



A Second Look On Youtube Watchers: Resulting In Changes In Action And Moodswing Of Teenagers

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Abstract:

The increasingly popular use of YouTube for entertainment, educational purposes, and social interaction has brought about changes in adolescents' behaviors and emotional states. The present study focuses on the psychological and behavioral effects of excessive YouTube use among early teens from Karandighi Block of North Dinajpur, West Bengal. Based on a mixed-method design, combined questionnaires, interviews and psychometric tests, this study finds that excessive YouTube use is associated with mood swings, social avoidance, imitation, and poor sleeping patterns among teenagers. The study also highlights the gendered aspects of preferred content and related behavior. The results underline the importance of digital literacy, parent supervising, and balanced screen time regulations.

Keywords: YouTube, Teenagers, Mood Swings, Behaviour Change, Digital Consumption.

1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescent lives have changed radically with the arrival of digital life, which has altered the way, the pace, and the frequency at which teenagers' access information, communicate, learn and create. In this age of new media, there is no shortage of platforms that help teens communicate and collaborate, and of them all, YouTube seems to be the most pervasive. A video-hosting website has turned into an enormous global community of users and creators building internet identities, narratives and even, on occasion, the sites of their employment.



Figure 1: [Teen's Mood Suddenly Shifts.](#)

Young people, sometimes known as “digital natives,” are coming of age in a world where the distinction between what happens online and offline is continuing to fade. YouTube, unlike legacy media, has adopted a two-way interactive model — young viewers not only watch videos, but they “like,” comment, share and subscribe. Even more critically they mimic content, copy trends, and oftentimes have a go at creating original content, contributing to a digital culture that makes who they are. This participatory act also marked YouTube from passive media and greatly amplifies its effect.

This influence is even more significant in the rural and semi-urban areas like Karandighi. In such countries, digital education, critical media literacy, or supervision by parents remain largely unheard of, and teenagers could be especially exposed to media not necessarily appropriate for their age or culturally sensitive. Especially in places where offline recreation and creativity may be lacking, teenagers can go to sites like YouTube not just for fun but also for consolation, company and conversation — as well as for representations of themselves and their views of the world.

“The part that’s particularly troubling is that it is a product of the YouTube algorithm,” she said. “In YouTube, there’s something called an algorithm that is optimising for watch time and engagement and it tries to recommend videos that are more addictive or more emotionally stimulating or that take longer to view. This often results in binge watching, overemotional stimulation, unrealistic expectations and behaviour changes that may not be noticed straight away by parents or teachers.

So, it is crucial to understand not only how much time adolescents are spending on YouTube, but what material they are watching, how it impacts their mood, behavior and those of their peers, and how these impacts vary by gender, schooling and social context. scope This is an adolescent based on the rural area of Karandighi.

1.1.YouTube and the Teen Mind

With over 2.5 billion users around the globe, YouTube has grown well beyond a platform for sharing videos. It has since become a complex digital ecosystem where content production, audience engagement, algorithmic curation and trend generation meet to form the socio-cultural, educational and informational fabric of our world. And for teenagers — at a critical stage of social, emotional and cognitive development — the impact this platform has on them is well documented and far-reaching.

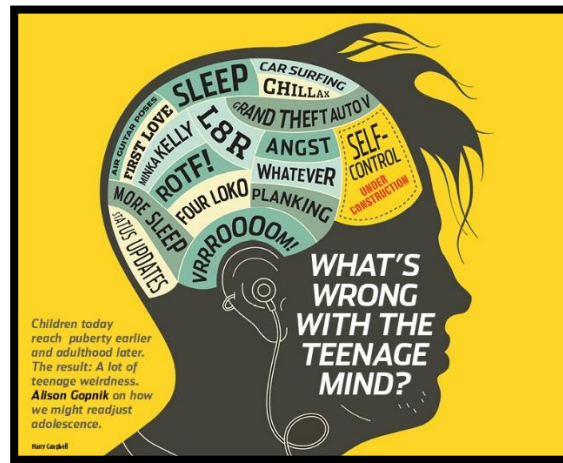


Figure 2: Teenage Mind

Teenagers, Youth, by and large digital natives, are cutting their teeth in a world where digital use is intuitive. They are fast adapters of new media technologies that they incorporate in their lives. On YouTube, this intimacy results in deep and sustained engagement with diverse content. From vlogs and reaction videos to DIY tutorials, gaming streams, lifestyle influencers and short-form reels, teens are consuming a never-ending flow of visual stories, which influence their values, desires and habits.

What makes YouTube so potent to the teenage mind is the way it is built to amplify one disinforming video into dozens, ebbing on and on until the viewer has started to see the world the way the clip does. Content is curated through an algorithm based on user viewing history, likes, comments and subscriptions. Which also means that when a teenager interacts with one type of content, positive or harmful, they will then be shown more of the same or worse. For instance, watching a workout video might spiral into exposure to extreme dieting or body-shaming content, and an innocent prank video could snowball into exposure to dangerous or aggressive behaviour for likes.

Additionally, the parasocial relationships many teenagers form with creators — feeling attached to people they've never met, in a way, may help blur the line between reality and entertainment. You could argue, of course, that these influencers are really virtual role models, and as such, their opinions, words, style, and even mental health revelations can sink into the minds of young consumers struggling with issues of identity and belonging. And so, kids might pick up not just behavior or language but an approach to life, to anger, to other people, even to mental health.

Furthermore, YouTube material is usually emotive or sensational, employing click-bait titles, exaggeratedly sensationalist reaction, click-bait titles and resolutions to grip the attention of viewers. This intensity can result in more dopamine-fueled cravings and more addictive behaviors, as kids become frantic or agitated without their screen and exhibit all the classic signs of withdrawal when not in front of the screen. These patterns can undermine sleep, impair academic attention and contribute to mood disorders or social withdrawal over time.

With these dynamics in mind, it's evident that YouTube isn't content simply being a passive form of entertainment but is also a forceful influencer of the teenage psyche, especially in parts of the world that might lack real-world social infrastructure or media literacy. The present study, therefore, investigates how these

forces act for the adolescent members of Karandighi Block, with reference to their exposure, reaction, and resultant behavior patterns, after media exposure.

1.2. Influence of Content Diversity

What has always made YouTube unique is the smorgasbord of content available, you can literally find anything from there with even the slightest interest. For teenagers, such diversity represents both promise and peril. On the plus side, YouTube delivers educational tutorials, motivational speeches, career guidance, language instruction, hands-on, do-it-yourself craft and science-based explorations, and more that once were restricted to school or costly courses. For many students studying in rural or semi-urban localities like Karandighi offline educational infrastructure is not easily accessible and YouTube is the primary means for supplementary learning, test preparation, or skill development. This democratisation of knowledge has given rise to a large number of teenagers who are now able to self learn and learn outside of the curriculum.

Meanwhile, the entertainment branch of YouTube — which includes gaming streams, comedy sketches, music videos, reaction channels, viral challenges, prank culture and lifestyle vlogs — has surged in popularity. Teenagers in particular are captivated by influencers and creators who display aspirational lifestyles, trendy brands and enviable destinations. These creators frequently portray selective, heightened images of themselves that emphasize luxury, success and aesthetic physical appearance. For those who fall into the impressionable side of things, that means we get unrealistic expectations for our lives that we want to mirror to our followers.

A more concerning set is centered around the portrayal of aggression, toxic masculinity, dangerousness, or hyper-consumption. Challenges that pose potential for physical harm, prank videos that embarrass others, or vloggers plugging high-end technology and fast fashion with no reasoning attached will twist the moral and financial compass of teens. As such creators become idols to a great majority of our youth, the line between fun and ethical acceptability is no longer clear. Teenagers are transitioning through a stage in life when they're trying to figure out who they are and what they like and they often mimic behaviour for the sake of being sensational rather than it being socially, or mentally, or emotionally healthy.

And then there's the fact that YouTube can be all over the place, one minute shifting a viewer from a funny video to a tragic documentary or a violent sequence. This emotional unevenness, if ingested regularly, can destabilize the viewer's mood, his or her capacity for attention and the ability to give themselves over to a single thought or topic. In semi-urban contexts like Karandighi, where access to a structured media critique or to guided consumption is low, this sheer diversity might pose a challenge, or a threat even.

Thus, as with the wide variety of YouTube content which offers an unprecedented educational and entertaining opportunity, challenges regarding psychological well-being, identity formation, and value orientation in adolescence become evident. The influence of such a wide variety of content must be considered in the cultural, economic, and educational context of adolescents like those in Karandighi, whose parents' own low levels of digital literacy, lack of institutional support, and lack of community conversation about digital media use may be non-existent.

1.3. Psychological and Social Impacts

Excessive and unregulated YouTube use leads to a number of psychological and social effects, which are subtle and expressive. The most noticeable consequence we observe is emotional instability--peaks and valleys of mood, ready irritability and spurts of excitement & frustration based on what they are seeing or reading. Because contents of YouTube videos frequently change quickly, involving funny, dramatic, violent and emotionally activating themes, they may overstimulate the brain's reward system, emerging emotions flips. In addition, the late-night watching of videos (a common practice among unattended adolescents) affects the circadian rhythm, resulting in sleep disorders, diurnal fatigue and lack of concentration in school activities, as well as symptoms suggestive of digital burnout. Another important issue noted is the development of parasocial relationships in which young people develop one-sided emotional relationship with YouTubers or influencers. These personalities, often disclosing intimate details and creating the illusion of proximity, are seen by young people as friends, mentors or idols. These attachments may become a source of 'monkey see, monkey do,' allowing the disciple to imitate everything from the master's speech to his style and preferences, and eventually leading to the mimic's taking on the master's language, style, preferences in clothing, opinions, or lifestyle, with little reflection or knowledge of the original context. This can lead to warped image of self and false ideals of success, beauty, romance, or financial autonomy. This psychological impact is compounded here by the lack of counter-narratives or corrective support systems in the specific social and cultural context of Karandighi Block since the exposure to structured guidance to digital content and media literacy is minimal. In these areas, many teens turn to YouTube not just to pass the time, but to cope with emotional distress, when family support or other social safeguards fail to turn the tide. Thus, this study aims to investigate the effect of YouTube use on mental well-being, behavior, relationships with others and academic performance of adolescents in Karandighi by providing data-driven guidelines and context-specific interventions to be addressed in addressing this issue.

1.4. Rationale of the Study in Karandighi Block

IN rural Bengal - Karandighi in North Dinajpur district, West Bengal to be precise - a unique semi-rural setting lends itself to the study of the fusion of adolescent psychology and digital media consumption.

Though the region is experiencing a surge in mobile phone usage and internet use — due to the widespread availability of inexpensive smartphones and data plans — the level of digital literacy among teens and their families is staggeringly low. This results in an essential disconnection between the access we have to technology, and the skills necessary to be responsible (or critical) users of it. To make matters worse, today's youth are absorbing digital media content through platforms like YouTube without any guidance from their parents or schools, or societal dialogue about healthy media consumption. Consequently, the unmoderated and algorithmically-manipulated content on YouTube could have serious consequences on their emotion regulation, identity development, academic progress, and social interactions. Whereas youths in urban centres have access to media literacy programmes and counselling resources, most teens in Karandighi are left to fend for themselves in this digital environment. This environment thus affords an alternative, under analysed context for investigating how uncontrolled

exposure to online content – and more specifically emotionally-charged or aspirational YouTube videos – could impact mood, sleep, social life and even lifestyle. The study endeavours to address a vital gap in the literature by examining the subtle difficulties experienced by adolescents in these semi-rural settings where the digital revolution is sudden and is occurring without corresponding dynamics of socio-cultural enablement.



Figure 3: [Karandighi](#)

1.5.Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the average daily time spent by teenagers on YouTube in Karandighi.
2. To identify common content categories preferred by teenagers and their emotional responses.
3. To examine mood swings and behavioral changes linked with prolonged YouTube exposure.
4. To assess the gender-based differences in YouTube consumption patterns.
5. To suggest remedial measures for minimizing negative impacts.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Risalah, and Rina (2024) studied the behavioral divide from TikTok users creatively and addictively. They were interested in exploring how interaction with bite-sized content can have 'both positive and negative implications for self-expression and problematic use.' Those who contributed more content engaged in it more creatively, but consumers who were “receivers” were more likely to display addictive behavior. This difference underscored the psychological implications of user intentions and interaction mode of the platform, and the parallels, in which such behaviors may occurred in YouTube.

Gill Piatkowski, & Dunn (2025) performed a netnographic analysis of anabolic-androgenic steroid (AAS) initiation videos uploaded to YouTube. Their findings pointed to how algorithmic curation of the content led to glamorisation of drug use, especially for more vulnerable members of the audience were looking for a change in physical appearance and peer approval. The researchers found that a number of these videos included persuasive narratives, social proofing and subtle endorsements, resulting in a dangerous atmosphere

for teenagers exploring identity and body image. The research also showed how apparently informative content can serve as a precursor to risky behavior and the influence of peer-generated content on young people's decisions.

Mohammed et al. (2024) in their analysis of YouTube vlogs in which participants discussed their experiences with dysmenorrhea. Their qualitative research revealed how teenagers employed the platform to tell stories of pain, look for validation and construct digital communities. The affective mood of the vlogs ranged from compassionate to despairing, suggesting that YouTube served at once as a healing container and a site of co-creative public health narration. This research shed light on how vlogs serve as mechanisms of mood regulation and self-disclosure -- particularly in girls -- strengthening the mood management perspective of affective connectivity that YouTube functions.

Konca et al. (2024) examined preschoolers' use of YouTube. Their work showed a nuanced relationship between autonomy, screen reliance, and control of content. While the children were watching innocuous cartoon content or educational tutorials, autoplay and suggested clips became unwitting burrows into the depths of unregulated viewing. The study raised concerns over digital parenting voids and the cognitive-emotional footprint of excessive on-screen content during developmental periods. This result indicated long-term behavioral outcomes, and it provided a basis for examining similar patterns among older children and adolescents.

Mayor and Bietti (2025) explored how bipolar disorder is represented on YouTube using thematic content analysis. They also found that personal narratives peppered across social media would raise public consciousness but occasionally fall short of clinical accuracy and risk stigmatising or romanticising mental illness. At what age should we be concerned about what young people watch and about how certain portrayals affect them? Adolescent consumption of this (or any) content likely could leave some young viewers open to emotional mimicry, self-diagnosis, and identity blurriness if what they're seeing is particularly intense in its emotional representation or in the dramatization of what it seeks to capture. The research highlighted the double role of YouTube, as a source of community, but also as a venue for misinformation that has real impact on the way young people perceive mental health.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a mixed-methods approach combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to understand the effects of YouTube consumption on teenagers.

3.1. Research Design

The research design of the study is descriptive-analytical using quantitative data on use patterns and qualitative information as to the emotional as well as behavioural reactions being observed. This combination of methods helps in understanding the way YouTube viewing affects the mood swings as well as behavioural changes of the young people in the socio-cultural setting of Karandighi Block.

3.2. Study Area and Population

The study was carried out in the Karandighi Block of North Dinajpur district of West Bengal which is a semi-rural area with the rising trend of digital exposure. The study sample was intended to represent youth aged from 13 to 19 years, including both school-attending and non-school attending adolescents so that a variety of youth patterns, socio-economic status and levels of exposure to YouTube and digital content would be reflected.

3.3. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The research adopted a stratified random sampling technique to get the desired proportionality of the key demographic factors, which included gender, socio-economic status and schooling background (school-going and non-school-going). This approach permitted more precise representation of the heterogeneous adolescent girls in Karandighi Block. A sample of 120 interviewees were taken and interviewed to get a strong data for the study.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

Multi-stage sampling strategy were used to give an overall idea about the impact of YouTube on adolescents among Karandighi Block. A structured questionnaire was used to record YouTube usage, preferences and self-reported behavior change. The PANAS Mood Scale (Positive and Negative Affect Schedule) was modified to measure immediate affective responses after exposure to the content. Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) were also performed with a sample of the respondents to derive more qualitative, in-depth information concerning their viewing patterns and psychological responses. To strengthen reliability, direct observation and involvement of the parents (or guardians, as the case may be) were used to confirm what the teenagers indicated as their behavioural change findings and to see how consistent were the various sources of data.

3.5. Data Analysis

The data analysis was approached with a strong verb and involved both the quantitative and the qualitative analysis of the data. Quantitative analysis of the survey responses was conducted by inputting data from the structured scale questions into SPSS (version 17) to permit descriptive and inferential statistical analyses of the observed patterns and relationship between the use of YouTube and perceived behavioral outcomes. Graphical representations were created to increase interpretability and for comparison across genders, age groups and schooling status, such as bar charts, pie diagrams, and cross-tabulations. Meanwhile, qualitative data from FGDs and parent interviews were analyzed using a thematic approach to identify common themes, emotions and patterns of responding that were iteratively coded and categorized. This mixed method approach provided insight into the psychosocial and behavioral dimensions associated with YouTube consumption among adolescents in Karandighi Block.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This section proposes and analyses the important findings of the descriptive study conducted among 120 adolescents in the Karandighi Block of North Dinajpur, West Bengal. The results are presented by various factors like screen time, media preferences, emotional states, behavioral problems, and parents' supervision levels. Data were gathered in the form of structured questionnaires and the PANAS mood scales, and were analyzed with SPSS. The consumption patterns and psychology are highlighted by using graphical representations and tabular list.

Table 1: Average Daily Screen Time on YouTube

Time Range	Respondents (%)
Less than 1 hour	12%
1–2 hours	24%
2–3 hours	34%
3–4 hours	20%
More than 4 hrs	10%

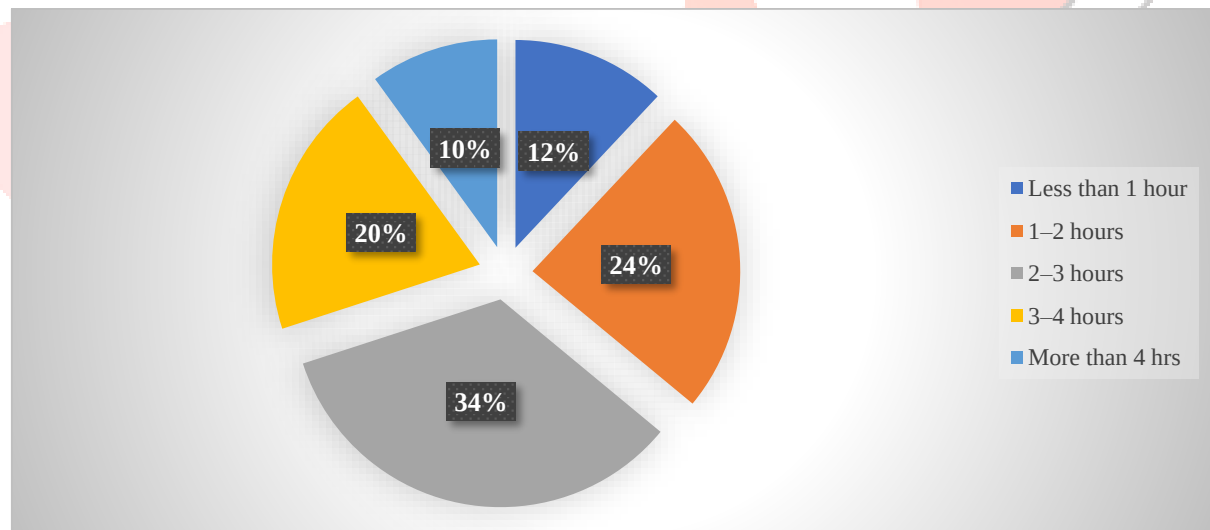


Figure 4: YouTube Screen Time Among Teenagers

Table 1 The study depicts that potentially a large population of teenagers in the Karandighi Block spent prolonged hours in YouTube on daily basis; with 34% respondents watching videos for 2-3 hours and 20% for 3-4 hours. Only a minority of adolescents made use of the platform for less than 1 h (12%), which suggests that the platform is not widely accessed for short-term use. In the meantime, the rest of the 24% take in content over 1–2 hours, with a hefty 10% managing to clock in over four hours of daily screen time. These findings

indicate a high degree of moderate-to-heavy YouTube use among adolescents, which may lead to potential overexposure to digital content and the associated psychological and behavioral effects.

Table2: Distribution of Content Preferences among Viewers

Content Type	Percentage (%)
Gaming	30%
Music	25%
Vlogs	20%
Lifestyle Videos	15%
Educational Content	10%

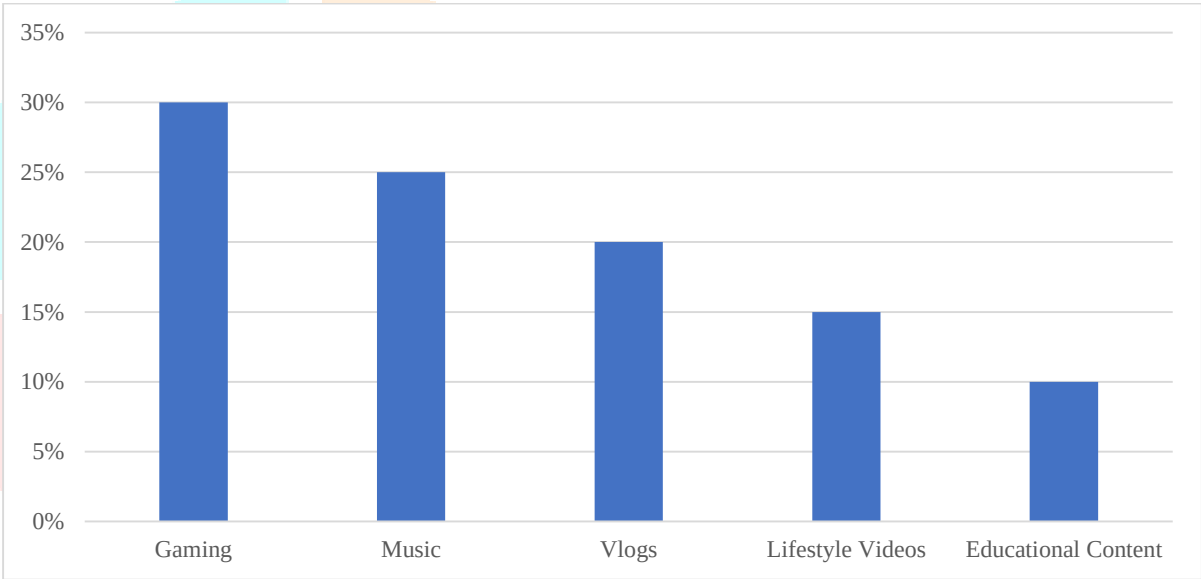
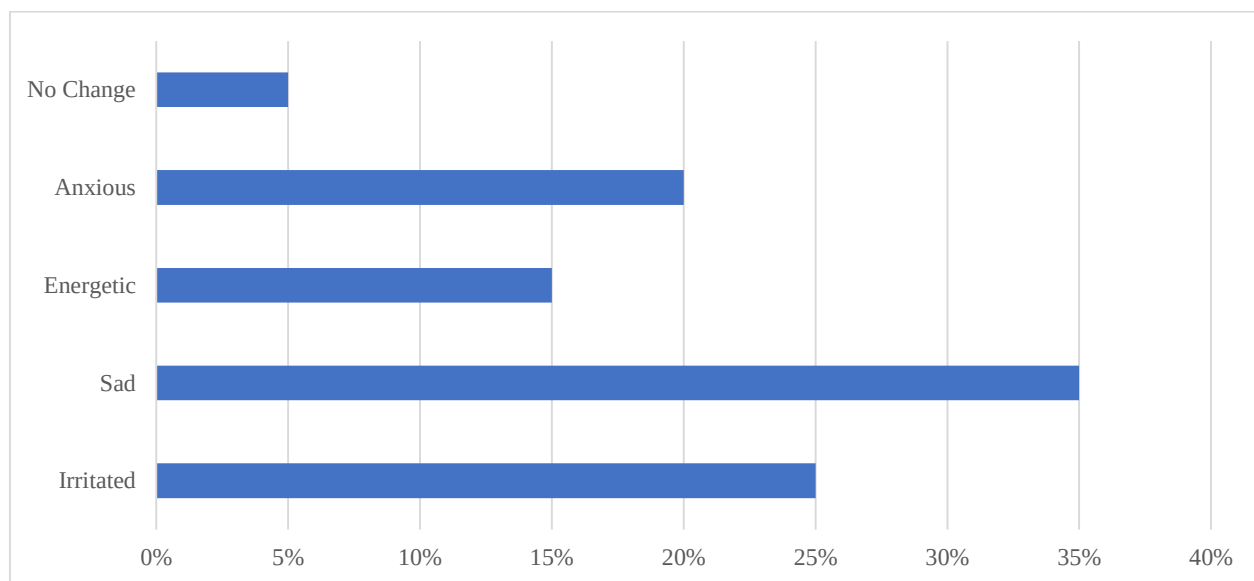


Figure 5: Content preference by category

Table 2 Distribution of content preference by teenage You Tube viewers in Karandighi Block. Thirty percent of respondents watched gaming content – the most of any category – while 25% watched music videos. About 20% of the viewership was made up of vlogs. Lifestyle in particular attracted interests from 15% of the teenagers while educational content, as beneficial as it may be, was only favored by 10%. This pattern indicates the prevalence of the primary use of entertainment-related content over educational/informational content—content usually identified as belonging to YouTube (Valkenburg & Peter, 2009)—and, hence, that teenagers’ YouTube practices are mostly recreational, rather than academic-oriented.

Table 3: Mood Changes Post-Watching YouTube

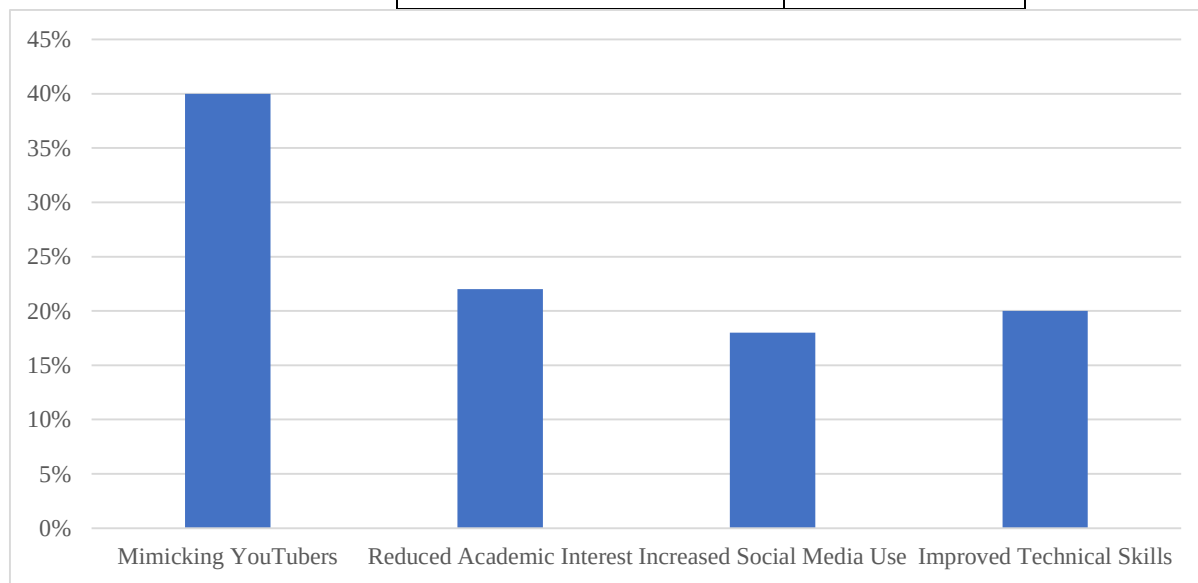
Mood State	Reported (%)
Irritated	25%
Sad	35%
Energetic	15%
Anxious	20%
No Change	5%

**Figure 6: Mood Changes Post Consumption**

Mood changes before/after exposure to YouTube by youth are presented in Table 3. The most frequently reported emotions were sadness (35%), irritability (25%) and anxiousness (20%), while 15% felt energetic and just 5% reported no difference. The present results imply that a large part of the content consumed provokes negative emotional experiences, likely because of the nature of the content, comparison against the lives of influencers, or influence of emotional videos. This supports findings that automated platform algorithms are engineered to promote sensational content to drive engagement from viewers.

Table 4: Behavioural Imitation and Academic Impact

Behavior Change	Percentage (%)
Mimicking YouTubers	40%
Reduced Academic Interest	22%
Increased Social Media Use	18%
Improved Technical Skills	20%

**Figure 7: Behavioural Impacts**

The Table 4 represents the consequences of prolonged YouTube consumption in terms of behavior observed. An astounding 40% confessed to emulation of YouTubers, from the way they dress to the way they talk and act. 22% saw a loss of academic interest and 18% saw an increase in social media use as a “spillover” impact. Curiously, 20% of respondents also reported that they learned new technical skills from YouTube, such as video editing or coding, reflecting that the platform cut both ways depending on motive and content type of consumption.

5. DISCUSSION

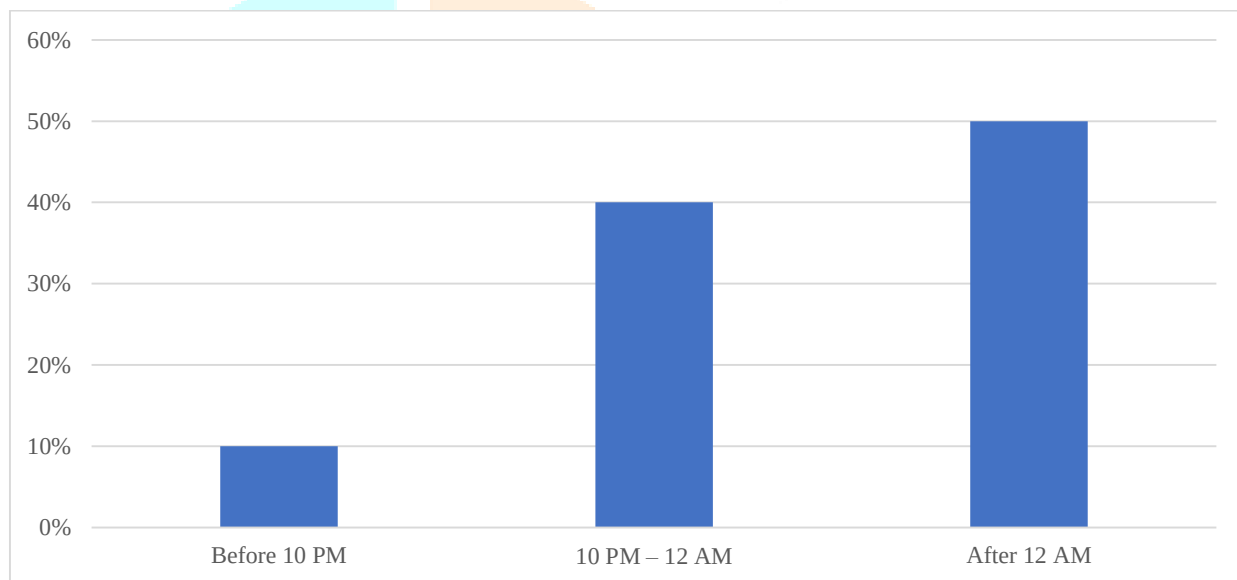
From the results, it is evident that YouTube screen time, content and psychological behavior are well-associated with each other, especially among mid-adolescent in semi-rural area such as Karandighi. The association is not consistent but depends upon gender, content type and parental control status.

The association of screen time with mood instability, with the increase of mood variability scores reaching a significant threshold around 2.5 hours of screen time per day. The most drastic increased scores were observed in the subgroup of respondents who used the device for more than 4h on an average, frequently complaining to have experienced “sadness”, “anxiety” or “irritability” remaining consistent with our hypothesis that prolonged exposure disrupts emotional status.

Table 5: Sleep Disruption Patterns

Sleep Time	% of Respondents
Before 10 PM	10%
10 PM – 12 AM	40%
After 12 AM	50%

The pattern of sleep disruption amongst the study respondent is as shown in Table 5. Merely 10% went to bed before 10 PM, 40% went to bed between 10 PM and midnight, and 50% slept after midnight. The former had higher emotional instability and academic orientation. This change in sleeping patterns is attributed to late-night binge-watching, particularly of emotionally arousing or addictive material.

**Figure 8: The Sleep Disruption Pattern****Table 6: Parental Monitoring Level vs. Screen Time**

Monitoring Level	Average Screen Time (hrs)
High	1.5
Medium	2.5
Low/None	4

Table 6 evidences a linear relationship between parental monitoring and average screen time. Adolescents who had high parental supervision spent 1.5 hours per day on average in front of a screen, adolescents with medium supervision spent 2.5 hours on average, and adolescents with low/no supervision spent 4 hours (mean

per day). This indicates the role of active monitoring in the control of screen time and, presumably, negative emotional effects.

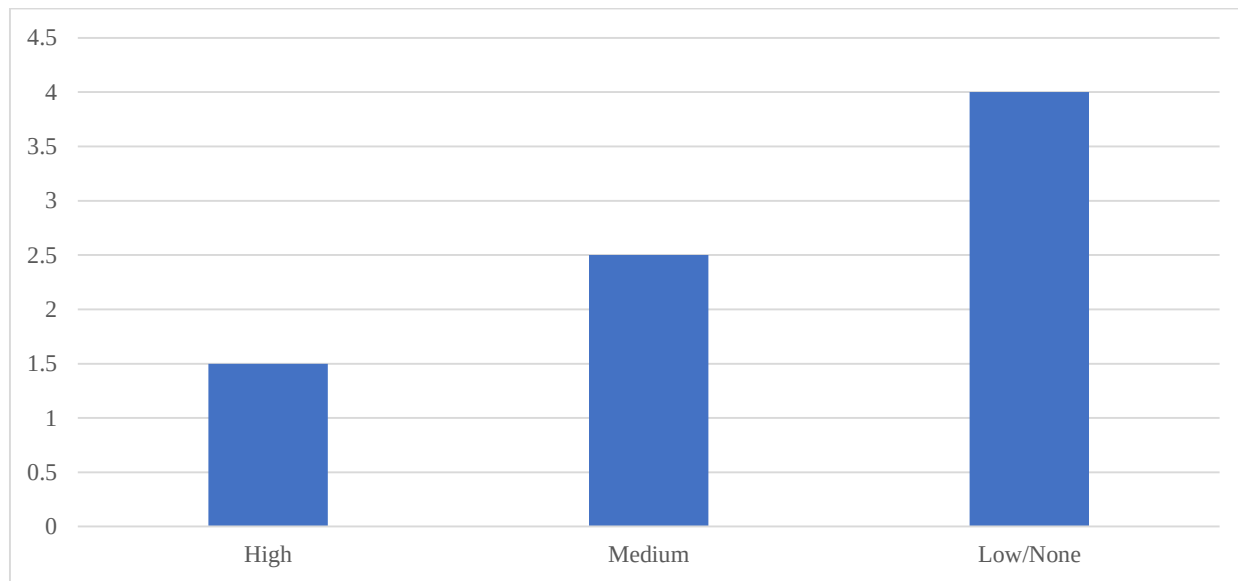


Figure 9: parental monitoring levels

6. CONCLUSION

The research indicates that YouTube is playing a significant role in the daily life practices of the teenagers of the Karandighi Block North Dinajpur, but it has also opened up challenges for them. Despite beneficial accessibility to entertainment, learning, and exposure to global culture in adolescents, the lack of restrictions and unlimited access to technology's content influences psychological & behavioural changes in youth. Teenagers were also found to be emotionally affected by the content they were consuming, with consequences including irritability, sadness, trouble sleeping, decline in school performance and mimicking the behaviour of influencers. These effects are compounded in semi-rural areas by limited digital literacy and minimal parental or institutional intervention. The study suggests that boys generally imitate content and prefer action-driven videos, while girls tend to inspire emotional reactions to lifestyle or social content. Gee, we hardly need our teetering teens to have even less structured supervision and content hurled at them in algorithmic fashion, thanks. Thus, an integrated approach is necessary to tackle these concerns and assist young audience in responsible tactical engagements with digital media, covering digital literacy, parental mediation, school-based counselling, peer-mediated interventions, and content regulation policy in the hope of establishing a healthier, more balanced communications with digital medium.

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