



Disagreement between Parents and Adolescents for Use of Social Media- A Critical Analysis

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Abstract

Adolescents spend most of their time on social media for which they started ignoring other important activities and interacts less in their real surroundings. They think that social media has given them the opportunity and the platform for improving their social skills, and sharing their creativity. Whereas parents feel that their children are wasting their precious time on social media. As the perceptions of parents and adolescents are different from each other regarding the use of social media, there starts a disagreement between parents and adolescents regarding the use of social media. The present study was an attempt to find out the reasons for disagreement between parents and adolescents for use of social media. By using a multi-stage sampling procedure, a sample of 118 numbers of adolescents and their respective parents, (236 samples) were selected from five schools of the Jorhat block of Assam. A self-constructed questionnaire was prepared to collect the required information from the respondents. The results revealed that there was disagreement in the areas of academic performance and socialization between parents and adolescents for use of social media, while no disagreement was present in the area of health.

Keywords: Social media, parents, adolescent, disagreement, academics, socialization, health

1. Introduction

Social media is an essential part of our society. Social network websites make it easy to connect people and anyone can post news, relevant material, and other items, like videos and photos, etc. (Cain, 2009). These sites like Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, Myspace, Youtube, and others have become a medium through which millions of adolescents maintain and develop their online networks (Junco et al., 2011). Adolescents were the best users of technology and are typically early adopters of the latest technologies, including the net, mobile phones, social media, and other devices. Adolescents are getting more and more attached to social networking sites (Shastri, 2011), adolescents are socially connected for sharing their daily learning experiences and do conversations on several topics (Liccardi et al., 2007). They think that being active on social media is extremely important because most of their friends and siblings are there on this platform. 94% of American teens between the ages of 13-17 years used social networking sites and among all social networking sites, Facebook is the most popular site among American teens, 71% of teens use this site. 52% of teens used Instagram and 41% of teens used

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snap chat (Lenhart, 2015). As per adolescent perception, social media allow users to manage, build and represent their social networks online (Rachkonda, 2016), it is the best way to maintain their lives because they can get an opportunity to determine and maintain a relationship with their friends and families within a short period.

According to Kuppuswamy and Shankar (2010), social network websites grab the attention of the students and then divert it towards non-educational and inappropriate actions including useless chatting. India is known for its strong family bond and attachment between parents and children. In today's society, the most difficult challenge is to spend time together with family members (Niveditha and Varghese, 2014). Parents and adolescents are found to be closer if they spend much time with each other (Peterson, 2009). Communication between parent and adolescent were less and they were less emotionally connected with their real surrounding due to more connection with the social networking sites (Khalid, 2017). Due to social media and texting, their children no longer have as much social interaction face-to-face because they see it as easier to say what they want behind a computer screen (Livingstone, 2008). Parents want their adolescents to attend a family gathering and spend time with elderly peoples in their surroundings through which they can gain knowledge about the relationship which helps them to experience new things related to their life and education. Parents want their children to follow the same disciplinary pattern that they followed in their adolescent periods, like reading books, interacting with their friends, involving themselves in some physical and recreational activities and helping their parents in household chores, etc. Instead of doing all these activities, today's adolescents spent their time on different sites, chatting with friends, playing games, and watching videos. As the parents perceive that social media is a waste of time for their children, therefore, they think that while getting engaged in social media their children tend to neglect their studies, careers and compromise their social relationships, educational and physical activities. The parents think that Adolescents are always busy with pinging, chatting while doing their classwork or assignments (Olubiyi, 2012). As a result, the enthusiasm of social media has crushed the times that should be channelled to learning, academic research, and creativity. Therefore, as a result of distraction from social media, most student academics suffer a lot. Parents and guardians were worried as they feel that their adolescents spent too much time on social media and did not spend sufficient time on their studies which affected negatively their academic performance (Mingle and Adams, 2015). Some parents agree that their adolescents spend more time on social media due to which they spent less time with them, and that leads to decrease attachment between parents and adolescents (Sultana, 2017). But on the contrary, adolescents argue that social networks are beneficial for them as it contributes in their learning experiences as well as in their academic life. They think that

social media helps them for knowing new things, building their self-confidence and it is very important as well as useful media for them. The adolescents feel that social media helps them to maintain their family relationships and helps to acquire more knowledge about the new technology, and the recent happening worldwide through following the web pages. They also get to learn by watching YouTube videos and attending online classes and tutorials, which helps them to understand easily. Adolescents get health-related content on social media which positively impacts their health. Through social media, they can get different types of health tips, eating habits, exercise, and other health-related issues (Goodyear, 2018). So they start arguing with their parents about the use of social media and start behaving like a stubborn child. Parents don't like this behaviour as they were aware of various adverse effects of social media on their child, so they get tensed and disappointed, and there starts a disagreement between parents and adolescents regarding the use of social media. The present study was undertaken to identify the reasons of disagreement for use of social media.

2. Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in the Jorhat Block, Jorhat district of Assam state, India. An explorative research design was applied to accomplish the objective of the study. For conducting the study, a multi-stage sampling design was adopted. Five schools comprising of both Assamese and English medium schools were selected randomly among other schools located in the Jorhat block. A total sample of 118 adolescents was selected by the method of probability proportional to size (PPS) and one of their parents for each adolescent's i.e. 118 numbers of parents, from the selected schools, comprises of total 236 samples respectfully. For collecting the data, a self-constructed questionnaire was used to collect the background information and other required information. The background information includes types of respondent's family, educational qualification of parents. The questionnaire had 25 statements to assess the reasons for disagreement between parents and adolescents for the use of social media. These statements were based on three areas namely- academic performance, health, socialization. In the area of academic performance there are 8 numbers of statement like- ignoring regular school activities, wasting of time while viewing others' updates, affects creativity of the adolescents, poor academic performance, procrastination in academic work, less interest in reading books, less interest in reading magazines, less interest in reading and newspaper. In the area of socialization there are total 6 numbers of statements like less interaction between family members, isolation from friends and family, less interaction between peers, no interest in social gatherings, poor communication, less interaction with guest. Similarly in the area of health there are 8 numbers of statement like- decrease of physical activities, does not want to play out door games and exercising, interrupt in sleeping schedule, eye problems, interrupt in diet



schedule, stay distracted during daily activities, depression , anxiety, mood swings, headache, obesity

The statements were collected on 5 point scale of “strongly agree,” “agree,” “undecided,” “strongly disagree” and “disagree” with a score of 5,4,3,2, and 1 point respectively for each statement. After collection of data, mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation (CV), and chi-square values were computed and the results were interpreted by using SPSS. Data were collected in the month of January in the year 2020.

3. Results and Discussion

Data were examined to identify the reasons of disagreement between parents and adolescents in the use of social media and the response received has been presented in the form of a Table.

This Table 1 shows the educational information of the respondent’s parents and the table revealed that the majority of 30.5% of respondent’s fathers had educational qualifications till graduation. It may be because, in our community, some people still think that males have more social roles than females. More importance is given to a male

Table 1: Educational background of the parents

Parents Information	Total no. of parents (n=118)			
	Father		Mother	
	Fre- quency	Percent- age	Fre- quency	Percent- age
Educational qualification of parents				
Below matriculation	21	17.8	26	22.0
Matriculation	27	22.9	33	28.0
Higher secondary	28	23.7	28	23.7
Graduate	36	30.5	27	22.9
Post graduate	6	5.1	4	3.4

child than a female child. The result also revealed that the majority of 28% of respondent’s mothers had educational qualifications till matriculation. It is showed that mothers were less educated compared to fathers. The early marriage cultures are still prevalent in our community, so it restricts the girls from getting a higher education. The findings can be supported by Plecher (2020) that the girls are less educated because more preference is given to the boys or sons in the family for education as they are considered as the future of the family. Traditionally, the girls were expected to stay at home and look after domestic chores. So education among girls was not encouraged (Table 2).

It was also found that 59.3% of respondents belonged to nuclear families. It is because most of them were in the urban area and also many of them were shifted to the urban area, to fulfil the needs of their children such as better education,

Table 2: Types of family

	Total no. of respondents (n=118)	
	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear family	70	59.3
Joint family	40	33.9
Extended family	8	6.8

health facilities, and exposure. It was also observed that the influences of modernization and urbanization have changed the traditional joint family practices to the nuclear family.

This Table 3 shows the areas of disagreement between parents and adolescents in the use of social media by taking the coefficient of variation (CV) values. As the CV value is more the disagreement between parents and adolescents is also more, so from the above table it is identified that in academic performance CV values is 45.17 which is the highest indicating more disagreement in the response of parent and adolescent in the use of social media, but in case of other two areas the CV is 44.99 and 39.73 which indicates comparatively less disagreement between parent and adolescent in the area of socialization and health.

Table 3: Disagreement between parents and adolescents in different areas

Area	Mean	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation (CV)
Academic performance	2.87	1.29	45.17
Socialization	2.7	1.21	44.99
Health	1.76	0.7	39.73

Table 4 indicated that in the area of academic performance, the *p*-value is <0.05 which indicates that the results are statistically significant. Hence it can be interpreted that all the reasons for disagreement between parents and adolescents regarding academic performance are statistically significant at a 1% level of significance. Adolescents claim that through social media they can share their study-related assignments, notes with their friends. But parents think that their adolescents use their accounts more in terms of chatting with friends, sharing photos, videos, etc. due to which they cannot concentrate on their school activities and they ignored their school activities, such as completing homework and other academic tasks regularly (Walsh, 2013). Since the adolescent uses their social media accounts for following and viewing other’s updates therefore unknowingly they spend a lot of their valuable time on these sites. So parents think that instead of staying active on social media sites they can use that time for any other activities or they can spend time with their immediate surroundings. Parents think that social media is a waste of time for their children, as the adolescent can use that time for studying or exploring new things related

Table 4: Reasons of disagreement between parent and adolescents in different areas

Area	Reasons	χ^2 Value	p-value
Academic performance	Ignoring regular school activities	176.818	0.000**
	Wasting of time while viewing others updates	164.722	0.000**
	Affects creativity of the adolescents	161.876	0.000**
	Poor academic performance	149.911	0.000**
	Procrastination in academic work	123.645	0.000**
	Less interest in reading books	104.817	0.000**
	Less interest in reading magazines	106.087	0.000**
	Less interest in reading newspaper	97.015	0.000**
Socialization	Less interaction between family members	143.714	0.000**
	Isolation from friends and family	7.894	0.029*
	Less interaction between peers	51.712	0.000**
	No interest in social gatherings	54.567	0.000**
	Poor communication	2.754	0.398
	Less interaction with guests	6.139	0.032*
Health	Decrease of physical activities	4.912	0.219
	Does not want to play outdoor games and exercising	5.444	0.142
	Interrupt in sleeping schedule	2.184	0.335
	Eye problems	6.423	0.298
	Interrupt in diet schedule	2.156	0.34
	Stay distracted during daily activities	4.781	0.092
	Depression	2.085	0.149
	Anxiety	2.085	0.149
	Mood swings	5.921	0.073
	Headache	5.432	0.082
	Obesity	0.876	0.349

** : Indicates significance at ($p=0.01$) level of probability; * : Indicates significance at ($p=0.05$) level of probability

to their career instead of chatting and viewing updates of strangers (Rawat, 2015). Adolescents think that through social media they can make different kinds of blogs, short videos, can post photographs, and join the online contest of music and dance competitions, through which they can improve their critical thinking, social and artistic skills and also get ample opportunity to interact with many people, which helps them to get recognition for their talent through updates and share in different sites. But according to parents, spending more time with the surroundings helps to improve creative thinking abilities but due to social media, adolescent spend more time with these sites for which they give less attention to their skills and as the adolescent becomes more dependent on these sites, so they always seek help which hampers their creative thinking (Elmansy, 2015). In terms of poor academic performance, adolescents think that through social media they can share their class assignments, notes and ask doubts to their friends and teachers. Adolescents felt that their

grades would be better if they can learn through social media and clarify their doubts. But parents on the other hand think that their adolescents use their accounts more in terms of chatting with friends, sharing photos, watching videos, etc. due to which they get distracted from their school activities, and their regular academic activities get hampered. Through social media, adolescents can get all the notes and home assignments from their friends directly. The adolescents think that with the help of social media they can seek help from their friends and other study-related groups for completing their assignments. But parents claim that since the adolescent are busy with social media they cannot concentrate on their study, they get distracted easily through chatting, scrolling, and checking the status of their friends because of which they forget their task or they delay in submitting their assignments and homework timely. More use of social media is linked to more academic procrastination among adolescents (Hervani, 2016).

Parents and adolescents disagreed in terms of less interest in reading books, magazines, and newspapers. It may be the fact that in this age of modernization, where technology and social media are part of our day-to-day life, therefore adolescents too crave getting engaged in social media after seeing others doing the same. Adolescents used social media sites for entertainment and study purposes too. Since books take more time to go through, adolescents usually go for the route which takes less time and would entertain them too, and through social media, they get them both. Reading books helps them to gain their knowledge and improve their vocabulary skills, which is not fulfilled in social media. Parents think that social media is killing the interest in reading books because it hampers creativity by viewing other updates (Cicero, 2015). The parents think that most of the time their children are busy chatting and playing with their online friends for which their interest has become less in reading books. Similarly, they claim that at home they find a few selected magazines and newspapers for them but in social media, they can find different types and more valuable things related to their interest. Only 2% of adolescents have an interest in reading newspapers while others have no interest in reading newspapers. They prefer social media as it is an easy way to get current news as per their interest. But parents claim that their children are not getting any relevant information on social media (Twenge et al., 2019).

In the case of socialization, all the reasons are not statistically significant. For poor communication, the disagreement between parents and adolescents is statistically not significant. The reasons like less interaction between family members, less interaction between peers and no interest in social gatherings the p -value is <0.01 which indicated that these reasons are statistically significant at a 1% level of significance. In terms of isolation from friends and family, less interaction with guests the p -value is <0.05 which showed that the disagreement between parents and adolescents is significant at a 5% level of significance. Parents and adolescents had a disagreement for use of social media in terms of less interaction between family members. As per parents' perception, most adolescents spent more time on social media making new friends, updating their accounts, and chatting with friends online, so they like to stay alone and do not interact much with family members. But adolescents claim that they are interacting with their family members because they are living together so they regularly interact with their parents and also in social media the adolescent get connected with their relatives through different social media sites. Adolescents perceived that social media help them to bring closure to their family members through following and chatting with them. In terms of isolation from friends and families, adolescents think that due to social media use they are getting in touch with their friends and families. The social media platform is the way of communicating with others, so they use this platform for maintaining a good relationship

with their friends and families. But parents agreed that due to social media their children can connect with their friends and families through chatting, video calling but these things are not enough to maintain a good relationship. Parents think that adolescents are more socialized in their social media sites as they spend more time on that media but in reality, they are more isolated from their real world. Miller (2017) supported that adolescent spent more time on social media is usually linked to a higher likelihood of feeling socially isolated. In terms of less interaction between peers, adolescents connect their peer groups in social media, therefore they can share and chat with their friends, they also meet through video calls and live chat on their social media sites. Parents are worried about their children's friend groups; because the friend circle has a vivid impact on their children's behaviour and psychology so they are worried about their children as they may have some unknown friend groups in their social media site which may be harmful to them. But parents want their children to interact with their real friends and connect with them through social gatherings and informal interaction and take up some physical activities and extracurricular activities, etc.

Parents and adolescents disagreed in terms of less interaction with the guest. Parents claim that social media has trapped the children so strongly that their all-day routine is being set and scheduled according to the social networking programs. Adolescents are always busy with their phones so they forget to interact with their relatives and guests, which is badly affecting the relation of children with their parents and other family relatives (Khurana, 2015). Parents and adolescents disagreed in terms of no interest in a social gathering. Adolescents like to share posts and pictures with their friends on their social media so they sometimes attend social gatherings. But parents claim that although they are present in a social gathering or any social function they are mostly busy with their phones and social media for posting status and pictures of the function. They claim that their adolescents did not interact much in a social gathering. 66% of adolescents ignored social gatherings since they spent surfing these social media sites for various purposes so they neglect their social gatherings and prefer sitting back home with an alternative to access these sites (Khurana, 2015).

In the area of health, it was found that the p -value is >0.05 which indicates that the results are not statistically significant. Hence, it can be interpreted that the reasons for disagreement between parents and adolescents regarding health are not statistically significant.

There is no disagreement between parents and adolescents in terms of health, it may be the fact that parents are more conscious about their children's education because they think that spending more time chatting with friends can hamper their study and not much in health, As per their perception, social media affects more on their children's academic and social life as compared to health. (Barry et al., 2017) revealed that as both parents and adolescents are not aware of the



term depression, anxiety, mood swings, and other health-related issues so they are unknown about the seriousness of health affected by the use of social media. Social media can also inspire adolescents to develop healthy eating habits by seeing and following their friends, so they claim through social media they maintain their health very well. Both parents and adolescents are not that much aware of the negative impact of social media on health, so there is no disagreement between parents and adolescents for use of social media.

4. Conclusion

In the areas of academic performance and socialization the disagreement present between parents and adolescents. It may be because parents are more concerned about the adolescent's education and social life and they are not aware of the negative effects of social media on health. To overcome the disagreement Parents should control the behaviour of adolescents and also involve them in different forms of extracurricular activities according to their interest so that they can divert from the temptation to use social media.

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