A STUDY ON UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION AMONG GEN-Z

Project Report submitted in Fulfillment for the

Award of Degree of

BACHELOR OF COMMERCE [BUSINESS ANALYTICS]

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DECLARATION

We, Sailesh Mesala,(106421538014), Srivathsa Nadadhur, (106421538030), Praveen Suthari, (106421538041), pursuing **B.Com (Business Analytics)** Final year from Badruka College of Commerce and Arts, hereby declare that this project work entitled **" A Study On Understanding Social Media Addiction Among Gen-Z "** submitted to Department of Commerce, Osmania University in fulfillment of **B.Com (Business Analytics)** course requirements, is a record of original work done by us.

This information and data submitted in the project are authentic to the best of our knowledge and belief. The project has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree, diploma or fellowship or published any time before.

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Certificate

This is to certify that the project title **"A Study On Understanding Social Media Addiction Among Gen-Z"** are the bonafide students work done by **Sailesh Mesala,(106421538014), Srivathsa Nadadhur, (106421538030), Praveen Suthari, (106421538041)** of bonafide students of Badruka College of Commerce and Arts, Kachiguda, Hyderabad under supervision of **Lt. mahender, Assistant Professor of Commerce**

Signature of External Examiner   Signature of Internal Examiner &Guide

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ABSTRACT

The generation which were born in a digital era have grown up in a life where social media platforms are all over and are important for their daily activities. This abstract tries to look into this aspect of social media addiction among the generation z by digging into its causes, effects and possible interventions. It can be observed that the universal use of social media by Gen Z is caused by various elements such as the dire need for one to feel socially accepted, FOMO(fear of missing out) and also the satisfaction that comes with receiving likes, comments and shares. While these platforms provide a sense of belonging and connection to something larger, they can also have negative consequences for individuals who excessively use them, impacting their mental health, productivity levels, and real-life relationships. A study revealed that this addiction can be likened to substance abuse, as both involve a compulsion to use them even when it's not necessary and experiencing withdrawal symptoms when denied access.

What makes matters worse is that these platforms are designed in a way that makes it difficult for addicts to resist. Features like infinite scrolling, notifications, and personalized content contribute to their addictive nature. Social media addiction refers to a phenomenon where individuals develop compulsive behaviors and become dependent on social media platforms, which negatively affects their mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Similar to other addictions, social media addiction involves losing control over usage patterns, experiencing withdrawal symptoms when access is limited, and prioritizing social media activities over other aspects of life.

The consequences of social media addiction can be far-reaching and complex. Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive approach that involves individuals, families, society, and technology. Strategies may include promoting digital literacy and mindfulness, encouraging open communication within families, implementing educational programs in schools, advocating for regulations to mitigate the addictive features of social media platforms, and promoting a culture of balance and moderation in technology usage.

Keywords: Social Media,Addiction,Instagram, Business Model,SWOT

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Understanding the concept of Social Media Addiction

In today's world, social media has become a huge deal, completely changing the way we communicate, interact, and get information. Social media refers to online platforms where people can create, share, and exchange user-generated content. It's not just a way to talk to each other anymore - it's a central part of everyday life for billions of people worldwide. Whether it's connecting with friends and family or accessing news, entertainment, and professional networks, social media has completely revolutionized how we share and consume information. The roots of social media can be traced back to the early days of the internet, with platforms like Six Degrees, Friendster, and MySpace laying the groundwork for what was to come. But it was Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat that really took social media to the next level, fundamentally changing how we communicate with each other and share our culture.

One of the best things about social media is that it breaks down geographical barriers, allowing us to connect with people all over the world in an instant. With features like posts, comments, likes, and shares, we can shape our online identities, express our thoughts and opinions, and build virtual communities based on shared interests, beliefs, and affiliations. Social media also gives us a platform to be creative, express ourselves, and even make a difference in society. The rise of social media has had a big impact on industries like marketing, advertising, journalism, and entertainment. Businesses now use social media to reach their target audience, build brand awareness, and engage with customers in real-time. Journalists also rely on social media for news gathering, sharing stories, and interacting with their audience, blurring the lines between traditional media and citizen journalism.

But of course, social media has its fair share of challenges and controversies. Privacy concerns, data security issues, misinformation, cyberbullying, and the addiction to being online are all hot topics that have raised important questions about the ethical and social implications of using social media. We've also seen how the algorithms that determine what content we see on our feeds can create filter bubbles, echo chambers, and even polarize public discussions. In addition to the above mentioned challenges the bigger and most challenging one is Social media addiction. This refers to a phenomenon where people

develop compulsive behaviors and become dependent on social media platforms, resulting in negative impacts on their mental, emotional, and physical well-being. It's similar to other types of addiction, where individuals lose control over their usage, experience withdrawal symptoms when they can't access social media, and prioritize it over other aspects of their lives.

Social media addiction is influenced by various psychological, social, and technological factors. Psychologically, people are drawn to social media as a way to seek validation, social connection, and entertainment. When we get likes, comments, and shares, our brain releases dopamine, which makes us feel good and reinforces the habit of using social media. Socially, the fear of missing out (FOMO) and the desire to stay connected with friends and social networks can drive social media addiction. The curated nature of social media feeds, where people only show the highlights of their lives, can worsen feelings of insecurity, comparison, and low. When it comes to technology, social media platforms are all about keeping users engaged and hooked. They do this by using features like infinite scrolling, push notifications, and personalized content. These design elements make the whole experience smooth and immersive, which encourages us to spend more time on social media and constantly check for updates. Dealing with social media addiction requires a well-rounded approach that covers individual, family, societal, and technological aspects. Some strategies could include promoting digital literacy and mindfulness, encouraging open communication within families, introducing education programs in schools, calling for regulations to tackle the addictive elements of social media platforms, and encouraging a balanced and moderate use of technology.

To sum it up, social media addiction is a big challenge in the digital age, affecting our well-being, relationships, and even society as a whole. By raising awareness, providing support, and using proven methods, we can reduce the negative effects of social media addiction and help people develop healthier and more balanced digital habits.

Common Social Media apps(Credits:Linkedin)

How it looks like using Social Media apps(Source:telegraphindia.com)

How it feels getting addicted to Social Media(Credits:Quora)

1.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to find out the causes and effects of Social Media addiction among the Gen-Z and to establish parameters regarding recovery and responsible use of Social Media. The targeted audience of this study are people belonging to Gen-Z.In other words people born between 1997 and 2012 are taken into consideration mainly students who are pursuing their bachelor's degree in the Hyderabad region of Telangana in India. Other age groups belonging to other states of India are not taken into consideration for this study.

Only a selected few popular Social Media apps in India are taken into consideration for this study so the findings may not accurately represent the position of all the Social Media apps .It only provides a brief overview of the Social Media including its past, present and future, and only the popular apps that are highly favourable by the masses are only taken into consideration out of which details about the app as well as the developers and publishers are provided.

The study does not intend to cover other smartphones features or any other software platform's features which are not used for the purpose of using Social Media.It also does not cover other aspects of the Social Media which do not play a role in making an individual addicted to it such as Social Media marketing,Sales and growth of brands who have a presence in Social Media etc.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

➢ To understand the concept of Social Media addicition such as the science behind it,how algorithms of various Social media apps are designed to hook the individuals.

➢ To find out the various factors contributing to Social Media addiction in the forms of Psychological,Social and Technological factors among the Gen-Z.

➢ To establish ways on how to overcome Social Media addiction among the Gen-Z.

➢ To find and implement ways on productive usage of Social Media which would prove beneficial to the individual in the long run whether academically or professionally.

1.4 NEED OF STUDY

The study makes some meaningful contributions on Social Media addiction especially among the Gen-Z along with suggesting possible practical measures on how to overcome Social Media addiction especially to the Gen-Z as they seem to be the major prisoners of what we call Social Media addiction and thus providing adequate measures on how to curb Social Media addiction would prove fruitful to this generation because every generation is unique and more tech savvy than the previous one.The chances of Social Media addiction is more and thus finding ways to migitigate it would serve Gen-Z and the coming generations beneficial.In addition to this the study also makes crucial contributions on understanding how Social Media impacts an individual belonging to Gen-Z's mental and physical health and while at the same time also providing ways to use Social Media more productive that would be beneficial to the individual instead of being a complete waste of time.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population:

Residents of Telangana

Sample Size:

The number of survey respondents- 210

Sampling Technique:

Random Sampling Technique: This technique is used when every person has an equal chance of getting selected to be the part of the sample.

Methodology:

The data has been collected via google forms. We are using quantitative methods of data collection only.

Primary Data:

Primary data collection involves gathering information directly from the source, and in this case, it's through a Google form-based survey shared with students. The survey serves as a direct means of acquiring firsthand insights and opinions from the target audience.

Secondary Data:

Secondary data involves the use of existing information that was not originally collected originally for the researcher's specific study. In this context, secondary data has been gathered through a review of credible research from various institutions that focus on similar topics

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- **Data Accuracy and Completeness:** The accuracy of the data relies on the honesty and precision of the respondents. Inaccurate or incomplete responses can impact the reliability of the study's conclusions.

- **Validity of Secondary Data:** While secondary data is obtained from credible sources, its validity relies on the accuracy and relevance of the information from previous studies. Changes in technology or societal trends over time may impact the applicability of secondary data to the current study.

- **Limitation of time:** Due to limitation of time, only few people were selected for the study. So, the sample of consumer was not enough to generate the findings of the study with utmost accuracy.

- **Geographical constraint:** Geographical scope of the study was invited to do a small area, which may not represent the whole sector of India.
- **Primary data limitation**: The primary data is limited to respondents.

CHAPTER-2

REVIEW

OF

LITERATURE

CHAPTER-2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

While social media is a comparatively new concept in the world of communication, it can be argued that "there is no single recognised definition" **(Jack & Scott, 2011).** Academics have therefore interpreted their own definition of the term. As diverse as these interpretations between authors are, one fact remains apparent; social media is advancing at an unbelievably fast pace. The method in which people connect with each other and the way that brands communicate with its consumers has been completely transformed by social media. "Social media lend radical transparency, and we've moved from a dominant, 20th century axiom that perception is reality to the situation where reality is perception" **(Sheldrake, 2013).**

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as a collection of online based applications that build on the philosophical foundations of 'Web2.0'; allowing the exchange of user generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Web 2.0 is the network as a platform, linking all associated devices; providing software as a frequently updated service that continuously improves the more people use it **(O'Reilly, 2005).** The most distinguishing aspect of social media is its power to revolutionise the direction of content by means of encouraging conversation amid dissimilar individuals to deliberate matters such as societal and global changes, for example.

To social media and online partnership tools **(Fraser & Dutta, 2009).** It is apparent that social media is transforming purchasing behaviour and business prospects as consumers today have more access to information than they have ever had previously.The obtainability of technological devices such as tablets, laptops and smartphones facilitate e millions of people each day with the access to social media, text messaging and content sharing. It is becoming increasingly problematic and, in few situations, impossible to follow traditional communication structures of hierarchy when people interact via social media platforms. Businesses are captivated by social media and surveys imply that brands are becoming increasingly responsive.

Studies indicate that social media addiction is prevalent among Gen Z. A survey by the Pew Research Center (2018) found that 45% of teens reported being online almost constantly. Similarly, a study by **Griffiths and Kuss (2017)** highlights that adolescents and young adults are at higher risk of developing addictive behaviors due to their high engagement with social media platforms.

Social media addiction has significant psychological effects on Gen Z. Research by **Keles, McCrae, and Grealish (2020)** shows a strong correlation between social media use and symptoms of anxiety, depression, and loneliness. The constant need for validation through likes and comments can lead to decreased self-esteem and increased feelings of inadequacy.

Excessive use of social media can detract from academic performance. According to a study by **Junco (2012)**, there is a negative relationship between the time spent on social media and academic outcomes. Frequent interruptions by social media notifications can also impair concentration and cognitive functions, as noted by **Rosen et al. (2013).**

Social media addiction affects real-life social interactions and relationships. A study by **Twenge and Campbell (2018)** found that heavy social media users are more likely to experience social isolation and have fewer in-person interactions. This can lead to weakened social bonds and a sense of loneliness despite being constantly connected online.

CHAPTER-3

COMPANY

PROFILE

3.1 HISTORY OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The history of social media spans centuries, with its roots deeply embedded in the human desire for connection and communication. While the term "social media" may evoke images of digital platforms and smartphones, the concept predates the internet by millennia. Here, we'll explore the evolution of social media from its earliest forms to the digital networks of today.

Social interaction has been a fundamental aspect of human society since ancient times. From prehistoric cave paintings to the bustling marketplaces of ancient civilizations, people have always sought ways to connect, share stories, and exchange information. In ancient Greece, the agora served as a gathering place where citizens would come together to discuss politics, philosophy, and culture, laying the groundwork for public discourse and social interaction.

The invention of writing further transformed human communication, allowing ideas to be recorded, preserved, and shared across time and space. The advent of the printing press in the 15th century revolutionized the dissemination of information, making books, newspapers, and pamphlets more accessible to the masses. These innovations facilitated the spread of ideas, sparking intellectual revolutions and shaping the course of history.

The 19th century witnessed the rise of mass communication, with the invention of the telegraph, telephone, and radio. These technologies enabled people to communicate over long distances in real-time, shrinking the world and connecting distant communities. The emergence of mass media, including newspapers, magazines, and radio broadcasts, further facilitated the exchange of information and the formation of public opinion.

The latter half of the 20th century saw the birth of the internet, a network of interconnected computers that would revolutionize communication and information exchange on a global scale. In the 1960s and 1970s, early computer networks such as ARPANET laid the groundwork for the digital revolution to come. These networks

were initially used for military and academic purposes but soon evolved into the interconnected web we know today.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the internet began to take shape as a public network accessible to the general population. Early online communities, such as bulletin board systems (BBS) and Usenet groups, provided platforms for people to connect, share ideas, and collaborate on projects. These primitive forms of social media laid the groundwork for the development of modern social networking platforms.

The 21st century witnessed the explosion of social media as we know it today. Platforms such as Six Degrees, Friendster, and MySpace introduced the concept of social networking to a broader audience, allowing users to create profiles, connect with friends, and share content online. These early platforms paved the way for the rise of contemporary social media giants such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Facebook, founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg and his college roommates, quickly became the world's largest social networking platform, connecting billions of users around the globe. Twitter introduced the concept of microblogging, allowing users to share short messages with their followers in real-time. Instagram popularized visual content sharing, while Snapchat introduced ephemeral messaging.

Today, social media is a ubiquitous part of everyday life, with billions of people around the world using platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok to connect, share, and interact with others. Social media has transformed the way we communicate, share information, and engage with the world around us, shaping culture, politics, and society in profound ways. As we look to the future, the evolution of social media promises to bring new opportunities and challenges, shaping the way we connect and interact in the digital age.

3.2 SOCIAL MEDIA APPS

1)INSTAGRAM

Instagram, launched in October 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, began as a simple photo-sharing app for iOS devices. Its inception stemmed from the founders' desire to create a platform that allowed users to capture and share moments of their lives through visually engaging images. The app's minimalist design and intuitive interface quickly gained traction among users, attracting millions of downloads within its first year of operation.

In its early days, Instagram differentiated itself from other social media platforms by focusing exclusively on visual content. Users could upload photos taken with their smartphones and apply filters and editing tools to enhance their images before sharing them with their followers. This emphasis on visual storytelling appealed to users seeking a more visually immersive and aesthetically pleasing social media experience.

As Instagram's user base continued to grow, the platform introduced new features and functionalities to enhance the user experience. In 2012, Instagram was acquired by Facebook for $1 billion, a move that provided the app with access to Facebook's resources and expertise in scaling and monetization. Under Facebook's ownership, Instagram expanded its reach, launching an Android app in 2012 and reaching 100 million active users by 2013.

One of Instagram's most significant milestones came in 2016 with the introduction of Instagram Stories. Inspired by the success of Snapchat's ephemeral messaging feature, Instagram Stories allowed users to share photos and videos that disappeared after 24

hours. This feature revolutionized how users interacted with the platform, providing a more casual and spontaneous way to share moments from their day without cluttering their profile feeds.

In 2018, Instagram launched IGTV, a long-form video platform that allowed users to upload videos up to 10 minutes in length (or up to 60 minutes for verified accounts). IGTV was designed to compete with platforms like YouTube and attract content creators and influencers looking to share longer-form video content with their audiences. While IGTV initially struggled to gain traction, Instagram has continued to invest in the platform, introducing new features and integrations to drive engagement.

Throughout its history, Instagram has also focused on enhancing its e-commerce capabilities, introducing features such as shopping tags and in-app checkout to make it easier for users to discover and purchase products directly from the app. These efforts have positioned Instagram as a key player in the burgeoning social commerce landscape, allowing brands and businesses to connect with consumers in new and innovative ways.

As of 2022, Instagram has evolved into one of the world's largest and most influential social media platforms, with over a billion monthly active users. Its emphasis on visual content, user-friendly interface, and diverse range of features have contributed to its widespread adoption and cultural impact. Whether users are sharing moments with friends, discovering new interests, or connecting with brands, Instagram continues to play a significant role in shaping how people communicate and interact online.

2)FACEBOOK

Facebook, created by Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes in a Harvard University dorm room in 2004, grew rapidly into a major online force. Initially called "TheFacebook," it started as a social network for Harvard students only before quickly expanding to more universities and then to the general public. Its easytouse interface and unique features attracted millions of users early on which brought it to the lead in social media. Over the years, Facebook's influence has spread across borders, languages, and cultures, with more than two billion users globally. Its widespread use has changed how people communicate, share information, and interact with each other. This has enhanced personal relationships and community interaction like never before.

Facebook provides a variety of features that meet the different needs and interests of its. Users can post statuses, photos, and videos. join groups. follow pages. and participate in events. The platform offers many ways for users to express themselves, engage with others, and explore new content. Despite being extremely popular, Facebook faces criticisms. Issues like user privacy concerns, data security threats, and the spread of false information have attracted attention from regulators, advocacy groups, and the public.

Facebook has faced numerous legal and ethical challenges, including of anticompetitive and misuse of user data.

To address these issues, Facebook has transformed significantly. Starting as a simple social networking site, it has become a diverse digital ecosystem. By acquiring Instagram and WhatsApp, Facebook extended its influence and

broadened its services. Moreover, its work in virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) shows its commitment to advance how we communicate and connect.

3)YOUTUBE
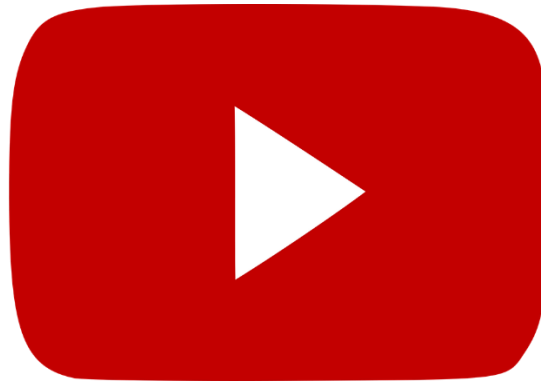
YouTube, founded in 2005 by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim, has grown into the world's largest video-sharing platform, boasting over two billion logged-in monthly users. Its inception marked a turning point in digital media consumption, offering a platform where users could easily upload, share, and discover a vast array of video content. From its humble beginnings as a platform for amateur videos, YouTube has evolved into a diverse ecosystem encompassing everything from entertainment and education to news, gaming, and beyond.

One of YouTube's defining features is its unparalleled diversity of content. With millions of creators uploading videos on a vast range of topics, interests, and genres, the platform caters to virtually every demographic and niche audience imaginable. Whether users are looking for tutorials, music videos, comedy sketches, or in-depth documentaries, they can find it all on YouTube. Its recommendation algorithms further enhance the viewing experience by surfacing personalized content tailored to individual preferences, ensuring that users are constantly discovering new and engaging videos.

YouTube's impact extends beyond entertainment, as it has also become a cornerstone of the creator economy. Through the YouTube Partner Program and various monetization features, creators have the opportunity to turn their passion into a profession, earning revenue through advertising, memberships, merchandise sales, and more. This has empowered individuals from diverse backgrounds to build successful

careers on the platform, fostering a vibrant ecosystem of creativity, entrepreneurship, and community engagement. As YouTube continues innovateand evolve, its influence on digital media and online culture is set to endure, shaping the way we consume and interact with video content for years to come.

4)X(Formerly known as Twitter)
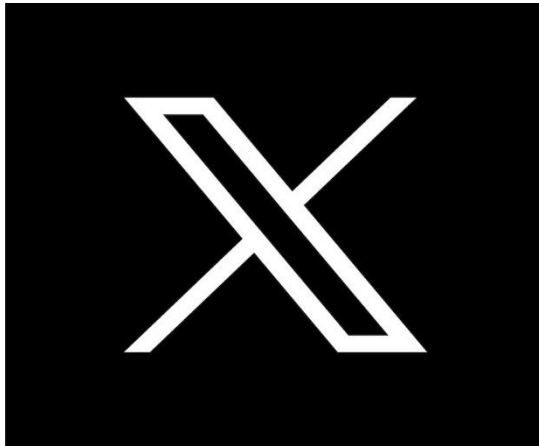
X which is formerly known as Twitter was launched in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams, has established itself as a leading social media platform known for its real-time, concise communication. With its iconic 280-character limit per tweet, Twitter enables users to share thoughts, news, and updates with brevity and immediacy. Over the years, it has become a vital tool for individuals, organizations, and public figures to engage with audiences, spark conversations, and disseminate information on a global scale.

One of Twitter's defining features is its role in facilitating public discourse and amplifying diverse voices. From breaking news and trending topics to niche communities and grassroots movements, Twitter serves as a virtual town square where people from all walks of life can share their perspectives and participate in conversations that matter to them. Its open and democratic nature empowers users to express themselves freely, connect with like-minded individuals, and contribute to ongoing dialogues on a wide range of issues.

Twitter's influence extends beyond individual users to encompass broader societal and cultural phenomena. From hashtag activism and social movements to the rise of influencer culture and the shaping of public opinion, Twitter has played a significant role in shaping the digital landscape. Its ability to drive conversations, spark debates,

and catalyze change underscores its status as a cornerstone of online communication and a reflection of the ever-evolving nature of digital culture.

5) SNAP CHAT
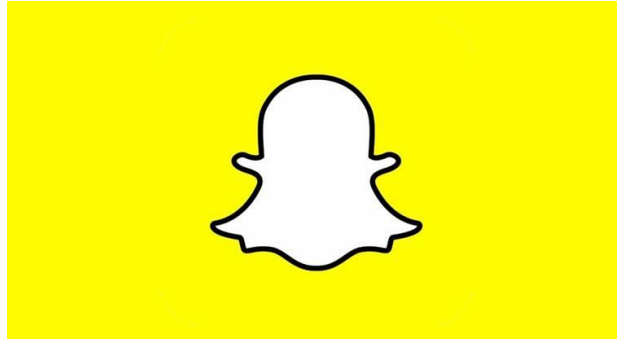
Snapchat, launched in 2011 by Evan Spiegel, Bobby Murphy, and Reggie Brown, introduced a novel approach to social media with its ephemeral messaging and multimedia sharing features. The platform's defining feature is its focus on temporary content, allowing users to send photos and videos, known as "snaps," that disappear after being viewed by the recipient. This ephemeral nature has fostered a sense of spontaneity and authenticity, distinguishing Snapchat from other social media platforms and appealing to a younger demographic.

Snapchat's innovation extends beyond ephemeral messaging to include a range of creative tools and features, such as filters, lenses, stickers, and augmented reality effects. These interactive elements enable users to personalize their snaps, add playful animations, and engage with friends in creative ways. Additionally, Snapchat introduced the Stories feature, allowing users to compile snaps into a chronological narrative that remains visible to friends for 24 hours, further enhancing the platform's storytelling capabilities.

In recent years, Snapchat has evolved into a multimedia content platform, offering a wide range of original programming through its Discover section. From news and entertainment to lifestyle and gaming, Discover provides curated content from publishers, creators, and influencers, catering to diverse interests and preferences. This expansion into original content and partnerships with media companies and brands has positioned Snapchat as a dynamic and engaging platform for both users and advertisers, cementing its status as a key player in the social media landscape.

3.3 The Science behind Social Media addiction

Social media addiction, also known as problematic social media use, is complex and influenced by psychological, neurological, and social elements. To understand this issue fully, we need to look at how the brain reacts to social media use and the psychological factors leading to excessive use.

Neurological Responses

Social media platforms are created to be engaging and fulfilling by activating the brain's reward systems. When we get likes, comments, or messages on social media platforms...

Our brains release dopamine, a chemical linked with happiness and rewards. When we use social media, this release of dopamine makes us feel good and encourages to keep using social media to get the same feeling.

Psychological Factors

Several factors play a role in the addiction to social media, including FOMO (fear of missing out), social comparison, and reinforcement. FOMO compels people to continuously check their social media so they do not feel out of touch or excluded from their groups. Social comparison is intensified by the often idealized images shown on social platforms which can make individuals feel inadequate and drive them to seek approval through likes and comments. Also, the intermittent but positive responses on social media encourage repeated usage akin to operant conditioning principles.

Escapism and Coping Mechanisms

For some individuals, Social media acts as an escape or a way to manage feelings of stress, boredom, loneliness, or other unwelcome emotions. When people use social media, it offers a temporary distraction and serves as a source of fun or social interaction. This can cause people to use it too as they try to improve their mood and ease discomfort.

Social Influence and Peer Pressure

The spread of social media usage among friends can pressure someone to join in and stay active on these platforms, possibly using them more than planned.

Moreover, receiving social approval from peers might strengthen the habit of excessive use of social media.

Thus Social Media addiction is a complex issue governed by a combination of neurological,psychological and social factors.Recognizing these factors and their mechanisms is the crucial first step in overcoming Social Media addiction.

3.4 Algorithm model of Social Media and how it makes a person addicted to it

First of all in order to understand what is Social Media algorithm we need to understand what an algorithm is. In simple words, An algorithm is a mathematical set of rules specifying how a group of data behaves. So in other words in social media, algorithms help maintain order and assist in ranking search results and advertisements.It is estimated that 62.3% of world population use Social Media with the total number of people using Social Media is as high as 4.95 million worldwide as on October 2023.

There are various types of Social Media algorithms governing various Social Media apps,Some of these are as follows:

1.Facebook Algorithm

Meaningful customer engagement is the key to Facebook's algorithm layout. It's created to intensify the importance and viewership of local, familial and friendly posts, rather than business posts. It's made up of four ranking signals:

- Popularity
- Content type
- Relationship
- Recency

Popularity involves the content or information which is very popular at the moment.Content type involves the type of content that the facebook user majorly prefers,they are categorized into various types ranging from education to entertainment.Relationship involves showing content relating to mutual friends and

people that the individual follows whereas Recency shows recent events that transpired around the world.

2.X(Formerly known as Twitter) Algorithm

When Twitter first came out in 2006, it ranked posts according to the timeline and so it was focused on the day and time rather than the content. Today, Twitter's algorithm (released in April 2023) has evolved to consider a wealth of additional ranking factors baked on subject specialism and demographic relevance.

The main signal for Twitter's algorithm is:

- Recency

- Virality

- Relevance

- Geographical location

- Personal interests

Recency refers to recent events that transpired whereas Virality refers to events which are trending at the moment and with relevance meaning events which are relevant to the current geographical location and personal interests that an individual has.

3.Instagram Algorithm

Similar to Twitter, Instagram's algorithm was based on chronology so it prioritized posts by time. In 2021, the algorithm now looks at five key factors:

- Interest
- Relationship with a user
- Following(Celebrities,Influencers etc)
- Session time
- Time posted

Interest refers to the content that the instagram user is interested in and prefers spending a lot of time watching the content of interest whereas Relationship with User and Following shows other instagram users including celebrities and influencers that follow and follow back the instagram user.Session time and time posted refer to amount of

time spent by the individual on Instagram and the amount of time spent in posting their posts,reels etc.

3.5 Overcoming Social Media Addiction

Overcoming social media addiction can be challenging, but with determination and the right strategies, it's possible to overcome it and regain control of your healthy lifestyle. Here are some tips:

1.Break the habit of automatically checking the phone

The first step involved in overcoming Social Media addiction is to create awareness amongst ourselves to not automatically check the phone every few minutes/hours and whenever the urge comes to automatically check the phone,replace it with an activity that entertains you but does not involve any screens such as Reading,Going for a walk etc.

2.Disable Notifications

Habitual actions often begin with a trigger. In the case of social media, notifications act like triggers. They remind the user to check your phone for that oh-so-cute video or to see what others are up to. That promise of novelty and excitement creates a craving which leads to user to indulge in Social Media.In order to break this cycle the user needs to disable notifications which is commonly found in app's permissions.

3.Digital Fasting once a week

Similar to giving your stomach a break through Fasting/dieting/restricted eating,you can also give your mind a break through a concept called "Digital Fasting".It basically involves dedicating a few hours per day from taking a break from usage of Digital media,In this case it would be Social Media.It is advised to to dedicate 6-12 hours every week to a screen free time.

4.Devise some "No phone" rules

Akin to devising rules for children,the individual can also devise some "No phone rules" for themselves.They could be:

➢ No phones on the dinner table.

➢ No phones during family time.

➤ No phones while using the washroom.

➤ No phones in bed or 30 minutes before bedtime.

➤ No phones 1 hour after waking up.

5.Uninstall Social Media

Quite often, just the presence of apps on our phones can itself be a trigger. Therefore uninstalling the social media apps from your phone is the best case scenario to overcome Social Media addiction. The individual can use their computer/laptop to access social media instead of having the app handy on your phone. So instead of checking Instagram on their smartphone,they can introduce some friction and check only on their computer. Making something difficult to achieve tends to avert the mind from doing it altogether.
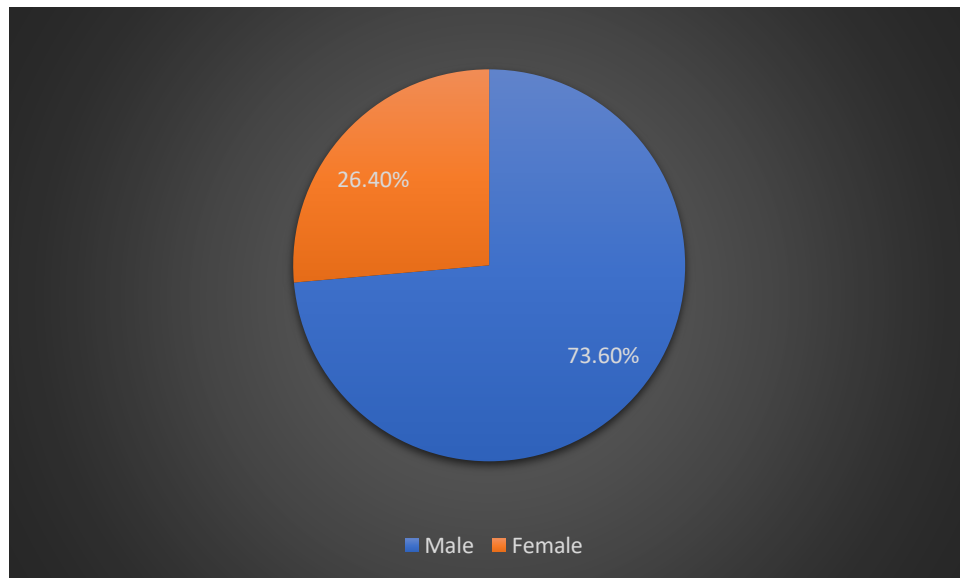
CHAPTER-4

DATA ANALYSIS

AND

INTERPRETATION

Table 1.0- Showing gender wise classification of Male and Female Respondents

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Male	159	73.6%
Female	57	26.4%

Pie chart 1.0 – Graphical representation of classification of Male and Female Respondents
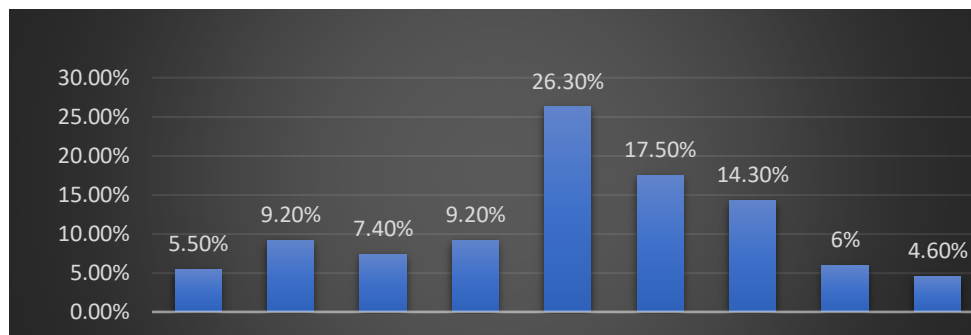

Interpretation: The above mentioned table and figure displays the demographic breakdown of a population based on Gender. Among the individuals surveyed 157and 57 were identified as male and female representing 73.6% and 26.4% of the overall population respectively.

Table 1.1- Showing the age distribution of respondents

Age	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
16	16	5.5%
17	20	9.2%
18	16	7.4%
19	20	9.2%
20	57	26.3%
21	38	17.5%
22	31	14.3%
23	13	6%
24	11	4.6%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie Chart 1.1 – Graphical representation of the age distribution of respondents


Interpretation: The above mentioned table and figure shows the age brackets. Among the respondents 5.5% are belonging to 16 aged group people, 9.2% respondents are belongs to 17 years old, 7.4% respondents belongs to 18 years old, 9.2% respondents are belongs to 19 years old, 26.3% repondents belongs to 20 years old, 17.5% respondents belongs to 21 years old, 14.3% respondents belongs to 22 years old, 6% repondents belongs to 23 years old and finally 4.6% repondents belongs to 24 years.

Table 1.2 - Showing the classification of responses on how they know about social media

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Friends	161	73.9%
Relatives	45	20.6%
Advertisements	9	4.1%
Others	3	1.4%
Total	218	100%

Pie chart 1.2 – Graphical representation of responses on how they know about social media
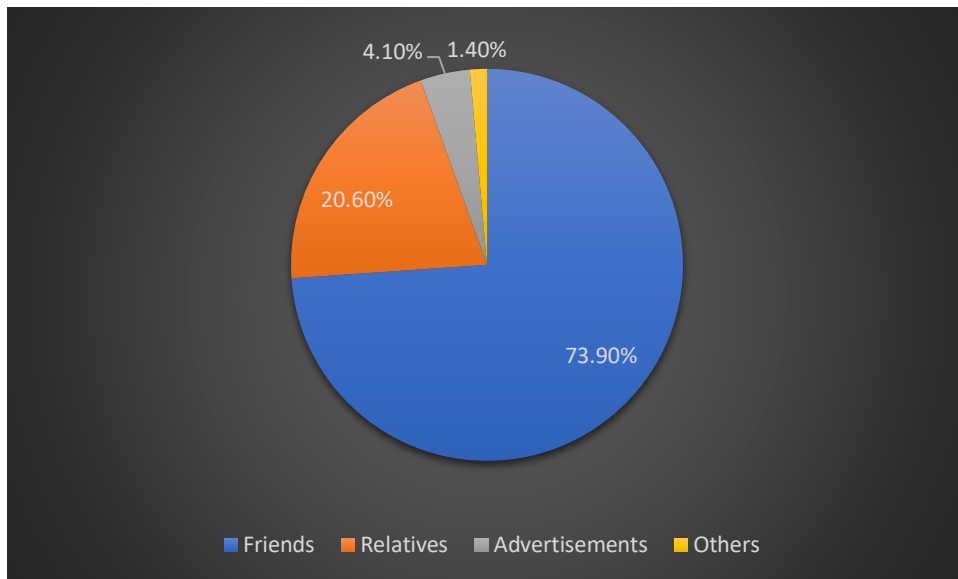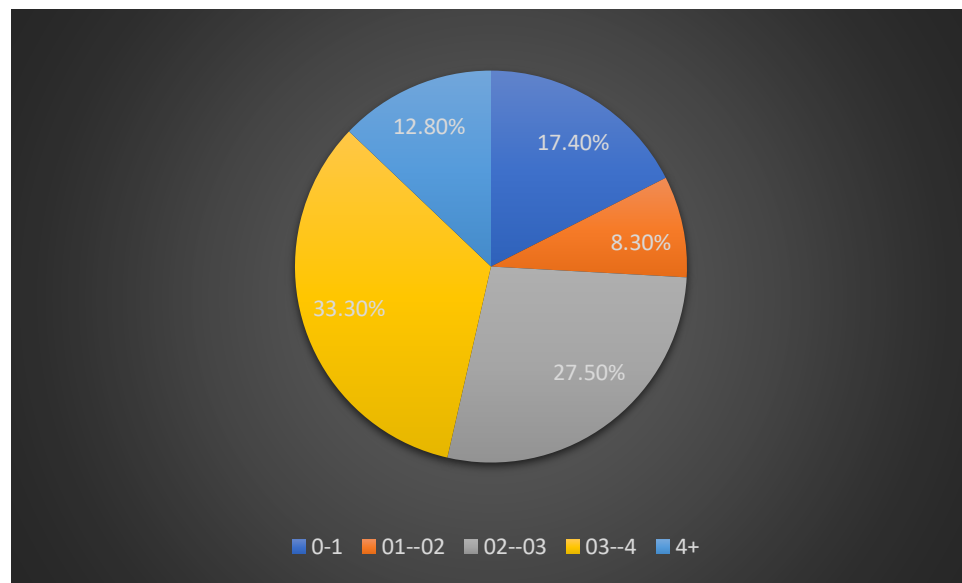

Interpretation: From the above table and chart we can infer the sources on how did the respondents first know about Social Media platforms.A majority of respondents(73.9%) are introduced to the realm of Social Media by their Friends whereas 20.6% have found about the existance of Social Media platforms through their Relatives.Whereas a small portion of respondents,4.1% and 1.4% have first known about Social Media platforms through Advertisements and Others respectively.

Table 1.3 - Showing the time spent on social media by respondents

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0-1	38	17.4%
1-2	18	8.3%
2-3	60	27.5%
3-4	72	33.3%
4+	28	12.8%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.3 – Graphical representation of time spent on Social Media by respondents
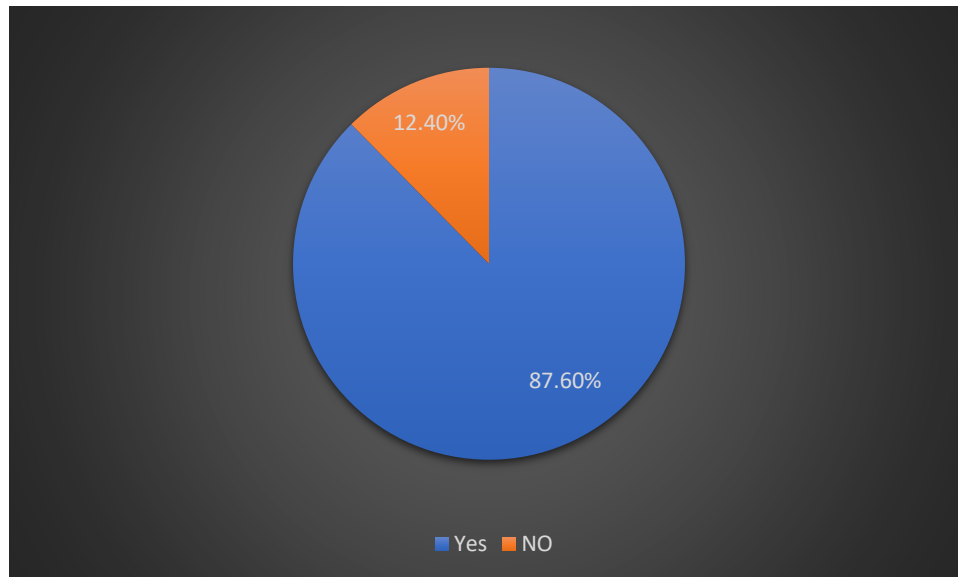

Interpretation: From the above table and chart we can infer the amount of time spent by the respondents on social media.Almost one third of the population(33.3%) prefer spending 3-4 hrs a day closely followed by 27.5% prefering 2-3 hrs which itself shows the dangerous levels of social media addiction.On the flip side 17.4% and 12.8% prefer spending 0-1 hour and more than 4 hours respectively.A minority of respondents,about 8.3% prefer spending 1-2 hours per day on Social Media.

Table 1.4-Showing the classification of respondents on is their any use of social media?

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	191	87.6%
NO	27	12.4%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.4 – Graphical representation of classification of respondents on is their any use of social media?
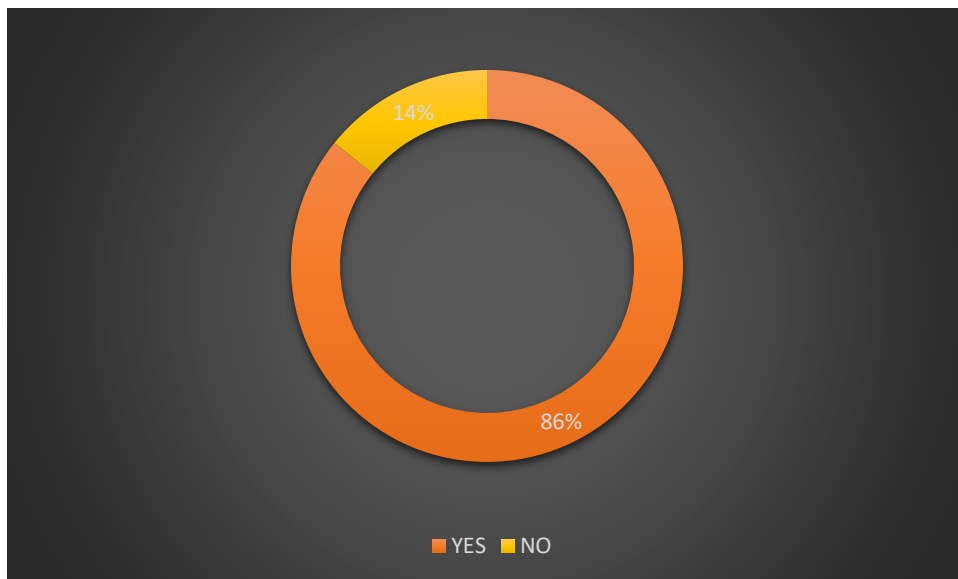

 Interpretation: The above table and chart we can see the respondents opinion on is there any use for Social Media.A majority of respondents of about 87.6% chose "Yes"whereas 12.4%' chose "No".Which shows that social media does have uses in the various forms such as connecting with family and friends,for seeking jobs and for entertainment.

Table 1.5 - Showing the distribution of respondents who think if using social media is important or mandatory for our age people?

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
YES	187	85.8%
NO	31	14.2%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.5 – Graphical representation of distribution of respondents who think if using social media is important or mandatory for our age people?


Interpretation:From the following table and chart we can elucidate the classification of respondents who seem to think using social media is important for people belonging to Gen-Z a.k.a our age group.A whopping 85.8% chose "Yes"' and the remaining 14.2% chose "No" which shows that Social Media is indeed important for people belonging to Gen-Z for various reasons.

Table 1.6 - Showing the classification of respondents on if they neglected responsibilities or obligation because of social media?

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
YES	185	84.8%
NO	24	11.1%
SOMETIMES	8	3.7%
Total	**217**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.6 – Graphical representation of classification of respondents on if they neglected responsibilities or obligation because of social media?
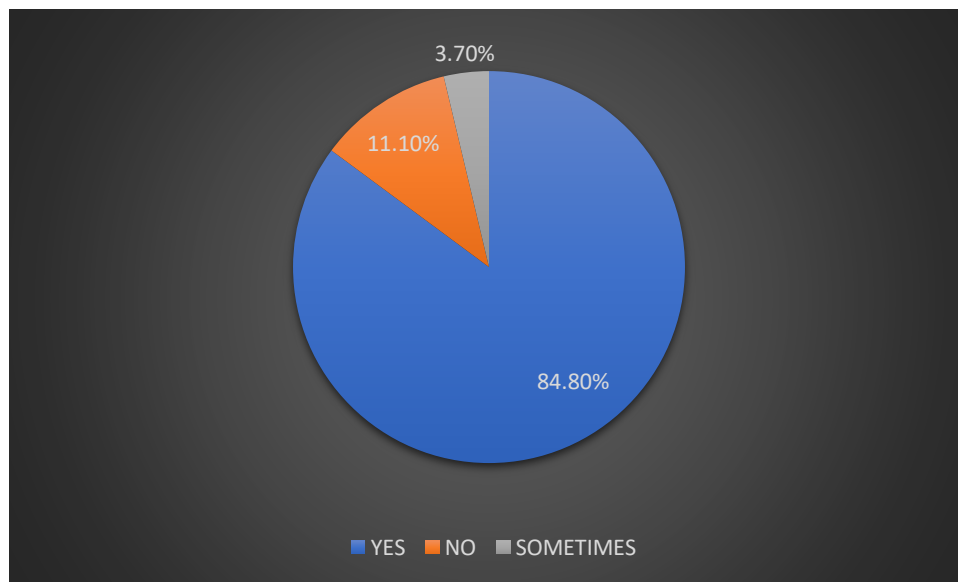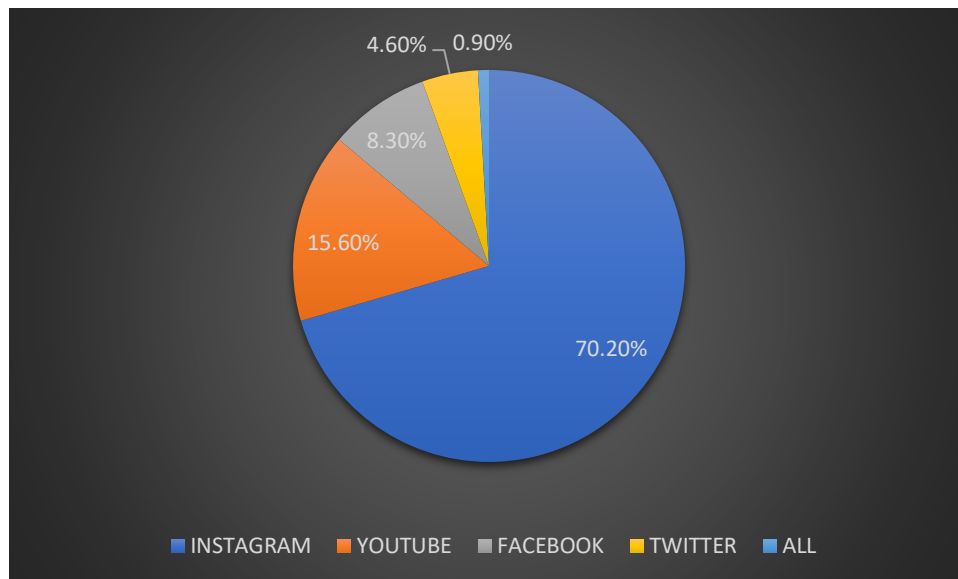

Interpretation:The above table and chart summarizes the distribution of respondents regarding neglecting their responsibilites or obligations because of Social Media.Surprisingly a majority(84.8%) went with "Yes" whereas about 11.1% chose "No".A minority of the population(3.7%) chose "Sometimes".Which shows that social media addiction has a higher possibility of derailing an individual's responsibilities and obligations.

Table 1.7 - Showing the grouping of respondents on the Social Media app that they use the most

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
INSTAGRAM	153	70.2%
YOUTUBE	34	15.6%
FACEBOOK	18	8.3%
TWITTER	10	4.6%
ALL	2	0.9%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.7 – Graphical representation of classification of respondents on if they neglected responsibilities or obligation because of social media?
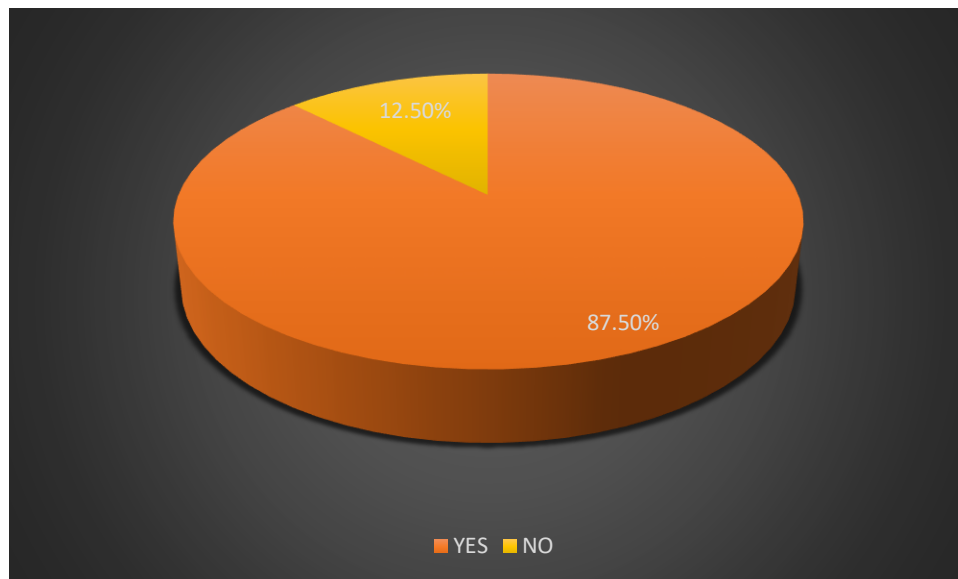

 Interpretation: The above table and chart shows the preference of Social Media among the respondents.Almost more than half of the population(70.2%) chose Instagram as the Social Media platform they use the most followed by Youtube,Facebook,X(formerly known as Twitter) by 15.6%,8.3% and 4.6% respectively.A very small portion of respondents(0.9%) chose "Others".

Table 1.8 - Showing the distribution of respondents on if they have ever tried to reduce the amount of time they spent on social media?

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
YES	189	87.5%
NO	27	12.5%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.8 – Graphical representation of distribution of respondents on if they have ever tried to reduce the amount of time they spent on social media?
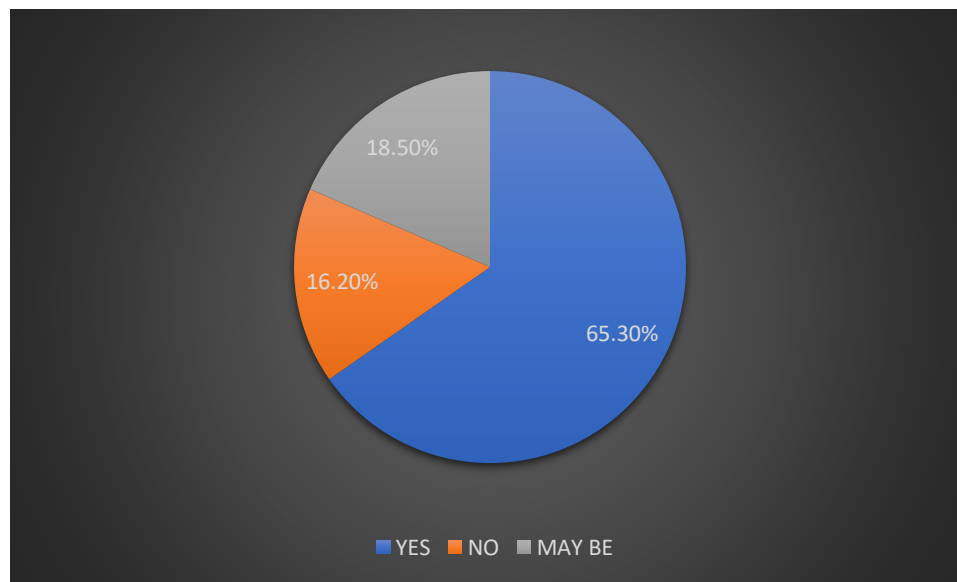

Interpretation: The above table and chart exhibits if the respondents have ever tried to reduce their Social Media screen time. 87.5% of the surveyed population have chose "Yes" which demonstrates that they have indeed tried to curb their social media addiction whereas 12.5% chose "No" which shows that they haven't tried to reduce the time spent on Social Media.

Table 1.9 - Showing the classification of respondents on if they have experienced negative emotions as a result of social media interactions?

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
YES	142	65.3%
NO	36	16.2%
MAY BE	40	18.5%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.9 – Graphical representation of classification of respondents on if they have experienced negative emotions as a result of social media interactions?
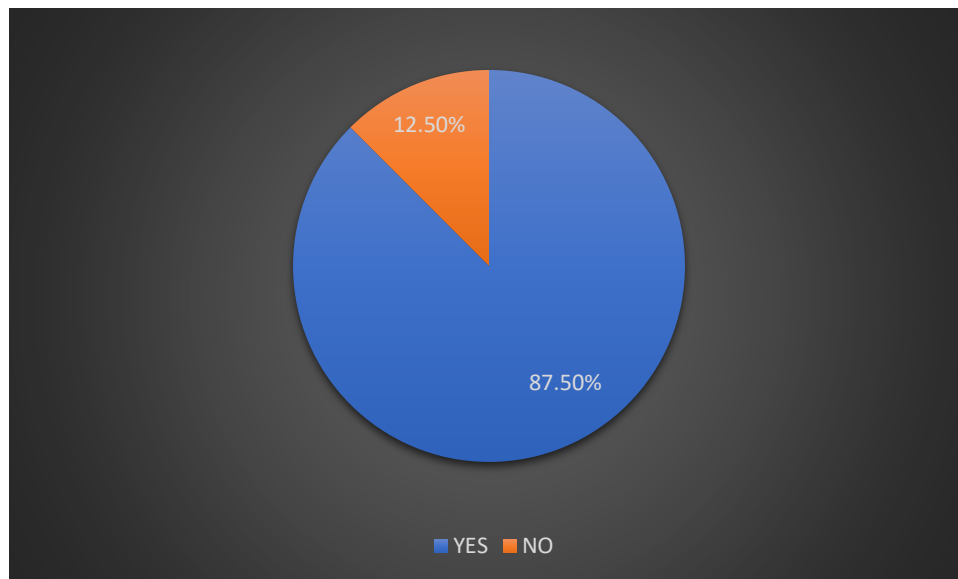

Interpretation:The above table and chart demonstrates if the respondents have ever experienced negative emotions as a result of Social Media Interactions.More than half the population,about 65.3% felt that they have indeed experienced negative emotions due to social media interactions whereas 16.2% are certain that they haven't experienced any negative emotions due to their Social Media interactions and 18.5% felt that they may have experienced negative emotions in their Social Media interactions.

Table 1.10-Showing the grouping of respondents on if they prioritize social media activities over sleep or other essential activities.

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
YES	190	87.5%
NO	28	12.5%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.10 – Graphical representation of grouping of respondents on if they prioritize social media activities over sleep or other essential activities.

Interpretation: The above table and chart displays the levels of respondents who prioritize Social Media activites over other essential activities and Sleep. Surpisingly it is found that 87.5% of respondents went with "Yes" and 12.5% went with "No" which shows that the majority does prioritize the Social Media over Sleep and other essential activities.

Table 1.11-Showing the distribution of respondents on if they feel pressurized to maintain a certain image or persona on social media

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
YES	143	66.2%
NO	39	17.6%
SOMETIMES	36	16.2%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.11 – Graphical representation of grouping of respondents on if they prioritize social media activities over sleep or other essential activities.
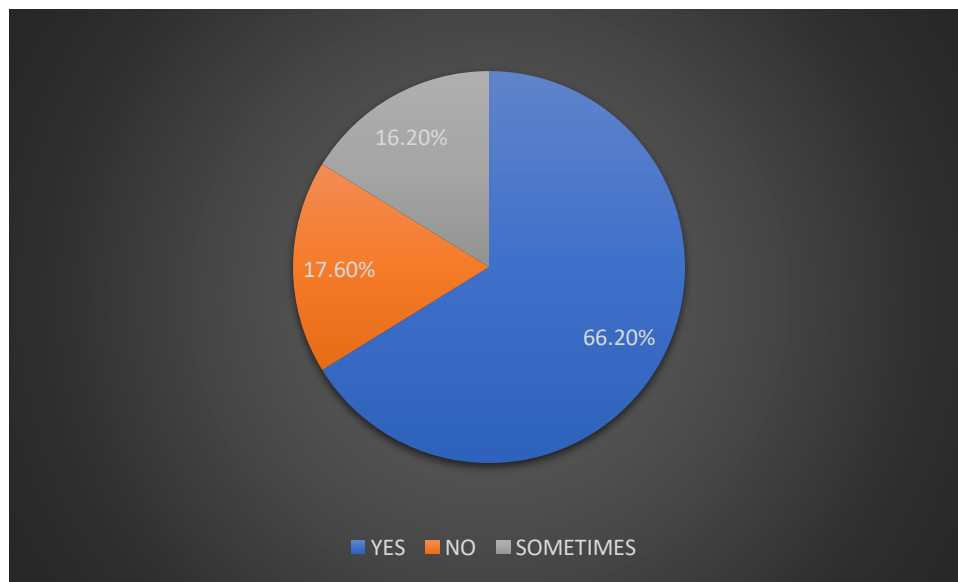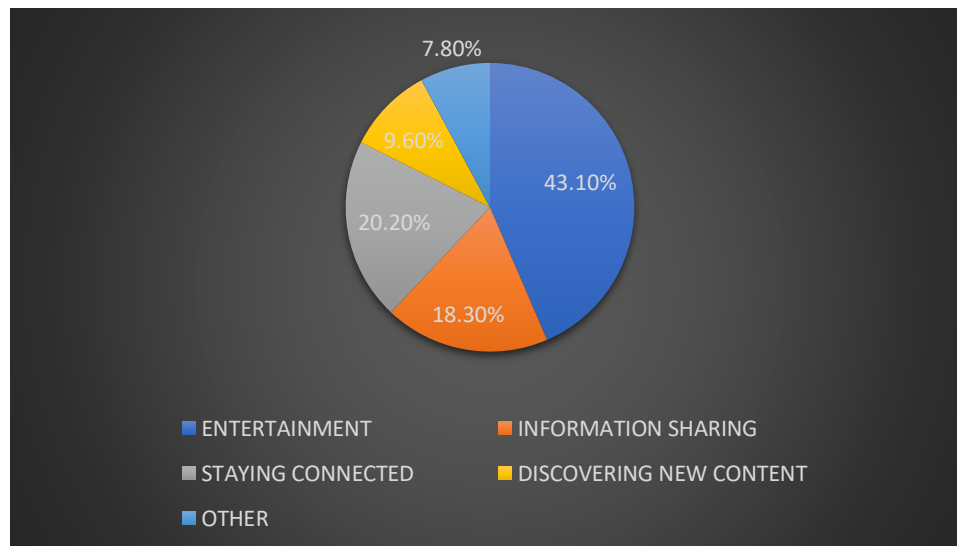

Interpretation: The above table and chart shows the classification of the respondents who feel pressurized that they need to maintain a certain image or persona on Social Media.More than half the respondents(66.2%) felt pressurized that they need to maintain a separate image or persona on Social Media whereas 17.6% don't feel pressurized and 16.2% feel pressurized to maintain a seperate image or persona on Social Media sometimes.

Table 1.12-Showing the distribution of respondents on reasons for why they like social media?

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
ENTERTAINMENT	94	43.1%
INFORMATION SHARING	40	18.3%
STAYING CONNECTED	44	20.2%
DISCOVERING NEW CONTENT	21	9.6%
OTHER	17	7.8%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.12 – Graphical representation of distribution of respondents on reasons for why they like social media?
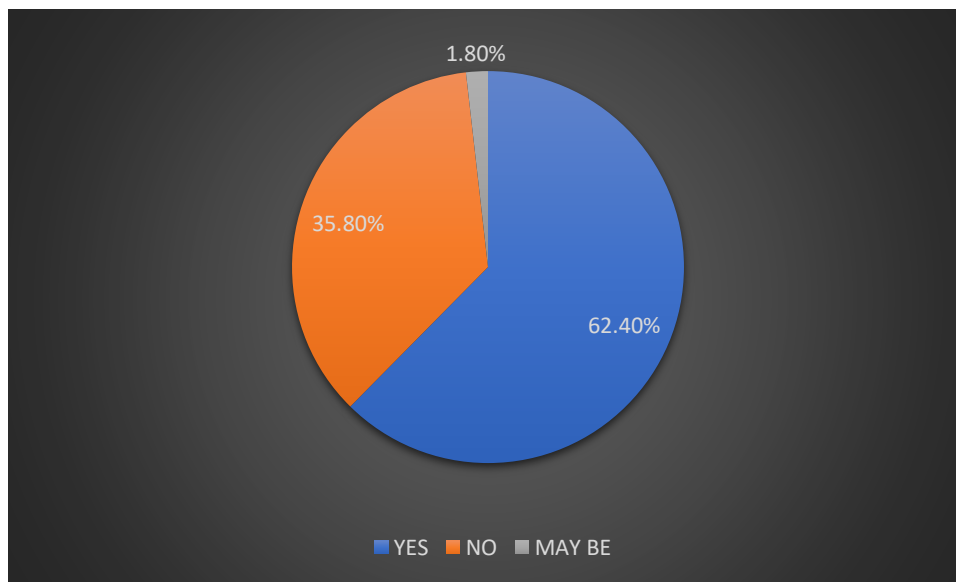

Interpretation:From the above table and chart we can sum up the reasons for liking social media among the respondents. Almost half the population(43.1%) prefer Entertainment as the core reason for liking Social Media followed by 20.2% and 18.3% prefering Staying Connected and Information sharing respectively.A small portion of the surveyed population,of about 9.6% and 7.8% feel that Discovering New content and content relating to reels and memes respectively are the main reasons for them liking Social Media.

Table 1.13-Showing the classification of respondents on if they are willing to delete their social media account

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
YES	136	62.4%
NO	78	35.8%
MAY BE	4	1.8%
Total	**218**	**100%**

Pie chart 1.13 – Graphical representation of classification of respondents on if they are willing to delete their social media account

Interpretation:The above table and chart shows the classification of population who if by any chance are willing to delete their Social Media accounts.Astonishingly more than half of the respondents chose "No" signalling that they are firm in their decision to not delete their Social Media accounts in any scenario whereas 35.8% are willing to delete their Social Media account and a minority of respondents(1.8%)are conflicted with them choosing "'Maybe".

CHAPTER-5

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

FINDINGS

➢ The surveyed population consists of 73.6% males and 26.4% females showing an overwhelming male dominance in usage of Social Media and facing negative consequences as a result of their addiction such as loneliness,depression etc.

➢ The majority of respondents fall within the ages of 20 and 21 years, comprising 43.8% of the total population which shows that students pursuing their bachelor's degree and fresher job holders are the main victims of Social Media addiction.

➢ Friends and relatives seem to be the main sources through which people are getting acquainted with Social Media platforms.

➢ One third of the population prefer spending 3-4 hours per day on Social Media which seem to be the catalyst for Social media addiction.

➢ Almost 85% of the population have neglected their responsibilities and obligations due to Social Media which shows that Social Media also makes an individual lazy and irresponsible.

➢ 65.3% of respondents have experienced negative emotions such as jealously,envy and anger as a result of Social Media whereas 16.2% haven't experienced it and 18.5% may have experienced which seems to be the first step in making an individual stressed and depressed and possibly suicidial.

➢ Entertainment and Staying connected with their family and friends seems to be the most prominent reasons on why the respondents like Social Media.

➢ A whopping 87.2% of the population have tried to reduce their Social Media screen time whereas 12.8% haven't tried it which shows that there is indeed a hope in overcoming Social Media addiction.

➢ Instagram and Youtube seems to be the most preferred Social Media platforms to use among the respondents.

➢ 62.4% of the population are willing to delete their Social Media accounts whereas 35.8% are unwilling to delete their accounts which shows that many individuals are willing to overcome their Social Media addictions by any means necessary.

SUGGESTIONS

- Individuals aged between 16 to 24 especially people aged 20,21 and 22 years should be more encouraged to inculcate Digital fasting in their day to day lives.In other words they should be fortified to pursue other entertaining activies such as playing sports,reading etc which does not involve mobile phones or other digital platforms in any way.

- There should be more severe restrictions on Social Media screen time per day which should be introduced by the platforms such as in addition to Night mode in Instagram they can also introduce other modes which limits the user's screen time.

- Educational institutions should promote productive usage of Social Media which is beneficial to students upskilling and development instead of labeling Social Media as a complete waste of time.

- Parents,Friends and relatives should also encourage the individuals to use Social Media more effectively which helps them in reaching their goals and ambitions such as for example-A jobless individual can use Social Media to find jobs instead of sitting at home and scrolling reels and memes.

- Social media apps should tweak their algorithms in such a way so that Positive content is made more available to individuals instead of negative ones which ruins a person's mood and makes him/her more jealous,envy and anger.

- Social Media users should be taught healthy ways to cope negative emotions such as jealously,envy,anger,stress and most important of all Depression.

- If in any case an individual experiences Depression or stress and any other mental symptoms they the parents,friends and relatives should be more compassionate towards them instead of taking these serious problems with a grain of salt.

- Gen-Z individuals should be more encouraged to foster real life relationships that involve face to face interactions instead of superficial online interactions such as chatting,calling etc.

- Social Media platforms should promote more positive celebrities or influencers who promote authenticity and well being as they can have a positive effect on Gen-Z individuals which helps them in navigating their own lives positively.

CONCLUSION

The study found out that Social Media addiction is increasing at an alarming rate especially among the more techsavvy generation known as the Gen-Z who are individuals born between 1997 and 2012.The history of Social Media has existed long since ancient times in the form of humans wanting to share information in the form of cave paintings etc,the invention of writing in the 15th century has progressed the means of communciation and 19th century has boosted the means of mass communication even more with introduction of telegrams, telephones etc with 20th century witnessing the birth of internet and thus finally 21st century saw the introduction of Social Media with apps such as Six Degrees, Friendster, and MySpace which paved the path to Social Media apps which we know today. The Social Media apps which are trending at the moment consist of Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat and X(formerly known as Twitter). The science behind Social Media addiction can be categorized into Neurological, psychological and Social elements and each Social Media app has it's own algorithm created with the sole purpose of maximum user engagement with the apps. The practical strategies that help in Overcoming Social Media addiction involve**s:** Breaking the habit of automatically checking the phone, Disabling Notifications, Digital Fasting once a week, Devising some "No phone" rules and finally Uninstalling Social Media.

It is also found that despite Social Media addiction increasing at an alarming rate there is still hope that Social Media addiction as it is found that many are aware of negative consequences that arise such as neglecting responsibilities ,awareness that they are experiencing negative emotions such as jealously, envy and anger due to Social Media interactions, feeling the pressure to create and maintain a separate image and persona on Social Media and that the individuals who participated in the survey have also tried to limit their Social media screen time and are also aware that Social Media does have some use one way or another which are all positive signs that Social Media addiction can be overcomed one way or another as long as the individual takes charge of their lives and start living their lives the way they wished they lived instead of being another slave to Social Media.

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ANNEXURE

1) Name*

Your answer

2) Gender*

A) Male

B) Female

3) What is your age? *

A) 16

B) 17

C) 18

D) 19

E) 20

F) 21

G) 22

H) 23

I) 24

4) How do you know about social media platforms? *

A) Friends

B) Relatives

C) Advertisment

D) Other:

5) How much time do you spent on social media? *

A) 0-1 hour

B) 1-2 hours

C) 2-3 hours

D) 3-4 hours

E) More than 4 hours

6) Why do you use social media platforms? *

A) Entertainment

B) Self expression(posts,reels)

C) Connection with friends and family

D) Promotion

E) Other:

7) Is their any use of social media? *

A) YES

B) NO

 8) Do you think using social media is important or mandatory for our age people?. *

A) YES

B) NO

9) Why do you like social media? *

A) Entertainment(Reels & Memes)

B) Information sharing

C) Staying connected

D) Discovering new content

E) Other:

10) Have you ever neglected responsibilities or obligations because of social media? *

A)Yes

B) No

C) Sometimes

 11) Which social media platform do you use the most ? *

A) Insta

B) Youtube

C) Facebook

D) Twitter

E) Other:

12) Have you ever tried to reduse the amount of time you spend social media ?*

A) Yes

B) No

13) Have you experienced negative emotions as a result of social media interactions?*

A) Yes

B) No

C) Maybe

14) Do you prioritize social media activities over sleep or other essential activities*

A) Yes

B) No

15) Do you feel pressure to maintain a certain image or persona on social media ?*

A) Yes

B) No

C) Sometimes

16) By any chance will you delete social media account? *

A) YES

B)   NO

C) Maybe