



A Study on Digital Wellbeing Among College-Going Youth in Tirupati City: The Role of Smartphone Usage, Self-Control and Digital Habits

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Abstract:

Digital technology has become an integral part of young people's daily lives, influencing communication, education, entertainment, social interaction, and consumption behaviour. The increasing dependence on smartphones and digital platforms has created both opportunities and challenges for maintaining a healthy balance between online and offline activities. In this context, digital wellbeing has emerged as an important area of research. The present study, titled "Understanding Digital Wellbeing Among Youth: The Role of Smartphone Usage, Self-Control and Digital Habits," aims to examine the relationship between smartphone usage, digital habits, self-control, and digital wellbeing among youth. The study focuses on understanding how the frequency and nature of smartphone use and everyday digital habits influence individuals' ability to maintain a balanced and healthy digital lifestyle. It also examines the role of self-control in managing digital technology use and promoting positive digital wellbeing. The study adopts a quantitative research approach and proposes the collection of primary data from youth through a structured questionnaire. Smartphone usage, digital habits, self-control, and digital wellbeing are measured using a five-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation, and regression analysis may be employed to examine the relationships among the study variables. The study is expected to provide useful insights for young consumers, educational institutions, parents, and digital platform stakeholders in promoting responsible technology use and healthier digital habits. The findings may contribute to the growing body of research on digital wellbeing and provide a basis for developing strategies that encourage balanced, mindful, and self-regulated digital engagement among youth.

Keywords: Digital Wellbeing, Smartphone Usage, Self-Control, Digital Habits, Youth, Digital Technology, Smartphone Dependency, Consumer Behaviour.

1. Background of the Study

Digital technology has become an essential part of modern life, particularly among young people. Smartphones, social media platforms, online entertainment, digital payment systems, educational applications, and other digital services have transformed the way youth communicate, learn, work, shop, and interact with others. The widespread availability of affordable smartphones and internet services has made digital connectivity a routine part of everyday life. For young consumers, smartphones are no longer used only for communication; they have become multifunctional devices used for education, entertainment, social networking, information search, shopping, financial transactions, and personal activities.

The increasing integration of smartphones into daily life has created several benefits for youth. Digital technologies provide quick access to information, learning resources, social connections, entertainment, and opportunities for personal and professional development. Smartphones also provide convenience by allowing users to perform multiple activities from a single device. However, continuous and uncontrolled engagement with digital technologies may also

create challenges. Excessive screen time, frequent checking of notifications, prolonged social media use, digital distractions, late-night smartphone use, and difficulty disconnecting from digital platforms may interfere with productive activities and everyday routines.

In this context, digital wellbeing has emerged as an important area of research. Digital wellbeing broadly refers to an individual's ability to use digital technologies in a balanced, healthy, meaningful, and controlled manner while maintaining physical, psychological, social, and productive aspects of life. It is not simply concerned with reducing screen time; rather, it focuses on whether digital technology use contributes positively to an individual's overall quality of life and whether individuals feel capable of controlling their digital behaviour. Thus, understanding digital wellbeing requires attention not only to the amount of technology use but also to the purpose, pattern, and quality of digital engagement.

Young people are particularly relevant to the study of digital wellbeing because they are among the most active users of smartphones and digital platforms. Their daily routines increasingly involve multiple forms of digital engagement, including social networking, video streaming, online gaming, messaging, educational activities, online shopping, and content creation. These activities can occur simultaneously, resulting in frequent switching between applications and continuous digital stimulation. While such behaviour can improve convenience and connectivity, it may also contribute to digital distraction and difficulties in maintaining boundaries between digital and offline activities.

Smartphone usage is therefore an important factor in understanding digital wellbeing. The frequency of smartphone use, duration of use, reasons for using smartphones, checking behaviour, use before bedtime, and difficulty in reducing usage may influence how individuals experience their digital lives. Merely measuring total screen time may not fully explain digital wellbeing because the same amount of smartphone use can have different effects depending on whether it is used for education, work, social interaction, entertainment, or other purposes. Therefore, examining patterns of smartphone usage provides a broader understanding of how digital engagement may be associated with wellbeing.

Another important dimension is digital habits. Repeated patterns of behaviour, such as checking social media frequently, responding immediately to notifications, using smartphones during meals or study, consuming digital content before sleeping, and switching between multiple applications, can gradually become routine. Positive digital habits, such as taking regular breaks, managing notifications, setting usage limits, and maintaining offline activities, may support healthier digital experiences. Conversely, habitual and unnecessary digital engagement may make it difficult for young people to regulate their technology use. Studying these habits can therefore provide meaningful insights into the development of digital wellbeing.

Self-control represents another important factor in this context. Individuals differ in their ability to regulate impulses, manage their time, resist distractions, and stop activities when necessary. In the digital environment, self-control may influence an individual's ability to resist unnecessary smartphone checking, limit social media use, avoid digital distractions during important activities, and disconnect from devices when required. Young people with stronger self-regulatory abilities may be better positioned to establish healthy boundaries around digital technology use. Therefore, examining self-control alongside smartphone usage and digital habits can provide a more comprehensive understanding of digital wellbeing.

The relationship among these variables is particularly relevant from a consumer behaviour perspective. Young consumers continuously interact with digital products, services, applications, advertisements, social media content, and online marketplaces. Their digital behaviour is influenced by convenience, entertainment, social influence, personalization, notifications, and persuasive digital environments. Consequently, understanding how young consumers manage their digital lives can provide insights not only into wellbeing but also into responsible digital consumption and technology-use behaviour.

Against this background, the present study, "Understanding Digital Wellbeing Among Youth: The Role of Smartphone Usage, Self-Control and Digital Habits," seeks to examine how smartphone usage and digital habits are associated with digital wellbeing among youth and to understand the role of self-control in maintaining healthy digital behaviour. The study is expected to contribute to a better understanding of the behavioural factors associated with digital wellbeing and provide useful insights for youth, educational institutions, parents, technology companies, and other stakeholders interested in promoting balanced and responsible digital engagement.

2. Introduction

The rapid growth of digital technology has fundamentally changed the way people communicate, learn, work, entertain themselves, and make everyday decisions. Among the different digital technologies, smartphones have become one of the most important and widely used devices, particularly among young people. A smartphone provides access to communication, social networking, education, entertainment, online shopping, digital payments, information, and

numerous other services through a single device. As a result, smartphone use has become deeply integrated into the everyday lives of youth.

Young people are among the most active participants in the digital environment. Their daily activities frequently involve social media platforms, instant messaging, video streaming, online learning, gaming, digital shopping, and other smartphone-based activities. The convenience and accessibility of these services provide several benefits, including faster communication, greater access to information, educational opportunities, social connectivity, and entertainment. At the same time, continuous digital engagement may create challenges when technology use becomes excessive, habitual, or difficult to control.

The growing intensity of digital engagement has increased interest in the concept of digital wellbeing. Digital wellbeing refers to an individual's ability to use digital technologies in a balanced, purposeful, healthy, and controlled manner while maintaining overall quality of life. It involves the ability to derive benefits from technology without allowing digital activities to negatively interfere with sleep, productivity, social relationships, personal responsibilities, and offline experiences. Therefore, digital wellbeing is concerned not merely with how much technology an individual uses, but also with how, why, and under what circumstances that technology is used.

Smartphone usage is an important factor in understanding digital wellbeing among youth. Frequent smartphone checking, prolonged screen time, continuous social media engagement, smartphone use during study or work, and usage immediately before sleep may influence an individual's ability to maintain a healthy digital routine. However, smartphone usage itself is not necessarily harmful. The impact may depend on the purpose and pattern of usage. Educational, professional, and productive smartphone activities may contribute positively to everyday life, whereas uncontrolled entertainment or repetitive checking may contribute to distraction and reduced control over digital behaviour. This makes it important to examine smartphone usage from a behavioural rather than simply a time-based perspective.

In addition to smartphone usage, digital habits play an important role in shaping digital wellbeing. Digital habits are repeated patterns of interaction with digital devices and platforms. Checking notifications frequently, browsing social media during free moments, consuming digital content before bedtime, multitasking across applications, and using smartphones during meals or social interactions are examples of digital habits that may become part of everyday routines. Similarly, taking regular digital breaks, controlling notifications, setting usage limits, and maintaining offline activities represent healthier digital practices. Understanding these habits can therefore provide insight into why some individuals experience greater digital balance than others.

Another important factor is self-control. Digital platforms are designed to provide continuous access to information, entertainment, communication, and personalized content. Notifications, recommendations, social feedback, and easily accessible content can encourage repeated engagement. In such an environment, an individual's ability to regulate impulses and manage technology use becomes important. Self-control may help young people resist unnecessary smartphone checking, limit social media use, maintain concentration during important activities, and disconnect from digital devices when required. Consequently, self-control may play an important role in achieving positive digital wellbeing.

The interaction between smartphone usage, digital habits, self-control, and digital wellbeing also has significance from a consumer behaviour perspective. Young consumers are not only users of smartphones but also consumers of a wide range of digital products and services. Their behaviour is influenced by convenience, personalization, social influence, entertainment, digital advertising, recommendations, notifications, and platform design. Understanding how young consumers regulate their digital engagement can therefore provide useful insights into responsible technology consumption and sustainable digital behaviour.

Although digital technology provides substantial benefits, excessive or poorly regulated engagement can create a tension between digital convenience and personal wellbeing. Young people may recognize the need to control their digital usage but may nevertheless find it difficult to reduce smartphone use or establish clear boundaries between online and offline activities. This highlights the need to examine the behavioural factors that contribute to healthy digital engagement rather than focusing exclusively on the negative consequences of technology.

The present study, titled “Understanding Digital Wellbeing Among Youth: The Role of Smartphone Usage, Self-Control and Digital Habits,” therefore focuses on the relationship between these key constructs. The study seeks to examine the influence of smartphone usage on digital wellbeing, analyse the relationship between digital habits and

digital wellbeing, and understand the role of self-control in promoting healthier digital behaviour among youth. By examining these variables together, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors associated with digital wellbeing in an increasingly connected society.

The findings of the study may be useful to young people in developing healthier digital routines and improving their ability to manage technology use. The study may also provide insights for educational institutions, parents, technology companies, and policymakers in designing awareness programmes and strategies that encourage responsible and balanced digital engagement. From an academic perspective, the study contributes to the growing research on digital wellbeing by bringing together technology usage, behavioural habits, and self-regulation within a youth-oriented framework.

Need for the study

The increasing use of smartphones and digital platforms has made technology an essential part of young people's daily lives. Although smartphones provide benefits such as communication, education, entertainment, and access to information, excessive or uncontrolled use may affect productivity, sleep, social interaction, and daily routines. Therefore, there is a need to understand smartphone usage patterns among youth and their relationship with digital wellbeing.

The study is also needed to examine **digital habits and self-control**. Frequent checking of smartphones, social media use, digital multitasking, and late-night digital activities may influence digital balance. At the same time, self-control can help individuals manage their technology use, avoid unnecessary digital distractions, and maintain healthy digital routines.

Therefore, the present study aims to provide an integrated understanding of **smartphone usage, digital habits, self-control, and digital wellbeing among youth**. The findings may help young people develop healthier digital practices and provide useful insights for educational institutions, parents, and other stakeholders in promoting responsible and balanced digital engagement.

Objectives of the Study :

1. To examine the influence of smartphone usage on digital wellbeing among youth.
2. To analyse the relationship between digital habits and digital wellbeing among youth.
3. To examine the role of self-control in promoting digital wellbeing among youth.

Scope of the study

The study focuses on understanding digital wellbeing among youth with particular reference to smartphone usage, digital habits, and self-control. It examines how the frequency, duration, purpose, and patterns of smartphone use are associated with young people's ability to maintain a healthy and balanced digital lifestyle.

The study covers digital habits such as social media usage, digital multitasking, notification checking, bedtime technology use, and taking digital breaks. It also examines self-control in managing smartphone and digital activities and its relationship with digital wellbeing.

The study is limited to youth respondents and uses primary data collected through a structured questionnaire. The findings are intended to provide insights for young consumers, educational institutions, parents, and other stakeholders interested in promoting responsible, balanced, and healthy digital technology use.

General Characteristics of Youth Smartphone Usage

1. Frequent Smartphone Usage :

Youth generally use smartphones several times throughout the day for communication, information, entertainment, education, and personal activities. Frequent checking of messages, notifications, and social media has become a common part of their daily routine.

2. Multiple Purposes of Use

Smartphones are used for a wide range of purposes, including online learning, communication, entertainment, information searching, digital payments, online shopping, and other personal activities. This makes smartphones an important part of everyday life.

3. Social Media Engagement

Social media is one of the major areas of smartphone usage among youth. Young people use social media platforms for communication, networking, content sharing, entertainment, and staying connected with friends and communities.

4. Digital Multitasking

Youth often use smartphones while performing other activities such as studying, working, eating, travelling, or communicating with others. Switching between different applications and activities is a common feature of their digital behaviour.

5. Continuous Connectivity

Smartphones provide continuous access to messages, notifications, social media, and online content. This constant connectivity allows youth to remain informed and socially connected but may also encourage repeated checking of their devices.

6. Online Consumer Activities

Youth increasingly use smartphones for consumer activities such as online shopping, food delivery, digital payments, travel bookings, and product information. Smartphones therefore influence not only communication but also everyday purchasing and consumption behaviour.

7. Personalized Digital Experience

Digital platforms provide personalized content, recommendations, advertisements, entertainment, and services based on users' interests and behaviour. Such personalization can increase convenience and engagement among young smartphone users.

3. Review of Literature

Devi et al. (2025) conducted a cross-sectional study among 1,067 college students aged 18–23 years in Kerala to examine the prevalence and associated factors of smartphone addiction. The study reported that 39.9% of participants met the criteria for smartphone addiction. Smartphone use before sleep, use after midnight, and prolonged use after lights were significantly associated with smartphone addiction. Social media was the primary purpose of smartphone use for 50.7% of respondents, while 87.5% reported using smartphones immediately before sleep. The study highlights the importance of examining smartphone usage patterns and digital habits when understanding the wellbeing of young people.

Pradeep et al. (2025) conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of smartphone addiction among undergraduate medical students in India. The review included 24 studies and estimated a pooled prevalence of approximately 60%, although substantial variation existed between studies. The authors emphasized the need for targeted awareness, preventive interventions, and institutional support to address problematic smartphone use among Indian students. The findings demonstrate the scale of smartphone-related behavioural concerns among young adults in India and support the need for further research on factors that can promote healthier digital behaviour.

Ann (2025) examined digital distraction, smartphone addiction, self-regulation, and academic procrastination among 503 undergraduate students in Kerala. The study found a strong positive relationship between smartphone addiction and academic procrastination, with smartphone addiction significantly predicting procrastination. The study interpreted the findings through self-regulation theory, suggesting that continuous digital engagement and immediate digital rewards can interfere with students' ability to regulate their behaviour and focus on long-term goals. This study is particularly relevant to the present research because it establishes the importance of self-control/self-regulation in understanding the consequences of smartphone usage among Indian youth.

Nandhini and Neelima (2025) investigated social media addiction and engagement among 1,062 undergraduate and postgraduate students aged 18–25 in Tamil Nadu. The study reported an almost equal division between students showing addictive tendencies and those not showing such tendencies, with 49.9% reporting addictive tendencies. The research highlights the significant role of social media in the digital lives of Indian youth and its potential relationship with mental wellbeing. The findings support the inclusion of digital habits and social media engagement when examining digital wellbeing among young people.

Sengupta (2025) studied smartphone addiction and perceived loneliness among college students in India, with particular attention to differences according to gender and academic year. The study highlights the relationship between excessive smartphone use and social-psychological experiences among young people. Its focus on loneliness is relevant to digital wellbeing because healthy digital engagement should be considered not only in terms of technology use but also in relation to individuals' social and emotional experiences.

Balasubramanian (2024) examined the impact of smartphone abstinence through a digital detox study among college students in Chennai. The study used qualitative methods and explored changes in self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, and overall wellbeing following a one-day smartphone detox programme. The findings indicated that participants experienced changes in their awareness of smartphone use and interpersonal experiences. The study provides support for the importance of digital breaks and conscious management of smartphone use in promoting healthier digital behaviour.

4. Area of the Study

The present study is confined to Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, with a focus on college-going youth pursuing undergraduate and postgraduate education. Tirupati was selected as the study area because it is a prominent educational centre comprising public universities, government institutions, private engineering colleges and private degree colleges. The study proposes to obtain primary data from students of selected institutions representing these categories. Institutions such as Sri Venkateswara University, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, National Sanskrit University, Sri Venkateswara University College of Engineering, S.G.S. Arts College, Annamacharya Institute of Technology & Sciences, Sree Vidyanikethan Engineering College, Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering and selected private degree colleges will provide the institutional base for the study. The geographical and institutional coverage will help examine smartphone usage, digital habits, self-control and digital wellbeing among college-going youth in Tirupati.

5. Research Design

The present study adopts a quantitative, descriptive-cum-analytical research design to examine digital wellbeing among college-going youth in Tirupati. The study focuses on smartphone usage, digital habits and self-control as major explanatory variables and digital wellbeing as the outcome variable. Primary data will be collected from undergraduate and postgraduate students of selected government/public and private educational institutions, including engineering and degree colleges in Tirupati, through a structured questionnaire. A five-point Likert scale will be used to measure the major constructs. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation and regression techniques will be employed to analyse the data and examine the proposed relationships among the study variables.

Sources of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data will be collected directly from college-going youth studying in selected government/public and private educational institutions in Tirupati through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire will measure smartphone usage, digital habits, self-control and digital wellbeing using a five-point Likert scale. Secondary data will be obtained from academic journals, books, research reports, government publications, institutional websites and other credible sources relevant to digital wellbeing and digital technology usage.

Population of the Study

The study focuses on college-going youth studying in selected higher educational institutions in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. The institutional population is classified into four segments: (i) government/public universities and institutions, (ii) government/public colleges, (iii) private engineering colleges, and (iv) private degree colleges. To provide balanced representation across the four institutional segments, **100 respondents will be selected from each segment**, giving a total proposed sample size of **400 respondents**. The respondents will comprise undergraduate and postgraduate students from selected institutions within each segment. This distribution is intended to provide adequate representation of students from different institutional environments and to facilitate comparison of smartphone usage, digital habits, self-control and digital wellbeing among college-going youth in Tirupati.

Institutional Segment	Sampling Approach	Population
Government/Public Universities & Institutions	Selected institutions → student respondents	100
Government/Public Colleges	Selected institutions → student respondents	100
Private Engineering Colleges	Selected institutions → student respondents	100
Private Degree Colleges	Selected institutions → student respondents	100
Total		400

Sampling Method

The study adopts a multi-stage sampling method for selecting respondents from college-going youth in Tirupati. In the first stage, educational institutions are classified into four segments: government/public universities and institutions, government/public colleges, private engineering colleges, and private degree colleges. In the second stage, selected institutions are identified from each segment. In the third stage, undergraduate and postgraduate students are selected as respondents from the identified institutions. To ensure balanced representation, 100 respondents are allocated to each institutional segment, resulting in a total sample of 400 respondents. Within the selected institutions, respondents may be selected using convenience sampling based on their availability and willingness to participate. Where complete student lists are available, stratified random sampling may be employed to improve the representativeness of the sample.

Sample Plan

The study population consists of 400 respondents. The sample size is determined using the finite population formula $n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$, where N represents the population size and e represents the margin of error. At a **5% margin of error**, the calculated sample size is 200 respondents. Therefore, 200 respondents will be selected from the defined population for the study.

Particular	Details
Population	400
Margin of Error	5%
Formula	$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$
Sample Size	200
Sampling Method	Stratified / Convenience Sampling

Data Collection Method

The study primarily relies on primary data collected from college-going students in selected educational institutions in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. Data will be collected using a structured questionnaire designed in accordance with the objectives of the study. The questionnaire measures smartphone usage, digital habits, self-control and digital wellbeing using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), along with questions relating to the demographic profile of the respondents. The questionnaire will be administered to selected respondents through direct and/or online modes. Respondents will be informed about the academic purpose of the study, and confidentiality

and anonymity of their responses will be maintained. The completed questionnaires will be examined for completeness, coded and subjected to appropriate statistical analysis.

6. Data analysis and interpretation

Objective 1:

To Examine the Influence of Smartphone Usage (SU) on Digital Wellbeing Among Youth

Code	Statement	S D (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Total
SU1	I spend a considerable amount of time using my smartphone every day.	6%	8%	13%	56%	18%	100%
SU2	I frequently use my smartphone even when it is not necessary.	40%	4%	3%	19%	35%	100%
SU3	Excessive smartphone usage affects my sleep, concentration, or daily activities.	8%	13%	13%	18%	50%	100%

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

Interpretation:

SU1: The findings indicate that 74% of the respondents (56% agree and 18% strongly agree) spend a considerable amount of time using smartphones every day. This suggests that smartphones have become an important part of the respondents' daily routines. Only a small proportion of respondents reported low levels of daily smartphone usage.

SU2: The results show that 54% of the respondents (19% agree and 35% strongly agree) frequently use their smartphones even when it is not necessary. This indicates a tendency towards habitual or unnecessary smartphone use among a considerable proportion of the respondents. However, 44% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, indicating that they may have better control over unnecessary smartphone usage.

SU3: The findings reveal that 68% of the respondents (18% agree and 50% strongly agree) believe that excessive smartphone usage affects their sleep, concentration, or daily activities. This indicates that excessive smartphone use may have a negative influence on important aspects of daily life. Only 21% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Objective 2:

To analyse the relationship between digital habits (DH) and digital wellbeing among youth

Code	Statement	S D (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Total
DH1	I frequently check social media, messages, or other digital content throughout the day.	5%	6%	8%	63%	19%	100%
DH2	I use digital devices while studying, working, eating, or doing other important activities.	13%	8%	7%	56%	17%	100%
DH3	My regular digital habits help me maintain a healthy balance between online and offline activities.	43%	13%	8%	15%	23%	100%

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

Interpretation :

DH1: The findings show that 82% of respondents (63% agree and 19% strongly agree) frequently check social media, messages, or other digital content throughout the day. This indicates that frequent digital checking is a common habit among college-going youth.

DH2: The results indicate that 73% of respondents (56% agree and 17% strongly agree) use digital devices while studying, working, eating, or performing other important activities. This suggests that multitasking with digital devices is prevalent among the respondents and may affect their attention to important activities.

DH3: The findings reveal that 38% of respondents (15% agree and 23% strongly agree) believe that their regular digital habits help them maintain a healthy balance between online and offline activities. In contrast, 56% disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that a majority do not feel that their current digital habits support a healthy balance.

Objective 3:

To examine the role of self-control (SC) in promoting digital wellbeing among youth

Code	Statement	S (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Total
SC1	I can control the amount of time I spend using my smartphone.	40%	15%	5%	24%	17%	100%
SC2	I can resist the urge to check my smartphone when I am engaged in important work.	27%	33%	5%	25%	11%	100%
SC3	I can stop using digital devices when I need to study, sleep, relax, or interact with others.	53%	13%	5%	10%	20%	100%

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

Interpretation :

SC1: The findings show that 41% of respondents (24% agree and 17% strongly agree) can control the amount of time they spend using their smartphones. However, 55% disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that a considerable proportion of respondents experience difficulty in controlling their smartphone usage.

SC2: The results indicate that 36% of respondents (25% agree and 11% strongly agree) can resist the urge to check their smartphones while engaged in important work. In contrast, 60% disagree or strongly disagree, suggesting that smartphone checking may interrupt concentration and important activities for many respondents.

SC3: The findings reveal that 30% of respondents (10% agree and 20% strongly agree) can stop using digital devices when they need to study, sleep, relax, or interact with others. However, 66% disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that most respondents find it difficult to disconnect from digital devices when necessary.

Objective 4:

To assess the level of digital wellbeing among college-going youth in Tirupati.

Code	Statement	S (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Total
DW1	I feel that my use of digital technology is balanced and under control.	38%	18%	5%	30%	10%	100%
DW2	My digital activities generally contribute positively to my daily life.	55%	20%	3%	15%	8%	100%
DW3	I am able to take breaks from digital devices without difficulty.	40%	15%	13%	18%	15%	100%

DW4	My digital activities do not significantly disturb my sleep or daily responsibilities.	10%	15%	5%	13%	58%	100%
DW5	Overall, I feel satisfied with the way I manage my digital life.	60%	8%	8%	5%	20%	100%

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

Interpretations:

DW1: The findings show that 40% of respondents (30% agree and 10% strongly agree) feel that their use of digital technology is balanced and under control. However, **56%** disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that a majority of respondents experience difficulty in maintaining control over their digital usage.

DW2: The results indicate that only 23% of respondents (15% agree and 8% strongly agree) feel that their digital activities generally contribute positively to their daily life. In contrast, **75%** disagree or strongly disagree, suggesting that most respondents do not perceive their digital activities as having a positive overall contribution to their daily lives.

DW3: The findings reveal that 33% of respondents (18% agree and 15% strongly agree) are able to take breaks from digital devices without difficulty. However, **55%** disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that more than half of the respondents find it difficult to take regular breaks from digital devices.

DW4: The results show that 71% of respondents (13% agree and 58% strongly agree) feel that their digital activities do not significantly disturb their sleep or daily responsibilities. Only **25%** disagree or strongly disagree with this statement, suggesting that a majority perceive limited disruption to their daily responsibilities and sleep.

DW5: The findings indicate that only 25% of respondents (5% agree and 20% strongly agree) are satisfied with the way they manage their digital life. In contrast, **68%** disagree or strongly disagree, indicating a relatively low level of satisfaction with their current digital-life management.

7. Findings

- Smartphone Usage and Digital Wellbeing:** The findings suggest that frequent and purposeless smartphone usage may adversely influence the digital wellbeing of college-going youth. The prevalence of excessive usage highlights the need for balanced technology engagement, mindful digital practices, and effective self-regulation to promote healthier digital behaviour.
- Digital Habits and Online–Offline Balance:** The findings reveal that frequent digital checking and multitasking constitute prevalent digital-use behaviours among college-going youth. At the same time, respondents appear to experience challenges in maintaining an appropriate online–offline equilibrium, indicating the need for more conscious and balanced digital engagement.
- Self-Control and Digital Behaviour:** The findings indicate that self-control over smartphone and digital-device usage is comparatively low among college-going youth. Limited self-regulatory capacity may contribute to difficulty in controlling usage duration, resisting digital distractions, and disengaging from devices, thereby potentially affecting healthy digital habits and overall digital wellbeing.
- Overall Digital Wellbeing:** The findings indicate that digital wellbeing among college-going youth requires further improvement, particularly with respect to maintaining digital balance, taking periodic breaks from digital devices, and effectively regulating digital activities. The results underscore the importance of self-regulation, mindful technology use, and healthy digital routines in enhancing digital wellbeing.

8. Suggestions

- Students should be encouraged to regulate their smartphone usage by reducing unnecessary and purposeless digital engagement and adopting more mindful patterns of technology use.
- Students should develop structured digital routines that provide an appropriate balance between academic activities, digital engagement, recreation, and offline social interactions.
- Colleges should conduct awareness programmes and behavioural interventions to strengthen students' self-regulation, impulse control, and ability to manage digital distractions effectively.

4. Students should incorporate regular screen-free intervals into their daily routines, particularly during study hours, meals, social interactions, and before bedtime.
5. Students should minimise digital multitasking while studying, working, eating, or performing other important activities in order to improve concentration and task effectiveness.
6. Students should be encouraged to participate in sports, cultural activities, hobbies, and face-to-face social interactions to strengthen a healthy online–offline balance.
7. Students should limit smartphone and other digital-device usage before bedtime to minimise potential disturbances to sleep and support healthier daily routines.
8. Educational institutions should introduce digital wellbeing initiatives, counselling programmes, and self-monitoring activities to promote responsible and balanced technology use among students.

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