

1 **Balancing Connectivity and Well-Being: A Study on Digital Media's Impact on Minors'**
2 **Mental Health**

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4 **Abstract:**

5 The research paper aims to analyse how the minds of minors or their mental health is being
6 affected due to digital media. The rapid digitalisation has led to sudden increase of its risk to
7 destroy mental health. The victims majorly comprise children aged from 8-17 years old. The
8 research paper will explore how various forms of digital exposure can have different levels of
9 effects on the young minds. In some cases this not only destroys the victim's life but sometimes
10 the victims make wrong decisions that destroys other's life too. Key findings suggest that while
11 digital tools can enhance access to mental health resources, they can also lead to increased
12 anxiety, loneliness, and sleep disruption. With the increasing accessibility of smartphones and
13 internet platforms, even young children are becoming regular consumers of digital content. The
14 paper concludes by emphasizing the need for digital literacy and balanced usage. It also
15 emphasises on consumption of age-approved digital media content to ensure psychological
16 safety and healthy development (*V. Bansal., 2025*).

17 **Chapter 1:Introduction**

18 As the world began to digitalise, everyday tasks became faster, easier, and more efficient. From
19 communication to education and entertainment, digital technology has transformed nearly every
20 aspect of modern life. However, this convenience comes at a cost, especially for the younger
21 generation. While digital platforms offer endless opportunities for learning and connection, they
22 also bring along serious risks to mental health, especially to minors. It can be agreed that digital
23 media has become an integral part of the life of the generation. Initially, during the COVID-19
24 pandemic, people became aware of mental health and why it is important. There were digital
25 media services available on mobile phones, smartwatches, etc., so that one could take care of
26 their mental health. That was one way a person could enhance their digital mental health. But
27 these platforms were not enough for long. These precautions became less relevant as the
28 problems grew. Digital mental health refers to how digital media or technology like social media,
29 apps, and screen time, affects a person's mental health. Today, digital mental health is as
30 important as mental health. If a person has healthy mental health, they will have healthy growth
31 and definitely a healthy body. (*V. Bansal., 2025*).

32 **Chapter 2: Factors Affecting Mental Health**

33 While technology and digital media have opened new doors to innovation, they also bring a set
34 of challenges that can affect one's mental well being. These issues are especially noticeable
35 among adolescents and young adults, who spend a large share of their daily lives online and are
36 therefore more exposed to its risks. The harmful side of the digital world does not only include

37 obvious threats such as harassment and exploitation, but also more subtle pressures like addictive
38 behaviors, the constant need to maintain a digital identity, and the tendency to compare oneself
39 with unrealistic standards presented on social media. (V. Bansal.,2025).

40 **1. Cyberbullying and Online Harassment**

41 Cyberbullying is one of the most harmful features of the internet. It can happen to any user at
42 any time, and the worst part is that it spreads rapidly to a wide audience, leaving victims with
43 almost no escape. The constant fear of being targeted online has been shown to cause anxiety,
44 depression, and in severe cases, even suicidal thoughts. What makes it even more concerning is
45 that bullies can easily hide behind fake usernames, VPNs, or anonymous accounts, making them
46 difficult to trace or hold accountable. This anonymity gives them a sense of power while leaving
47 the victim feeling helpless and isolated. “The internet neither forgets nor forgives”.Unlike face-
48 to-face bullying, the damage of cyberbullying often lingers because harmful posts, images, or
49 comments can remain online indefinitely, resurfacing again and again. For many victims, the
50 psychological weight of knowing that their humiliation can be seen by countless strangers makes
51 the trauma far more severe. (V. Bansal.,2025).

52 **2. Privacy Violations, Deepfakes, and Exploitation**

53 The misuse of technology for activities such as spreading private content, manipulating images
54 or videos through deepfakes, or leaking MMS clips has become a deeply troubling issue with
55 serious mental health consequences. These violations do not just harm reputations but leave
56 behind long-lasting scars of trauma, humiliation, and mistrust. Victims often live with the
57 constant fear that their personal images or information could be misused again, turning even
58 ordinary notifications or messages into sources of anxiety. What makes the damage worse is the
59 permanence of the internet once something is shared online, it can resurface anytime, regardless
60 of whether the original source is taken down. This uncertainty becomes a heavy burden, creating
61 stress,anxiety and depression. Many victims withdrew themselves from digital platforms
62 entirely, avoiding spaces that should have been safe and empowering, while they faced issues
63 with privacy. The things that should have been private are now public. Such photos and videos
64 are often created using AI or special digital tools which makes it more disturbing. Such tools are
65 generally developed to make it easy for movie developers to create scenes that can;t be
66 physically shot.(V. Bansal.,2025).

67 **3.Gaming and Gambling Addictions**

68 Online gaming and digital gambling are increasingly being recognized as forms of behavioral
69 addiction that carry serious risks. Young people, in particular teenagers, often find themselves
70 spending excessive hours immersed in virtual worlds or betting platforms, sometimes losing
71 track of time altogether. This constant engagement disrupts sleep cycles, academic performance,
72 effecting across different areas of life. What begins as a form of entertainment can gradually turn
73 into a dependency, where individuals feel restless, irritable, or even anxious when they are

74 unable to play or gamble. Over time, this cycle not only damages mental and emotional health
75 but also makes them isolate themselves from the world , as individuals may choose the screen
76 over real-life interactions. In cases of gambling, financial losses and secrecy can add another
77 layer of stress, often leading to tension and conflicts within families.. If left unchecked, such
78 addictions can have long-term consequences, shaping a person's self-esteem, decision-making,
79 and ability to build healthy relationships. Today children aged from 12-13 years are playing
80 games like Call Of Duty, PUBG etc. Such games are rated adult or 17+ on play store and app
81 store due to the presence of extreme violence. (*V. Bansal.,2025*).

82 **4. Pressure to Maintain an Online Presence**

83 In today's digital culture, self-worth is often tied to numbers on a screen—likes, comments,
84 followers, and views. What may begin as a casual attempt to share a moment can quickly grow
85 into a constant drive for validation. For many, particularly young people, this dependency turns
86 social media into a source of pressure, where confidence rises or falls based on how others react
87 online. The repeated cycle of posting, checking responses, comparing outcomes, and seeking
88 more attention can become draining, even addictive. Over time, relying on external approval
89 takes a toll on mental health, fueling anxiety, insecurity, and a fragile sense of identity. In some
90 cases, the chase for recognition even pushes individuals to exaggerate their lives, change how
91 they present themselves, or take risks simply to stay visible. Instead of remaining a space for
92 genuine connection, social media risks becoming a stage where performance overshadows
93 authenticity, and people measure their value through the approval of others rather than their own
94 self-belief. (*V. Bansal.,2025*).

95 **Chapter 3: Case Study**

96 A shocking case from Lucknow shows how dangerous gaming addiction can become. A 16-year-
97 old boy who was addicted to PUBG lost control when his mother asked him to stop playing and
98 ended up shooting her with his father's pistol while his father, an army officer, was away in
99 another state. After the incident, he tried to hide what he had done by keeping her body in a room
100 for two days, spraying air freshener to cover the smell, and threatening his younger sister to stay
101 quiet. Later, when he couldn't manage anymore, he lied to his father saying that an electrician
102 had killed his mother, but during the police investigation his sister revealed the truth. This tragic
103 case shows how badly addiction to violent games can affect a person's mind, making them more
104 aggressive and unable to separate the virtual world from reality. Instead of calmly talking to his
105 mother, the boy felt that violence was the only solution, which proves how dangerous digital
106 addiction can be if it goes unchecked. It's a reminder that too much gaming or unhealthy use of
107 technology can ruin mental health, relationships, and even lives, and that balance and control are
108 very important before things get out of hand. (*V. Bansal.,2025*).

109 **Chapter 4: Conclusion**

110 Digital technology today has become such a big part of our lives that it is almost impossible to
111 imagine a world without it, but the truth is that along with all the benefits it brings, it also carries
112 risks that can harm our mental health if we are not careful. For teenagers especially, the problems
113 are visible everywhere—cyberbullying makes people anxious and depressed, privacy violations
114 and deepfakes create shame and fear, while gaming and gambling addictions waste time, ruin
115 studies, and even damage family relationships. Social media adds another layer of pressure
116 where likes, followers, and comments become measures of self-worth, and this makes many
117 young people feel that they are never good enough. What makes these issues so dangerous is that
118 they do not always show up immediately; instead, they slowly affect the way we think, behave,
119 and even the way we see ourselves. Some extreme cases, like the tragic incident in Lucknow
120 where a boy killed his own mother over PUBG, prove how serious these problems can become
121 when addiction takes over and blurs the line between reality and virtual life. This is why digital
122 mental health must be taken as seriously as physical health, because the mind suffers just as
123 much as the body when it is not cared for. The good part is that solutions are possible—small
124 steps like limiting screen time, avoiding age-inappropriate content, keeping social media
125 accounts private, and most importantly, talking openly with parents and friends about problems
126 can make a huge difference. Technology itself is not bad; it is how we use it that matters. If we
127 learn to control it instead of letting it control us, we can enjoy its advantages without falling into
128 the traps that destroy our peace of mind.(V. Bansal.,2025).

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