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Two Days National Seminar  
on



# EDUCATION ON DIGITAL CULTURE AND SOCIAL MEDIA



MONOGRAPH



ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

(UGC-SAP-DRS – II Approved Department)

15	<b>Education on Digital Culture and Social Media</b> <i>D.Vigneshwaran, Dr.S.Mohankumar</i>	54	29
16	<b>Design and Try out of Multimedia Instructional Package in Developing Analytical skills among Secondary School Students</b> <i>Dr. Jose Cherian, K. Sumita Rao</i>	59	30
17	<b>Impact of Digitization of Education in India</b> <i>Dr.P.B.Kavyakishore</i>	62	31
18	<b>Digitization of Education: Assessing Blog Culture for Pedagogy of Science in Goa</b> <i>Manasi Bakhale , Dr. Dada Vaidya</i>	66	32
19	<b>Skype As Tool For Teaching And Learning</b> <i>Muhammed Yasir O</i>	69	33
20	<b>Application of Augmented Reality(AR)Technology in Education</b> <i>L.Murali Krishnan</i>	72	34
21	<b>Promoting art and craft through social mediain School education</b> <i>Prachiti Ganpule, Dr.Dada</i>	75	35
22	<b>Use of Social Networking - Educational Challenges and Opportunities</b> <i>R.Saravanakumar, Dr. K.K. Rajendran</i>	78	36
23	<b>Transforming Teacher Education using Web 2.0 tools</b> <i>Siena Fernandes, G.V.Ms Dr. Dada</i>	82	37
24	<b>Mobile Apps in Daily Life</b> <i>Dr.Y.Sireesha</i>	84	38
25	<b>Blog Writing as a Reflective and Pedagogical Tool in Teacher Training Institutions</b> <i>K. Sumita Rao</i>	88	39
26	<b>Online World: A Psychological Apocalypse</b> <i>Surekha V. Patil, Dr Dada Vaidya</i>	91	40
26	<b>Social Media and Youth Culture</b> <i>K.S.Gangadhara</i>	93	
28	<b>Impact of Digital Culture on Adolescents</b> <i>Rajamanickavasagan. S, Dr. SivanthiAditanar, Dr. A. Punitha Mary</i>	100	41



National Seminar On  
**“Education on Digital Culture and Social Media”**



**Impact of Digital Culture on Adolescents**

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**Abstract**

Adolescents use the digital media generally for entertainment and communication purposes rather than academic. It was reported that most violent games were played on the digital media and playing these games were related to aggression toward others and self. Pathological digital media users or addicted people usually chat more, view pornographic and shopping sites than other users. It was also suggested that as pathological digital media use increases, the academic performance decreases. The excessive use of digital media leads to addiction, which parents should be aware. Adolescents delay work to spend time for online, lose sleep due to late-night logons and feel life would be boring without the digital media. The higher use of digital media for any purpose as shown in the increase the risk of being alone and decrease the interpersonal relationships. In the era of globalization parents are busy in their work and most of them do not find time to spend with their children and are least bothered about their activities over the digital media. Most of the parents provide whatever their wards ask for and there is a lack of supervision in terms of scrutiny on which sites children visit and poor restrictions on children's digital media activities. The current discussion on the risk behaviors of adolescent in using digital media clearly shows how children and adolescents are vulnerable to risk factors while accessing the digital media. It also affected the interaction patterns and interpersonal relationships of the adolescents for whom these two are very important for proper social development. Thus the digital media should be used in the right way with proper guidance from the parents, care takers, and teachers. This paper have focus on effect of negative digital media.

**Keywords:** Adolescents, Digital media, Interpersonal relationships.

**Introduction**

In the present era, internet has become an important medium for education, communication, information sharing and personal growth of every individual including adolescent. Especially, among adolescents, internet communication applications have become an important social context for their development. But along with its uses, it is also leading to many risk-taking behaviors among adolescents. The term adolescent has a broader meaning. It includes mental, emotional and social maturity as well as physical maturity. Adolescence starts from the age of 12-18 years or from completion of primary school up to graduation level (Peterson C, 2004). Many biological changes take place during the adolescent years. Physical changes such as increase in height, weight, body proportions and the development of secondary sexual characteristics are common. Along with these physical changes wide spectrum of endocrine changes (gonadarche and adrenarche), including hormones that affect gonadal maturation and the production of gonadal sex steroids also takes place. The growth spurt during early and mid-adolescence is regulated by the complex, inter-related production of a number of hormones (Ramalingam A, 2014). Traditionally, adolescence has been thought of as a period of “storm and stress”—a time of heightened emotional tension resulting from the physical and glandular changes that are taking place. As they grow older, they learn to handle them. One of the most difficult developmental tasks of adolescence is

social adjustment. These adjustments must be made with the members of the opposite sex in a relationship that never existed before and to adults outside the family and school environment. To achieve the goal of adult patterns of socialization, the adolescent must make many new adjustments, most important of which are those of the increased influence of the peer group, changes in social behavior, new social groupings, new values in friendship selection, new values in social acceptance and rejection and new values in the selection of leaders. Due to these changes adolescents need close supervision, support from teachers, parents and other important persons (Kagu B, 2000). If the above issues are not addressed, then this would lead to various problems among adolescents and they might affect the healthy transition of the adolescents to adulthood.

### **Digital media culture**

Digital media has developed dramatically and its use has spread to all the fields and age groups. Adolescents are not exceptional from the use of digital media. The rapid growth of digital media communication and its potential to change the way one could communicate and gather information has brought both positive and negative impact. So the positive impact of digital media uses involve any information reaching very fast to any part of the world; individuals from worldwide could communicate without distinctions of nationality, race, gender, class; variety of information is available on the digital media helps other fields' research effectively. On the negative side, one can access all kinds of information including self-distraction, faulty socialization, risk-taking behaviors, loneliness, etc (Beebe TJ et al, 2004, Markey PM et al, 2002, Mesch GS et al 2001). Risks in the digital media has been defined as "one goes beyond the normal use of the digital media and takes risk which may threaten one's personal growth, safety and interpersonal relationships." There is no doubt that the growing popularity of digital media communication applications among adolescents has become an important social context for their development. Though wealth of information is available on the digital media, the misuse of this is becoming more evident among adolescents. Studies report that adolescents access pornography, hate and terrorism related sites and they are vulnerable to sexual solicitation and predation, cyberbullying, and harassment. In recent times, studies have reported pathological use or digital media addiction among adults and adolescents (Markey PM et al, 2002, Bayraktar F et al, 2007).

### **Impact of digital media on adolescents**

We should acknowledge the fact that adolescents are extremely vulnerable to certain growth and developmental aspects of life. And therefore, the effects that digital culture usage has on these children should be of particular importance to each and every knowing adult. The negative impacts of digital media should be noticed on time. As digital media is known to a great social network tool, its evils in the society cannot be overlooked. Adolescents especially are susceptible to potential harm posed by digital media usage. These negative impacts of digital media if not recognized on time and handled can be risky to the health and social well-being of the adolescent children. Negative impact of digital media on youth is as follows (https://www.techprevue.com)

#### **1. Facebook depression**

Facebook depression is an emotional disturbance associated with social media usage. When a teenager is made to feel inferior to their social media counterparts, they often fall into depression commonly referred to as a Facebook depression. The need to stand out, fit in or be accepted by their Facebook or Twitter friends is what drives users towards this form of emotional disturbance.

#### **2. Cyberbullying**

A cyberbully is the use of social media to communicate false, embarrassing or hostile information to specific users. Among the major effects of social media, cyberbullying is an effect that has become such atypical toady. Victims of prolonged cyber-bullying often end up with psychosocial problems like depression, isolation, loneliness, stress, anxiety, low self-esteem and some even become suicidal. The lack of a mechanism to unravel users behind cyber bullying accounts is what is making these activities rampant.

### Change the effects of cyber bullying

- Understand these effects and the risk they pose to teenagers
- Familiarize yourself with these social media platforms
- Get informed on what drives teens to seek social media attention
- Establish good communication with teenager on the same
- Set ground rules on the usage of social media
- If need be to get a monitoring app for social media on child's device

### 3. Sleep deprivation

Social media is among the leading causes of sleep deprivation in teens today. They are constantly worried about what their friends are posting and sharing. Adolescents can stay active on social media for longer durations if not prompted to stop. And if they do these especially during sleep time or just before sleep, then there is a high possibility of their sleep being disrupted.

### 4. Lower self-esteem

Mostly teen girls start comparing themselves with celebrities after spending time on social media and want to look slim, pretty and rich like them. In the teenage, it is normal to copy those persons to whom they admire or consider a role model. This imitation can negatively affect their self respect and dignity. The outcome of different studies in girls who spend more time on social media to portray them similar to celebrities are isolated from friend circles. Their friends do not accept them.

### 5. Social isolation

There is a statistical relationship between the use of social media and social isolation. When teenagers see the pictures or video of a party where they were not invited, it can bring anxiety. It is known as "fear of missing out". Most of the time, teenage children believe they are connecting to different persons using social media but actually they are out of the present moment and their life. This can become a cause to feel more isolated.

### 6. Poor concentration

Today negative effects of social media on students can be seen easily. Different tasks, such as schoolwork, class work or homework, require more concentration to deal with something important but now teenagers have a habit of simultaneously using social media. Most of them consider it multitasking but it is not. Researches show constant interruption has an adverse effect on the attention and reduces learning and performance.

### 7. Decreased activity

Teenagers who do heavy use of social media do not spend enough time on activities that definitely increase mental abilities, skills and physical movement. Those who exercise daily, their body releases endorphins that signal brain to stay positive and reduce depression. Thus decreased activities reduce the secretion of endorphins and it causing depression a common problem.

### 8. Internet addiction

Uncontrolled social media usage among teens can lead to internet addiction. The more time kids spend on social media, the more they get exposed to new stories and ideas that they would want to explore. This habit eventually turns into an addiction that if not handled early can affect their school performance, mental health and even personal development.

### Conclusion

Modern digital culture is a blessing for new generation and it should be utilized in the right spirit. Digital media usage can lead to access enormous knowledge, increase skills, at the same time it can also spoil adolescents' life. If adolescents do not know how to use digital media, there is a high chance that they may be misled. This is dangerous to the society. Parents, teachers and other stakeholders need to be educated on the importance of adolescents' digital media use, risk-taking behaviors, proactive attitude, taking safety steps in preventing any hazards and interpersonal intelligence. There is an urgent need to address this issue on a greater level including policy level for new generation.

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