AN ANALYSIS OF BODY IMAGE, SOCIAL MEDIA HABIT, AND SEXUAL ATTITUDES AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT:

This study analyzes body image, social media habits, and sexual attitudes among adolescents. The sample consisted of 300 participants (150 males and 150 females) aged 15 to 19. The quota sampling method was used for data collection. Participants completed the Social Media Addiction Checklist, the Body Image Scale, and the Sexual Attitude Scale. Data were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation, mean, standard deviation, and t-tests in SPSS. The findings revealed a significant correlation between **social media habits and body image**. *However, no significant correlation was found between social media habits and sexual attitudes or between body image and sexual attitudes among adolescents. Additionally, there was no significant difference in social media addiction between male and female adolescents, while significant differences were observed in body image and sexual attitudes between genders. The results are detailed in the paper.*

Keywords: Social Media Habits, Body Image, Sexual Attitude, and Adolescents Students

INTRODUCTION:

Social media is a tool that has become increasingly popular due to its user-friendly features. It is a prevalent medium today, enabling the transfer of information and communication with people worldwide via an Internet connection. Over the past few years, social media has grown tremendously, capturing millions of users globally.

INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA:

Social media has undeniably reshaped the landscape of human interaction and societal structures. Its influence is pervasive, impacting various facets of our lives, from how we consume information to how we engage in political discourse.

Here's an indication of the multifaceted influence of social media on society:

Positive Impacts:

Enhanced Communication and Connectivity: Social media platforms have bridged geographical barriers, enabling instant communication and fostering connections across the globe.(Social Media Has Changed The Lives, 2018) This has been particularly valuable for maintaining relationships and building communities.

Social and Political Activism: Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for social and political movements, enabling mobilization, raising awareness, and advocating for change.(Role of social media in Politics, 2019) It has facilitated citizen journalism and amplified marginalized voices.

Negative Impacts:

Mental Health Concerns: Excessive social media use has been linked to increased rates of anxiety, depression, body image issues, and loneliness.(Social Media: Impact on human behavior and society, 2018) The constant comparison, fear of missing out, and online harassment can negatively impact mental well-being.

Spread of Misinformation and Disinformation: The rapid and widespread dissemination of information on social media makes it challenging to control the spread of false or misleading content.(Social Media Has Changed The Lives, 2018) This can have detrimental consequences, influencing public opinion and decision-making.

In conclusion, social media's influence on society is complex and multifaceted, presenting both opportunities and challenges. It's crucial to navigate this digital landscape with awareness, critical thinking, and a balanced approach to harness its benefits while mitigating its potential drawbacks.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND TODAY'S YOUTH:

Youth are among the most dominant users of social media. The rapid increase in online network usage, especially in terms of time spent, has led some researchers to argue that excessive social networking can lead to addiction (Griffiths & Pontes, 2014, p.120; Sussman et al., 2011). Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and X are particularly popular among young people. Interaction methods have evolved, with "texting" becoming a common form of daily communication. Social media provides a platform for youth to socialize, make friends, gain knowledge, stay updated with news, and more, which are considered benefits. However, overuse of these platforms, mainly for entertainment, can be detrimental as it may consume time that could be used for academic or work purposes.

BODY IMAGE:

Body image is a multidimensional construct that encompasses an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours related to their physical appearance. (Rodgers et al., 2023) It involves how we perceive, think about, feel about, and act towards our bodies.

Here's a breakdown of the key aspects of body image:

Perceptual: This refers to how we see our bodies, which may or may not align

with reality. For example, someone might perceive themselves as overweight when they are actually within a healthy weight range.

Cognitive: This involves our thoughts and beliefs about our bodies. These thoughts can be positive, negative, or neutral, and they can be influenced by a variety of factors, such as media, culture, and personal experiences.

Affective: This refers to the feelings we have about our bodies, such as pride, shame, anxiety, or disgust. These feelings can be influenced by our thoughts and perceptions of our bodies, as well as by our overall mood and self-esteem.

Behavioral: This refers to the actions we take as a result of our body image. For example, someone with a negative body image might engage in excessive dieting, exercise, or body checking.

Body image is a significant aspect of our overall well-being, and it can have a profound impact on our mental and physical health.(Rodgers et al., 2023) A negative body image is associated with a range of problems, including low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and eating disorders.(Jung et al., 2014) On the other hand, a positive body image is associated with greater self-esteem, confidence, and overall well-being.

Traditionally, body image refers to the mental image we form of our own bodies. Recently, however, the term has expanded to include our feelings about our bodies and our satisfaction or dissatisfaction with them.

BODY IMAGE AND SELF-ESTEEM:

Some studies suggest that favourable family interactions and parenting characteristics are associated with positive psychological conditions, such as higher self-esteem and self-efficacy, especially in adolescence (Bean and Northrup, 2009). Rosenberg (1965) defined self-esteem as the personal evaluation of one's value and appropriateness, reflected in feelings, thoughts, and attitudes of approval or disapproval of oneself. Self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura (1977, 2001), involves the cognitive assessment of the ability to gather cognitive, emotional, and behavioral resources needed to perform a task or achieve a goal. In contrast, self-esteem encompasses feelings of self-worth (Zimmerman and Cleary, 2005).

Sexual Attitude:

Sexual attitudes refer to one's views on sexuality or sexual behaviors. These attitudes, evident in individual sexual behavior, are influenced by family and cultural perspectives, sexual education, and prior sexual experiences. Sexual health should be recognized as a positive concept associated with well-being and positive qualities beyond reproductive health. It involves the expression of individual and collective needs, human rights, and responsibilities. According to the WHO,

sexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being about sexuality, not merely the absence of disease or dysfunction. Achieving sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships.

Sex Education:

Sex is a taboo subject in India, and sex education is an even bigger taboo. Student curricula do not adequately cover topics related to sex education. As a result, adolescents or adolescents are often unaware of the consequences of irrational sexual behavior.

Sexual Behaviour:

Typical or normative sexual behavior is spontaneous, intermittent, light-hearted, and playful, occurring between children of similar age, size, and ability, who may be of the same or opposite genders. Healthy sexual relationships should involve protection against STIs and unwanted pregnancies and be free of coercion, sexual assault, rape, discrimination, violence, and pain.

Adolescents:

Young adulthood, defined as the age group 18 to 25, requires awareness of current topics. Providing sex education and promoting a positive approach to social media addiction can enhance the attitudes of adolescents. As the current generation and future of India, they need to be well-informed and knowledgeable about these subjects

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

Social media may create unrealistic beauty standards, leading to body dissatisfaction and low self-esteem in both women and men. High exposure to lean and toned body shapes has created new standards and "idealized" body types. Aside from the role of family and peer groups, social media is also one of the major agents of sexual socialization in adolescents.

1. Understanding Adolescent Development: This study provides insights into how body image, social media habits, and sexual attitudes interact and influence the psychological and social development of adolescents. Understanding these relationships is crucial for comprehending the broader spectrum of adolescent behavior and mental health.

2. Mental Health Implications: Identifying the impact of social media on body image and sexual attitudes can highlight potential mental health issues, such as body dysmorphia, low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression. This understanding can lead to better mental health interventions and support systems for adolescents.

3. **Educational Interventions:** The findings can inform the design of educational programs that address the negative impacts of social media on body image and sexual attitudes. Schools and educators can use this information to develop curricula that promote healthy body image,

responsible social media use, and positive sexual attitudes.

4. Parental Guidance: Parents can benefit from understanding the influence of social media on their children's body image and sexual attitudes. This knowledge can guide them in monitoring and managing their children's social media use and fostering open discussions about body image and sexuality.

5. Policy Development: Policymakers can use the study's findings to create regulations and guidelines for social media platforms to protect adolescents from harmful content and interactions. Policies can be developed to ensure safer online environments that promote positive development.

6. Healthcare Interventions: Healthcare providers can use the insights from this study to offer targeted interventions and counseling for adolescents struggling with body image issues or unhealthy sexual attitudes. This can lead to more effective treatment plans and support mechanisms.

7. Social Awareness: The study can raise awareness about the potential negative impacts of social media on adolescents' body image and sexual attitudes. Increased awareness can drive community efforts to support healthy adolescent development and combat negative social influences.

8. Future Research: The findings can serve as a foundation for future research on related topics, such as the long-term effects of social media use on adult behavior and mental health, or the impact of emerging social media trends on adolescents.

By highlighting these areas, the study emphasizes the importance of addressing body image, social media habits, and sexual attitudes to support the overall well-being and development of adolescents.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The present study Analysis of Body Image, Social Media Habit, and Sexual Attitudes among Adolescents.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To assess the correlation between social media addiction and body image amongadolescents.

2. To assess the correlation between social media addiction and sexual attitudes amongadolescents.

3. To assess the correlation between body image and sexual attitude among adolescents.

4. To find out whether male and female adolescents differ in their Social media addiction.

5. To find out whether male and female adolescents differ in their Body Image.

6. To find out whether male and

female adolescents differ in their Sexual attitudes.

HYPOTHESES

1. A significant relationship between social media addiction and body image among adolescents would be observed.
2. A significant relationship between social media addiction and sexual attitudes among adolescents would be observed.
3. A significant relationship between body image and sexual attitude among adolescents would be observed.
4. A significant difference would be observed in the social media addiction of male and female adolescents.
5. A significant difference would be observed in the Body Image of male and female adolescents.
6. A significant difference would be observed in the sexual attitude of male and female adolescents.

METHODOLOGY:

Participants:

100 participants (Age range: 18-25) were divided into two groups, namely Male (50) and Female (50). The method used for data collection is Quota sampling.

Including criteria:

1. Both males and females of ages that ranges between 18 to 25 years.
2. Can read, write and speak Hindi, Marathi and English.

Excluding Criteria:

1. Those who are under 18 or above 25.

Variable:

Independent Variable: Gender

Dependent Variable:

1) Social Media Addiction
2) Body Image
3) Sexual Attitude

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS:

1) Social Media Addiction: Social media addiction is a type of behavioral addiction that is broadly defined as compulsive engagement in social media platforms that significantly disrupts the users' functioning in important life domains, such as interpersonal relations, work or study performance, and physical health.

2) Body Image: the body image is the mental representation of one's body in both static and action aspects. It contains both cognitive and affective elements, such as how the body is perceived and known, and how the body is experienced and felt.

3) **Sexual attitude**: Manifested in a person's individual sexual behavior,

these attitudes are based on family and cultural views about sexuality, on sex education (both formal and informal), and on prior sexual experiences.

TOOLS USED IN THE STUDY:

1) Social media addiction Check-list: This check-list is developed by Dr. Vijaya Laxmi Chouhan and, Neelima Joshi, in 2016. This test consists of 40 statements with two alternative blocks given for "yes" and "no" answer, which were intended to identify social media addiction characteristics from the respondents.

2) Body Image Scale: This scale is developed by Dr. V. L Chauhan and P. Surana (2000). This 5point scale consists of 30 statements related to one's feelings about herself or himself in everyday life. There are five alternatives against each statement, namely, "always", "most of the time", "don't know", "sometimes", and "never". The split half reliability, test retest reliability, and cross validity were calculated as .84, .76, and .81 respectively for this scale.

3) Sexual Attitude Scale: This scale is developed by Sunita Mhasde and Dr. Gauri Patil (2017). This scale consists of 70 questions with five alternatives each, namely, "Strongly agree", "agree", "undecided", "disagree", and "strongly disagree". The test retest reliability is .97 and split half reliability is .99 respectively.

PROCEDURE:

Permission was obtained from the principal of a college in Kolhapur district of Maharashtra. The sample was selected by Quota Sampling (convenience sampling), and they were made to solve three scales, mentioned in Tools. Scoring was done manually on all three scales. Data was statistically analyzed on SPSS (Statistical Package of Social Sciences version by using an Independent sample t-test for measuring differences, and correlation for examining the relationship between variables.

STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS:

The data was statistically analyzed by using Mean, SD, 't' test, and Pearson product moment correlation, on SPSS.

RESULTS:

Table No. 1: Correlation between Social Media Addiction and Body Image among adolescents.

Factor	N	Mean	SD	df	'r'
Social Media addiction	100	37.22	2.72		
Body Image	100	117.58	16.61	198	0.484

**Significant at 0.01 level, *significant at 0.05 level, NS- Not significant

Table No. 2: Correlation between Social Media Addiction and Sexual attitude amongadolescents.

Factor	N	Mean	SD	df	'r'
Social Media Addiction	100	37.22	2.72		
Sexual Attitude	100	245.74	33.29	198	0.107

**Significant at 0.01 level, *significant at 0.05 level, NS- Not significant

Table No. 3: Correlation between Body Image, and Sexual attitude among adolescents.

Factor	N	Mean	SD	df	'r'
Body Image	100	117.58	16.61		
Sexual attitude	100	245.74	33.29	198	0.234

**Significant at 0.01 level, *significant at 0.05 level, NS- Not significant

Table No.4: shows mean, SD, and t-test results about gender for Social MediaAddiction, of adolescents.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	't' value
Social Media Addiction	Male	50	36.98	2.13		
	Female	50	37.46	3.2	98	0.9NS

**Significant at 0.01 level, *significant at 0.05 level, NS- Not significant

Table No. 5: shows mean, SD, and t-test results about gender for Body Image, ofadolescents.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	't' value
Body Image	Male	50	122.14	15.04		
	Female	50	113.02	17	98	2.85**

**Significant at 0.01 level, *significant at 0.05 level, NS- Not significant

Table No.6: shows mean, SD, and t-test results about gender for Sexual attitudes,of adolescents.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	't' value
Sexual Attitude	Male	50	233.48	32.66	98	3.95**
	Female	50	258	29.41		

**Significant at 0.01 level, *significant at 0.05 level, NS- Not significant

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION:

Table No. 1, indicates the correlation between social media addiction and Body Image among adolescents. The mean value for social media addiction is 37.22 with 2.72SD. The "df" is 198. For Body Image mean value is 117.58 with 16.61SD. The df is 198.

The respected 'r' value is .484, which is statistically significant at level 0.01. The 'r' value interprets a low positive correlation, between Social media addiction and body image

Table no. 2 shows the correlation between Social media addiction and Sexual Attitude among adolescents. The mean value for social media addiction is 37.22 with 2.27SD. For Sexual attitude mean value is 245.74 with 33.29 SD. The respected 'r' value is .107, which is not statistically significant at any level. The 'r' value interprets no existing correlation, between Social media addiction and Sexual Attitude.

Table no. 3 shows the correlation between Body Image and Sexual Attitude among adolescents. The mean value for Body Image is 117.58 with 16.61SD. For Sexual Attitude mean

value is, 245.74 with 33.29 SD. The df is 198. The respected 'r' value is .234, which is statistically significant at level 0.01. The 'r' value interprets low positive correlation, between Body Image and Sexual Attitude.

Table no. 4 indicates Mean, SD, and 't' value showing difference in gender, for social media addiction, body image, and sexual attitude of adolescents.

For Social media addiction, Mean value of male adolescents is 36.98 with 2.13 SD. Mean value of female adolescents is 37.46 with 3.2SD.The df is 198. The obtained 't' value is 0.9 which is not statistically significant at any level. The results indicate that male and female adolescents do not differ significantly on their social media addiction.

Table no. 5 indicates Mean, SD, and 't' value showing difference in gender, for social media addiction, body image, and sexual attitude of adolescents.

For Body Image, Mean value of male adolescents is 122.14 with 15.04SD. Mean value of female adolescents is 113.02 with 17SD.The df is 198. The obtained, 't' value is 2.85

which is statistically significant at 0.01 level. The results indicate that male and female adolescents do not differ significantly on their Body Image.

Table no. 6 indicates Mean, SD, and 't' value showing difference in area, for social media addiction, body image, and sexual attitude of adolescents

For sexual attitude, Mean value of male adolescents is 233.48 with 32.66SD. Mean value of female adolescents is 258.00 with 29.41SD (df = 98). The obtained, 't' value is 3.945 which is statistically significant at 0.01 level. The results indicate that male and female adolescents differ significantly on their Sexual Attitudes.

CONCLUSION:

1) There is a significant correlation observed between social media addiction and body image among adolescents.
2) There is no significant correlation observed between social media addiction and Sexual Attitude image among adolescents.
3) There is no significant correlation observed between Body Image and Sexual Attitude among adolescents.
4) There is no significant difference between male and female adolescents on social media addiction.
5) There is a significant difference between male and female adolescents in Body Image.
6) There is a significant difference between male and female adolescents in Sexual Attitude.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

1) In the present study only, psychological tests are used to collect the data. In the future study other data collection techniques such as interview, experimental method, observation etc. should be employed.
2) Data collected for the current research is limited regarding the location and number of participants. In the future reference, large number of data should be collected.

RESEARCH APPLICATIONS:

1) Workshops or lectures should be arranged for adolescents for improving their Body Image and sexual attitude.
2) Social media can be used as a platform to create a new perception regarding Body Image, by normalizing all body types.

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