

A Study on the Impact of Social Media in Youth Behaviour with Reference to Thanjavur City

Prof. Dr. R Ragaventhara R

Assistant Professor, Management Studies, Bon Secours College For Women (Autonomous)

Abstract:

Social media has become a pervasive force in shaping youth behavior, identity formation, and overall well-being across multiple dimensions of adolescent life. The platforms—including Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and Twitter—now play a central role in influencing how young people express themselves, interact with others, and develop their sense of identity. Positive Impacts and Opportunities: Social media provides significant benefits for youth, including enhanced opportunities for social connection, self-expression, and mental health support. Mental Health and Psychological Challenges: Despite these advantages, excessive social media use carries substantial risks to adolescent mental health. Self-Image and Body Dysmorphia: Social media's portrayal of idealized, often digitally altered images significantly impacts youth self-esteem and body image perception. Behavioral Risks and Cyberbullying: The platforms introduce serious behavioral risks, including cyberbullying, exposure to substance-related content, and normalization of risky behaviors. Additionally, social media use correlates with increased fear of missing out (FoMO), which influences impulsive decision-making and risk-taking behaviors among youth, particularly in consumer and social contexts. Identity Formation and Social Dynamics: Social media profoundly influences youth identity construction and political engagement. Future Directions: A multidisciplinary approach integrating policy regulation, digital literacy education, and targeted mental health interventions is essential for fostering healthy social media engagement among youth. Longitudinal research is needed to understand the long-term psychological effects and distinguish between adaptive and maladaptive digital behaviors in adolescent development.

INTRODUCTION

Social media has emerged as one of the most influential forces shaping human behaviour in the digital age, particularly among youth. With the rapid advancement of information and communication technology, social networking platforms have become an inseparable part of everyday life. Youth today rely heavily on social media for communication, entertainment, education, and social interaction. The widespread availability of smartphones and affordable internet services has further accelerated social media usage among young people.

Thanjavur city known for its rich cultural heritage and educational institutions, has also witnessed a significant rise in social media usage among youth. Students, young professionals, and adolescents in Thanjavur actively use platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

Social media has become a common medium for sharing information, expressing opinions, and maintaining social relationships in Thanjavur city. As a result, youth behaviour in Thanjavur is increasingly influenced by digital interactions and online content. Youth represent a dynamic and impressionable segment of society.

The youth people's attitudes, values, and behavioural patterns play a crucial role in shaping the future of the community. In Thanjavur city, youth behaviour is influenced by a combination of traditional cultural values and modern digital exposure. Social media acts as a bridge between local traditions and global trends, influencing lifestyle choices and social attitudes.

Social media provides several benefits to youth in Thanjavur. It enables them to stay connected with friends, relatives, and peer groups irrespective of physical distance. Educational content available on social media platforms supports academic learning and skill development. Many students in Thanjavur use social media for online classes, exam preparation, and career guidance. At the same time, excessive use of social media has raised concerns regarding behavioural changes among youth.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify positive and negative behaviour changes caused by regular social media usage.
2. To assess how social media affects academic performance, time management and study habits.
3. To analysis how social media usage influence the behavioural patterns, communication style and emotional well-being of youth.
4. To evaluate the role of social media in shaping youth's attitudes decision making and daily activities.
5. To determine the extent of addiction to social media and its behavioural consequences.

SCOPE OF STUDY:

- The scope of the present study is confined to understanding the impacts of social media on youth behaviour with special reference to Thanjavur city. The study focuses on youth who actively use social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter for communication, entertainment, education, and social interaction.
- The study covers various dimensions of youth behaviour, including psychological, social, emotional, and academic aspects. It examines how social media usage influences attitudes, decision-making, lifestyle patterns, self-esteem, and interpersonal relationships among youth in Thanjavur city.
- The scope also includes analysing the extent of social media usage and the level of dependency or addiction among youth. It attempts to identify both positive and negative behavioural outcomes, such as improved connectivity and awareness on one hand, and stress, distraction, and emotional imbalance on the other.
- The study is limited to a specific geographical area, namely Thanjavur city, and the findings are based on responses collected from selected youth groups such as students and young working professionals. The scope does not extend to rural areas or other cities.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT:

- In recent years, the use of social media among youth has increased rapidly due to the widespread availability of smartphones and affordable internet services. In Thanjavur city, young people actively engage with various social networking platforms for communication, entertainment, education, and social interaction. While social media offers several benefits such as improved connectivity, access to information, and opportunities for self-expression, its excessive and uncontrolled use has raised serious concerns regarding changes in youth behaviour.
- Many youths spend a significant amount of time on social media, which may lead to addiction, distraction from academic and productive activities, and reduced face-to-face interaction. Issues such

as stress, anxiety, low self-esteem, cyberbullying, peer pressure, and sleep disturbances have become increasingly common among young social media users. These behavioural and psychological changes may negatively affect their academic performance, emotional well-being, and social relationships.

- Despite the growing influence of social media on youth behaviour in Thanjavur city, there is limited empirical research focusing specifically on its local impact. Understanding how social media affects the attitudes, behaviour, and daily activities of youth in this region is essential for parents, educators, and policymakers. Therefore, the present study seeks to examine the extent and nature of social media usage among youth in Thanjavur city and to identify its positive and negative impacts on their behaviour.

1.4 LIMITATION:

1. Limited sample size- the study included 100 respondents.
2. Geographical constraints- The geographical for the studies limited to Thanjavur district only
3. Variation in social media- Differences in social media may affect the respondents action.
4. Limited Time Frame- The study only limited for a smaller time frame
5. External factors such as family environment, peer influence, and educational background are not studied in detail.

2. REVIEW OF LITRATURE:

OECD (2025): An international organization that shapes policy standards to promote economic expansion and social well-being. OECD highlighted technology's role in youth learning. Digital platforms enhance collaboration and access to knowledge. However, excessive use lowers focus and academic performance. Policy support ensures safe engagement. Structured digital systems benefit adolescents.

Global Youth Online Survey (2025): A large-scale international research initiative tracking the digital habits and psychological trends of young people. The survey found rising dependence on digital platforms among youth. Online presence strongly influences identity formation. Peer validation significantly affects emotions. Communication patterns have changed due to digital interaction. Balanced usage improves confidence and well-being.

UNESCO (2024): A specialized UN agency aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education and sciences. Emphasized digital citizenship education. Critical thinking reduces misinformation impact. Schools must teach safe online behaviour. Youth empowerment improves positive engagement. Education mitigates behavioural risks.

World Economic Forum (2024): An international non-governmental organization that engages political and business leaders to shape global agendas. Reported digital transformation in youth culture. Social media shapes aspirations and creativity. Influencers impact lifestyle choices. Online identity becomes central. Balanced use enhances productivity.

Indian Council of Social Science Research (2024): India's premier national body for reviewing and promoting research in social sciences. Highlighted behavioural shifts among Indian youth. Digital communication reshaped norms. Online activism increased participation. Misinformation spread rapidly. Awareness programs are necessary.

2.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research methodology refers to the systematic way of collecting, analysing, and interpreting data to achieve the objectives of the study. The present study adopts a structured approach to examine the

impact of social media on youth behaviour with special reference to Thanjavur city.

Research Design

The study follows a descriptive research design. This design is appropriate as it helps in describing the characteristics, behaviour, and opinions of youth regarding social media usage and its impact on their behaviour.

Area of the Study

The geographical area of the study is Thanjavur city. The study focuses on youth residing within the city limits.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of youth aged between 20 and 40 years who actively use social media platforms in Thanjavur city.

Sample Size

A sample size of 100 respondents has been selected for the study. The sample size is chosen based on time and accessibility constraints.

Sampling Technique

The study adopts a convenience **random sampling method**, where respondents are selected based on availability and willingness to participate in the survey.

Sources of Data:

Primary Data

Primary data has been collected through a **structured questionnaire** administered to the selected respondents. The questionnaire includes multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions to measure usage patterns and behavioural impacts.

Secondary Data

Secondary data has been collected from **books, journals, research articles, websites, reports, and previous studies** related to social media and youth behaviour.

RESEARCH TOOLS:

Tools for Data Collection

The main tool used for data collection is a questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to gather information on:

- Demographic profile of respondents
- Frequency and purpose of social media usage
- Behavioural, emotional, and academic impacts
- Perception towards social media influence

Period of the Study

The study was conducted over a period of two months.

INFERENTIAL ANALYSIS

CHI-SQUARE TEST:

Objective: To examine the relationship between age and the frequency of social media usage among youth

FORMULATION OF HYPOTHESIS:

Null Hypothesis(H₀):

There is no significant relationship between age and the frequency of social media usage among youth.

Alternative Hypothesis(H₁):

There is a significant relationship between age and the frequency of social media among youth.

TABLE

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE AND FREQUENCY OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AMONG YOUTH CROSSTABULATION

Particular	Valid N	Valid %	Missing N	Missing %	Total N	Total %
Age * How frequently do you use social media platform in a day	100	100.0%	0	0.0%	100	100.0%

Crosstabulation Table

Age	1–2 Hours	2–3 Hours	Less than 1 Hour	More than 4 Hours	Total
20–25	15	8	13	9	45
25–30	6	7	4	5	22
30–35	6	5	4	4	19
35–40	2	3	5	4	14
Total	29	23	26	22	100

Chi-Square Tests

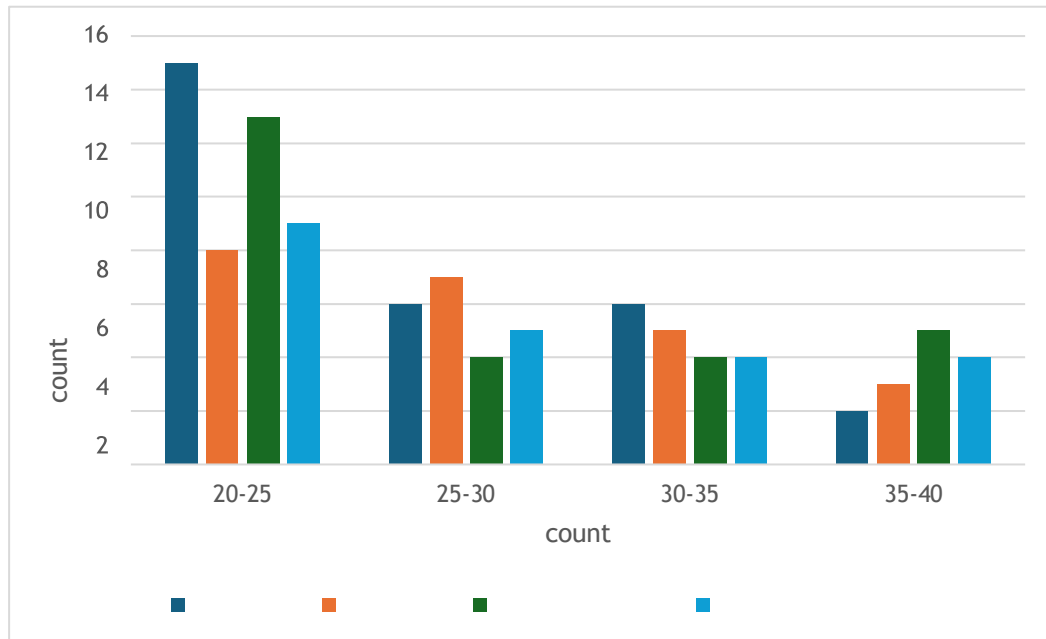
Test	Value	dff	Asymptotic Significance (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.504	9	0.875
Likelihood Ratio	4.689	9	0.861
N of valid cases	100		

INFERENCE:

Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the result is not statistically significant, we accept the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between age and the frequency of social media usage among youth.

CHART

AGE AND FREQUENCY OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AMONG YOUTH



CHI-SQUARE TEST

Objective

To examine the relationship between feeling restless or anxious when unable to access social media and the extent to which social media usage interferes with youth academic, personal, and social activities.

FORMULATION OF HYPOTHESIS:

Null Hypothesis (H₀):

There is no significant relationship between feeling restless when unable to access social media and the extent to which social media usage interferes with academic, personal, or social work.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁):

There is a significant relationship between feeling restless when unable to access social media and the extent to which social media usage interferes with academic, personal, or social work.

TABLE

CROSSTABULATION BETWEEN FEELING RESTLESS WHEN UNABLE TO ACCESS SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA INTERFERES WITH ACADEMIC, PERSONAL OR SOCIAL WORK

Case Processing Summary

Cases	N	Percent
Valid	100	100.0%
Missing	0	0.0%
Total	100	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

Test	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	28.080	12	0.005
Likelihood Ratio	25.953	12	0.011
N of Valid Cases	100		

Feeling restless when unable to access social media	Not at all	To an extent	To a great extent	To a small extent	Total
Frequently	3	3	3	3	12
Never	9	3	1	3	16
Rarely	4	3	2	23	32
Sometimes	6	11	3	11	31
Very Often	1	3	1	4	9
Total	23	23	10	44	100

Chi-Square Value = 28.080 Degree of Freedom = 12

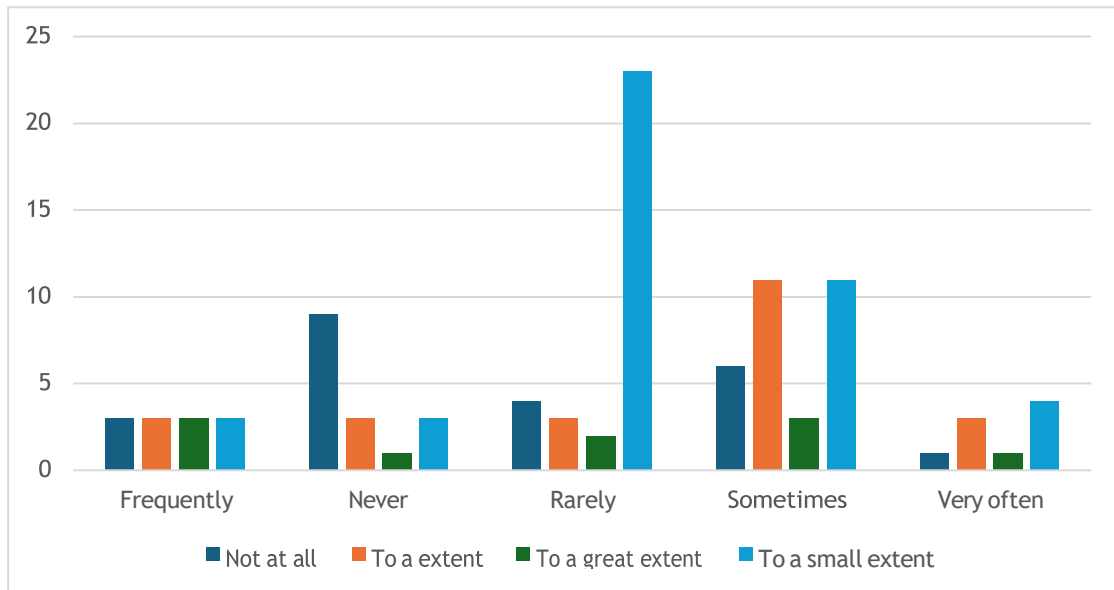
P-Value = 0.005

INFERENCE:

Since the p-value (0.005) is less than the level of significance (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between feeling restless when unable to access social media and the extent to which social media usage interferes with academic, personal, and social work among youth. Therefore, social media usage has a noticeable impact on youth behaviour

CHART

THE UNABLE TO ACCESS SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA INTERFERES WITH ACADEMIC, PERSONAL OR SOCIAL WORK



4.2.2 ANOVA TESTING:

Objective

The objective of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test is to examine whether there is a significant difference in the level of impact of social media usage on youth behaviour. It helps to identify whether variations in responses among different groups are statistically significant.

COMPARISON HYPOTHESIS:

Null Hypothesis (H₀):

There is no significant difference between social media usage and its interference with academic or personal work among youth.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁):

There is a significant difference between social media usage and its interference with academic or personal work among youth.

DESCRIPTIVE EXPLANATION:

The ANOVA test is used to compare the mean values of different groups to determine whether the differences among them are statistically significant. In this study, ANOVA is applied to analyse whether social media usage has a significant impact on students' academic and personal activities. The test helps to understand if variations in responses from the respondents are meaningful or occur merely by chance.

TABLE

Particulars	Category	N
To what extent has social media usage interfered with your academic, personal (or) social work?		24

	2	21
	3	30
	4	23
	13	2

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects (ANOVA)

The social media feeling restless or anxious when unable to access social media

Row No	Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Corrected Model	4.803	4	1.201	0.795	0.531
2	Intercept	427.131	1	427.131	282.893	0.000
3	Social media usage interfered with academic/personal work	4.803	4	1.201	0.795	0.531
4	Error	143.437	95	1.510	-	-
5	Total	1198.000	100	-	-	-
6	Corrected Total	148.240	99	-	-	-

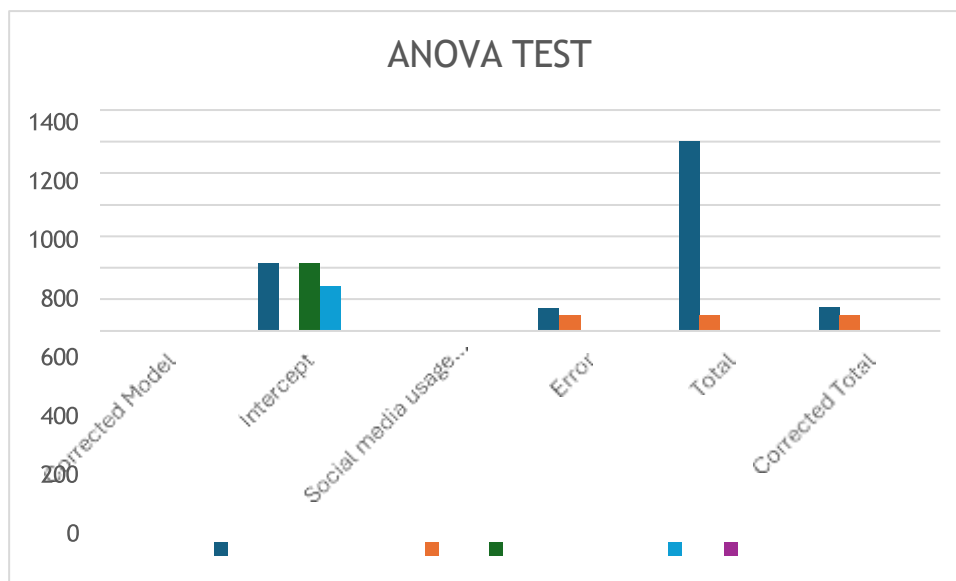
Note: R Squared = 0.032 (Adjusted R Squared = -0.008).

INFERENCE

The significance value (0.531) is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no significant relationship between social media usage interference and feeling restless or anxious when unable to access social media.

CHART

THE SOCIAL MEDIA FEELING RESTLESS OR ANXIOUS FEELING



FINDINGS:

- The majority of respondents are in the 18–21 years age group.
- Female respondents are slightly higher than male respondents in the study.
- Most respondents are undergraduate students.
- The majority of respondents use smartphones to access social media.
- Most youth spend 2–3 hours daily on social media.
- A large number of respondents check social media immediately after waking up.
- Instagram is the most preferred social media platform among youth.
- WhatsApp is mainly used for communication with friends and family.
- YouTube is widely used for entertainment and learning videos.
- Most respondents use social media for entertainment purposes.
- A considerable number of respondents use social media to get news and information.
- Many students believe social media helps them gain knowledge.
- A majority of respondents agree that social media improves communication skills.
- Some respondents feel social media influences their lifestyle and fashion choices.
- Many students admit that social media distracts them from studies.
- Some respondents report reduced concentration in academic activities due to social media use.
- A significant number of youth use social media late at night.
- Late-night usage of social media affects sleeping patterns of respondents.
- Some respondents feel stress or pressure due to social media comparisons.
- A number of respondents say social media affects their face-to-face social interactions.
- Many respondents agree that social media helps maintain relationships with friends.
- Some respondents believe social media creates addiction among youth.
- The chi-square test shows a significant relationship between social media usage and youth behaviour.
- The ANOVA test indicates variation in social media usage among different respondent groups.
- Overall, the study reveals that social media has both positive and negative impacts on youth behaviour.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Youth should limit the time spent on social media to avoid addiction and maintain a balance between studies and online activities.
- Students should use social media for educational purposes, such as accessing online learning materials, tutorials, and academic discussions.
- Parents and teachers should guide students on the responsible and safe use of social media platforms.
- Awareness programs should be conducted in colleges to educate youth about the positive and negative impacts of social media.
- Students should avoid using social media late at night, as it affects sleep and reduces concentration in studies.
- Youth should develop proper time management skills to reduce unnecessary use of social networking sites.
- Students should focus more on real-life social interaction, outdoor activities, and physical exercise instead of spending too much time online.
- Government and educational institutions should promote digital literacy programs to encourage responsible use of social media.
- Students should follow positive and informative social media pages that provide educational

content, career guidance, and skill development information.

- Youth should avoid comparing their lives with others on social media, as it may create unnecessary stress and reduce self-confidence.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the impact of social media on youth behavior with specific reference to Thanjavur city. The findings reveal that social media has become an integral part of daily life among young people. Most of the youth actively use platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube for communication, entertainment, education, and information sharing. The study identified both positive and negative effects of social media usage. On the positive side, social media enhances communication skills, provides access to educational resources, promotes creativity, and increases awareness about career opportunities and social issues. It also supports entrepreneurship and digital skill development. However, excessive usage leads to several negative behavioral changes such as reduced academic concentration, sleep disturbances, anxiety, social comparison, and emotional dependency on online validation. Cyberbullying and online peer pressure also affect the psychological well-being of youth. Therefore, awareness programs, digital literacy education, parental guidance, and institutional support are essential to ensure healthy social media habits among youth in Thanjavur city.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

BOOKS:

1. **Boyd, D. (2014).** It's complicated: The social lives of networked teens. Yale University Press.
2. **Livingstone, S., & Smith, P. K. (2014).** Annual review of cyberpsychology: Children and social media. Routledge.
3. **Sherry Turkle (2011).** Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other. Basic Books.
4. **Danah boyd (2014).** It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens. Yale University Press.

JOURNAL ARTICLES:

1. **Kuss, D. J., & Griffiths, M. D. (2015).** Social networking sites and addiction: Ten lessons learned. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 12(3), 2307–2327. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph120302307>
2. **Best, P., Manktelow, R., & Taylor, B. (2014).** Online communication, social media, and adolescent wellbeing: A systematic narrative review. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 41, 27–36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2014.03.001>
3. O'Keeffe, G. S., Clarke-Pearson, K., & Council on Communications and Media. (2011). The impact of social media on children, adolescents, and families. *Pediatrics*, 127(4), 800–804.
4. **Yvonne Kelly et al. (2018).** Social Media Use and Adolescent Mental Health. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*. Study linking heavy social media use with depressive symptoms among adolescents.
5. **Amy Orben & Andrew K. Przybylski (2019).** The association between adolescent well-being and digital technology use. *Nature Human Behaviour*. Found that the impact of social media on youth well-being is small but noticeable.

RESEARCH ARTICLES

1. **Singh, V. (2019).** Impact of Social Media on Social Life of Teenagers in India. Examines behavioural and communication changes among Indian youth.

2. **Abhani, D. (2019).** A Study on Impact of Social Media Over Youth of India. Analysis both positive and negative behavioural outcomes.

WEBSITES / ONLINE SOURCES:

1. **Pew Research Center. (2018).** Teens, social media & technology 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/05/31/teens-social-media-technology-2018/>
2. **UNICEF. (2017).** The state of the world's children: Children in a digital world. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2011-0054>
3. **American Psychological Association** – www.apa.org.com Provides research reports on youth mental health and digital behaviour.
4. **Common Sense Media** – www.common Sense Media.org.com Offers research and statistics on children and teens' media use.