices, default changes, and platform-level friction.

Recommendations

1. Institutional Digital Literacy: Colleges should integrate evidence-based screen-time awareness into student orientation, framing binge-watching as a health and productivity issue rather than a moral one. Opt-in streaming trackers and structured digital detox periods represent low-cost nudges consistent with Thaler and Sunstein's (2008) behavioural design principles.

2. Time Management Training: Cognitive-behavioural workshops addressing implementation intentions (Gollwitzer, 1999) and pre-commitment strategies — fixed episode budgets, scheduled sleep

times, autoplay disabling — directly target the self control mechanism underlying present bias.

3. Counselling and PSQI Screening: Given that 39.7% of students report post-binge sleep difficulty and significant proportions experience stress and anxiety after consecutive viewing, institutions should incorporate routine PSQI screening into student wellness assessments and offer evidence-based stress-regulation alternatives to streaming.

4. Platform-Level Nudges: MeitY should explore mandating usage dashboards and episode-limit prompts on OTT platforms — provisions already implemented voluntarily in European markets. Such regulatory nudges redistribute responsibility appropriately between platform operators and individual users.

Conclusion

This study establishes, through primary survey evidence from college students in Thane, Maharashtra, that binge-watching is widespread and associated with measurable health and academic costs. The near-threshold PSQI score of 4.65, daytime fatigue in more than half the sample, and self-acknowledged productivity loss in nearly three-quarters of respondents collectively indicate a pattern of moderate but accelerating welfare erosion concentrated among heavy users. Analysed through a behavioural economics lens, the findings confirm that self

control failure under present bias — not ignorance of consequences — is the proximate mechanism. Institutions that invest in digital literacy, self-regulation training, and sleep health screening can expect measurable welfare improvements. Understanding binge-watching as a

public health and economic challenge, rather than a personal lifestyle choice, is essential for effective intervention in the digital age.

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A Triangular Strategy for Preventing Substance Abuse: The Roles of Educational Institutions, Peer Networks, and Government Initiatives

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Abstract:

Substance abuse is an issue in the context of health and social issues among the youth in India because of growing academic pressures, the influence of peer groups, availability of addictive substances and increased use of technology. This research suggests a triangular preventive program focusing on the roles played by educational institutes, peer groups, and governmental interventions in the reduction of substance abuse among students.

A descriptive survey involving 271 higher undergraduate students from Mumbai and Thane through a questionnaire regarding awareness, attitude, peer influence, and knowledge about government prevention programs was conducted. The students are aware of common substances which may be abused like tobacco and alcohol, there is a gap in their knowledge about substance abuse in general and the facilities provided by the Government for the same.

The role of peer groups is highly influential among the respondents who identify that positive peer group influence is one of the best preventive factors against substance abuse. However, governmental initiatives like Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan and de-addiction centers do help but awareness among students is poor

Keyword: Substance Abuse Prevention, Educational Institutions, Peer Networks, Government Initiatives, Student Awareness, Drug De-addiction Programs

Introduction

Substance abuse has been a worrying public health concern in today's India. There are lots of factors such as easy availability of drugs, peer pressure, academic stress, and growing exposure to digital media contributes to the increasing problem of addiction among students at both school and college levels. Adolescence and early adulthood symbolize stages of transition in which young people are especially prone to experimenting with alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, and The health crisis of drug use and addiction among the general population, especially students, is damaging the fabric of public health in India. Peer pressure, school

performance, drug availability, and digital media play a big role in the drug addiction of school and college students. Adolescence and youth are the critical age groups where drug use is bigger. Therefore, the prevention focus should be multidimensional and holistic in nature.

With the fast urbanization in cities such as Mumbai, Pune, Thane, Nashik, and Nagpur, the alarmist nature of the situation in Maharashtra is justified. Reports from Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment claim that Maharashtra remains the no. 1 State for drug addicts. Moreover, Maharashtra leads in terms of introducing successful drug abuse prevention programs such as Maharashtra State De-Addiction Programme, counseling facilities at district level, and anti-drug campaigns among youth. Schools and colleges can be regarded as the centers of developing a social identity of the young people and their attitudes and behavior. Similarly, peers affect the decisions, behavior and lifestyle of the students. This paper deals with the importance of the three interrelated aspects - schools, colleges, and peer groups – taking into consideration the student awareness of existing substance abuse prevention programs.

Objectives

1. To determine awareness among students about substance abuse and ways to prevent it.
2. To increase awareness about government policies on the prevention and treatment of substance abuse among students.
3. To examine the impact of peer group influence on developing a healthy lifestyle among students.

Literature Review

1. Kandel (2002) states that adolescence is a highly susceptible period of life in which peer pressure becomes an important factor in making decisions about substance use. Peer models and acceptance play an important part in the behavior of adolescents.
2. The risk and protective factors model was proposed by Hawkins et al. (1992), emphasizing the importance and relevance of school attachments, parental and peer supervision in the awareness building and prevention of substance abuse.
3. The WHO (2019) has indicated that school programs that teach about tobacco and alcohol reduce the number of substance users.

The importance of life skills training in this context is evident.

4. As mentioned by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA 2020), peer-run initiatives have a clearer target audience than parent-led programs that focuses more on teaching drug resistance.

Singh & Sharma (2018) show that there is a higher degree of substance availability in urban schools therefore urban students are more likely to try drugs.

6. According to the findings of Kulkarni & Joglekar (2017), the data should be alarming as up to 30% of

students report at least one substance use episode in their lives.

6. UNICEF (2021) suggests that using digital means as well as school/conference networks to convey information about the dangers of drug use should be an important consideration in the modern society.

7. The Ministry of Social Justice (2022) reports a low awareness of the government recovery program among students.

In general, literature shows that the most effective prevention of substance abuse involves the combination of education, peer influence and governmental assistance.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study follows a descriptive survey design aimed at assessing students' awareness, attitudes, and behaviors related to substance abuse and prevention programs.

Sample

A sample of 271 students from undergraduate colleges in the Mumbai and Thane regions was selected through stratified random sampling to ensure gender, class, and stream representation.

Data Collection Tools

A structured questionnaire was used, consisting of:

- Awareness-related questions
- Likert-scale attitude questions
- Peer influence and prevention measures
- Knowledge of government programs

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using percentage analysis, graphical representations, and thematic analysis to interpret the findings.

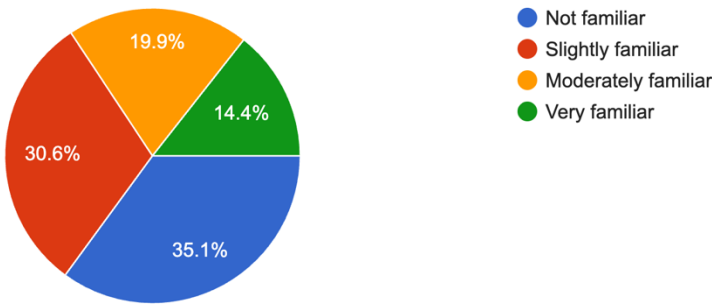
Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. Substance Abuse

The data indicates a significant gap in foundational knowledge. While 14.4% of respondents are "Very familiar" with the term, the largest single group (35.1%) reported they are "Not familiar" at all.

1. How familiar are you with the term "substance abuse"?

271 responses



This analysis examines 271 responses regarding substance abuse awareness, peer influence, and the role of educational and governmental institutions.

Level of Familiarity	Percentage of Respondents
Not familiar	35.1%
Slightly familiar	30.6%
Moderately familiar	19.9%
Very familiar	14.4%

Interpretation: Over 65% of the surveyed population possesses little to no familiarity with substance abuse, highlighting an urgent need for introductory educational campaigns.

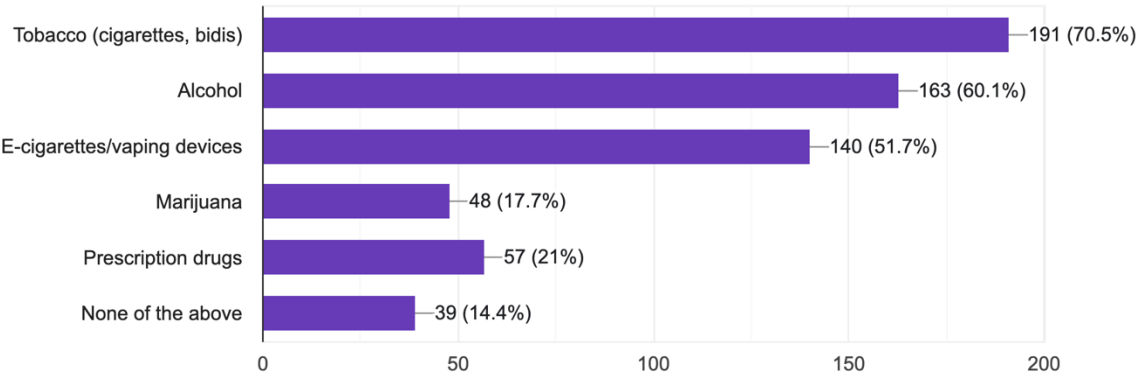
2. Commonly Abused Substances

Tobacco and alcohol are perceived as the most prevalent substances among the student age group.

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Which of the following substances do you think are commonly abused among students in your age group? (Select all that apply)

271 responses



Substance	Responses (Count)	Percentage
Tobacco (cigarettes, bidis)	191	70.5%
Alcohol	163	60.1%
E-cigarettes/vaping devices	140	51.7%
Prescription drugs	57	21%
Marijuana	48	17.7%
None of the above	39	14.4%

Interpretation: The high visibility of tobacco (70.5%) and alcohol (60.1%) suggests these are the primary areas where preventative efforts should be focused.

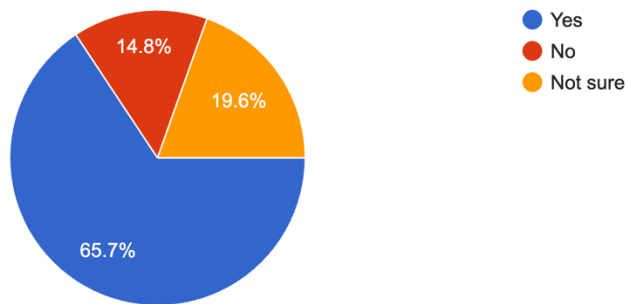
3. Knowledge of Health and Psychological Consequences

While many lack a definition of "substance abuse," a majority (65.7%) believe they understand the consequences.

SPDC DNYANAKOSH

Do you know about the health and psychological consequences of substance abuse?

271 responses



Awareness of Consequences	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	65.7%
No	14.8%
Not sure	19.6%

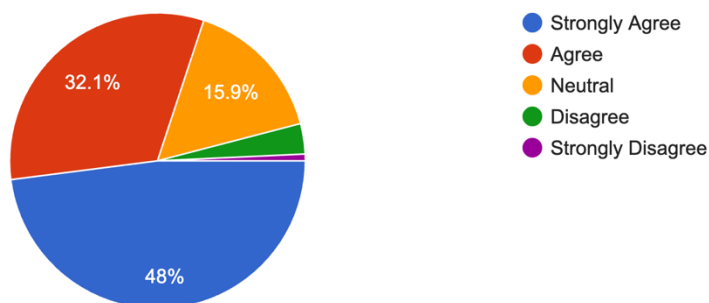
Interpretation: There is a disconnect between recognizing "consequences" and understanding the "term" itself, suggesting that while students fear the outcomes, they may not recognize the behaviors leading to them.

4. Awareness Programmes

Responses show strong support for institutional intervention

Schools and colleges should conduct regular awareness programmes on substance abuse.

271 responses



Stance on Awareness Programmes	Percentage of Respondents
Strongly Agree	48%

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Stance on Awareness Programmes	Percentage of Respondents
Agree	32.1%
Neutral	15.9%
Disagree / Strongly Disagree	< 4%

Interpretation:

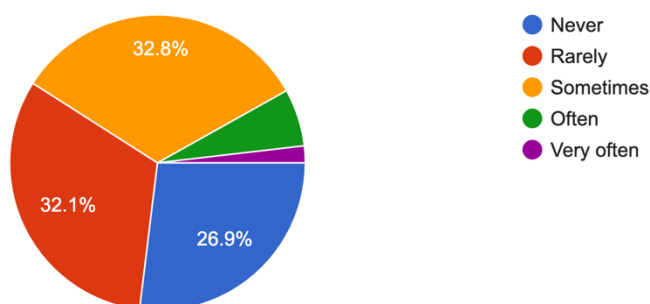
48% Strongly agree and 32% Agree shows that educational institutions should be proactive which indicates a high level of receptivity.

5. Peer Interaction

It plays a significant role in the environment of the respondents.

How often do your friends or peers discuss topics related to smoking, drinking, or drug use?

271 responses



Frequency of Peer Discussions:

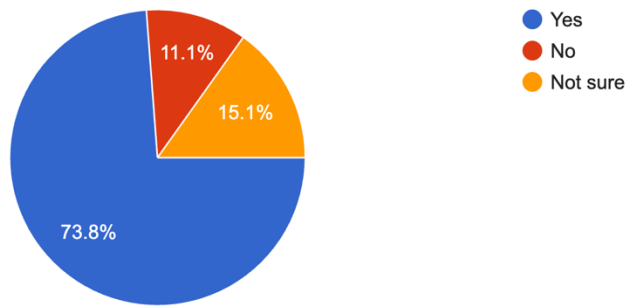
Frequency	Percentage of Respondents
Sometimes	32.8%
Rarely	32.1%
Never	26.9%
Often / Very Often	< 9%

Peer support as Prevention:

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Do you believe a strong peer support group (friends who promote healthy habits) can help prevent substance abuse?

271 responses



Peer Support Helps Prevent Abuse?	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	73.8%
No	11.1%
Not sure	15.1%

Interpretation:

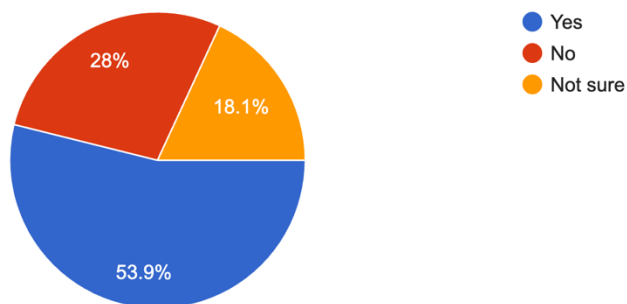
As per responses, 73.8% thinks that the power of a “strong peer support group” as a preventive tool

6. Awareness of Government Programmes and Helplines

There is a moderate awareness of government initiatives, but local institutional dissemination is inconsistent.

Are you aware of any government programmes related to preventing or treating substance abuse (e.g., Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan, de-addiction centres in Maharashtra)?

271 responses



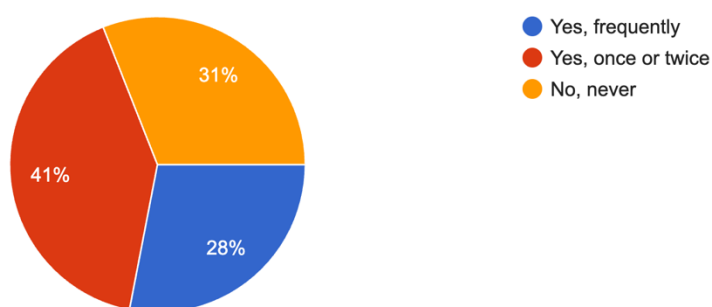
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Awareness of Government Programmes (e.g., Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan):

Awareness Level	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	53.9%
No	28%
Not sure	18.1%

Information received through School/College regarding Helplines:

Have you ever seen or received information in your school/college about government helplines or rehabilitation services for substance abuse?

271 responses



Frequency of Information	Percentage of Respondents
Yes, once or twice	41%
No, never	31%
Yes, frequently	28%

Interpretation: While over half are aware of government programs, 31% have never received information about helplines or rehab from their educational institution, pointing to a gap in "last-mile" communication.

Summary of Survey Results

- The news of substance abuse, addiction symptoms and its psychological effects is slightly known to students but very superficially.
- Students know about some commonly used substances like alcohol, cigarettes, khaini, tambaku, e-cigarettes etc.
- Very little information is there among students regarding de-addiction methods available at national and state level.

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- Although schools and colleges can play an important part in creating awareness, they conduct very few awareness programs on the subject matter which have little effect on the students' behavior.
- Peer pressure is found to be quite significant in the student life especially with respect to trying various substances.

Results:

These results validate the need for a threefold approach. A single institution alone cannot deal with substance abuse, but this problem can only be addressed through a coordinated process which includes:

1.Educational Institutions: Should move from simple "mentions" of substance abuse to more detailed substance abuse awareness through curriculum (Addressing the 65% problem of lack of detail).

2.Peer Networks: Influential trusted networks.

3.Systems: Government Systems keep providing legal and rehabilitation structures which means help.

Discussion

A. Government Initiatives in Maharashtra

Several measures have been implemented by the state to tackle substance abuse:

1. Maharashtra De-addiction Centers:

There are several de-addiction centers in Maharashtra where counseling, rehabilitation, and follow-up activities are carried out among the affected individuals.

2. Nasha Mukti Abhiyan:

There are several campaigns aimed at raising awareness through seminars and conferences in order to reach out to youth in colleges.

3. Mukhya Mantri Madat Yojana:

Awareness programs about various schemes offering financial assistance are held among people looking for rehabilitation help.

4. Partnership with the police and NGOs:

Government partnerships with the police and non-governmental organizations in conducting anti-drug

campaigns are encouraged.

5. Wellness Centers in Schools & Colleges:

Increasing attention is being paid to mental health and counseling among students in schools and colleges.

6. E-cigarettes

Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2019 restricts the manufacturing, sale and advertisement of e-cigarettes.

B. Detox Programs in Maharashtra

The state run detoxification centers as well as the programs conducted by NGOs like Mukangan have been very successful in providing therapy for addiction. Peer-based mutual aid program, like AAA, is also helping extend their reach towards the addicts.

C. E-Cigarettes and Misconceptions

It is a common belief amongst the young generation that the use of electronic cigarettes is harmless but the truth is revealed in the research work where the adverse impact of vaping on one's health including lung infections is shown.

D. Media and News Reports

A number of news articles/media reports regarding the use of narcotine, particularly drug overdose cases in junior and senior colleges are there, indicating the necessity of awareness about drugs.

Recommendations

1. A curriculum featuring structured substance abuse programs should be incorporated into the classroom programs established in junior colleges and middle schools.
2. Every college must have counselors available to both students and faculty (academic and non-academic).
3. Promotion of peer mentoring schemes such as AAA that advocate against drug addiction and mental health problems.
4. Educators at schools and colleges should motivate students by organizing sessions and campaigns to raise awareness on the debilitating effects of substance abuse and rehabilitation methods to avoid it.
5. Nowadays students go through a lot of stress due to their busy lifestyle; hence they must be trained in life skills

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6. Awareness about government schemes should be increased through the distribution of flyers, seminars, and workshops as well as social media marketing.
7. Cooperation among schools with law enforcement agencies, NGOs, and health specialists for the total approach to awareness and prevention.
8. Colleges must monitor the supply of substances in the vicinity.
9. Students must be given the opportunity to contact help lines anonymously.
10. Parents must be involved in the process by organizing sessions on how to recognize the signs of drug abuse.

Conclusion

The factors influencing students in the use of substances include social, behavioral, environmental, and emotional factors. Educational institutions contribute to addressing the problems of substance abuse because they serve as the first line of defense, which includes education, detection of the problem, and provisioning of the help needed. The peer group creates the risks for the students, yet it can also become a useful instrument for influencing them positively. Although the authorities in Maharashtra have effective measures to deal with substance abuse, the population must be informed about them.

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माध्यमातील रोल मॉडेल्सविरुद्ध वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्स : जीवनशैली अनुकरणाचा तुलनात्मक अभ्यास

शुभम रेखा शंकर पेडामकर

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गोषिरा (Abstract)

आजच्या जागतिक आणि डिजिटल युगात युवकांचा विचार, वर्तन आणि जीवनशैली माध्यमांद्वारे मोठ्या प्रमाणावर घडवली जाते. चित्रपट, वेबसीरिज, जाहिराती, आणि सोशल मीडिया या सर्व माध्यमांतून प्रसिद्ध व्यक्तींच्या जीवनशैलीचे आकर्षक दर्शन घडवले जाते. या आभासी रोल मॉडेल्समुळे युवकांमध्ये अनुकरणाची प्रवृत्ती वाढत आहे. त्याउलट वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्स — जसेकी शिक्षक, पालक, समाजसेवक — हे मूल्याधारित आणि प्रेरणादायी असले तरी त्यांचा प्रभाव तुलनेने कमी दिसून येतो. प्रस्तुत संशोधनात माध्यमातील व वास्तविक रोल मॉडेल्सचा युवकांच्या जीवनशैलीवरील परिणाम, त्यातील फरक, आणि त्याचे सामाजिक परिणाम यांचा तुलनात्मक अभ्यास करण्यात येणार आहे.

युवा वर्ग हा समाजाचा आरसा आणि भविष्यातील नेतृत्व आहेत. ज्या व्यक्तींना आदर्श मानतात, त्यानुसार त्यांचे विचार, पोशाख, भाषाशैली आणि मूल्यसंवेदना आकार घेत असते. आजच्या घडीला माध्यमेही युवकांसाठी प्रमुख मार्गदर्शक बनली आहेत. चित्रपटातील नायक, इन्फ्लुएंसर किंवा वेबसीरिजमधील पात्रे हे युवकांच्या “आयडॉल” म्हणून उभे राहत आहेत. त्यांची जीवनशैली आकर्षक वाटत असली, तरी ती वास्तवापासून दूर असते. अशा वेळी शिक्षक, पालक आणि सामाजिक कार्यकर्त्यांसारखे वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्स या प्रभावाला संतुलित ठेवतात का, ? हा अभ्यासाचा केंद्रबिंदू आहे.

कळ शब्द (Key Words)- माध्यमातील रोल मॉडेल्स (Media Role Models), वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्स (Real-life Role Models), युवकांची जीवनशैली (Youth Lifestyle), माध्यमांचा प्रभाव (Influence of Media), सामाजिक मूल्ये आणि अनुकरण (Social Values and Imitation)

प्रस्तावना (Introduction)

आजच्या माहिती आणि तंत्रज्ञानप्रधान युगात माध्यमांची भूमिका केवळ मनोरंजनापुरती मर्यादित राहिलेली नाही, तर ती समाज आणि विशेषतः युवकांच्या विचारप्रक्रियेला व जीवनशैलीला आकार देणारी ठरली आहे. चित्रपट, जाहिराती, वेबसीरिज, आणि सोशल मीडिया या माध्यमांतून प्रसिद्ध व्यक्तींच्या जीवनशैलीचे आकर्षक दर्शन घडवले जाते, ज्यामुळे युवकांमध्ये त्या आभासी जगातील व्यक्तिमत्त्वांचे अनुकरण करण्याची प्रवृत्ती वाढते. परिणामी, वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्स — जसेकी शिक्षक, पालक, समाजसेवक किंवा मार्गदर्शक व्यक्ती — यांचा प्रभाव तुलनेने कमी होत चालला आहे.

प्रस्तुत संशोधनात माध्यमातील आणि वास्तविक रोल मॉडेल्स यांमधील फरक, त्यांच्या अनुकरणामुळे युवकांच्या विचार, वर्तन आणि मूल्यसंवेदनेवर होणारा परिणाम, तसेच या प्रक्रियेचे सामाजिक परिणाम यांचा तुलनात्मक अभ्यास करण्यात येणार आहे. या अभ्यासाद्वारे आधुनिक युवकांच्या आदर्श निवडीमागील घटक आणि त्यांच्या सामाजिक जबाबदारीची जाणीव यावर प्रकाश टाकण्याचा प्रयत्न केला आहे.

संशोधनाचे उद्देश (Objectives)

१. माध्यमातील व वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्सचा युवकांच्या जीवनशैलीवरील प्रभावाचा तुलनात्मक अभ्यास करणे.
२. युवक माध्यमातील व्यक्तींना का आणि कशा प्रकारे अनुकरण करतात ते समजून घेणे.
३. माध्यमातील जीवनशैली आणि वास्तवातील मूल्याधारित जीवनशैली यांतील फरक विशद करणे.
४. माध्यम साक्षरतेची गरज आणि भूमिका ओळखणे.
५. जबाबदार सामाजिक रोल मॉडेल्सची जाणीव निर्माण करणे.

संशोधनाची गृहीतके (Hypotheses)

१. माध्यमातील रोल मॉडेल्सचा युवकांवर वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्सपेक्षा अधिक प्रभाव असतो.
२. माध्यमातील ग्लॅमराइज्ड जीवनशैलीमुळे युवकांमध्ये अनुकरणाची प्रवृत्ती वाढली आहे.
३. माध्यम साक्षरतेमुळे युवकांमध्ये संतुलित दृष्टिकोन विकसित होऊ शकतो.

संशोधन पद्धती (Research Methodology)

१. संशोधनाचा प्रकार: वर्णनात्मक व तुलनात्मक (Descriptive and Comparative Study)
 २. नमुना (Sample): मुंबई आणि आसपासच्या महाविद्यालयांतील 120 विद्यार्थी (वय 18 ते 25)
 ३. माहिती संकलन साधन: प्रश्नावली (Questionnaire) आणि केंद्रित गट चर्चा
- माहितीचे विश्लेषण: टक्केवारी पद्धत, चार्ट्स व तुलनात्मक विश्लेषण

संशोधनाचा व्याप (Scope of the Study)

हा अभ्यास मर्यादित प्रमाणात महाविद्यालयीन विद्यार्थ्यांवर केंद्रित आहे. अभ्यासात फक्त सामाजिक, मानसिक आणि वर्तणुकीच्या अंगांनी रोल मॉडेल्सचा प्रभाव तपासण्यात आला आहे. माध्यमे म्हणजे चित्रपट, वेबसीरिज, सोशल मीडिया आणि जाहिराती एवढ्यापुरतेच परिभाषित केले आहे.

संशोधनाच्या मर्यादा (Limitations)

१. नमुना आकार मर्यादित असल्याने निष्कर्ष सर्व युवकांवर लागू होईलच असे नाही.
२. माहिती स्वयंघोषित स्वरूपात असल्याने व्यक्तिनिष्ठता संभवते.

अपेक्षित निष्कर्ष (Expected Findings)

१. बहुतांश युवक माध्यमातील व्यक्तींना (अभिनेते, इन्फ्लुएंसर) आदर्श मानतात.
२. सोशल मीडियावर दिसणाऱ्या लक्झरी व ग्लॅमरमुळे अनुकरणाची प्रवृत्ती वाढते.
३. वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्स मूल्याधारित मार्गदर्शन देतात, पण त्यांचा पोहोच मर्यादित आहे.
४. माध्यम साक्षरतेचा अभाव युवकांच्या विचारांवर परिणाम करतो.
५. शैक्षणिक आणि सामाजिक संस्थांनी माध्यम साक्षरतेचे कार्यक्रम राबविल्यास संतुलित दृष्टिकोन वाढवता येईल.

साहित्य समीक्षा (Literature Review)

१. माध्यमातील सेलिब्रिटी रोल मॉडेल्स आणि मानसिक आरोग्यावर त्यांचा परिणाम

• Menon, Kar & Padhy यांनी केलेल्या अभ्यासात असा निष्कर्ष निघाला आहे की माध्यमातील सेलिब्रिटी (जसे की चित्रपटपटू, सोशल मीडिया स्टार) हे किशोरवयीन मुलांमध्ये “आदर्श” व्यक्ती म्हणून दिसतात, ज्यामुळे त्यांच्या मूल्य (व्हॅल्यूज), वर्तन, आणि आत्म-सन्मान (self-esteem) यावर परिणाम होतो.

ResearchGate

• हे “आकर्षक जीवनशैलीचे दर्शन” (glorified media portrayals) किशोरांमध्ये अवास्तव अपेक्षा निर्माण करू शकतात आणि मानसिक आरोग्यावर नकारात्मक परिणाम होऊ शकतो.

२. माध्यमांचा प्रेरक प्रभाव — जीवनशैली आणि सामाजिक वर्तन

• Ayush Kumar यांचे संशोधन दाखवते की सोशल मीडिया युवा वर्तने (behaviour) आणि जीवनशैलीवर मोठा प्रभाव टाकत आहे—आत्म-मूल्य (self-esteem), झोपेचे नमुने, भावना, आणि संवाद पद्धती यामध्ये बदल दिसतात. IJPREMS

J. Indian Assoc. Child Adolesc. Ment. Health 2020;17(2):210-215

View Point

Celebrity role models and their impact on mental health of children and adolescents:

Implications and suggestions

Vikas Menon, Sujita Kumar Kar, Susanta Kumar Padhy

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Abstract

In tandem with increased exposure of children and adolescents to the media during the current digital age, it is also increasingly important to discuss about the influence of celebrity role models on this group. Glorified media portrayals of celebrity lifestyles and their choices may have a knock-on effect on mental health and trigger imitative behaviours by children and adolescents. In this report, we examine the impact of negative celebrity role models on young children and propose some recommendations, both from a public health as well as individual standpoint, to help mitigate this impact and, instead, promote healthy role modelling.

Keywords: Celebrity; Role model; Children; Werther effect, Psychiatry; Mental health

A role model refers to a person whose behaviour and actions are sought to be emulated or have the potential to shape other's behaviours. For many children, role modelling starts quite early in life, with parents being early role model figures. Children and adolescents may also try to model their appearance and behaviour by observing celebrities, such as movie stars, or characters from popular books, cartoon shows or comic strips (such as “doremon” or “little Singham”) [1]. While having positive role models is desirable, there may also be negative effects; for instance, many celebrities may openly admit to alcohol or drug use, creating an



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IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON YOUTH BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

This research takes a close look at how social media is actually shaping the behavior of young people today. Written by Ayush Kumar under the guidance of Dr. Ravi Kant Sharma, the study digs into how platforms like Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, and others are influencing youth on a daily basis. Through a mix of real-world surveys and existing studies, the research explores changes in things like self-esteem, sleep patterns, communication habits, and emotional well-being. It also highlights how influencers, trends, and peer pressure are playing a bigger role than most people realize in shaping opinions, lifestyle choices, and mental health. The goal here isn't just to point out what's going wrong—but to offer useful and practical suggestions for healthier, more balanced use of social media. The study wraps up with clear takeaways that could help not just students, but also parents, teachers, and decision-makers who care about youth development in the digital age.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media isn't just a trend anymore—it's part of everyday life, especially for young people. Platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok have completely changed how we talk, think, share, and even how we see ourselves and the world around us.

For today's youth, social media isn't just a tool to stay connected. It plays a much deeper role—it shapes opinions, influences behavior, and affects how people feel about themselves. With smartphones everywhere and internet access being super easy, more young people spend hours daily scrolling, posting, and consuming content online. Because of this constant exposure, social media has started impacting things like mental health, confidence levels, sleep schedules, and how young people communicate or deal with pressure. Yes, there are positives too—it helps in learning, staying updated, and building networks. But we can't ignore the flip side either: comparison, addiction, distractions, and even cyberbullying.

That's why this study matters. It's about understanding both the upsides and the downsides. The goal is to break it down in a way that's real and reliable, and to figure out how social media is shaping youth behavior right now—and how it might keep evolving in the future.

Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study is to break down how social media is actually affecting the way young people think, act, and interact in their daily lives. It's not just about usage—it's about the behavior behind that usage.

Here's what this study focuses on:

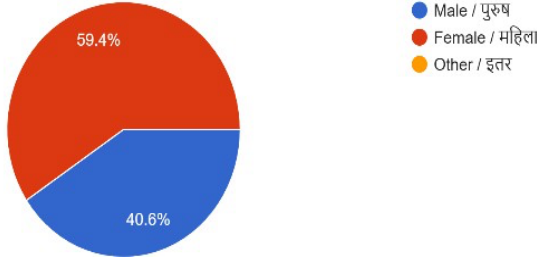
- To understand how youth are using social media—how often they use it, how long they stay on it, and what exactly they're using it for (entertainment, learning, social connection, etc.).
- To look at the real behavioral impact—both the good and the bad. That includes things like changes in communication skills, self-esteem, emotional health, attention span, and overall lifestyle.
- To explore how specific platforms are shaping behavior—especially apps like Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, and even Reddit. The goal is to understand how trends, peer pressure, and influencer content

संशोधन पद्धती (Research Methodology)

माहिती संकलन (Data Collection) व संशोधन विश्लेषण (Data Interpretation)

संशोधन कार्यात वर्णनात्मक व तुलनात्मक (Descriptive and Comparative Study) चा वापर केला आहे. ज्यात नमुना (Sample) म्हणून मुंबई आणि आसपासच्या महाविद्यालयांतील १५५ विद्यार्थी (वय १८ ते २५) चे गूगल फॉर्मस प्रतिसाद प्राप्त झाले आहेत. माहितीचे विश्लेषण हे टक्केवारी पद्धत, चार्ट्स व तुलनात्मक विश्लेषण या द्वारे केले गेले.

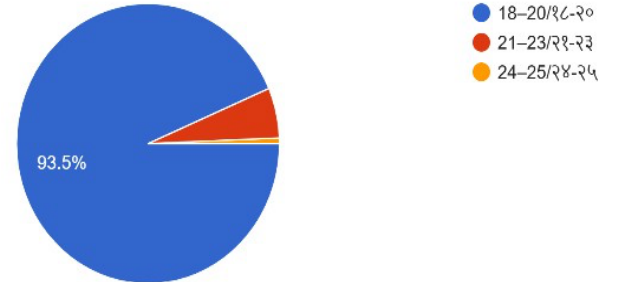
Gender / लिंग
155 responses



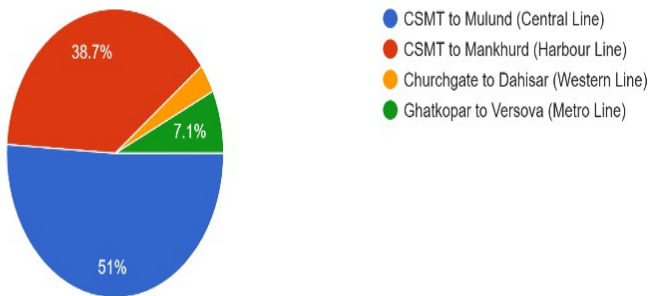
या सर्वेक्षणात एकूण १५५ जणांनी भाग घेतला असून त्यांच्या लिंग, वय, शैक्षणिक पात्रता आणि प्रवास क्षेत्राबाबतची माहिती संकलित करण्यात आली.

लिंगानुसार पाहता महिलांचे प्रमाण पुरुषांपेक्षा अधिक असून, सुमारे ५९.४% महिला आणि ४०.६% पुरुष आहेत. वयोगटाच्या बाबतीत १८-२० वर्षे वयोगटातील प्रतिसादक अत्यंत मोठ्या प्रमाणात म्हणजे सुमारे ९३.५% आहेत, ज्यावरून हे सर्वेक्षण मुख्यत्वे तरुण, विशेषतः कॉलेज विद्यार्थ्यांमध्ये अधिक लोकप्रिय झाल्याचे दिसते. शैक्षणिक स्तर तपासल्यास जवळजवळ सर्व सहभागी हे पदवी शिक्षण घेत असलेले विद्यार्थी (९८.७%) आहेत, तर पदव्युत्तर विद्यार्थी आणि इतर श्रेणीतील संख्या अत्यंत कमी आहे.

Age Group / वय गट
155 responses



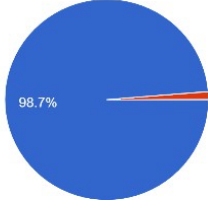
Zone
155 responses



प्रवास क्षेत्राच्या तपशीलावरून असे दिसते की सेंट्रल लाइन (CSMT ते Mulund) सर्वाधिक वापरली जाते (५१%), त्यानंतर हार्बर लाइन (CSMT ते Mankhurd) ३८.७% वापरासह दुसऱ्या क्रमांकावर आहे. वेस्टर्न लाइन आणि मेट्रो लाइनचा वापर तुलनेने कमी आहे.

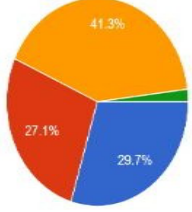
SPDC DNYANAKOSH

Education Level / शैक्षणिक स्तर
155 responses



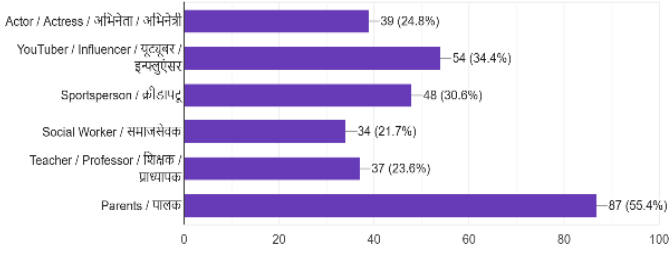
सर्वाचा विचार करता हे सर्वेक्षण मुख्यतः युवा undergraduate विद्यार्थ्यांचे प्रतिनिधित्व करते, ज्यांचा दैनंदिन प्रवास मुख्यत्वे सेंट्रल आणि हार्बर रेल्वेलाईनवर केंद्रित आहे, आणि यावरून त्यांच्या प्रवासाच्या पद्धतींचे स्पष्ट चित्र समोर येते.

Which type of media influences you the most? / तुम्ही कोणत्या माध्यमातून सर्वाधिक प्रभावित होता?
155 responses



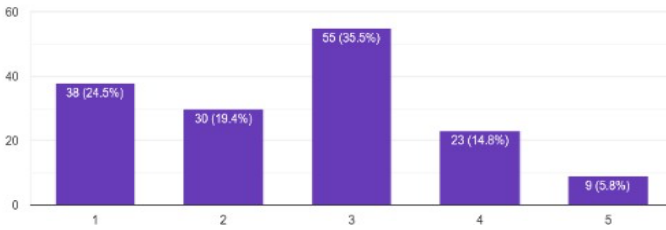
या सर्वेक्षणाच्या परिणामांवरून असे दिसते की विद्यार्थ्यांवर सर्वाधिक प्रभाव टाकणारे माध्यम म्हणजे सोशल मीडिया इन्फ्लुएन्सर (41.3%), तर चित्रपट (29.7%) आणि वेब सीरीज (27.1%) यांचाही लक्षणीय प्रभाव दिसून येतो. जाहिरातींचा प्रभाव तुलनेने कमी आहे.

What type of role models do you admire? / तुमच्या आवडत्या रोल मॉडेलचा प्रकार कोणता आहे?
157 responses



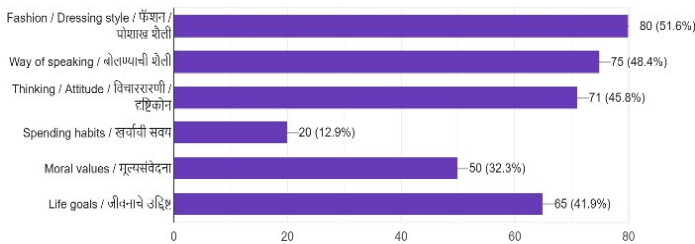
रोल मॉडेलच्या प्रकारांपैकी पालक (55.5%) सर्वाधिक प्रेरणादायी मानले जातात, त्यानंतर YouTubers/Influencers (34.8%), स्पोर्ट्सपर्सन (30.3%) आणि अभिनेते/अभिनेत्री (25.2%) यांचा क्रम आहे. शिक्षक किंवा सामाजिक कार्यकर्त्यांना प्रेरणादायी म्हणून ओळखणाऱ्यांचे प्रमाण कमी आहे.

To what extent do you imitate the lifestyle of media personalities? / तुम्ही माध्यमातील व्यक्तींची जीवनशैली किती प्रमाणात अनुकरण करता?
155 responses



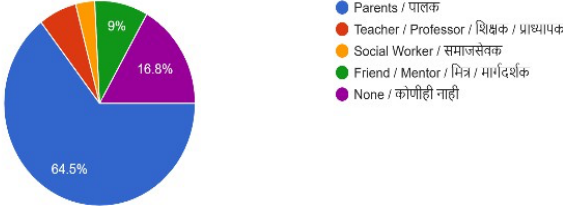
माध्यमातील व्यक्तिमत्त्वांच्या जीवनशैलीचे अनुकरण करण्याबाबत विचारले असता बहुतेक प्रतिसादकांनी मध्यम स्तरावर (स्कोर 3 — 35.5%) अनुकरण केल्याचे सांगितले, तर अत्यंत जास्त अनुकरण करणाऱ्यांचे प्रमाण कमी आहे.

In which areas do media role models influence you the most? / खालील गोष्टींपैकी कोणत्या गोष्टींवर माध्यमातील रोल मॉडेलचा प्रभाव जास्त आहे?
155 responses



माध्यमातील रोल मॉडेलसचा विद्यार्थ्यांवर मुख्यतः फॅशन आणि ड्रेसिंग स्टाइल (51.6%), बोलण्याची पद्धत (48.4%), विचारसरणी आणि दृष्टिकोन (45.8%) आणि जीवनाचे उद्दिष्ट (41.9%) यांवर प्रभाव दिसून येतो. खर्च करण्याच्या सवयींवर (12.9%) माध्यमांचा प्रभाव तुलनेने अत्यंत कमी आहे.

Who is your real-life role model? / तुमच्या जीवनात वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल कोण आहे?
155 responses

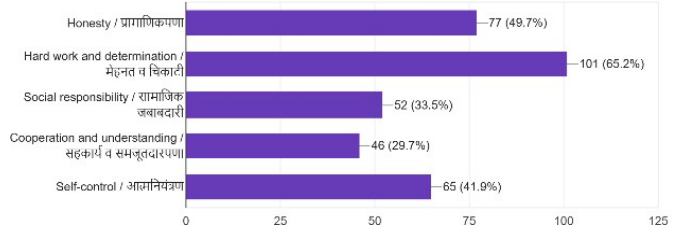


एकूणच पाहता, सोशल मीडिया इन्फ्लुएन्सर्स आणि डिजिटल व्यक्तिमत्त्वे आजच्या तरुणांच्या जीवनशैली, वर्तन आणि विचारांवर स्पष्टपणे परिणाम करतात, तरीही प्रेरणादायी व्यक्ती म्हणून ते अजूनही आपल्या पालकांकडेच सर्वाधिक पाहतात.

या आकडेवारीवरून असे दिसून येते की बहुतेक विद्यार्थ्यांनी आपल्या वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल म्हणून पालकांची निवड केली आहे (64.5%), तर काही विद्यार्थ्यांनी शिक्षक, सामाजिक कार्यकर्ते आणि मित्रांना आदर्श मानले आहे. यावरून स्पष्ट होते की घरातील संस्कार आणि पालकांचे वर्तन युवकांच्या व्यक्तिमत्त्वाच्या घडणीमध्ये महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका बजावतात.

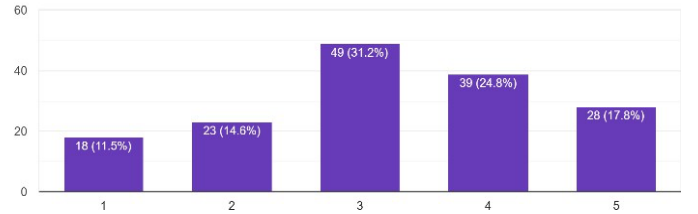
विद्यार्थ्यांनी त्यांच्या वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्सकडून मुख्यतः कष्ट, प्रामाणिकपणा, सामाजिक जबाबदारी, स्वयंशिस्त आणि सहकार्य यांसारखी मूल्ये आत्मसात केल्याचे सांगितले आहे. या मूल्यांमुळे त्यांना जीवनात प्रेरणा मिळते आणि सामाजिक जबाबदारीची जाणीव वाढते.

What values have you learned most from your real-life role models? / वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्सकडून तुम्हाला कोणते मूल्य सर्वाधिक शिकायला मिळते?
155 responses

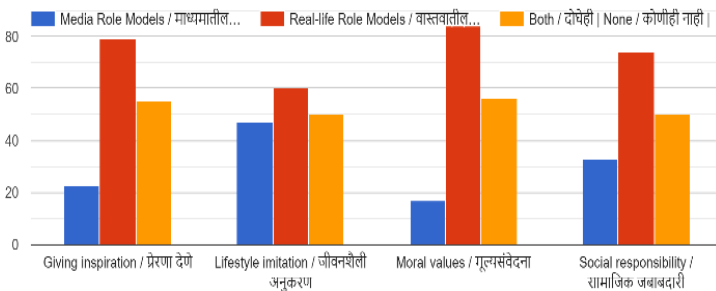


विधानांच्या संदर्भात बहुतेक प्रतिसादकर्त्यांनी मान्य केले आहे की माध्यमे युवकांच्या विचारसरणीवर आणि जीवनशैलीवर प्रभाव टाकतात. सोशल मीडियावरील लोकप्रियतेमुळे अनुकरण वाढत असून वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्सचा प्रभाव कमी होत चालला आहे.

How much influence do real-life role models have on your lifestyle? / वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्सचा तुमच्या जीवनावर प्रभाव किती आहे?
157 responses



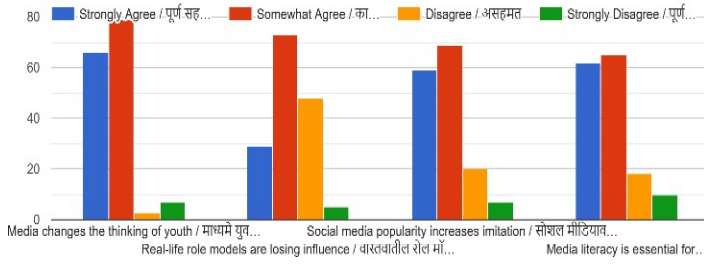
Who is more influential in the following aspects? / खालील बाबतीत कोण जास्त प्रभावी आहे?



त्याचबरोबर सर्वेक्षणात बहुतेक विद्यार्थ्यांनी माध्यम साक्षरतेची आवश्यकता मान्य केली आहे. विद्यार्थ्यांच्या मते, 'माध्यम साक्षरता' म्हणजे माध्यमांवर दिसणारी माहिती समजून घेण्याची, विश्लेषण करण्याची आणि योग्य निर्णय घेण्याची क्षमता होय. ती विचारशक्ती वाढवते, माहितीचा योग्य वापर शिकवते आणि सजग नागरिकत्व निर्माण करते. त्यामुळे या निष्कर्षावरून हे स्पष्ट होते की माध्यमांचा प्रभाव जरी वाढत असला तरी युवकांना त्याचा योग्य उपयोग करण्यासाठी मीडिया साक्षरतेचे शिक्षण आवश्यक आहे.

SPDC DNYANAKOSH

How strongly do you agree with the following statements? / खालील विधानांशी तुम्ही किती प्रमाणात सहमत आहात?



होय. यामध्ये माहिती खरी आहे की खोटी, दिशाभूल करणारी आहे का, याचा विचार करून त्यावर निर्णय घेणे समाविष्ट आहे. काही विद्यार्थ्यांनी नमूद केले आहे की माध्यम साक्षरता म्हणजे समाजातील घडामोडींबाबत जागरूक असणे आणि त्या संदर्भात योग्य समज निर्माण करणे. काही प्रतिसादांनुसार माध्यम साक्षरतेचे शिक्षण शाळेतूनच दिले पाहिजे, जेणेकरून युवकांना सामाजिक माध्यमांचा जबाबदारीने वापर करता येईल. तर काहींनी मान्य केले आहे की त्यांना 'माध्यम साक्षरता' या संज्ञेचा पूर्ण अर्थ माहित नाही, म्हणजेच अजूनही या विषयावरील जागरूकतेची गरज आहे.

In your words, what does 'Media Literacy' mean? / तुमच्या मते 'माध्यम साक्षरता' म्हणजे काय?

155 responses

Media literacy
Media literacy is something that we gain some sort of educational or personal and professional information for guidance that we approach through the social media
knowing how to understand and judge the information you see or hear
People/society perceive what a perceived (cameraman) perceives, so whatever we see on social is basically a performance i believe i might not be the most mature but mature enough to understand social media should be at it' place and my real life starts somewhere . I believe we as students should be made literate about perceptions, reality, living of ourself. Because it is difficult even for our parents to teach us that since they never had SOCIAL media, our basically SANSKAR happens on media, goals , life , ambitions are many a times influenced , it is veryyyy imp to be aware about what and how we perceive things.
It means thinking skills create and act
Media literacy means media educated person

In your words, what does 'Media Literacy' mean? / तुमच्या मते 'माध्यम साक्षरता' म्हणजे काय?

155 responses

Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act with all forms of media. It involves critically assessing information to understand its accuracy, intent, and underlying messages, and includes the responsibility to create and share content ethically.
Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create messages in all forms of media
Education
Media should know what to show
In social media we use to do social work on the media
Teach media literacy in school
Awareness of the surroundings
I don't know how to say because I really do not know the proper meaning of media literacy

In your words, what does 'Media Literacy' mean? / तुमच्या मते 'माध्यम साक्षरता' म्हणजे काय?

155 responses

Media literacy is the ability to access analyze. Evaluate, create using all forms of communication
Media literacy, in simple words, means the ability to understand, analyze, and question the media you see every day – such as videos, news, social media posts, advertisements, and online content. It involves skills like: • Recognizing the purpose behind a message (to inform, entertain, persuade, or sell something) • Checking if information is true or misleading • Understanding how media can influence your thoughts, feelings, and decisions
Media literacy ka matlab hota hai ki hum kisi bhi media content ko sahi tarah samajh sake, uski sachchai jaan sake, fake aur real news mein fark kar sake, aur social media ya news ko responsibly use karein. Isse hume pata chalta hai ki information kaise banayi jaati hai aur hum uska sahi tarah use kaise kar sakte hai.
To know and have knowledge that whatever we see online is not always true
Media literacy means knowing and being aware of current situations.
Ability to analyse

एकंदरीत या प्रतिसादांवरून असे दिसते की विद्यार्थ्यांना माध्यम साक्षरतेबद्दल प्राथमिक समज आहे—ती केवळ माहिती वाचनाची नव्हे तर विचारपूर्वक आणि नैतिकतेने माध्यमांचा वापर करण्याची प्रक्रिया आहे.

माध्यम साक्षरता ही आजच्या डिजिटल युगातील अत्यंत आवश्यक कौशल्य मानली जाऊ शकते, कारण ती युवकांना योग्य माहिती ओळखण्याची आणि चुकीच्या माहितीपासून स्वतःला वाचवण्याची क्षमता प्रदान करते.



त्याचबरोबर माहिती संकलन साधन: प्रश्नावली (Questionnaire) वापरून केंद्रित गट चर्चा वडाळ्याच्या एन.के.ई.एस कनिष्ठ महाविद्यालयातील संवाद साधला. त्यावर विद्यार्थ्यांनी माध्यमातील रोल मॉडेल्स विरुद्ध वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्स या विषयावर चर्चा केली त्यावेळी खालील मुद्दे समोर आले.

१. माध्यमातील रोल मॉडेल्स बहुतेक वेळा अवास्तव व अतिरंजित दाखवले जातात, त्यामुळे तरुणांमध्ये अशक्य अपेक्षा व स्वतःबद्दल कमीपणा निर्माण होऊ शकतो.



२. वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्स (जसे शिक्षक, पालक, समाजकार्यकर्ते) अधिक सहज उपलब्ध असल्याने त्यांच्याकडून प्रत्यक्ष मार्गदर्शन, प्रेरणा आणि जीवनातील व्यावहारिक कौशल्ये शिकता येतात.

३. सोशल मीडियावरील सेलिब्रिटी अनेकदा फक्त यशाचे आकर्षक पैलू दाखवतात, परंतु वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्स यशामागील मेहनत, अडचणी व मूल्ये स्पष्टपणे सांगतात.



४. माध्यमातील रोल मॉडेल्सचे प्रभाव तात्पुरते वाटतात, तर वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्सचा प्रभाव दीर्घकालीन व वैयक्तिक विकासाला अधिक पूरक असतो.

वरील संपूर्ण संशोधनाचा अभ्यास करता, दिलेले अपेक्षित निष्कर्ष मोठ्या प्रमाणात साध्य झाले आहेत असे दिसून येते. सर्वेक्षणाच्या निकालांनुसार आणि केंद्रित गट चर्चेच्या निष्कर्षांनुसार युवकांचा कल माध्यमातील व्यक्तिमत्त्वांकडे

(अभिनेते, इन्फ्लुएंसर, यूट्यूबर्स) जास्त आहे, हे स्पष्ट होते.

निष्कर्ष

त्यामुळे पहिला निष्कर्ष — बहुतांश युवक माध्यमातील व्यक्तींना आदर्श मानतात — सिद्ध झाला आहे.

दुसरा निष्कर्ष — सोशल मीडियावरील ग्लॅमर आणि लक्झरी जीवनशैलीमुळे अनुकरणाची प्रवृत्ती वाढते — हे देखील सर्वेक्षणातील 41% प्रतिसाद आणि चर्चेतील मतांवरून संपूर्णतः सत्य ठरते. युवक सोशल मीडिया ट्रेंड्स आणि प्रसिद्ध व्यक्तींच्या जीवनशैलीकडे आकर्षित होत असल्याचे दिसून आले.

तिसरा निष्कर्ष — वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्स मूल्याधारित मार्गदर्शन देतात, पण त्यांचा पोहोच मर्यादित आहे — हे देखील डेटा आणि चर्चेतील प्रतिसादांवरून स्पष्ट झाले आहे. विद्यार्थ्यांनी पालक, शिक्षक, समाजसेवक हे प्रेरणादायी असल्याचे मान्य केले असले, तरी त्यांचा प्रभाव सोशल मीडियातील व्यक्तींइतका व्यापक नाही, हे दिसून आले.

चौथा निष्कर्ष — माध्यम साक्षरतेचा अभाव युवकांच्या विचारांवर परिणाम करतो — हा सर्वेक्षणातील "Media Literacy" प्रश्नांच्या उत्तरांमधून सत्य सिद्ध झाला आहे. अनेक विद्यार्थ्यांना माध्यम साक्षरतेचा नेमका अर्थ ठाऊक नसल्याचे दिसले, म्हणजेच याबाबत अधिक जागरूकतेची गरज आहे.

शेवटचा निष्कर्ष — शैक्षणिक आणि सामाजिक संस्थांनी माध्यम साक्षरतेचे कार्यक्रम राबविल्यास संतुलित दृष्टिकोन वाढवता येईल — हा अभ्यासातून सकारात्मकपणे सूचित होतो. विद्यार्थ्यांनी मीडिया साक्षरतेचे शिक्षण आवश्यक असल्याचे मान्य केले आहे.

एकूण निष्कर्ष

सर्व अपेक्षित निष्कर्ष संशोधनाच्या डेटा द्वारे आणि विद्यार्थ्यांच्या मतांद्वारे पूर्ण झाले असून, प्रस्तुत संशोधनाने माध्यमातील आणि वास्तवातील रोल मॉडेल्समधील फरक तसेच माध्यम साक्षरतेचे महत्त्व प्रभावीपणे अधोरेखित केले आहे.

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निवडक मराठी आणि हिंदी सिनेमांतील व्यसनाधीन तरुणाई - आजचे वास्तव

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गोषवारा (Abstract)

आजच्या धकाधकीच्या जीवनामध्ये माणूस प्रत्येक घडीला नवं सुख शोधू पाहतो. हे सुख शोधत असताना तो बऱ्याचदा त्या सुखाचे नवे आयाम शोधत असतो ; परंतु कित्येकदा या सुखाच्या शोधामध्ये त्याला स्वतःच्या दुःखावर मात करण्यासाठी वेगवेगळ्या साधनांची आवश्यकता वाटते. सामाजिक परिपाकातून या सगळ्यांचा विचार करत असताना एक गोष्ट यावेळी लक्षात येते, की आधुनिक समाजामध्ये ड्रग्स, अल्कोहोल, निकोटीन तसेच डिजिटल व्यसन या सगळ्या पार्श्वभूमीवर तरुण मंडळी स्वतःच आयुष्य बांधू पाहतात. या सगळ्यांचे दूरगामी परिणामही त्या तरुणांच्या विश्वावर होताना आपण बघतो. साहित्य आणि चित्रपट हा समाजाचा आरसा असतो. चित्रपट आणि साहित्यामधून समाजामध्ये घडणाऱ्या घटनांचा तार्किक दृष्ट्या अभ्यास करून त्याचे चित्रण केले जाते.

या शोधनिबंधामध्ये मराठी आणि हिंदी या भाषेतील काही चित्रपटांमध्ये व्यसनांशी निगडित असणारी पात्र, त्या पात्रांच्या आयुष्यावर त्या व्यसनांचे होणारे दूरगामी परिणाम आणि या सगळ्यांचा भवताल तपासून पाहण्याची जबाबदारी मी घेतली आहे. या दृष्टीने चित्रपट, त्यातील कथानक, त्या कथानकाच्या अनुषंगाने येणारी पात्र, त्या पात्रांच्या आयुष्यावर व्यसनांमुळे होणारा परिणाम या सगळ्यांचा अभ्यास या शोधनिबंधामध्ये केला आहे. यासाठी विविध सिनेमे पाहून त्या अनुषंगाने व्यसनांचा आणि व्यसनांमुळे होणाऱ्या परिणामांचा आढावा घेण्यात आलेला आहे.

सदर शोधनिबंध हा सामाजिक , सांस्कृतिक आणि मानसशास्त्रीय अंगाने अभ्यासला गेला आहे. समाजातील व्यसन, त्यातून निर्माण होणारे आर्थिक प्रश्न, मानसिक ताणतणाव, दारिद्र्य, एकलकोंडेपणा, सामाजिक दडपण , मानसिक कोंडी या सगळ्यांमधून बाहेर निघण्याचा एकमेव उपाय म्हणजे व्यसन , असं समजणारी तरुण पिढी ही या शोधनिबंधाचा महत्वाचा विषय आहे. विविध सिनेमांनी व्यसनांचे शारीरिक , मानसिक आणि सामाजिक परिणाम वास्तववादी पद्धतीने मांडले आहे. या संशोधनामध्ये व्यसनावर आधारित चित्रपटातील पात्र, कथानक यांचा सखोल अभ्यास करण्यात आला आहे.

व्यसनावर आधारित असणारे सिनेमे अभ्यासून त्या दृष्टिकोनातून तरुणांचा अभ्यास करणे आणि व्यसनाधीनतेचे सामाजिक , सांस्कृतिक आणि मानसशास्त्रीय चित्रण करणे चित्रपटांचा समाजावर होणारा परिणाम तपासणे हे या शोधनिबंधाचे प्रमुख उद्दिष्ट आहे.

व्यसनातून बाहेर पडण्यासाठी कुटुंब आणि समाज यांची भूमिका किती महत्त्वपूर्ण ठरते याचाही अभ्यास या शोधनिबंधामध्ये केला आहे. व्यसनाधीन तरुणांचे पुनर्वसन करणे हा यामागील महत्वाचा उद्देश आहे.

कळ शब्द (key words)

सिनेमा, व्यसन, तरुणाई, मानसिक कोंडी, सामाजिक दडपण, कुटुंब, पुनर्वसन.

भारतीय समाजव्यवस्था ज्या पद्धतीने आपल्याला जीवन जगण्यासाठी प्रेरित करते, ती निश्चितपणे आशादायी आहेच, परंतु तितकीच गुंतागुंताचीही आहे. ही गुंतागुंत समाजातील अनेक घटकांमुळे निर्माण होते. वैयक्तिक, कौटुंबिक, सामाजिक, आर्थिक आणि अनेक स्तरांवर व्यक्ती या सगळ्यांशी झुंजत असतो. यातूनच अनेक सामाजिक समस्यांचा जन्म होतो. रिचर्ड म्हणतो, त्याप्रमाणे समाजातील अनेक सदस्यांच्या हातून घडणाऱ्या अनेक आक्षेपांही आणि अनावश्यक वाटणाऱ्या वागणुकीच्या पद्धती म्हणजे सामाजिक समस्या आहेत. आणि समाजाला ती समस्या आक्षेपांही वाटणे ही त्या समस्यांची खरी कसोटी आहे. उदा. जुगार, मद्यपान इ. याही पलीकडे जाऊन अनेक व्यक्तींना गर्द या मादक आणि अत्यंत अपायकारक द्रव्य किंवा पावडरचे ज्याचे नाव 'ब्राऊन शुगर' असे आहे, त्याचीही सवय लागलेली दिसून येते. कुटुंबातील दारिद्र्य, गरिबी, निराशा, दुःख, विरह, अपयशी लग्न या सगळ्यांमधून या मादक द्रव्यांचे सेवन वाढल्याची अनेक उदाहरणे आपण आपल्या समाजात पाहू शकतो. गर्दच्या आहारी जाण्यामुळे व्यक्तीचे आणि त्या अनुषंगाने त्या कुटुंबाचेही नुकसान होते हेही आपण समाजामध्ये पाहू शकतो. यातूनच धूम्रपान, मद्यपान, अफू, चरस, गांजा, चिलीम या सगळ्यांची सवय माणसांना लागते. त्यामागची काही कारणे आपल्याला ठळक रितीने मांडता येतील. जसे - (१) माणसाच्या आयुष्यातील दुःख (२) गैरसमज आणि अज्ञान (३) फॅशन (४) मानसिक कारणे. या सगळ्यांचा माणूस म्हणून होणाऱ्या जडणघडणीवर काय परिणाम होतो, यासाठी आपल्याला साहित्याची मदत घेता येईल; कारण साहित्य हे अभिव्यक्तीचे परिपूर्ण माध्यम आहे.

समाजात घडणाऱ्या अनेकविध घटकांचा परिणाम साहित्यावर होत असतो. समाजातील विविध घडामोडी, सर्व स्तरांतील प्रश्न, विविधांगी समस्या, समाजातील व्यक्तींचे विचार, प्रवृत्ती या सगळ्यांचे परिणाम साहित्यावर झालेले दिसून येतात. तेनवे सांगितल्याप्रमाणे साहित्य आणि समाज यांचा परस्पर संबंध असतो. हा संबंध वंश, काळ आणि परिस्थिती यांनी प्रेरित झालेला असतो. समाजात त्या त्या काळामध्ये असणाऱ्या वेगवेगळ्या प्रवृत्ती, त्या प्रवृत्तींबद्दल असणारे वादविवाद, वेगवेगळे मतप्रवाह, संस्कृती, सामाजिक मतभेद, सामाजिक प्रश्न या सगळ्यांचा उहापोह साहित्यामध्ये केलेला दिसून येतो. साहित्यनिर्मितीची बीजे समाजातच रुजलेली असतात, त्यामुळे साहित्य हे समाजाभिमुख असते असे म्हणता येईल. या घटकांचा अभ्यास आपल्याला समाजशास्त्रीय अंगाने अधिक करता येईल. त्यासाठी अनेक भारतीय भाषांतील सिनेमे आणि वेब सिरीज तसेच काही नाटकांचे दाखले देता येतील. यांतून मानवी मनाचा तळ शोधण्याचे महत्त्वाचे काम केले गेले. मानवी जीवनातील भकासपण, एकटेपण, स्पष्ट तरीही बकाल जीवन जगणाऱ्या माणसांची दुःख तसेच श्रीमंत कुटुंबातून आलेल्या आणि श्रील करण्याच्या नादात आपले आयुष्य दावणीला लावणाऱ्या माणसांचे दुःख यांतून मांडले गेले.

भारतीय चित्रपटसृष्टी आधीपासून बोलकी राहिली आहे. चित्रपटांमध्ये दाखवत असलेले सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक भाग किंबहुना आर्थिक जीवन या सगळ्यांचे अनेक वेळा समाजामध्ये अनुकरण केले गेले. कधी ते सकारात्मक ठरले तर कधी नकारात्मक परंतु सिनेमाचा पगडा हा भारतीय समाजव्यवस्थेवर सुरुवातीपासून मोठ्या प्रमाणावर राहिला आहे, याची अनेक उदाहरणे आपल्याला पाहता येतील. वेगवेगळ्या डायमॅन्शनने हे सिनेमे पाहता येतात. सिनेमा पाहण्याचा आपला नेमका हेतू काय आहे? हे आपल्याला कळले की त्या अनुषंगाने सिनेमांची निवड करता येते. काही सिनेमे निव्वळ मनोरंजन करण्यासाठी बनवलेले दिसून येतात, तर काही सिनेमे प्रबोधन करण्यासाठी. प्रत्येक सिनेमा बनवण्यामागचा हेतू वेगवेगळा दिसून येतो. गल्लेभरू सिनेमे वेगळे आणि कलात्मक बाजू असलेले सिनेमे वेगळे. कलात्मक सिनेमे तितकेसे प्रकाशझोतात येत नाहीत, परंतु गल्लेभरू सिनेमा पाहिला की त्यात युवा पिढी गुरफटून गेलेली आपल्याला दिसते. त्यांना हवं असलेलं, त्यांना ज्या गोष्टीचं आकर्षण आहे, त्या गोष्टी सिनेमांत दिसल्या की त्या सिनेमांसाठी तिकीटघराकडे रांगा लागलेल्या दिसून येतात. या सिनेमांमधून अनेकदा अश्लीलता, बिभत्सता, व्यसनाधीनता, मादक आणि अमली

पदार्थांचे सेवन करण्याचे फॅड दिसून येते. कधी कधी या सगळ्यांमधून युवकांना अतिशयोक्ती वाटते, तर कधी युवक याचे अनुकरण करताना दिसतात. हिंदी भाषेत तर अशी अनेक उदाहरणे पाहायला मिळतील. देव आनंदच्या 'हरे रामा हरे कृष्णा' या सिनेमातील गांजा आणि ड्रग्स सेवन करणे हे काहीतरी वेगळं अनुभवायला मिळतंय म्हणून वेडावून जाणारी नवी पिढी आता 'अॅनिमल' या चित्रपटापर्यंत येऊन पोहचली. या प्रवासामध्ये 'रेगे' सारखे मराठी सिनेमे तसेच हिंदीमध्ये 'उडता पंजाब' आणि 'फॅशन' सारखे महत्वाचे सिनेमे आणि 'डबा कार्टेल' सारखे शबाना आझमी महत्वाची भूमिका साकारत असलेली वेब सिरीज असो या सगळ्यातून तरुणाई नेमकी कोणत्या दिशेला पाऊल टाकतेय, याबद्दल प्रश्न पडू लागलेत.

'हरे रामा, हरे कृष्णा' या सिनेमात ड्रग्स हे केवळ नशेचे साधन राहत नाही, तर ते दुःख विसरण्याचे आणि त्यापासून पळण्याचे माध्यम आहे. हा सिनेमा केवळ व्यसनावर भाष्य करत नाही तर विभक्त कुटुंबपद्धती, त्यातून निर्माण झालेले कलह, एकमेकांपासून विभक्त झालेले आई वडील आणि यावेळी लहान मुलांची होणारी कुचंबणा या सगळ्यांमधून बाहेर पडण्यासाठी ड्रग्सचा घेतलेला आधार हे या सिनेमाचे महत्वाचे सूत्र ठरते. तेव्हा ड्रग्स हे निस्सीम सुखाचे साधन वाटू लागते. त्याचप्रमाणे अभिजित पानसे दिग्दर्शित 'रेगे' हा सिनेमा तरुणाई, काहीतरी श्रीलिंग करण्याची त्यांची वृत्ती, तारुण्यातला जोश आणि या जोशामध्ये घेतल्या जाणाऱ्या ड्रग्सचा आधार हे पाहून आजची पिढी तिथेही आकर्षित होते. 'चिमणी पाखरं' या चित्रपटातही दारुमुळे एखादा हसता खेळता संसार कसा देशोधडीला लागतो, याबद्दल काही भाग आलेला दिसून येतो. याचवेळी 'उडता पंजाब' सारखा सिनेमा महत्वाचा ठरतो. पंजाब राज्यातील ड्रग्सच्या अनैतिक व्यवहारावर भाष्य करणारा हा सिनेमा अनेक अंगाने महत्वाचा ठरतो. ड्रग्सच्या विळख्यात अडकलेली आणि कोकेनसारख्या अंमली पदार्थांचे सेवन करणारी तरुणाई आपल्याला यात दिसून येते. ड्रग्समुळे तरुणाई कोणत्या खाईत लोटली जात आहे, याचे वास्तववादी चित्रण या सिनेमातून येते. तर मधुर भांडारकरच्या 'फॅशन' सिनेमातून फॅशनच्या जगातील वास्तव, नैराश्य, स्पर्धा, त्यावर मात करण्यासाठी नशेचा तसेच ड्रग्स आणि इतर अंमली पदार्थांचा घेतलेला आधार आणि त्यातून तरुण पिढीची घुसमट आणि त्यावर मात करण्यासाठी त्यांनी केलेले सकारात्मक आणि नकारात्मक अशा दोन्ही पातळीवरचे प्रयत्न हे या चित्रपटाचे महत्वाचे सूत्र आहे. आपल्याला फॅशन व्यवसायात टिकून राहायचे असेल तर आपल्याला अपरिहार्यपणे हे सगळं स्वीकारावं लागेल, अशी धारणा आजच्या तरुण पिढीची झालेली दिसून येते. अर्थात याला काही सन्माननीय अपवादही आहेतच. ते ही नाकारून चालणार नाही. 'देवदास' या सिनेमासंदर्भातही असा विचार करता येतो. देवदास ही कोण्या कफल्लक दारुड्याची शोकांतिका वाटत नाही, तर तिच्या पोटात विलक्षण जीवनानुभूतीचे दर्शन पदोपदी घडते. देवदासच्या त्रिकोणातील प्रत्येक कोन, मग तो देवदास असो किंवा चंद्रमुखी किंवा पारो या साऱ्या ढळढळीत वास्तवावर बेतलेल्या व्यक्तिरेखा आहेत. सोप्या शब्दात समृद्ध आशयाने भरलेला 'देवदास' हा सिनेमा पुन्हा एकदा आपल्याला 'एकच प्याला' या नाटकाची आठवण करून देताना दिसतो; मात्र या सिनेमात देवदास हा दारुड्यांचा प्रतिनिधी नव्हे तर तरुणाईचे प्रतीक वाटतो. इथे अनेक तरुण युवक युवती एकमेकांसाठी झुरतात, सुखी संसाराची मोठाली स्वप्ने बघतात; पण त्यानंतर पड खातात, दगड होतात, विवाहाला सामोरे जाण्यापूर्वी अशा अनेक पारो आपल्या देवदासांना धाडसाने भेटल्या आहेत, पण त्यांचा भेकडपणा पाहून परिस्थिती समोर वाकल्याही आहेत. प्रत्येक व्यक्तीला स्वतःमध्ये देवदास, पारो तर कधी चंद्रमुखी दिसू लागते. स्वतःला ते त्या जागी ठेवून सिनेमाचा आनंद घेऊ लागतात किंवा त्यांचे कॅथार्सिस तरी होते, म्हणजे या चित्रपटांच्या माध्यमातून त्यांच्या भावनांचे विरेचन होण्यास मदत होते. अनेक गावातून, शहरातून भारतवर्षात घडणाऱ्या सामान्यांच्या या कहाणीचे एक रूप म्हणजे 'देवदास' आहे असे मला वाटते.

थोडक्यात आपण मराठी आणि हिंदी अशा दोन्ही भाषांमधील चित्रपटांची पाहणी केली असता, आपल्या लक्षात येते, की या चित्रपटांमध्ये अनेकदा तरुणांचे प्रश्न हे प्रेम आणि व्यसन यांच्याशी संबंधित असलेले दिसून येतात. व्यसन करण्यामध्ये काहीतरी श्रील आहे किंवा व्यसन करण्यात मोठेपणा आहे किंवा व्यसन हे आपल्या दुःखापासून पळवाटा शोधण्याचा एक मार्ग आहे, अशा पद्धतीने

या तरुणांनी या व्यसनाला आत्मसात केलं आहे. यातून बाहेर पडण्यासाठी तरुणाईला चांगल्या चित्रपटांची, त्यासाठीच्या चांगल्या मार्गदर्शनाची आणि अर्थातच चांगल्या समुपदेशनाची गरज आहे असे मला प्रामाणिकपणे वाटते ; परंतु या चित्रपटांमधूनही आपल्याला अनेक गोष्टी शिकायला मिळतात याचा मात्र आपल्याला सतत अभिमान वाटत राहतो असे म्हणता येईल.

संदर्भ -

- १) प्रा. गंदेवार एस. एन, भारतीय समाज वादातीत विषय आणि समस्या, विद्याभारती प्रकाशन
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