

## THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AMONG CHILDREN – A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PUDUCHERRY

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### ABSTRACT

*Purpose: The escalation of screen time and its effects on children is a significant concern, as sustaining physical and mental wellness becomes progressively challenging for them. Children of all ages require cognitive enhancement, since exposure to social media significantly impacts their mental capabilities; also, it fosters a craving for junk food and alters their dietary patterns. Marketers are eager to promote their items using social media applications. Immediate care is required to save future generations and their healthy environment. Design/Methodology/Approach: This study uses 280 children, screen time and social media app usage as indicators to draw conclusions from an online poll. Analysis of variance (ANOVA), descriptive statistics, and the basic percentage method are all a part of this research. Findings: The study found that social media marketing gives an instant spark to purchase food products as agreed by 36 per cent of the children. Paper Type: Research Paper.*

**KEYWORDS:** Children, Social Media, Applications, Psychological, Impact

### INTRODUCTION

In this highly competitive world, the ability to maintain the demand is very difficult especially for children-based food products, so the marketers use social media applications to connect easily with the children using various types of attractive marketing polls and advertisements. Over the past few years, applications for social media have seen a significant increase in popularity among toddlers and children. On the other hand, there is a strong correlation between the usage of social media applications and the severity of mental health issues as well as the addictive nature of these programs in toddlers and children. Using children as a target audience, social media and its marketing methods are causing children to develop a craving for unhealthy food products. As a result, the strategies that children use to acquire these products are the subject of research. The mental health of children is extremely important for their development because the applications of social media influence the fundamental nature of a child's mind. The increasing amount of time that children spend in front of screens leads to a decrease in attention span among children, which is essential for the child's overall development. Additionally, there are reports of psychological distress and pressure being placed on parents.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This is a concerning situation for children, as they are highly dependent upon social media applications, which not only impact their psychological well-being but also their physical health and dietary preferences. It is imperative to prioritize the mental and physical well-being of children in the future. This necessitates the attention of the aspects.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Oprea, et al., (2016)**, The study found that most people think that children seeing ads makes them less happy with their lives. This paper also tries to find out if and how it works by looking at the link between seeing ads and being happy with your life, as well as the part that psychological health plays in that relationship. Three-wave group data were gathered from 1,133 kids ages 8 to 12. Overall and by dimension, psychological well-being was examined. The researchers discovered that advertising exposure in Wave 1 didn't have a significant overall effect on life satisfaction in Wave 3. The bad direct effect was cancelled out by the positive indirect effect through overall psychological wellbeing in Wave 2. Personal growth and autonomy were found to be positive mediators in the relationship between advertising exposure and life happiness. On the other hand, purpose in life was found to be negative.

**Naumovska, et al., (2017)**, this study focuses on the children under 8 lack the cognitive capacity to comprehend marketing messages' persuasive intent. All unified marketing strategies, programs, and messages are distributed across traditional and digital media, expanding the media mix and exposure for youngsters. Children, known as Generation Z in multigenerational marketing, are particularly vulnerable to advertising due to their questionable comprehension of the message and lack of cognitive skills. The growing use of digital media among youngsters highlights the need for ethical and affirmative marketing communications models. Comparing theoretical analyses of all four generations in marketing segmentation reveals unique consumer behaviour and important differences. We focus on Generation Z to study the impact of media exposure on children and its potential ramifications. This paper presents a marketing communication model for Generation Z and children, benefiting both parties: audience protection from inconvenient messaging and marketers better targeting children through media mix and content.

**Chaudhary, et al., (2023)**, in this study, the researchers found out that the rise in social networking has led to increased access to a richness of knowledge from various sources. Advancements in technology enable digital influencers to build close ties with their followers. These linkages have influenced children's behaviour, mindset, and decisions. This study contributes to mental health knowledge by analysing the impact of social media and influences unique qualities on youths' behaviour. Theories and models were created to clarify this issue. Systematic methodology and Positivism and Deductive techniques were used to generate this study, according to the researcher. It was chosen because it's reasonable and reduces errors. The scholar choose the descriptive method to generate more insight and material for the study. To acquire data on the situation, 5 social media influencers were chosen for the poll. Critical data indicate that influencer marketing practices significantly impact teen mental health and cognitive behaviour. The survey found a higher focus on social media due to the increased use of numerous platforms among teens.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Due to the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult to control the amount of time that children spend in front of screens in today's rapidly developing social media world, as well as the fact that children's dietary preferences have

become more sophisticated, this study has chosen to concentrate on children and the impact that social media applications have on them, as well as the mental health of children.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore the social media marketing and psychological changes among children in Puducherry.
- To study the social media marketing and its impact among children's dietary preferences in Puducherry.

## HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- $H_{01}$ : There is no significant difference between social media marketing and psychological impact among children
- $H_{02}$ : There is no significant difference between social media marketing and dietary preferences among children.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling and detailed outcome documentation are the two main components of data collection. The effectiveness of an investigation is dependent on the accuracy of the data collected. The research examined the impact of the survey taker's commitment in many domains and took place in a real-world context.

### Sample Design

The primary data was retrieved using methods involving random samples. The children who are residing in Puducherry who participated in the field survey were asked to provide necessary data using structured interview schedule. A total of 280 children have taken part in the study, which employs a basic random sampling method.

**Table**

S. No	Name of the Schools in Puducherry	No. of Children
1	Petit Seminaire Schools	70
2	St. Joseph of Cluny Schools	70
3	Acharya Siksha Mandir Schools	70
4	Shankara Vidyalaya	70
<b>Total</b>		<b>280</b>

Based on Primary Data

### Statistical Tools

The ANOVA, Descriptive and Simple percentage analysis has been used to analyze The Psychological Impact of Social Media Marketing among Children with special reference to Puducherry.

**Table 1: Usage of Social Media Applications (per day)**

S. No	Usage of Social Media	No. of Children	Percentage
1	Upto 30 Minutes	38	13
2	30 Minutes – 1 Hour	40	15
3	1 – 2 Hours	33	12
4	More than 2 Hours	169	60
<b>Total</b>		<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

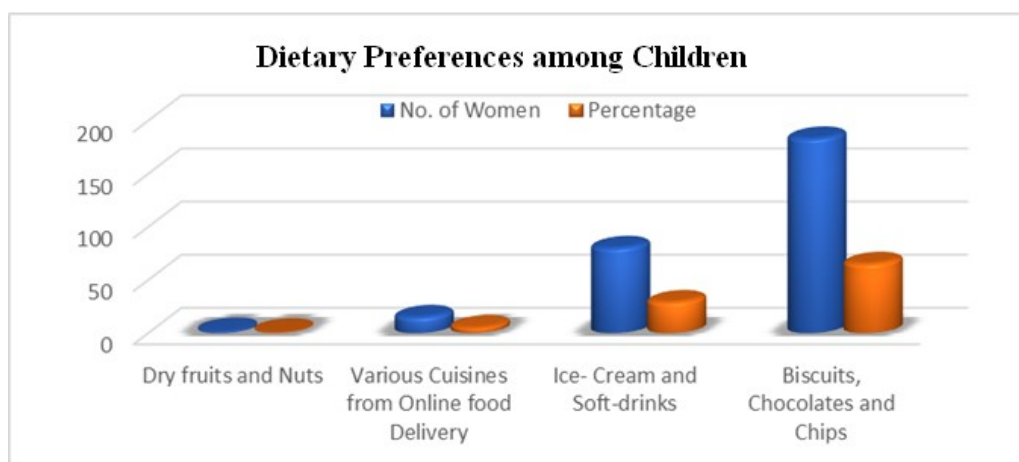
Table 1 indicates that 12 per cent of the children use social media applications for 1 to 2 hours in a day, followed by 12 per cent of the children use for upto 30 minutes, 15 per cent of the children use social media for 30 minutes to 1 hour and at last 60 per cent of the children are using social media applications for more than 2 hours per day.

**Table 2: Dietary Preferences among Children**

S. No	Preferences	No. of Children	Percentage
1	Dry fruits and Nuts	2	1
2	Various Cuisines from Online food Delivery	15	5
3	Ice- Cream and Soft-drinks	80	29
4	Biscuits, Chocolates and Chips	183	65
Total		<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 reveals the dietary preferences among children with the exposure of social media applications, as highly preferred is Biscuits, Chocolates and Chips with 65 per cent of the children, followed by 29 per cent of the children prefer Ice- Cream and Soft-drinks, Various Cuisines from Online food Delivery as preferred by 5 per cent of children and in case of Dry fruits and nuts only 1 per cent of the children prefer.



**Figure 1**

**Table 3: Social Media Applications and their Psychological Impact among Children**

S. No	Psychological Impact	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Total
1	Attention deficiency and Reduced concentration towards Education.	80	78	47	63	32	280
		27	22	16	21	14	100
2	Forgetting things which are important.	88	92	50	30	20	280
		29	34	20	10	7	100
3	Always demanding advertised food products.	82	58	80	40	20	280
		31	22	27	13	7	100
4	Social media marketing gives an instant spark to purchase food products.	62	108	37	40	33	280
		24	36	16	13	11	100
5	I feel like I don't want to talk or start interaction with anyone.	107	63	35	45	30	280
		39	21	15	15	10	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 highlights that the Out of 280 children surveyed, 27 per cent are in strongly agreed that Attention deficiency and Reduced concentration towards Education, followed by 34 per cent of the children agreed that Forgetting things which are important being an issue, Always demanding advertised food products as strongly disagreed by 7 per cent of the children, along with that 13 per cent of the children disagreed that Social media marketing gives an instant spark to purchase food products and finally 21 per cent of the children agreed that they don't want to talk or start interaction with anyone due to the social media applications.

**Table 4: ANOVA Test of Dietary Preferences and Psychological Impact among Children**

Variables	Preferences	N	Mean	S.D.	F Value	Sig.
Attention deficiency and Reduced concentration towards Education.	Dry fruits and Nuts	2	1.28	0.23	.498	0.75
	Various Cuisines from Online food Delivery	15	1.52	0.53		
	Ice-Cream and Soft Drinks	80	2.25	0.23		
	Biscuits, Chocolates and Chips	183	1.55	1.52		
	Total	280	3.56	1.36		
Forgetting things which are important.	Dry fruits and Nuts	2	1.63	0.56	.862	0.70
	Various Cuisines from Online food Delivery	15	1.56	0.46		
	Ice-Cream and Soft Drinks	80	1.27	0.26		
	Biscuits, Chocolates and Chips	183	1.35	0.13		
	Total	280	2.69	0.22		
Always demanding advertised food products.	Dry fruits and Nuts	2	1.36	0.36	.367	0.55
	Various Cuisines from Online food Delivery	15	1.05	0.89		
	Ice- Cream and Soft-drinks	80	1.36	1.00		
	Biscuits, Chocolates and Chips	183	1.36	1.03		
	Total	280	2.24	1.03		
Social media marketing gives an instant spark to purchase food products.	Dry fruits and Nuts	2	1.36	1.06	1.797	0.41*
	Various Cuisines from Online food Delivery	15	4.66	1.05		
	Ice- Cream and Soft-drinks	80	3.79	1.22		
	Biscuits, Chocolates and Chips	183	1.83	0.50		
	Total	280	1.05	1.48		
I feel like I don't want to talk or start interaction with anyone.	Dry fruits and Nuts	2	3.89	0.49	3.686	0.05*
	Various Cuisines from Online food Delivery	15	3.26	1.63		
	Ice- Cream and Soft-drinks	80	3.23	1.23		
	Biscuits, Chocolates and Chips	183	2.36	1.11		
	Total	280	3.24	1.74		

Based on Primary Data \* Sig.@5%

The calculated F values at 1.797,3.686 are significant at the five percent level. These values signify that there is on significant difference in dietary preferences among Childers and Social media applications and their psychological impact among children. Therefore, the stated null hypothesis is rejected. The calculated data F values are .498, .862, and .367, Therefore, the stated null hypothesis is accepted. However, this clearly shows that social media applications and their psychological impact among children have dietary preferences among Childers Biscuits, Chocolates and Chips in secondary and primary moves that other income and customer satisfaction.

Table 5: ANOVA Test for Usage of Social Media and their Psychological Impact among Children

Variables	Usage of Social Media	N	Mean	S.D.	F Value	Sig.
Attention deficiency and Reduced concentration towards Education.	Upto 30 Minutes	38	4.28	1.23	5.498	0.005*
	30 Minutes – 1 Hour	40	4.92	0.53		
	1 – 2 Hours	33	4.25	0.23		
	More than 2 Hours	169	4.55	1.52		
	Total	280	4.56	1.36		
Forgetting things which are important.	Upto 30 Minutes	38	3.78	1.56	6.862	0.001*
	30 Minutes – 1 Hour	40	3.76	0.46		
	1 – 2 Hours	33	3.28	1.26		
	More than 2 Hours	169	4.66	1.13		
	Total	280	4.77	1.22		
Always demanding advertised food products.	Upto 30 Minutes	38	4.79	1.36	7.367	0.002*
	30 Minutes – 1 Hour	40	3.05	1.89		
	1 – 2 Hours	33	4.76	1.00		
	More than 2 Hours	169	3.71	1.03		
	Total	280	3.74	1.03		
Social media marketing gives an instant spark to purchase food products.	Upto 30 Minutes	38	3.36	1.06	5.797	0.003*
	30 Minutes – 1 Hour	40	4.66	1.05		
	1 – 2 Hours	33	3.99	1.22		
	More than 2 Hours	169	3.83	1.50		
	Total	280	4.95	1.48		
I feel like I don't want to talk or start interaction with anyone.	Upto 30 Minutes	38	4.89	1.49	6.776	0.005*
	30 Minutes – 1 Hour	40	4.26	1.63		
	1 – 2 Hours	33	4.23	1.23		
	More than 2 Hours	169	4.36	1.11		
	Total	280	4.24	1.74		

Based on Primary Data \* Sig.@5%

The test of F values year of experience and the Test of Satisfaction towards Facilities Provided by Usage of Social Media Applications and Social media applications and their psychological impact among children. It is 5.498, 6.862, 7.367, 5.797, 6.776, and there are significant differences in the study. Therefore, the stated null hypothesis was rejected. However, this clearly shows that teachers have experience up to 20 years and 21-30 years more than other experience and Test of Satisfaction towards Facilities Provided by Usage of Social Media Applications and Social media applications and their psychological impact among children.

## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The study found that 60 per cent of children are using social media applications for more than 2 hours per day.
- The study explored that Dry fruits and nuts were preferred by only 1 per cent of the children among the total of 280.
- The study found that social media marketing gives an instant spark to purchase food products as agreed by 36 per cent of the children.

- The calculated F values at 1.797 and 3.686 are significant at the five percent level. These values signify that there is on significant difference in dietary preferences among Childers and Social media applications and their psychological impact among children. Therefore, the stated null hypothesis is rejected. The calculated data F values are 0.498, 0.862, and 0.367, Therefore, the stated null hypothesis is accepted. However, this clearly shows that social media applications and their psychological impact among children have dietary preferences among Childers Biscuits, Chocolates and Chips in secondary and primary moves that other income and customer satisfaction.
- The test of F values year of experience and the Test of Satisfaction towards Facilities Provided by Usage of Social Media Applications and Social media applications and their psychological impact among children. It is 5.498, 6.862, 7.367, 5.797, 6.776, and there are significant differences in the study. Therefore, the stated null hypothesis was rejected. However, this clearly shows that teachers have experience up to 20 years and 21-30 years more than other experience and Test of Satisfaction towards Facilities Provided by Usage of Social Media Applications and Social media applications and their psychological impact among children.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

- The screen-time of children need to be reduced using various parental control applications.
- The contents viewed by children must be monitored by parents by using the same identity for both children and parents.
- The children-related advertisements must be specially given license by the government, specifically by the food and safety department to telecast in any media form.
- Like other subjects, there should be separate subjects in schools which includes food and safety.
- Weekly one day without gadgets and interacting with parents need to be encouraged.

## **CONCLUSION**

The use of the Internet poses a growing risk to the mental health of children. This is because prolonged exposure and dependence on the Internet can make children more susceptible to unhealthy dietary practices and other forms of change in food culture. These changes can also further produce negative outcomes such as depression, anxiety, and loneliness, in addition to anger and attention deficit disorder. Because of the study, it is abundantly evident that children are subjected to a significant amount of screen time and social media applications as well. This can eventually lead to a decrease in the level of emotions and connectivity that exists between parents and children, and children are compelled to rely on dopamine that is provided by outside sources. The importance of family time to the development of children's physical and mental health is another topic that is investigated in this study.

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