



Impact of Social Media on Emotional Development of Children in India

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to analyse the role of social media on emotional development of children in Indian context. With the development of Technology, the lifestyle of every child has become more digital platform oriented with changing mode of interactions. Communication mode has been shifted from offline to online now specially for the covid-19 pandemic situation. Naturally, this changing environment is influencing the soft mind of children through changing emotional development pattern in them. Social media are the most effective digital platforms with many utility values for the development of a child but, at the same time, unrestricted use and addiction to these platforms can brutally affect the emotional development of a child. It can even develop in them some serious mental issues. Thus, improper use of these platforms sometimes make life more complicated rather than to make it easier. So, the need of the hour is that parents and teachers should be more conscious about the uses of social media and its accessibility to children so that it can connect them with right knowledge, with right person and thoughts to make them a socio-emotionally developed productive citizens for future.

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Introduction:-

Technology is an essential component in modern society. Now, children are getting different digital platforms at very early stage for education and amusement. These wide range of digital media have great influence on the development pattern of a child. Social media is one of these digital varieties, which has



tremendous effect on the emotional development of children. In India, now a days, we cannot imagine even a toddler without these technologies. Social media technologies naturally influencing the language, communication, interaction, cognitive behavioural skills and emotional development of a child. Social media opens up a wide area of digitalised communication and self learning but on the other hand, excessive screen time reduces the healthy direct interactions with relatives and neighbours and decreases the attention span with development of intolerance and violence among the children. Thus, a balance is too much crucial between the use of social media and offline world for proper emotional development of a child.

Conceptual Meaning of Social Media:-

Social media is a collective treasure of websites and applications that focuses on digital communication, exchange of thoughts and ideas, educational content sharing, business or marketing, collaboration and many more. It enhances and extends human interaction network. It is an useful economical as well as entertaining way to keep in touch with near and dear ones. Hence, in today's busy mechanical schedule, social media has become a very important and essential concept for children, adults and seniors.

Nature of Emotional Development of Children:-

The word 'Emotion' is derived from Latin Word 'Emoverse' which means 'to stir up' or 'to agitate' or 'to excite'. This is a disturbed state of mind and involves feelings, impulses and physical reactions.

Emotional development in human differs from person to person. Some children may develop their age appropriate emotions very early and some may take time to develop. It begins from birth and continues till adulthood. Through interactions with environment, new emotions such as anger, fear, joy, laughter are developed in child. With the growing age these emotional sentiments grow further such as shyness, sympathy, empathy, hatred, sorrow, love etc. According to the physical age the emotional development also continues till adulthood with different ways of manifestations. The natural techniques to control own emotional thoughts and feeling and understanding the emotions of others and behaving as per situation with full emotional control in social is the sign of true emotional development in human. Exchange interaction and collaboration is a very important weapon to develop such varieties of emotions. Here, social media communication has great effect on the emotional development pattern of a child in this technical era.

Social Media Platforms and Childrens' Access:-

Social media has extended its roots from entertainment to education, connectivity, communication, business, management and almost every important fields in digital India. Various social media platforms are now within the reach of a child in India with some necessary digital media acts. Broadly, these platforms can be categorised in different groups namely;

- (i) Content Community : YouTube
- (ii) Blogs & Micro Blogs : Twitter, tumblr
- (iii) Collaborative Social Media Platforms: Quora,YAHOO!

WIKIS,Online Magazines

- (iv) Social Networking Websites: Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp,

LinkedIn,Snapchat,Pinterest

- (v) Virtual Game or Social World: WORLD WARCRAFT,LUDO

KING,PUBG

Many of these wide variety of media are available now in education sector also. Social media has a very complex and important aspect in modern education. Children can connect with the wide open sea of knowledge with the help of these networks. Moreover, teachers also prefer to use social media nowadays in delivering lessons and enriching themselves with knowledge. Recent past of covid- 19 pandemic situation is a great illustration in point where these social media networks play very important role in continuing the flow of education through online mode in a very interesting way by connecting faraway remote learners with their teachers. Hence, social media has become an indispensable and inseparable part in Indian education system. It has great influence on the emotional development along with all other aspect of development of a child. The types of interactions, audio- video clips and contents which a child observe in these digital platforms certainly influence their thinking levels, behavioural pattern, social communications and emotional understanding. Somewhere,social media is making children modern society adjustable with deep understanding in various matters but somewhere it is delaying their social emotional development by restricting the interactional mode in a mechanical way. Children are getting mechanical now with too much social media addiction and missing the real life taste of physical interaction. They have no time for neighbours, relatives, friends but have no scarcity of time for social media where they can search content as per their interest and communicate to a far away unknown person or friend whom they want to talk. Thus, social media is giving them independence on



communication and connection to knowledge hub. Hence, it is a great factor of influence on the emotional development of a child in modern technically advanced society

Advantages of Using Social Media on Emotional Development of Children:-

Social media is an integral part of our life. Using social media technology a child not only enter into the gateway of the endless sea of knowledge but also can get emotional help too. There are many reasons of using social media for emotional development of a child. These are-

(i)**Connectivity:** Social media platform helps to connect with a far away person as well as to an expert in any discipline for any personal consultation.

(ii)**Awareness:** Social media makes aware of the recent social economical and political issues so that a child become conscious and alert about the present condition of society.

(iii)**Promotion of Creativity and Self-expression:** A child can design he or her own content and can express freely his or her thoughts completely with individual style through social media. Thus, it enhances the creative and expressive power of a child.

(iv)**Appreciation and praise for motivation:**

Social media motivates a child by giving direct prompt feedback of appreciation by just one click of 'like' or 'share' and these values most for a new blogger.

(v)**Emotional Support:** Social media often emotionally support an user on personal or social issues by providing advises through audios or videos related to similar issues by experienced one. This is surely helpful for those who need emotional support.

(vi)**Build Relationships:** social media establishes rapport very easily to build strong relationships among learners, teachers and advisors and helps to attach them emotionally.

(vii)**Creates Collaboration:** Social media can stimulate the sense of collaboration very joyfully by arranging some collaborative activities through digital platforms.

(viii)**Ways of expressing emotions:** Social media gives a marvelous opportunity to express emotional feelings thoughts related to different incidents and activities in a very easy and interesting manner. Thus social media platform gives a great opportunity for those who are not always comfortable to express



their emotions and thoughts verbally but prefer to express it through digital media to a larger portion of society.

(ix)**Unity:** Social media has the ability to unite a large number of people on any issue irrespective of their religion, caste, creed, economical status and geographical dissimilarities. This sense of unity plays an important role for emotional development of a child as well as for the socio-economic development of a society.

Thus, social media is an integral part of life for socio-economic development of a child in modern technology dependent nuclear family. Hence, realising its importance various schools are now partly allowing their learners and teachers to use these platforms for a better healthy and friendly teaching learning environment.

Disadvantages of using Social Media:-

Social media has some sort of significant disadvantages too. Some of these are-

- (i) It disconnects user from the real world by limiting the real life face to face interaction.
- (ii) It is transforming a person to be a mechanical one
- (iii) Children are becoming heartless by excessive and improper use of social media platforms.
- (iv) Social media now diminishing thoughtfulness understanding level.
- (v) It is disconnecting a child from family, friends, relatives and neighbours.
- (vi) Various short-type videos are lowering the concentration, focus and Patience of learners.
- (vii) Sometime some violent content can harm the soft immature mind of a child and can develop in them the emotions of a hatred, jealousy, comparison, greed and more dangerously the tendency of performing crime and suicide.

Social Media and Mental Health:-

Mental health is a vital issue related to emotional development. Social media has some tremendously negative effect related to mental health of a child. Due to over use of social media platforms the proper balance of neuro-transmitters got disturbed and imbalance of these chemicals such as Glutamate, GABA, Glycine, Serotonin, Histamine, Dopamine, Epinephrine, Norepinephrine, Endorphins, Acetylcholine create different mental illness. Some of these are-



Depression: More often a child uses social media more he/she will compare himself/herself with others and this tendency can build a feeling of loneliness and inferiority. Hence, it may develop the problem of depression.

Anxiety: Excessive use of social media can develop the condition of anxiety for which a person feels very uncomfortable to talk publicly or interact openly with a fear that he/she may be criticised. Hence, it creates a barrier in social interaction.

Dysphoria: Observing the world through the eye of social media a person often starts believing that he/she is not good enough in all aspect as per their role model. This feeling creates dysphoria many types and hampers one's personal life brutally.

Self-harm and Suicidal Tendency: Emotional and psychological lack of confidence specially among teenagers and youngsters causing dangerous tendency of self-harm and even suicidal tendency for over and wrong use of social media.

Thus, to enhance the advantages and decrease the disadvantages, proper use of social media is a vital issue now. We have to be very careful about the uses of digital platforms for the proper development of a child and society.

How to control the negative effects of Social Media:-

There may be some very easy and conscious ways to control the negative effects of social media uses. These are-

- (i) By limiting the time of use.
- (ii) By connecting more to real world.
- (iii) By having a detox period full of noble talks, books and thoughts.
- (iv) By practicing mindfulness.
- (v) By closing unnecessary accounts in social media platforms
- (vi) By engaging more in daily life activities.

These are some useful methods to optimise the positive effect of social media and to minimise the negative effects of the same on children.

Conclusion:-



Technology and social media have both positive and negative aspects of their uses. But, we cannot detouch ourselves from the field of social media because that will be just like hammering on once own feet. On the other hand, too much and unrestricted use of social media platforms can ruin a child's life by creating socio-emotional problems with serious mental issues. The risk of negative use of social media is undoubtedly a serious matter of concern for children. Children are immature and future citizens. They are developing now. So in this vital period of development, right input of knowledge and information is very crucial for them. Otherwise, developmental impairments and behavioural problems may arise in them for their over sensitive behaviour. Hence, society and most deliberately parents and teachers should be conscious about the types of website,videos,audios,games etc. which are being watched by the children and the time spent on social media platforms. Appropriate and controlled mindful use of these digital platforms obviously flourish the children with proper emotions and prepare them for future responsible citizen.

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