



Impact of Social Media on the Mental Health of Secondary School Students

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Abstract : *There has been a growing apprehension over the past couple of decades regarding the connection between social media employs and the mental health issues. Social media is the collective of online communication channels which is dedicated to community based input. Some prominent types of social media are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and WhatsApp. There are negative and positive effects of social media on society. One of its negative effects is that it leads to addiction. Spending countless hours on the social sites can divert people's focus and attention from a particular task. It lowers the motivational level of the people, especially of the secondary school students. They rely mainly on technology and internet instead of learning practical*

knowledge. But we see that there are always two sides to a coin. Secondary school students throughout the country regularly use the internet, cell phones etc. to gather information and to communicate with one another. This ability to interact with others is the outstanding feature of social media, which provides powerful and prominent new ways for adolescents to create and navigate the social surroundings. Teens' use of social media occurs with their developing and growing identity, emerging sexuality, physical development and moral consciousness. The purpose of this research is to explore how social media use is related to the mental health of secondary school students. To accomplish this goal, the researcher reviews and synthesizes the existence of literature pertaining to the characteristics of social media, general adolescent mental health, and the current social and individual level theories that may help to explain the relationship between social media use by secondary school students and their mental health.

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Introduction:

Using social networking sites is one of the most common activities of today's adolescents. The rapid development of these sites has caused several profound changes in the way people communicate and interact. Facebook today has over one billion users, and it is estimated that this number will significantly increase, especially in developing countries. Facebook can be used for both personal and business communication, and its application has brought numerous advantages in

terms of increasing connectivity, online learning and interactive conversations. The influence of social media on adolescents is of particular importance, not only because this particular group of children is physically, mentally and emotionally vulnerable but also because they are the ones who use social media abundantly.

The secondary school students are the most vulnerable age-groups whose mental health is most affected by the usage of social media because they are a part of the “next generation” which believes in trying everything and anything new. So, the study is relevant to the present scenario. Through this research project, we will come to know of the mental health of secondary school students and how it is affected.

Social Media :

Social media consist of websites and applications that enable users to create and share contents and to participate in social networking. It is the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content sharing and collaboration. Some prominent examples of social media are Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Wikipedia, LinkedIn, etc.

Mental Health :

Mental Health is a level of psychological well-being or an absence of mental illness. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health includes “*subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, inter-generational dependence and self-actualization of one’s intellectual and emotional potential, among others.*”

Secondary School Students :

In India, high school is a grade of education from class 9 to 10. Classes 9 and 10 are also called Secondary School. Usually students from ages 14-17 study in this section. Education is compulsory until age 14.

1.1 Research questions : It becomes imperative to conduct a study on this issue to answer the following questions:

1. How long do the secondary school students use social media?
2. How does social media affect the mental health of secondary school students?

3. What is the relationship between the usage of social media and the mental health of secondary school students?
4. What is the difference in the impact of social media on the mental health of boys and girls of the secondary school students?
5. What is the difference in the impact of social media on the mental health of secondary school students of public and private schools?

This study will be able to provide insight into the ways in which the school students may use social media networks as tools for integrating themselves into the globalized world without affecting their mental health and academic performance. So, the topic “**Impact of Social Media on the Mental Health of Secondary School Students**” has been chosen for this research.

1.2 Objectives of the study

- To find out the usage of social media of the secondary school students.
- To find out the mental health of secondary school students.
- To find out the relationship between usage of social media and the mental health of secondary school students.
- To find out the difference in impact of social media on the mental health of boys and girls of secondary school.
- To find out the difference in impact of social media on the mental health of secondary school students of public and private schools.

1.3 Significance of the study : Whenever effort, time and money are spent on a study, it is expected that in return the results of the study will have a bearing on mankind in some way or other. Keeping with this, it is important to state the significance of the present study as well. The significance has been enumerated as below:

- The study will reveal how adolescents are using social media.
- The study will throw light on how boys and girls are using social media and how it is affecting their mental health.
- The study will help to understand about the

mental health of students of public and private schools and their use of social media.

- The study will show whether social media is related to mental health or not.

2. Literature Review

Going by the related literature on gender use of social networking, results are mixed as to which group spends more time on it. Studies have revealed that boys have been online more than girls in previous decades, because of earlier forms of technology, such as, video or computer games (Lin and Subrahmanyam, 2007). Though another related study cited by Gils and Price (2008) reveals that girls were reported to have been active users of social networking for things like chatting and downloading music. Girls are more likely than boys to post sexual activity in public forums. However, boys are more likely to create an account simply because they are trying to meet a significant other (Bonds-Raacke and Raace, 2008).

Kaveri Subrahmanyam and Patricia Greenfield state that using online communication has both negative and positive effects, because there are harmful ways in which the internet could be used. They also state that nowadays, schools are trying their best to control how students use digital media on school grounds (Subrahmanyam and Greenfield, 2008).

Junco (2011) identifies that today we live in the time of the social web, an interactive, engaging, and democratizing space where social capital- the resources obtained through interpersonal interactions- is of great importance. Alongside the expansion of the social web came a generation of students, who have never known life without the technologies that many have to depend on. This mobile technology makes it easier for kids to fit whatever they want to access in their pockets, while making it more difficult for parents to monitor what their kids are doing.

Smith found that 84% of 18-29 year olds are on Facebook, more than any other age group. They are also the fastest growing age demographic, growing from only 9% usage in 2004. Given that social media is becoming increasingly prominent in young adults' lives, it is important to understand how this usage may affect them (Smith, 2013).

This continuous social media usage might stem

from increased mobile usage of social networking sites. As smart phones and tablets increases in popularity, many social media users rely on their mobile applications to access their favorite sites. In the last year, 300 million Facebook users were mobile-only users (DeSilver, 2014).

3. Methodology

Area of the study : The study was conducted on the students of secondary schools of Patna district.

Sample Size : A sample of 200 students was taken from the 9th and 10th grades of public and private schools of Patna.

Sampling Method : Incidental sampling technique was used to draw the required sample.

Tools for Data Collection : A questionnaire to measure the impact of social media on the mental health of secondary school students was prepared for this study.

Methods of Data Analysis : Suitable statistical techniques were adopted for analysing and interpreting the data collected in the study and, wherever necessary, qualitative explanation was adopted.

4. Data Interpretation and Analysis

On the basis of data for the study at hand, the data interpretation has been provided for further research.

The main data interpretation of this research is as follows:

4.1 Data interpretation related to the first objective : The first objective of the study was to find out the usage of social media of the secondary school students.

For this, there was a section, i.e., Part A, which had the questionnaire related to the usage of social media.

Table 4.1.1 shows that 68.5% students used Facebook, 28% students used Gmail, LinkedIn is not used by any of them and 3.5% students used Twitter.

It is inferred from the table 4.1.2 that 26% students were on social networking sites less than a month, 20% students were on social networking sites from 1-6 months, 13% students were on social networking sites since last 7 months and 41% students were on social networking sites more than a year.

Table 4.1.3 shows that 37.5% students were not members of any group/community, 30.5% students were member of 10-20 groups/ communities, 20% students were members of 20-30 groups/communities and 12% students were members of 30-40 groups/communities.

Table 4.1.4 shows that 46% students visited social networking sites every day, 19.5% students visited social networking sites twice a week, 11% students visited social networking sites once a week and 23.5% students visited the social networking sites only once in a month.

Table 4.1.5 shows that 77% students use social networking sites for less than 2 hours, 12.5% students use social networking sites after every 2-4 hours, 3.5% students use social networking sites after every 5-6 hours and 7% students spend more than 6 hours using social networking sites.

Table 4.1.6 shows that 47% students spent less than 1 hour daily on social networking sites, 11% students spent 1-4 hours on daily social networking sites, 30.5% students spent 5-12 hours daily on social networking sites and 11.5% students spent 13-24 hours daily on social networking sites.

Table 4.1.7 shows that 20.5% students had less than 100 friends on social networking sites, 22.5% students had 10-50 friends on social networking sites, 23.5% students had 50-100 friends on social networking sites and 33.5 students had more than 100 friends on social networking sites.

Table 4.1.8 shows that 28.5% students are not at all affected by the use of social media, 42.5% students are somewhat affected by using social media, 11.5% students are completely affected by social media and 17.5% students had no opinion on this statement.

On analysing the overall result obtained from the data on the usage of the social media, we can say that the secondary school students' interest and involvement in social media not only results in wastage of time, but also hampers their studies and health up to a certain extent.

4.2 Data interpretation related to the second objective : The second objective was to find out the mental health of the secondary school students.

For this, there was a section i.e., Part B.

Table 4.2.1 shows that; 39% students had average mental health and are somewhat affected by social media, whereas, 61% students had high mental health, and they use social media judiciously and were completely unaffected by social media.

On analysing the overall result, we can say that, the majority of them have high mental health and are positively affected by social media. They are very well aware of the pros and cons of social media, whereas, some of them have average mental health, and are somewhat ignorant of the pros and cons of social media, which in a way affects them in a negative manner.

4.3 Data interpretation Related to the Third Objective : The third objective was to find out the relationship between the usage of social media and the mental health of secondary school students.

For this purpose, we sorted out the filled in questionnaire i.e., Part A and B.

Table 4.3.1 shows that there is negative correlation between the usage of social media and mental health of secondary school students.

Thus, it shows the relationship between the usage of social media and mental health of secondary school students.

On analysing the overall result, we see that there is an inverse relationship between the usage of social media and the mental health of secondary school students.

Hence, the secondary school students who are more involved in social media and who use it on a regular basis are affected behaviourally, and psychologically too, as they get irritated and frustrated frequently.

4.4 Data interpretation Related to the Fourth Objective : The fourth objective was to find out the difference in impact of social media on the mental health of boys and girls of secondary school.

For this purpose, we sorted out the filled-in questionnaire i.e., Part B.

Table 4.4.1 shows that 38% boys had average mental health and are somewhat affected by social media. Whereas, 62% boys had high mental health and

they use social media judiciously and were completely unaffected by social media.

Table 4.4.2 shows that; 43% girls had average mental health and are somewhat affected by social media. Whereas, 57% girls had high mental health, they use social media judiciously and were completely unaffected by social media.

Table 4.4.3 shows that the mean of the mental health scores of boys is 51.01 and the mean of the mental health scores of the girls is 50.68, Standard deviation of the mental health of boys is 5.40 and that of girls is 4.80. The value of t is 0.456 and the value of df is 198.

On analysing the overall result obtained, we observe that there is an insignificant difference between the two.

It implies that both boys and girls use it almost in the same manner. The fast-growing world and its needs have pulled both the genders into the vicious circle of these trends, making them mentally indifferent up to a certain extent.

4.5 Data interpretation related to the fifth objective : The fifth objective was to find out the difference in impact of social media on the mental health of secondary school students of public and private schools.

For this purpose, we sorted out the filled in questionnaire i.e., Part B.

Table 4.5.1 shows that; 44% of private secondary school students had average mental health and are somewhat affected by social media. Whereas, 56% students had high mental health and they use social media judiciously and were completely unaffected by social media.

Table 4.5.2 shows that; 40% public secondary school students had average mental health and are somewhat affected by social media. Whereas, 60% secondary school students of public schools had high mental health and they use social media judiciously and were completely unaffected by social media.

Table 4.5.3 shows that: the mean mental health score of the students of private school is 50.73 and that of the public school students is 50.68. Standard deviation of the mental health score of private school

students is 5.69 and that of public school students is 4.47. The value of t is 0.456 and df is 198.

On analysing the overall result, we observe that there is an insignificant difference between the two. We don't see a significant difference between the two because even the students of public schools are now having effective and proper use of public aids which are in a way exposing them to the recent trends. Public policies have indeed made it possible for their students to cope up with the galloping generation, making them at par with the students of private schools. Hence, it is rightly found that there is an insignificant difference between the mental health of secondary school students of public and private schools.

5. Conclusion

We all are well aware of the fact that this generation is very fond of social media. Social media or Social networking site is a term that everybody is well aware of. The adolescents or the secondary school students are the ones who are the greatest and most regular users of the social media. When the data was analysed, the results showed that Facebook was the most popular and the most used sites when compared to the others in both the private and government schools. It was also seen that many students have been a part of social media for a long time. When the mental health of these secondary school students was measured, we found that the majority of the students had average mental health and the rest of them had high mental health. On observing the relationship between the usage of social media and the mental health of secondary school students, we came to know that they are inversely proportionate. The students who used more of social media had a low mental health score, whereas less use of social media by the students resulted in their high mental health score. When the difference between the usage of the boys and the girls was studied, we found that there was no difference between the two and the maximum number of them were found to have average mental health. Even when the difference between the students of the public and private schools was measured we found that there was no difference between them and students of both the schools were found to have average mental health.

5.1 Educational Implication: A number of significant implications emerge from the above-

mentioned conclusions, which are very important and useful from the point of view of education. They are listed as follows:

- It is important to understand the reasons due to which the students are inclined towards social media.
- These reasons may be studied and proper steps could be taken to secure their psychological well-being.
- This study measures the difference in the impact of social media on the mental health of secondary school students of public and private schools.
- It may help the concerned authorities to look into the loopholes and come up with desirable remedies.

5.2 Limitation of the study : The study has some limitations that constrict the scope of its generalization. They have been outlined below:

1. The study was restricted to the schools that could be easily approached by the researchers.
2. Due to dearth of time and resources, only five schools were taken for the study.
3. While responding, some students consulted each other in making their choices, which put a question mark on the reliability of the result.

5.3 Suggestions

- This study demonstrates the condition of the mental health of the secondary school students due to the impact of social media, at present. These studies should be conducted in future so as to find out the consequences of social media on the real life and on the academic performance of the secondary school students.
- The students of government schools were unaware of the social networking sites. Workshops should be conducted to make them aware of the ill-effects of the impact of social media.
- These types of research turn out to be fruitful because they help to know how the mental health of the students of secondary schools, of both the public and private schools, is

affected by social media. These types of research should be carried out from time to time so that the effects can be revealed and certain measures can be taken accordingly.

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Table 4.1.1. Showing percentage of the social networking site used by the secondary school students.

Social Networking Site(s) used	Frequency of students	Percentage of students
Facebook	137	68.50
Gmail	56	28.00
LinkedIn	0	0.00
Twitter	7	3.50
	N=200	

Table 4.1.2. Showing percentage of the students using social networking site in a specified time period.

Time period	Frequency of students	Percentage of students
Less than a month	52	26.00
1-6 months	40	20.00
7 months	26	13.00
More than a year	82	41.00
	N=200	

Table 4.1.3. Showing percentage of the number of communities/groups the secondary school students are members of.

Number of communities/groups	Frequency of students	Percentage of students
None	75	37.50
10-20	61	30.50
20-30	40	20.00
30-40	24	12.00
	N=200	

Table 4.1.4. Showing percentage of the frequency of visits to the social networking sites in a week by secondary school students

Frequency of visits	Frequency of students	Percentage of students
Everyday	92	46.00
Twice a week	39	19.50
Once a week	22	11.00
Once a month	47	23.50
	N=200	

Table 4.1.5. Showing the percentage of the frequency of visits to the social networking sites in a day by secondary school students

Frequency of visits	Frequency of students	Percentage of students
Less than 2 hours	154	77.00
2-4 hours	25	12.50
5-6 hours	7	3.50
More than 6 hours	14	7.00
	N=200	

Table 4.1.6. Showing the percentage of the time spent daily on social networking sites by secondary school students.

Time Spend	Frequency of students	Percentage of students
Less than 1 hour	94	47.00
1-4 hours	22	11.00
5-12 hours	61	30.50
13-24 hours	23	11.50
	N=200	

Table 4.1.7. Showing percentage of contacts/friends of secondary school students on social networking sites.

Number of contact / friends	Frequency of students	Percentage of students
Fewer than 100	41	20.50
10-50	45	22.50
50-100	47	23.50
More than 100	67	33.50
	N=200	

Table 4.1.8. Showing percentage of the secondary school students affected by the use of social media.

Affected rate	Frequency of students	Percentage of students
Does not have an affect	57	28.50
Somewhat has an affect	85	42.50
Completely affects	23	11.50
No opinion	35	17.5
	N=200	

Table 4.2.1. Showing percentage of Secondary School Students who have low, average and high mental health with regard to the impact of social media.

Mental health scores	Types of mental health	Frequency of Students	Percentage of Students
0-24	Low	0	0.00
35-49	Average	78	39.00
50-72	High	122	61.00
		N=200	

Table 4.3.1. Mean, Standard deviation and Correlation between the usages of social media and mental health of secondary school students.

		Mental health scores	Usage of social media scores
Mental health Scores Correlation	Pearson	1	-0.655** 000
	Sig (2-tailed)	200	
	N	200	
Usage of social media scores Correlation	Pearson	-0.655** 000	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	200	200
	N	200	

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4.4.1. Showing percentage of Secondary School boys who have low, average and high mental health with regard to the impact of social media.

Mental health scores	Types of mental health	Frequency of Students	Percentage of Students
0-24	Low	0	0.00
35-49	Average	38	38.00
50-72	High	62	62.00
		N=100	

Table 4.4.2. Showing percentage of Secondary School girls who have low, average and high mental health with regard to the impact of social media.

Mental health scores	Types of mental health	Frequency of Students	Percentage of Students
0-24	Low	0	0.00
35-49	Average	43	43.00
50-72	High	57	57.00
		N=100	

Table 4.4.3. Mean, Standard Deviation, t, and df value of mental health of boys and girls of secondary school students.

Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df
Boys	51.01	5.40	0.456**	198
Girls	50.68	4.80		
		N=200		

**The mean difference is insignificant.

Table 4.5.1. Showing the percentage of Private Secondary School students who have low, average and high mental health with regard to the impact of social media.

Mental health scores	Types of mental health	Frequency of Students	Percentage of Students
0-24	Low	0	0.00
35-49	Average	44	44.00
50-72	High	56	56.00
		N=100	

Table 4.5.2. Showing the percentage of Public Secondary School students who have low, average and high mental health with regard to the impact of social media.

Mental health scores	Types of mental health	Frequency of Students	Percentage of Students
0-24	Low	0	0.00
35-49	Average	40	40.00
50-72	High	60	60.00
		N=100	

Table 4.5.3. Mean, Standard Deviation, t and df value of the mental health score of the students of public and private schools.

Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df
Private	50.73	5.69	0.456**	198
Public	50.68	4.47		
		N=200		

**Mean difference is insignificant.

LIST OF FIGURES

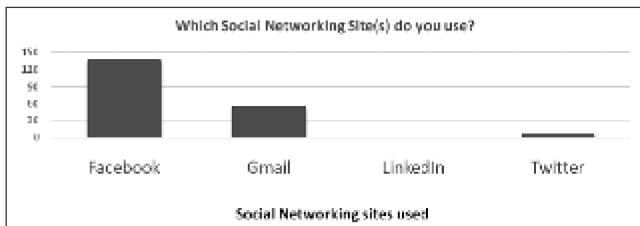


Fig. 1

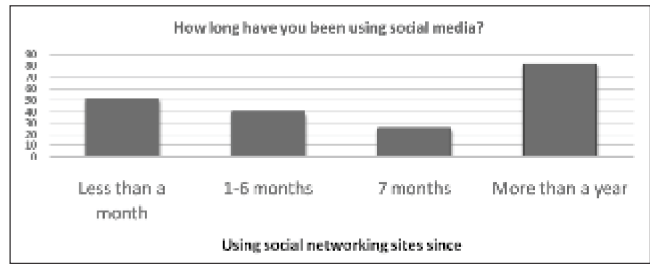


Fig. 2

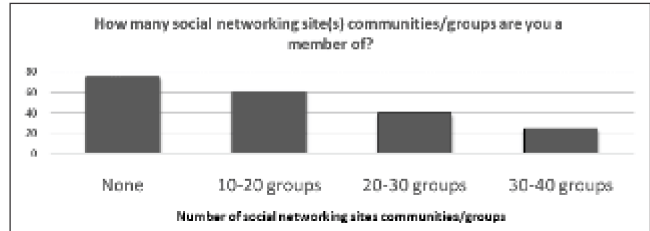


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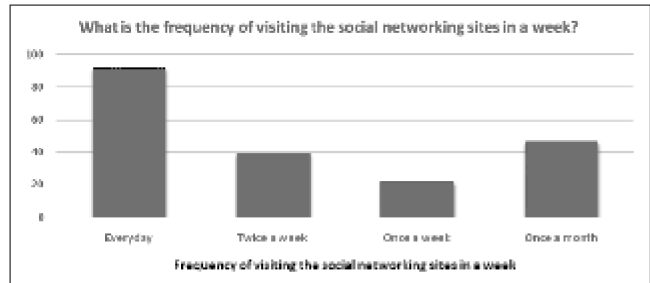


Fig. 4

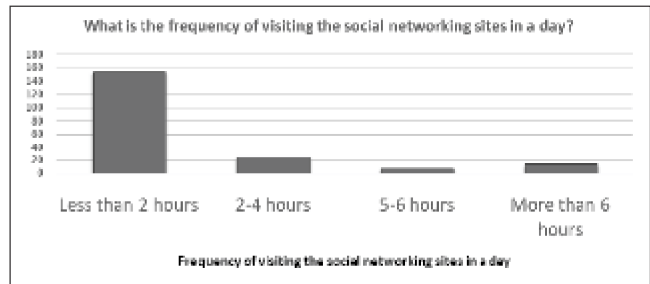


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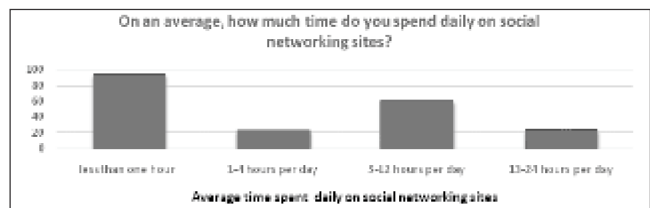


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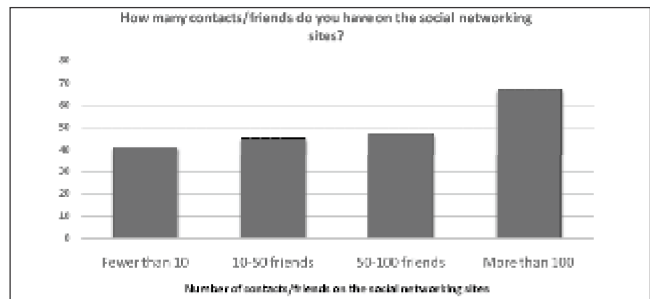


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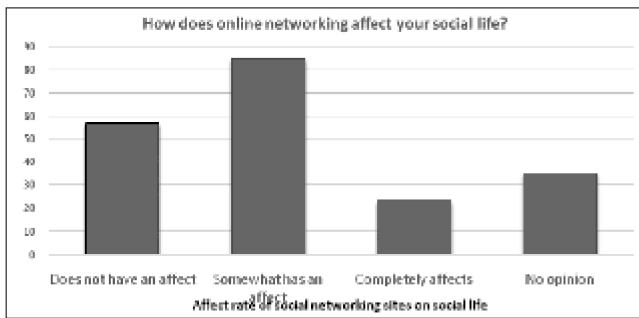


Fig. 8

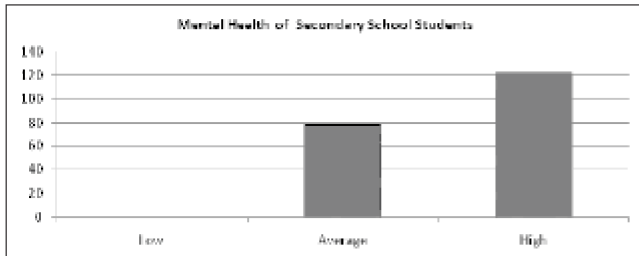


Fig. 9

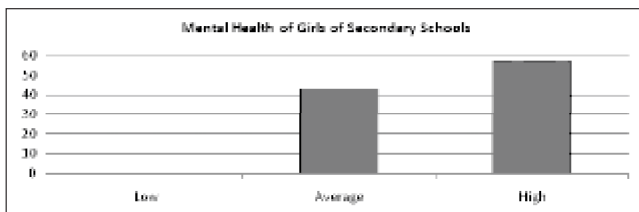


Fig. 10

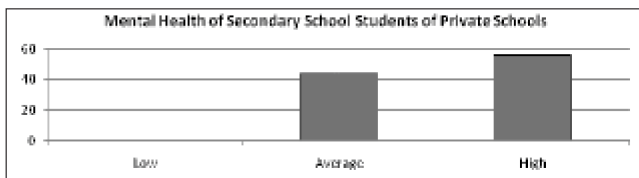


Fig. 11

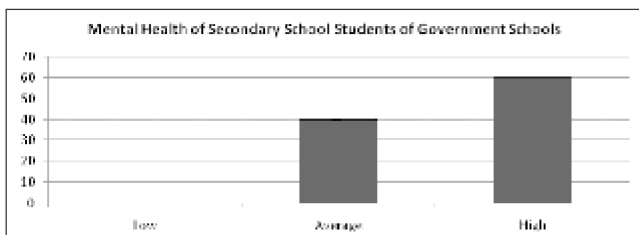


Fig. 12



Fig. 13

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