



The effects of social media on childrens in India- An analysis

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Abstract

The technology has developed a lot, these changes have brought many differences among the public. Social media is one among those development which is changing many of our life styles and the usage of social media is carried out by the almost everyone in the recent days. Social media is known as any websites and applications that enables users to create and share contents or to participate in social networking. This includes facebook, myspace, twitter, gaming sites, video sites, etc. During this pandemic situation many students are attending classes through online and they are getting influenced by social media. They use the social media for many purpose. It has both positive and negative impact on them. They share all their details in social media, they have no knowledge about the consequences. All the schools follow online classes and many students are compelled to attend classes in online mode. While they work online they come across many misleading advertisements. Many get influenced by those advertisements and they intend to follow those apps blindly. Therefore, the researcher is of the opinion that though there are many laws which protect them, majority are still a victim. In thispaper the researcher has made an attempt to analyze the crisis faced by the children through social media and remedial measures available for them.

Keywords: technology, social media, impact, children, cybercrimes, victims

Introduction

Social media is an online platform that enables children to stay connected and interact with each other. It is growing immensely and used by different age groups to share their opinions, to play online games, to watch videos, to study and be updated etc. There are positive and negative impact in this development. In order to overcome the negative impacts on the children many networks impose age restriction on a user who get access to it. This policy is implemented to protect the children from online threats. However, this policy is not implemented effectively. Many underage users are communicating and interacting with each other using social media ^[1]. They have access to social media without understanding the consequences and become victims. The development in technology eventually develops crimes against children. Those crimes are increasing and it includes sexual abuse, trafficking and exploitation. These technological developments are facilitating the crimes to occur without difficulty ^[2]. United nation convention on rights of child has made an effort to analyze the rights available to a child worldwide. The sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, gave effect to international legislation banning online child sexual abuse materials ^[3]. Though there are many legislations which protects children, crime are never ending and now a days it has become easier through technology ^[4].

Types of crimes

The list of social problems/crime using the social media, that are many but we may be categorized few of them as follows: -

1. **Child Pornography:** Child pornography is a form of child sexual exploitation. Federal law defines child pornography as any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving a minor (persons less than 18 years old). Images of child pornography are also referred to

as child sexual abuse images ^[5].

2. **Child Sexual Abuse:** Child sexual abuse involves any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot be given. This includes sexual contact that is accomplished by force or threat of force, regardless of the age of the participants, and all sexual contact between an adult and a child, regardless of whether there is deception or the child understands the sexual nature of the activity ^[6].
3. **Sexting:** Sexting can be broadly defined as “the sharing of personal,sexually suggestive text messages, or nude or nearly nude photographs or videos via electronic devices ^[7].”
4. **Child grooming:** Grooming is when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child or young person for sexual activity at a later time.Grooming can include communicating and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent/carer ^[8].
5. **Identity theft:** Identity theft is the crime of obtaining the personal or financial information of another person to use their identity to commit fraud, such as making unauthorized transactions or purchases ^[9].
6. **Cyberbullying and Cyberstalking:** Cyberbullying is bullying that occurs online, often through instant messaging, text messages, emails, and social networks. Cyberbullies may be the same age as the victims, or they may be older. If the perpetrator is an adult, it is generally called cyber-stalking or cyber-harassment ^[10].

Review of literature

The United Nations had introduced the Convention on the Rights of The Child (UNCRC) in the year 1989 and which was ratified by the Indian Government in the year 1992. Franklin and Horwath (1996) had observed a concerning change in society's perception towards children.

Kesavamooty (2013) Now a day cyberspace is the place where children grow and learn, Privacy and security are the great concern while using social networking. Children are worst affected by the ill-practice of social networking. It is need of the hour to look into the legal aspects of the social networking and the child. Protecting the child from the cyber predators is one of the key concerns in India. This article throws light on the offenses committed to the child in the virtual space. It embarks upon various legal aspects related to the child and the use of social networking. This paper meticulously analyzes the lacunae in the legal framework and also brings out the problem solving solutions. Ahmed (2018) The society and law makers have a great responsibility in monitoring these problems such as cyberbullying, online grooming, FOMO (fear of missing out) depression, anxiety, increasing narcissism, sexting, and excess to inappropriate contents. This paper will explore the various positive as well negative effects on children and analyse how those benefits can be enhanced while discussing the legal safeguard with special reference to ASEAN countries.

Object of the study

1. To determine the importance of social media in the society
2. To analyze the impact of social media in the society

Research Methodology

The research methodology used is doctrinal and non-doctrinal research. The research is based on the close ended questionnaire method. The general public, parents, teachers and doctors were the target audience of the research. It was distributed to 200 people and survey was conducted to find out the impact of social media on children. The research was done by taking reference from textbooks, journals, articles and internet sources.

Indian legislations on cyber-crimes against children

In Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 certain provisions to deal with prevailing cybercrimes. Section 67B of the Act specifically provides stringent punishment for publishing, browsing or transmitting child pornography in electronic form [11]. The Ministry of Women and Child Development had enacted the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO Act) as a special law to protect children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography [12]. Section 13 to Section 15 deals with the issue of child pornography [13]. Section 14 and Section 15 lays down the punishment for using child for pornographic purposes and for storage of pornographic material involving child. Further Section 28 of the POCSO Act 2012 provides for establishment of Special Courts for the purpose of providing speedy trial of offences under the Act. Section 43 of the POCSO Act, 2012 provides that the Central Government and every State Government takes all measures to give wide publicity to the provisions of the Act [14]. Further, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) are also mandated to monitor the implementation of the POCSO Act, 2012 [15]. The India Penal Code (IPC), 1860, protects individuals, including

children, from all crimes. The IPC covers certain cyber-crimes that are variants of traditional crimes such as theft, cheating, forgery, mischief and defamation [16]. In certain cases, these legislative provisions overlap and an accused may be charged with a series of offences under the relevant provisions of IPC, POCSO and the IT Act. If an accused is convicted under all three acts, they are punished under the provision that provides the greater punishment [17].

Report on the survey

The social media has greater impact on the society. The survey report clearly states that 50% of the children are accessing social media. The researcher distributed questionnaire among 200 people. Among them 50 were teachers, 50 were parents, 50 were doctors and 50 were general public.

1. Impact of social media

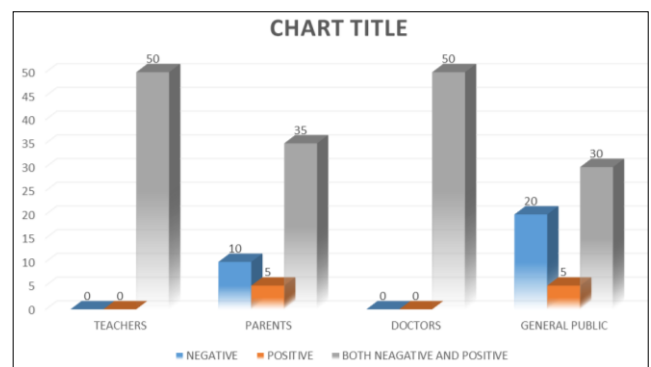


Fig 1: Impact of social media

According to the table 15% of the respondents have mentioned that usage of social media has only negative impact. 5% of the respondents have stated that it has positive impact. 80% of the respondents have accepted that it has both negative and positive impact among the children.

2. Advantages and disadvantages of social media

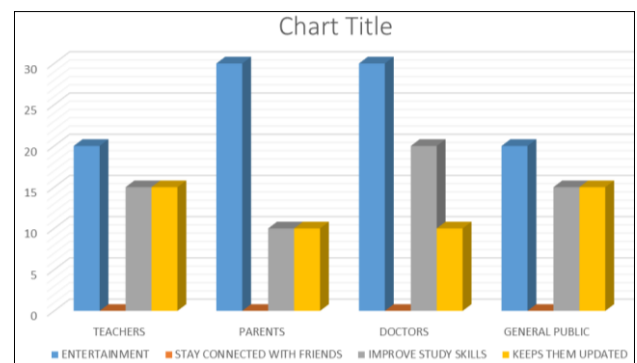


Fig 2: Benefits of social media

According to figure 2 there were 4 kinds of benefits mentioned in the questionnaire. 50% of the respondents stated that the only benefit from social media was entertainment. 25% have stated that their kids can develop their study skills through social media. 25% have stated that it keeps them updated. There were 4 disadvantages mentioned in the questionnaire and all the respondent's majority of the respondents have agreed that children's are

becoming victims to social media.

Effectiveness of legislation

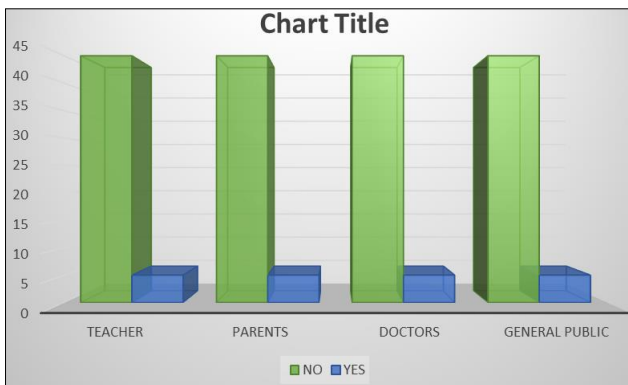


Fig 3: Whether there is an effective legislations

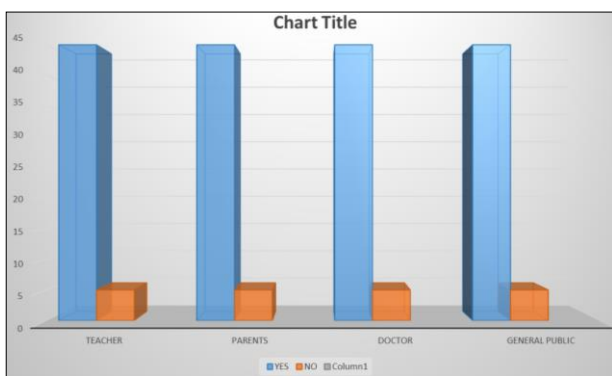


Fig 4: Whether a new law should be enacted

The respondents were asked whether there is an effective legislations to protect the victims of cybercrime. Around 90% has told no and only 10 % has said yes (figure 3). When they were asked whether a new law should be enacted to protect them, 95% respondents have suggested to bring an effective legislation. (Figure4)

Findings, suggestions and conclusion

The government has taken many steps to protect children’s from certain crimes. The survey report clearly state that though there are many legislations, nothing is implemented effectively to protect the children from cyber crimes. Only certain crimes are being protected by information technology act 2000 and POSCO act. There are certain schemes like ‘Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC)’ under which an online Cyber Crime reporting portal, (www.cybercrime.gov.in) has been launched to enable public to report complaints pertaining to Child Pornography/ Child Sexual Abuse Material, rape/gang rape imageries or sexually explicit content. This portal facilitates the public to lodge complaints anonymously or through Report and track option. Steps have also been taken to spread awareness, issue of alerts/advisories, training of law enforcement agencies, improving cyber forensic facilities etc. These steps help to prevent such cases and speed up investigation.

Social media is commonly being used by everyone in the recent days. It helps an individual to be updated about recent news, to stay connected with friends etc. There cannot be person without access to social media in recent days. The survey clearly stated that each and every individual have

access to social media. But there are many crisis faced by an individual through social media. Based on the survey the researcher gives following recommendations

1. There should be a proper care taken by the parents and teachers. The parents should communicate regularly to their child about their online usage. They should encourage them to play outdoor games rather than video games.
2. There should be a child protection apps in all the mobile phones. The app should have access to all the social media and search history policy should be in such a manner that an individual cannot delete their search history.
3. There should be a regular awareness programs conducted in schools for parents and teachers. They should be instructed not to give mobile phones to their children and to keep a check if their kid is becoming a victim to cybercrimes.
4. There are many schools which communicate to parents through social media. This mode of communication is used basically to update certain information about school. The parents allow kids to have access to it. This mode of communication should be stopped because children do not access only the information from school, they tend to see advertisements which are inappropriate and make use of certain other apps.
5. Though government is taking necessary actions to protect the children’s. It is clear that many are not aware of it. There are many victims to the cybercrime. Therefore, the researcher would recommend the government to pass an effective legislation. The legislation should specify all the cybercrimes such as
6. The victim should be given proper care and the accused should be punished rigorously, whereas every individual should be scared to commit such crimes.
7. The age restriction given in the privacy policies of social media should be implemented more effectively, because many underage people access social media by mentioning wrong age. Therefore, age proof should be taken while registering age.

Therefore, it is clear that social media is used by many children. In order to overcome the difficulty, there should be a proper legislation enacted and cybercrimes should be taken very seriously as other crimes.

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