

IMPACT OF ICT ON CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT:

ICT is a major factor in shaping the new global economy and producing rapid changes in society. Within the past decade, the new ICT tools have fundamentally changed the way people communicate and do business, engineering and other fields. They also have the potential to transform the nature of education where and how learning takes place, and roles of the students and teachers in the learning process. The internet provides us with access to vast amount of information on almost everything, offers platforms for knowledge and opinion sharing, is a source of entertainment for people of all ages and diverse interests, and also avails opportunity to network and maintain contact with people from home and abroad, which had been curtailed due to busy work schedule and mechanised lifestyles. ICT is becoming a ubiquitous component of the physical and social world occupied by young children.

There is a growing recognition of many different ways that ICT can contribute to, or transform the activities, roles and relationships experienced by children and adults in early childhood education settings. ICT can be a useful tool for supporting young children learning and development. It can provide a context for collaboration, co-operation and positive learning experiences between children, or between children and adults. The active role parents in the young generations internet activity can ensure their proper mental growth protect them from potential online dangers, and ay a pivotal role in utilising the wealth of information available in the internet for their academic and social excellence.

It is often argued in the literature that children's early childhood education experiences should reflect and connect with their experiences in the wider world. Therefore, ICT matters in early childhood education, because it already has an effect of the people and the environment that surround young children's learning and wellbeing. Children should experience ICT as a tool with vast possibilities for communication and information technology sharing.

KEY WORDS: Early childhood, Societal changes, Mechanised lifestyle.

INTRODUCTION:

ICT can be defined as "anything which allows us to get information to communicate with each other or to have an effect on the environment using electronic or digital equipment". ICT can be useful tool for supporting young children's learning and development. ICT also provides unique opportunities for scaffolding and supporting learning for children with special learning needs, especially for those who are from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds. ICT provides a variety of ways for children to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings. ICT helps to weave together words, pictures, and sounds for better understanding. Young children are growing up in the society.

In this modern era, it is necessary to befriend children so that they can share their thoughts and activities without worrying about being punished or misjudged. Children today live in a communication rich environment. The models of communication they encounter in their everyday lives include a whole range of electronic and digital methods of communication. It is important that children begin to develop technological literacy. Just as it is every child's right to become literate, he or she should have right to become a skilful user of ICT.

Child Development plays a vital role in development and shaping of child's personality. ICT helps us to boosts the growth and development by utilising ICT in the field of education.

Developing a child means trying to bring a change in the child at the appropriate time by using the modern techniques of ICT and educating them through proper mechanism by enhancing their development and preparing them to faculty upcoming trends in the field of education.

OBJECTIVES:

- To create awareness of ICT.
- To study the impact of ICT on childhood development.
- To investigate ICT access and its usage at home as well as school.
- To scrutinize the comparative impact of ICT on gender as well as age.

COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY:

A TOOL FOR CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT:

ICT means "Information and Communication Technology". This term is now widely used and replaced the older term "IT" or information technology; The use of ICT in the childcare environment provides great opportunities for creative development in the children.

- Creativity: ICT now-a-days helps all the age group children to be more creative and innovative in their thoughts as it provide those ideas which directly hit the child's mind to inculcate the idea in a successful innovation.
- Physical Development: Physical Development is important in young children. They grow rapidly and learn all the skills and competencies during this phase. The internet has a vast range of health related websites aimed specifically at children. This can support children learning about themselves and body. They can find out about diet, exercises and sport.
- Encouraging Conversation: Technology can support communication during pretend play activities. These activities encourage children to express and communicate their ideas, thoughts & feelings. Since ICT helps in growing child's communicative skills, he/she is more aware of how to maintain societal behaviour as compared to those who are not aware of the right usage of ICT tools. According to the above study, boys use more ICT tools than girls. This shows that boys are extrovert in nature while using the ICT tools. A visit to a supermarket or bank or any coffee shop will help children to look at how technology is used to price items, scan codes, use bank cards and print receipts.
- Developing reading and writing skills: Children get enormous pleasure from reading stories and rhymes. Software programmes which are inbuilt in create a virtual environment and also encourage children to read and learn.
- Promoting Confidence: ICT is the major tool to boost children confidence and make them more communicative. Some of the children who are good in their academics use ICT tools get more information via these tools. Children will develop strong interpersonal skills when they are mastered in using ICT tools.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

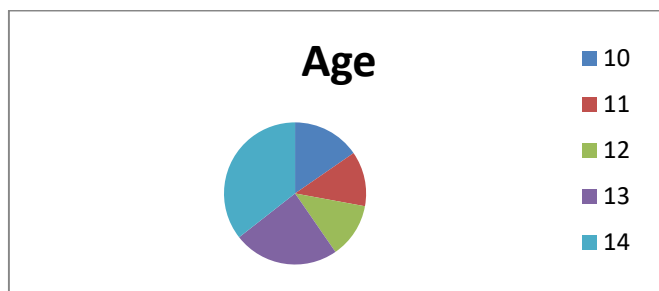
Data is collected from:

Primary Source: Sample size was of 100 children, and non-probability judgemental convenience sampling method of data collection was used with the help of open and close ended questionnaire.

Secondary Source: Books & Websites.

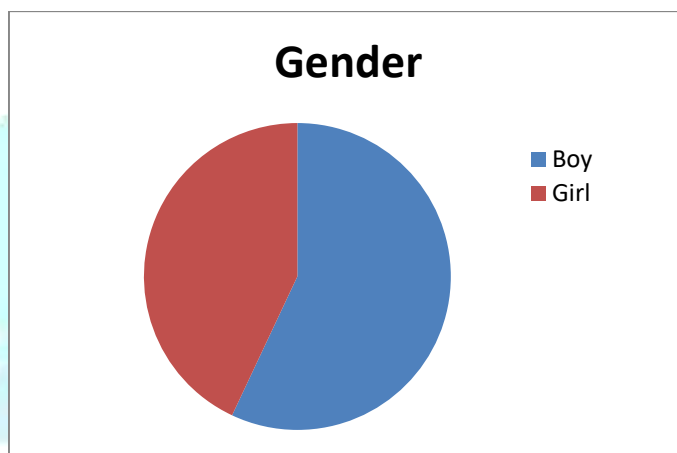
ANALYSIS OF DATA:

Q.1) What is your age?



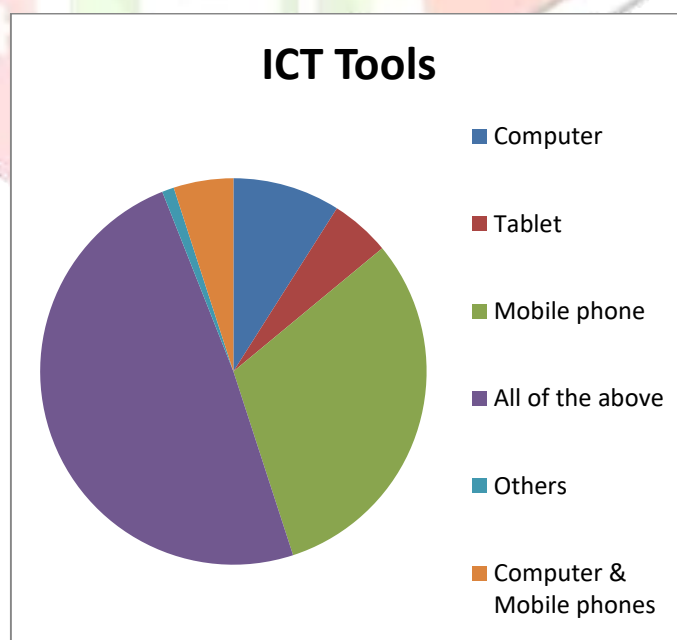
From the above analysis it is proved that the more number of questionnaire are filled by the children of age 14 followed by age 13.

Q.2) Gender?



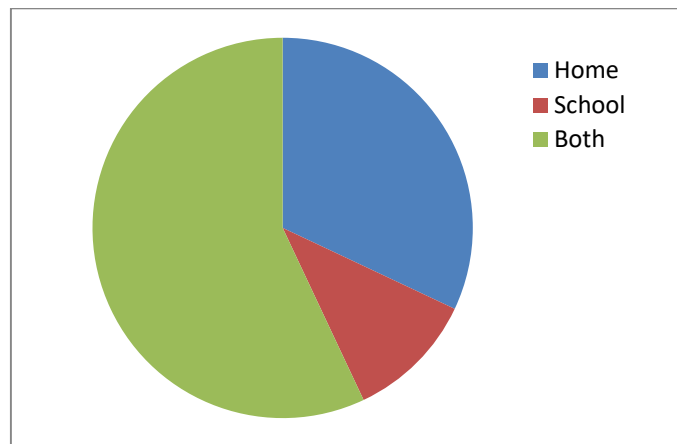
The above analysis shows that number of boy entrants is more as compared to girl entrants.

Q.3) Which ICT tool you are aware of?



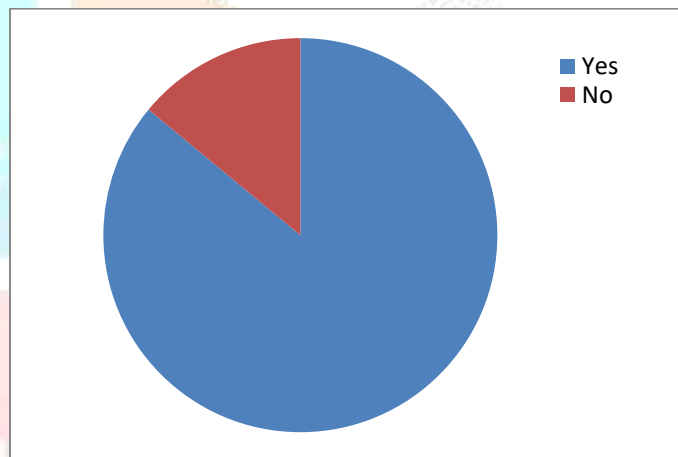
According to the above analysis, the targeted prospects are mostly aware of all the available ICT tools.

Q.4) Where do you get to use the above mentioned ICT tools?



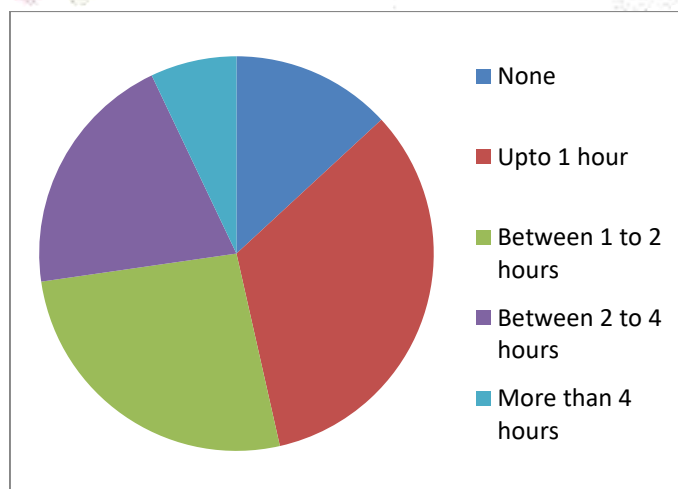
As per the above analysis, the children get to use the ICT tools at home as well as in their schools.

Q.5) Do you have Internet Access?



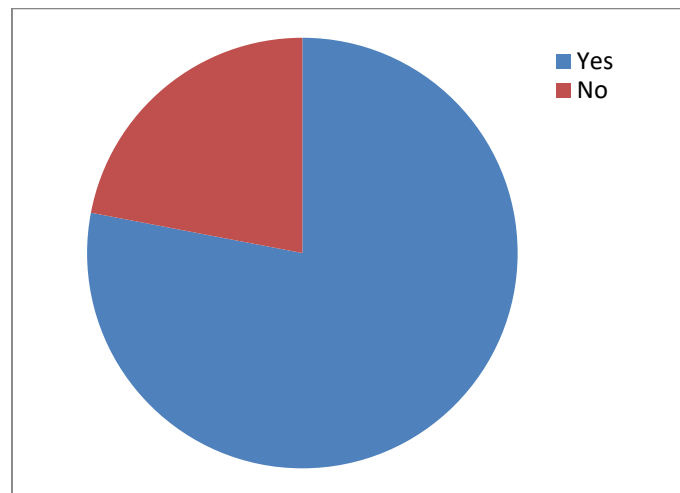
According to the above analysis, most of the entrants have internet access.

Q.6) How much time you spend per day on the Internet?



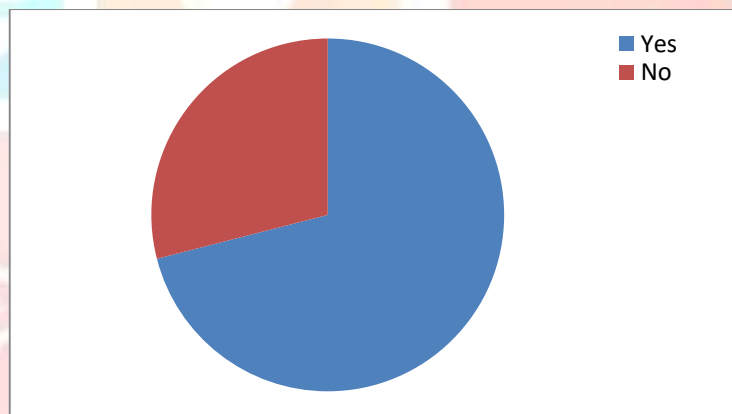
The above targeted children spend mostly upto 1 hour on their ICT tools.

Q.7) Does your school have a virtual learning platform or virtual learning environment?



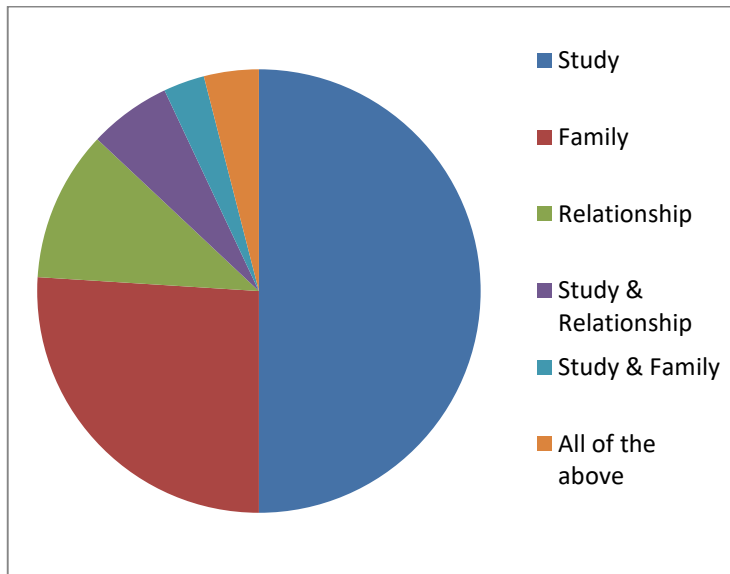
From the above analysis, it is proved that most of the schools have adopted the virtual learning environment for their students.

Q.8) Are you aware of smart class?



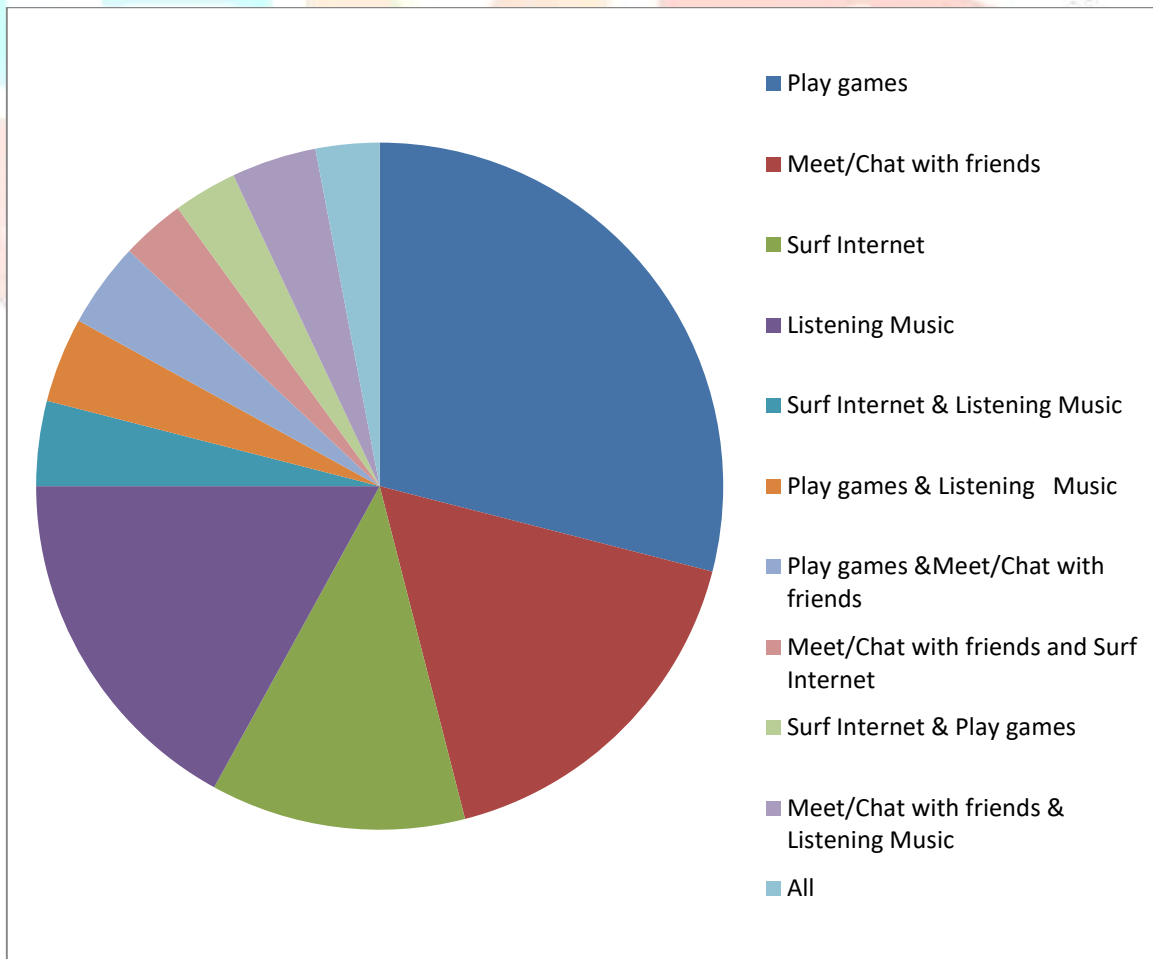
From the above analysis, it is proved that maximum number of the children is aware about the ICT tools.

Q.9) which pressure affects you the most?



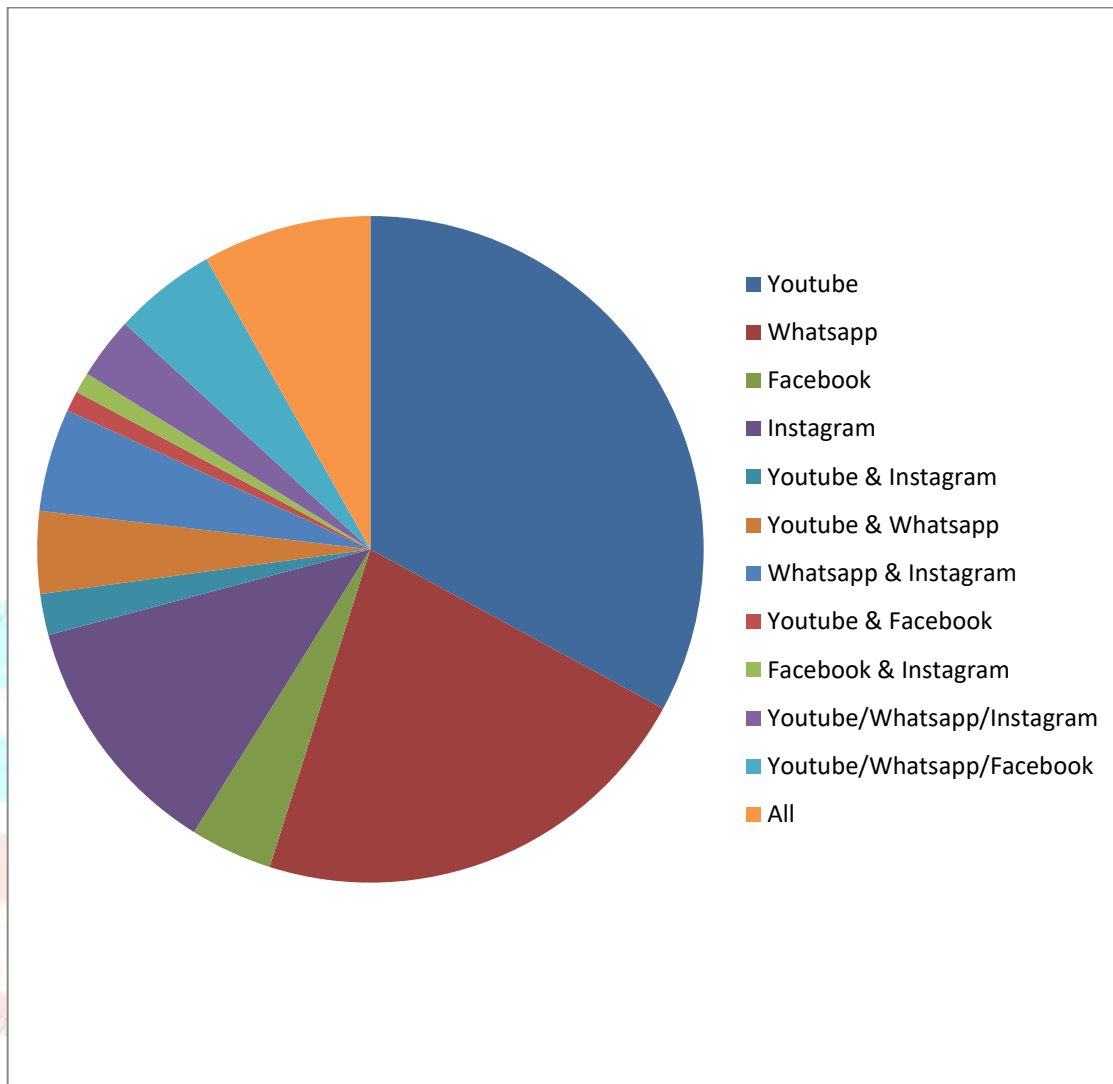
As per the above analysis, it is proved that the pressure of studies affects the to the children in the higher proportion followed by the family pressure.

Q10) How do you release your stress?



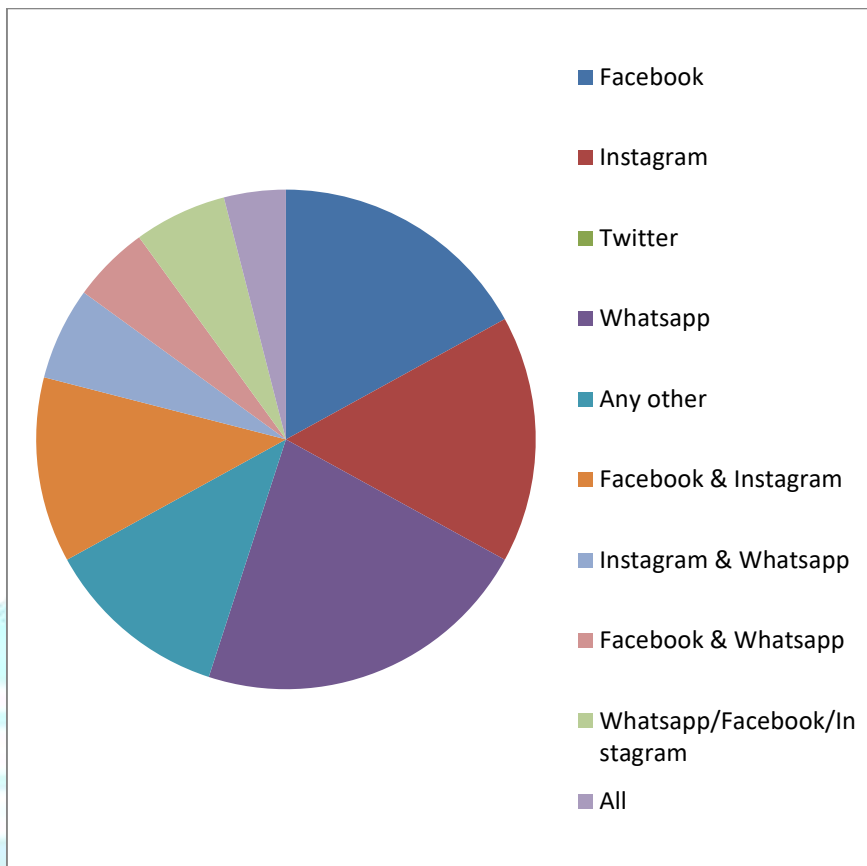
According to the above data, it is proved that the stress is most of the times released by playing games.

Q.11) Which apps do you use often?



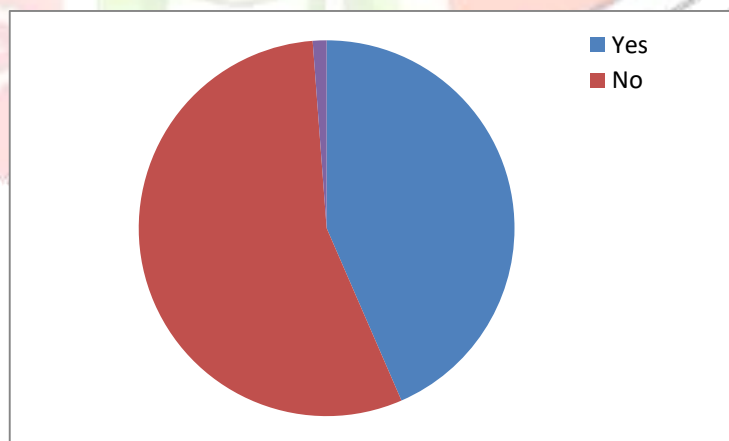
From the above analysis, it is proved that YouTube is the most often app amongst the children followed by what Sapp.

Q.12) On which social networking site you have an active account?



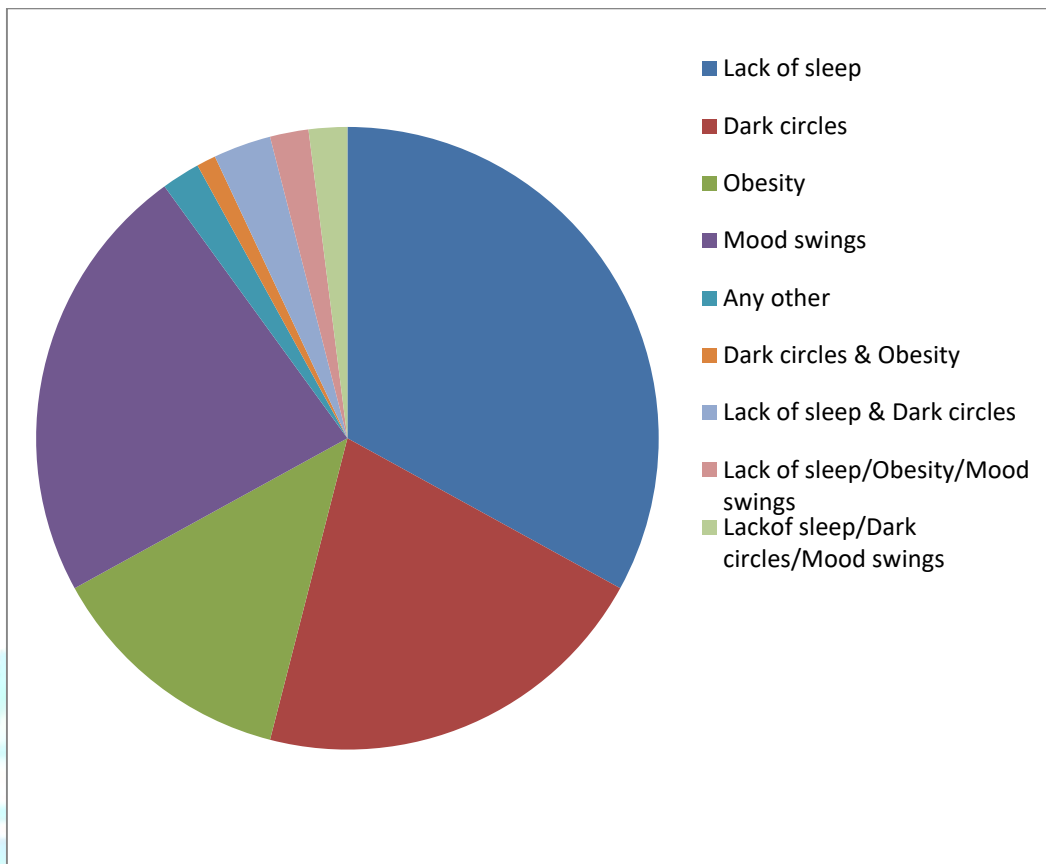
The above analysis shows that the Sapp usage is more as compared to Facebook & Integra.

Q.13) Are you addicted to any website or web-series?



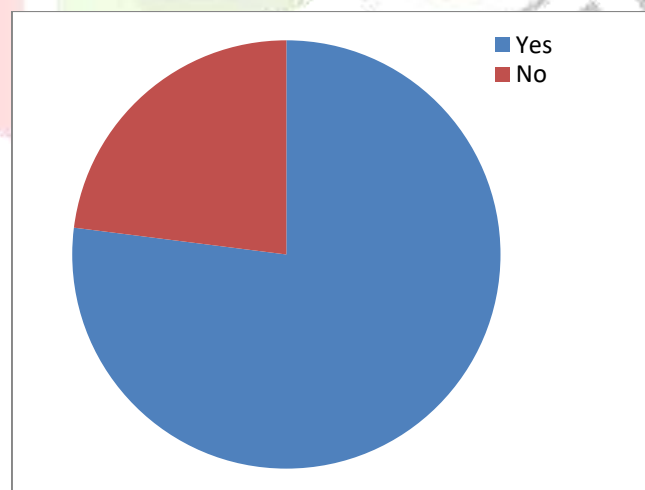
According to the analysis, most of the children are not addicted to any of the website or web-series.

Q.14) What changes have you observed after excessive use of ICT tools?



As per the analysis, most of the children get less sleep due to excessive use of ICT tools.

Q.15) Is there any improvement in your academics after using ICT tools?



As per the scrutiny, utmost number of entrants feels that there is an improvement after using ICT tools.

FINDINGS:

The primary data has been collected from respondents between the age of 10 to 14 with open and close ended questionnaire. The data have been collected from 100 respondents from Mumbai suburban with both open and close ended questionnaire. Analysis shows the following:

- There is a significant awareness of various ICT tools among 90% of the respondents.
- Most of the students are ready to adopt virtual learning environment in schools.
- Children have lack of knowledge about the risks exposure involved while using ICT.
- There is a difference in usage of ICT tools by girls & boys.
- 33% of the children are facing health issues such as lack of sleep due to excessive use of internet.
- 50% of the Children in their childhood lifestyle have been suffering from pressure of studies because of their socially active accounts.
- 77% of the entrants state that there is an academic growth after usage of ICT.

CONCLUSION:

In order to analyse the risks that children are exposed to when using these ICT tools. It is important to first understand how children use the technologies. Also, from where do they acquire and use them.

Most of the targeted children either boy or girl have at least one online social network account. Children are using the social networking platforms and instant messaging to communicate with the known and unknown friends.

Children get easy access to internet due to advancement of technology. The major contribution is done by service provider Reliance Jio by providing affordable internet services. Not all the children use the ICT tools in the same way. Some of them have a computer at home while others use the computers available at school or go to the cyber cafe. Some children use the new technologies mostly to communicate with their friends and family or meet new friends over the internet, while others prefer to play or watch videos on YouTube and also there are some children who prefer ICT not only for their entertainment but also to complete their homework and learn how to use the programs or other applications. Regarding usage of ICT tools some children uses it for making calls or communicating. On the other hand some uses it for the most advanced level such as for exchanging files, taking pictures, listening to music & for surfing internet.

Watching videos on YouTube like DIY i.e., "Do It Yourself" build a lot confidence in the children to do their project activities by themselves. It has been found that boys might use ICT tools mostly to befriend

with strangers. Similarly girls within certain age groups exhibit characteristics (such as going to specific websites, exchanging certain information and also post their images online on socially active accounts).

Children are restricted to from using ICT tools because of the security and safety issues since they lack the quality of being decisive and ethical. The lack of education about internet safety can cause harm to the mental as well as physical health of the children.

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