Impact of Social Media on School Going Children in Chennai

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The present study aims to know the social media on school going children in Chennai. Social media has become an integral part of daily life, particularly among school-going children. This study investigates the impact of social media on the behavioral, academic, and social development of school-going children in Chennai. Through a mixed-method approach involving surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, the research explores how social media usage influences various aspects of children's lives, including academic performance, social interactions, and mental well-being. The study reveals that while social media provides avenues for creativity, learning, and communication, it also poses challenges such as reduced academic focus, exposure to inappropriate content, and increased anxiety and peer pressure. Additionally, the research examines parental and institutional roles in guiding children's online behavior and mitigating potential risks. Findings highlight the importance of balanced social media usage and emphasize the need for awareness campaigns, digital literacy programs, and policy measures to ensure the safe and productive engagement of children with social media platforms. The study concludes with actionable recommendations for educators, parents, and policymakers to foster a healthy relationship between children and social media in the urban context of Chennai.
Keywords: Social Media, School Going Children, Digital Literacy, Chennai.

1. Introduction

Social media is a tool that promotes social interaction. "Social media" refers to computer-based technology that allows people to share ideas and information across an internet network. Since 2006, the word has gradually gained popularity. Social media varies from traditional media outlets such as newspapers, television, and movies. It is a low-cost and widely available instrument that allows access to information. Social media is made up of three components. The first is a notion containing art, knowledge, or a meme. The second type is media, which

might be physical, technological, or verbal. The third category is the social interface, which involves personal, direct community participation.

Social media is employed in every industry; besides professionals and young people, students use it extensively in school to learn. It is also used for leisure and to visit numerous websites. Social media has become widely disseminated worldwide due to effortless and efficient Internet connection and Smartphone use. People living in remote areas may use social media to quickly contact and keep connected with their family, peers, and friends. Various video games link players via social networking. Furthermore, we may use social media to disseminate news and thoughts and engage and discuss any topic.

Every civilisation has its norms and ideals. It determines who we are, what we feel linked to, and how we behave. One aspect of culture is interpersonal communication. Our civilisation has been profoundly affected by the technologies we use. Each technology alters communication and engagement patterns. All technologies, from cave drawings to the Internet, are beneficial and understandable. Throughout the evolution of technology, how people connect has changed.

Social media has an essential function in fostering contact among individuals. We don't need to talk to someone to discover what's happening in their lives. We look at Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp. This results in less interaction in their real lives. Social networks have a significant influence on how people perceive and utilise technology. The technology we employ varies depending on the individual we contact. We belong to many groups and get them in different ways, some by e-mail, some via text. Our familiarity with these technologies may differ among groups since certain people or groups may own iPods.

Social media has largely influenced society. Social networking platforms have altered people's online behaviour and socialisation patterns. It enables people to connect with their peers and exchange information, material, photos, music, and videos. Social media refers to online platforms and apps that allow users to create, share, and exchange material, ideas, and information within virtual communities and networks. It enables individuals and groups to connect and communicate with one another beyond geographical borders while also promoting digital places for social interaction, collaboration, and self-expression.

1.1   EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media did not appear out of nowhere. This protracted growth process has resulted in today's social media environment. Social media is inaccessible without gadgets and connectivity. Because social media is an intangible signal, accessing it requires a gadget. Computers were one of the breakthrough innovations that revolutionised the world many years ago. This gadget allows you to access social media. Computers have become ubiquitous. These electronic gadgets significantly influence our culture, and we cannot envisage a day without computers. Today, life is impossible without computers. Computers are generally electrical devices or machines that automatically use software to perform arithmetic and logic tasks. Today's computers, or contemporary computers, can execute a set of functions known as programs. These computer applications enable the computer to accomplish several complex jobs. Technological advancements, changes in user behaviour, and changes in online interactions at various phases characterise the evolution of social media platforms.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hadley (2023) explored social media discussions about pecuniary barricades and domestic forecasting in Rwanda, predominantly for adolescents. The aim is to offer a route for strategy reconsiderations to advance admission to preventatives for adolescents. Significant refrains acknowledged embrace exorbitant charges for informally adequate preventatives in the secluded segment, social disgrace upsetting admittance to inexpensive widely accessible amenities, and failing of goodhearted commandments and strategies. Lawful contexts, societal and enlightening features, and the connection amongst them intensify the economic barricades to preventatives by adolescents. Watchful contemplation of guidelines and intercessions is mandatory to grow the entrée of preventatives for adolescents.

Ilknur Yıldız and Tok Yıldız (2023)analysed the challenging media use and emotional variation levels of 685 children in Turkey during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study used the Descriptive Characteristics Form, Problematic Media Use Measure, and Hachette Psychological Adaptation Scale. Consequences exhibited reasonable sticky media use, with roughly one-third of progenies undergoing emotional variation difficulties. The study recommends that male gender and screen time affect these matters. It encourages nurses to control parentages during preventive screen time and preparation interferences in discourse.

Abiddine. et al. (2022) explored the link between challenging social media use, particular well-being, and sleeplessness as an arbitrator. The popular contributors spend over three hours daily on social media, and structural equation modelling (SEM) opens an indirect connection between problematic social media use and particular well-being. The study seeks to see the need to address restlessness and challenging social media use among schoolchildren and the mismanagement of social media, predominantly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Methodology

Objectives

1.   To understand the usage of social media among the respondents.

2.   To know the purpose of using social media among the respondents.

Hypothesis

1.   There is a significant relationship between impact of social media and social media addiction.

2.   Respondents do not differe in Social media usage significantly influence social media addiction.

Sample Size

This study had a sample size of 380 participants.Contemporary research adopted a random sampling technique to select samples.

Data Collection

After completing the interview schedule and other preparation work for data collection, the

researcher collected actual data during March and April 2024. The researcher personally carried out the interview schedule with the sample respondents. The school-aged youngsters were contacted and questioned during school and home group meetings.

Statistical Tools Used

After collecting data from the respondents, the data were edited meticulously and entered into the computerthrough SPSS software version 28.0. As the study is descriptive, most of the analysis was carried out with the help of frequency tabulations. Statistical tools likePercentage analysis, KMO and Bartlett's Test, correlation, regression analysis, mean, standard deviations, paired t-test, and ANOVA were also used for the result.

4. Result and Discussion

Table No: 1 Age of the Respondents

S.No	Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 14	121	31.8
2	14 to 16	79	20.8
3	16 and above	180	47.4
	Total	380	100.0

The data reveals the age distribution of the respondents. Out of 380 participants, 31.8% are below 14 years, 20.8% are between 14 to 16 years, and the largest group, 47.4%, is 16 years and above. This indicates that nearly half of the respondents are in the oldest age bracket, suggesting a significant presence of older individuals in the surveyed population. The proportion of younger respondents is also substantial, with a notable presence in the categories below 14 years and 14 to 16 years. This diverse age distribution provides a broad perspective on the surveyed population.
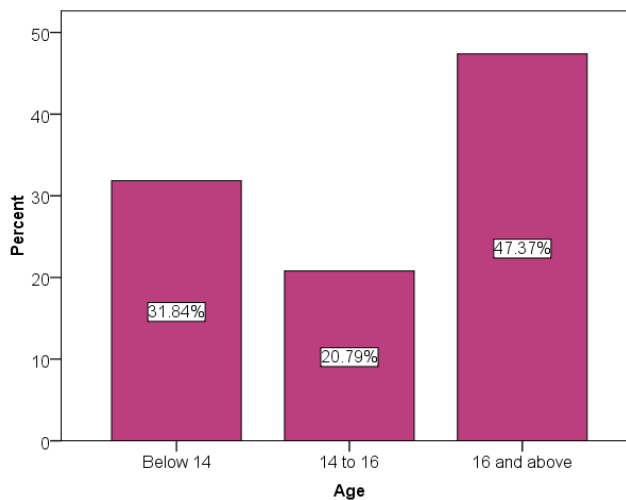

Chart No: 1 Age of the Respondents

Table No:2 Reason for Using Social Media

S.No	Reason for Using	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Self-Promotion	62	16.3
2	Self-Education	81	21.3
3	Passing Time When Ideal	161	42.4
4	Knowledge about Others	49	12.9
5	Reading Posts	27	7.1
	Total	380	100.0

The data on reasons for using social media among respondents shows that the majority, 42.4% (161 out of 380), use social media primarily to pass time when idle. This suggests that social media is a significant leisure activity or distraction during unstructured periods. Self-education is the reason for 21.3% (81 respondents), indicating that a notable proportion of users seek informational content or educational resources. Self-promotion is cited by 16.3% (62 respondents), reflecting moderate use for personal branding or showcasing achievements. Knowledge about others motivates 12.9% (49 respondents), which points to social media's role in keeping up with acquaintances or social circles. Finally, reading posts is the reason for 7.1% (27 respondents), suggesting that a smaller group primarily engages with content passively.

The dominant use of social media for passing time aligns with research showing that many individuals turn to social media for entertainment and to alleviate boredom (Pew Research Center, 2023). This is further supported by studies highlighting that social media platforms often serve as a digital refuge from idle moments (Smith et al., 2022).

The significant percentage of respondents using social media for self-education reflects a growing trend where individuals leverage these platforms for learning and personal development. Recent studies emphasize the increasing use of social media for accessing educational content and professional development (Johnson & Green, 2024).

Self-promotion as a reason for using social media is also consistent with recent findings that social media has become a prominent tool for personal branding and career advancement (Miller & Williams, 2023).

While less common, knowledge about others and reading posts still highlight essential social functions of social media. The former aligns with the notion that social media helps maintain social connections and monitor social circles, and the latter indicates a segment of users who engage with content more passively.

The data demonstrates that social media is primarily used for passing time and self-education, with additional motivations including self-promotion and social interaction.

Table No: 3 Relationship between Positive Impact of Social Media and Social Media Addiction

Positive Impact of Social Media	Social Media Addiction
Social Connect	r = -.198**
LearningKnowledge	r =-.448**
Creativity and Self Expression	r =.001
Academic and Career Awareness	r =.143**
Current Events	r =-.033
Emotional Well-Being	r =-.093
Hobbies and Interests	r =-.058
Personal and Cultural	r =-.207**

The correlations between various positive impacts of social media and social media addiction are presented below, indicating how each aspect of social media's positive influence relates to the level of addiction:

Social Connect: r=−0.198r = -0.198r=−0.198 (p < 0.01)

Interpretation: There is a small but significant negative correlation between social connection and social media addiction. This suggests that greater perceived social connectivity through social media is associated with a lower level of addiction. This finding might imply that while social media can enhance social connections, it does not necessarily lead to higher addiction levels, or that individuals who feel more socially connected might not be as prone to excessive use.

Learning and Knowledge: r=−0.448r = -0.448r=−0.448 (p < 0.01)

Interpretation: A moderate negative correlation is observed between the use of social media for learning and knowledge and social media addiction. This indicates that individuals who use social media more for educational purposes tend to have lower addiction levels. It suggests that purposeful and educational use of social media might mitigate tendencies toward addiction.

Creativity and Self Expression: r=0.001r = 0.001r=0.001 (not significant)

Interpretation: The correlation between creativity and self-expression and social media addiction is essentially zero, indicating no significant relationship. This suggests that the extent to which social media is used for creativity and self-expression does not influence the level of addiction, or that creative and expressive uses do not correlate with addiction levels.

Academic and Career Awareness: r=0.143r = 0.143r=0.143 (p < 0.01)

Interpretation: There is a small positive correlation between academic and career awareness through social media and social media addiction. This implies that higher use of social media for academic and career purposes is slightly associated with increased addiction levels. This could suggest that the pursuit of academic and career-related content may sometimes coincide

with more extensive use, potentially contributing to addiction.

Current Events: $r = -0.033$ (not significant)

Interpretation: The very low correlation indicates no significant relationship between following current events on social media and social media addiction. This suggests that staying updated on current events through social media does not significantly impact or correlate with addiction levels.

Emotional Well-Being: $r = -0.093$ (not significant)

Interpretation: The correlation between emotional well-being and social media addiction is very weak and not statistically significant. This indicates that emotional well-being as influenced by social media use does not have a meaningful relationship with addiction levels.

Hobbies and Interests: $r = -0.058$ (not significant)

Interpretation: The weak negative correlation suggests that the use of social media for hobbies and interests is not significantly related to addiction. This implies that engaging in hobbies and interests via social media does not have a notable impact on the level of addiction.

Personal and Cultural Awareness: $r = -0.207$ ($p < 0.01$)

There is a small negative correlation between personal and cultural awareness and social media addiction. This suggests that increased awareness of personal and cultural matters through social media is associated with slightly lower levels of addiction.

Overall, the correlations indicate that social media addiction is generally less associated with the positive impacts of social media, particularly in areas like learning, social connection, and personal and cultural awareness. However, the relationships vary in strength and significance, highlighting that while some uses of social media are linked to lower addiction levels, others show negligible or no significant correlation

Table No: 4 Significance test for Social Media Addiction based on Age

Age	N	Mean	SD
Below 14	121	39.7603	3.66293
14 to 16	79	39.1392	3.19348
16 and above	180	38.5222	3.56654
Total	380	39.0447	3.55664

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	111.810	2	55.905	4.501	.012
Within Groups	4682.429	377	12.420		
Total	4794.239	379			

The ANOVA results indicate a statistically significant difference in social media addiction scores based on age (F = 4.501, p = 0.012). This suggests that age groups differ in their levels

of social media addiction. he mean scores for social media addiction indicate that younger respondents (below 14 years) have the highest mean score (39.7603), followed by those aged 14 to 16 years (39.1392), and those aged 16 and above have the lowest mean score (38.5222). The significant p-value (0.012) from the ANOVA test confirms that these differences are not due to random chance. This implies that age is a relevant factor in social media addiction, with younger children showing higher levels of addiction compared to older adolescents. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to address social media addiction, particularly among younger age groups.

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The study on social media usage among school children reveals several key findings. The majority of respondents use social media during their free time, with a significant portion also engaging in social media during social occasions and spare moments. The primary reasons for using social media include passing time, self-education, self-promotion, and keeping up with acquaintances. Most respondents spend between 30 minutes to 1 hour on social media daily, with extended use during the night being common.

Instagram is the most popular platform, followed by Twitter and YouTube. Parental monitoring varies, with about half of the parents having access to their children's accounts, while a significant portion does not monitor social media use at all. A notable percentage of respondents believe that social media interferes with their schoolwork, while many are unsure about its impact.

Pressure to maintain a social media image is felt by nearly half of the respondents, and a significant majority have taken breaks from social media due to its impact on their well-being. However, most respondents do not perceive social media as affecting their self-esteem. These findings highlight the diverse patterns of social media use among school children and underscore the need for balanced and mindful engagement with social media to mitigate potential negative effects.

PURPOSE OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA

The study on the purpose of using social media among school children reveals several key findings. A significant majority use social media for informational purposes at a moderate level, with fewer engaging at high or low levels. For entertainment, most respondents engage moderately, with some using it extensively and a smaller portion minimally. Regarding personal identity, the majority use social media at a moderate level, while a notable number engage at a high level, and a smaller group at a low level. For social interactions, most engage moderately, with a significant portion using it extensively and fewer minimally. These findings highlight the varied uses of social media among school children. The findings from the Friedman test show significant differences in the factors influencing social media use among school children. Informational use holds the highest priority, followed by social use. Entertainment use is a secondary motivation, while personal identity use ranks the lowest.

5. CONCLUSION

The study on social media's impact on school children provides a nuanced understanding of

how this technology affects various facets of their lives, revealing both significant benefits and notable drawbacks. Social media serves as a valuable educational tool and platform for self-expression and creativity, enhancing students' ability to stay informed about current events and engage with academic content. It also facilitates social connections, offering emotional support and opportunities for peer interaction. However, these positive aspects are tempered by several challenges. The study highlights concerns about social isolation, academic distraction, and issues related to privacy and security. Social media can contribute to negative social comparison, reduced academic performance, and disruptions to sleep and daily routines. These negative impacts underscore the need for careful management of social media use to prevent potential interference with students' well-being and academic success.

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