

---

# REGULATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CHILDREN IN INDIA: A LEGAL AND EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

---

Mr. Keshav Vats, VSLLS, VIPS-TC, GGSIPU

## ABSTRACT

Children's access to social media in India remains largely unregulated, with no single, comprehensive statute specifically governing their use of digital platforms. While existing laws such as the Information Technology Act, 2000, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, and data protection frameworks address certain forms of online harm, they do not directly regulate age-based access to social media platforms. This research paper examines the need for a dedicated legal framework to regulate children's access to social media in India, focusing on concerns relating to mental well-being, privacy, and online safety. The study involves empirical research conducted through a survey method among parents, legal guardians, and non-parent individuals. The findings reveal a broad consensus among respondents on the need for legal intervention to regulate children's access to social media platforms, with a clear preference for age-based and proportionate regulation over unrestricted access. The paper further undertakes a comparative analysis of international approaches adopted by jurisdictions such as Australia, the European Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States, which have introduced varying degrees of regulation to safeguard children in digital spaces. Judicial developments in India demonstrate repeated acknowledgment of the risks posed to children online, while consistently deferring access based regulation to the legislature as a matter of policy. It is imperative that a legislation regulating children's access to social media is introduced as the absence of clear legal framework has exposed them to risks which existing laws and platforms safeguards are unable to address.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Online Harm, Digital Safety, Age-based Access.

## **Introduction**

The digital age has witnessed an unprecedented expansion of social media making it an integral part of our everyday life. Social media is a form of digital communication platform that allows its users to form online networks and communities for socializing, sharing information and posting user-created content. Social media applications/platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, Snapchat, Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) are today used by everybody for communication, entertainment, connectivity, professional networking etc. With the widespread and easy availability of smartphones and low-cost internet services these social media platforms have become deeply integrated in daily lives of people irrespective of their age, gender, social backgrounds.

In this digital age, children have also become common users of social media platforms. Children today are exposed to social media platform from a very young and tender age. They use social media for watching videos, playing games, messaging, communication etc. Most children use social media with little to no supervision from their parents or guardians. Most of these social media platforms were not originally designed with children as their primary users and target audience which is why the increasing use of the same raises concerns regarding their exposure to inappropriate content, online harassment, data privacy and their psychological well-being.

The Economic Survey 2025-26<sup>1</sup>, officially tabled in the Parliament of India on January 29, 2026, by the Union Ministry for Finance and Corporate Affairs, specifically flags “digital addiction” as a rising national concern. It states that access to digital spaces is no longer a constraint for the 15–29 age group, with mobile/internet use described as “near-universal”. The survey links high-intensity social media use in the 15–24 bracket to increased rates of anxiety, depression and sleep debt.

The Annual Status of Education Report<sup>2</sup> released in 2025, highlights the growing impact of social media in the lives of Indian children. The report states that nearly 76% of rural Indian children between the ages of 14 and 16 use smartphones primarily for accessing social media platforms while only about 57% use them for educational purposes. It also observes that around 82% of children in this age group are digitally literate and capable of independently operating

---

<sup>1</sup> Ministry Of Finance, Govt. of India, Economic Survey 2025-26 (Issued on January 29, 2026).

<sup>2</sup> Pratham Education Foundation, Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2024.

smartphones. While use of social media in early ages reflects increased access to technology, it also exposes children to online spaces without the ability to fully understand the risks of the same. These concerns highlight the need to examine whether existing legal and regulatory frameworks are adequate to combat the risks faced by children in their use of social media.

The NITI Aayog, in its strategy paper titled “Online Safety for Children: Protecting the Next Generation from Harm”<sup>3</sup>, which was released in 2025, acknowledged the growing risks faced by children in digital spaces and the limitations and loopholes in existing safeguards. The paper highlighted a significant parental gap in India’s digital ecosystem. It also highlighted that most Indian households lack the necessary digital literacy to exercise proper supervision over their child’s use of social media.

India does not have a specific law or legislation that directly bans children from accessing social media platforms. There are multiple statutes and regulations which address online harms caused by such platforms to children, however, none of them explicitly regulate age-based access.

### **Impact of Social Media on Children**

Social media platforms formally prescribe minimum age requirements and parental consent mechanisms to regulate children’s access; however, these safeguards remain largely selfregulatory and weak in practice. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, and YouTube generally prescribe a minimum age of 13 years, with limited parental oversight tools. These requirements rely heavily on self-declared age, allowing children to create accounts without meaningful verification. As a result, access is often gained without parental knowledge or supervision, reducing the effectiveness of existing safeguards.

Instagram and Facebook, both operated by Meta, permit users above the age of 13 and offer optional parental supervision features for adolescent accounts. Despite these measures, the platforms’ design is driven by visual content, public validation, and algorithmic recommendations which raises concerns for children’s mental health and online safety. WhatsApp, while commonly used by children for educational communication and peer interaction, also follows a minimum age threshold and offers limited parental control. Its end-

---

<sup>3</sup> Sadhna Singh, NITI Aayog, Online Safety for Children: Protecting the Next Generation from Harm (Issued on June 10, 2025).

to-end encryption, although important for privacy, restricts oversight and makes it difficult to identify harmful interactions involving minors.

Other platforms such as Snapchat, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter) follow similar age-based access models. Snapchat's disappearing content and YouTube's recommendation driven video feed present risks when accessed by children outside designated child-focused versions such as YouTube Kids. Across platforms, parental consent is often treated as a one-time, formal requirement rather than a continuous protective mechanism. This approach fails to account for the evolving risks children face online and the limited digital awareness among many parents and guardians.

While these platforms claim to regulate children's access through age limits and parental consent policies, the reality reflects a significant gap between policy and practice. Children frequently access social media independently, often without understanding the long-term consequences of online engagement. This lack of effective regulation has exposed children to several forms of harm, including the following:

- Increased risk of anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and sleep disorders due to excessive screen time and social comparison
- Exposure to cyberbullying and online harassment
- Access to age-inappropriate or harmful content, including violent, sexual, or self-harm related material
- Privacy risks arising from sharing personal information without understanding its consequences
- Vulnerability to online grooming, manipulation, and exploitation by unknown users
- Reduced attention span and academic distraction due to addictive platform design

### **Legal and Judicial Framework Governing Children's Online Safety in India**

There are several existing laws & legislations in India that address different forms of harm that children may face online. The Information Technology Act, 2000 section 67B<sup>4</sup> criminalises

---

<sup>4</sup> The Information Technology Act, 2000, § 67B.

acts of creation, possession, and distribution of sexually explicit material involving children with imprisonment of up to 5 years and fine of up to 10 lakh rupees. In addition to this, remedies for the infringement of children's rights may also be sought under other provisions of the Act, such as relating to violations of privacy and the transmission of offensive or harmful content. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 prohibits use of children for pornographic purposes and penalises its storage or dissemination under Sections 13<sup>5</sup> and 15<sup>6</sup> of the act.

Article 21<sup>7</sup> guarantees the right to life and personal liberty, interpreted to include privacy, mental well-being, and protection from psychological harm. In *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India*<sup>8</sup>, the Supreme Court recognised the right to privacy as a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution. Article 15(3)<sup>9</sup> empowers the State to make special provisions for children, enabling age-based safeguards, while Article 39(f)<sup>10</sup> of the Directive Principles of State Policy directs the State to protect children from exploitation and ensure their moral and material development. These provisions provide a constitutional basis for the government to enact age-based access regulations to prevent infringement of children's fundamental rights in digital spaces.

The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 requires verifiable parental consent for processing children's personal data and restricts harmful practices such as targeted advertising (Section 9)<sup>11</sup>. Although these laws address online harms, privacy, and exploitation, none directly regulate children's access to social media platforms, so children or their guardians can only seek remedies under existing content- or data-related provisions.

In a petition filed before the apex court by The Zep Foundation<sup>12</sup>, the Supreme Court declined to entertain the public interest petition seeking a prohibition on children below the age of 13 from accessing social media platforms. The petition highlighted the severe physical, mental, and psychological impact of social media exposure on young children and sought directions for the implementation of robust age-verification mechanisms, including biometric

---

<sup>5</sup> The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 § 13.

<sup>6</sup> The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 § 15.

<sup>7</sup> India Const. art.21.

<sup>8</sup> *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India*, (2019) 1 SCC 1.

<sup>9</sup> India Const. art. 15, cl. 3.

<sup>10</sup> India Const. art. 39, cl. (f).

<sup>11</sup> The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 § 9.

<sup>12</sup> *Zep Foundation v. Union of India*, Diary No. - 8128/2025.

authentication. A Bench comprising Justices B. R. Gavai and Augustine George Masih held that the issue of imposing age-based restrictions on social media usage falls within the domain of legislative policy and is not suited for judicial intervention. The Court observed that decisions relating to the regulation or prohibition of children's access to digital platforms require broader policy considerations, including technological feasibility, privacy implications, and societal impact, which are best addressed by Parliament. While refusing to adjudicate the merits of the plea, the Court granted liberty to the petitioner to make a representation to the appropriate authorities.

Similarly, in the case of *Child Rights Foundation v. Union of India & Ors*<sup>13</sup>, the apex court refrained from issuing directions to the government regarding age restrictions for social media access, instead emphasizing that such policy decisions fall within the legislative domain. A three-judge bench led by Chief Justice Dipak Mishra, and comprising Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and D.Y. Chandrachud, acknowledged the legitimate concerns raised but declined to issue directives on implementing a social media ban for children. The Court observed: "While we appreciate the petitioner's concerns regarding children's safety in the digital landscape, imposing specific age restrictions or access limitations falls within the realm of legislative policymaking. The Court cannot substitute its judgment for that of the legislature on matters requiring specialized knowledge, extensive public consultation, and careful balancing of competing interests."

A major legislative reform currently under consideration is the proposed Digital India Bill<sup>14</sup> (also referred to as the Digital India Act), which has not yet been passed. The Bill aims to modernise and replace the IT Act, 2000, providing a comprehensive framework for digital services and intermediaries. It includes age-appropriate safeguards, stronger age-gating mechanisms, protection against addictive or harmful content, and algorithmic transparency, with a focus on making digital platforms safer for children.

In *S. Vijayakumar v. Union of India*<sup>15</sup>, the Madras High Court examined the issue of unregulated access to pornographic and harmful content on the internet, particularly its impact on children. The Court expressed concern over the ease with which minors can access explicit content through social media platforms and digital services. They recognised the inadequacy

---

<sup>13</sup> *Child Rights Foundation v. Union of India & Ors.*[Writ Petition (Civil) No.287 of 2025].

<sup>14</sup> Digital India Bill, 2023 (Proposed).

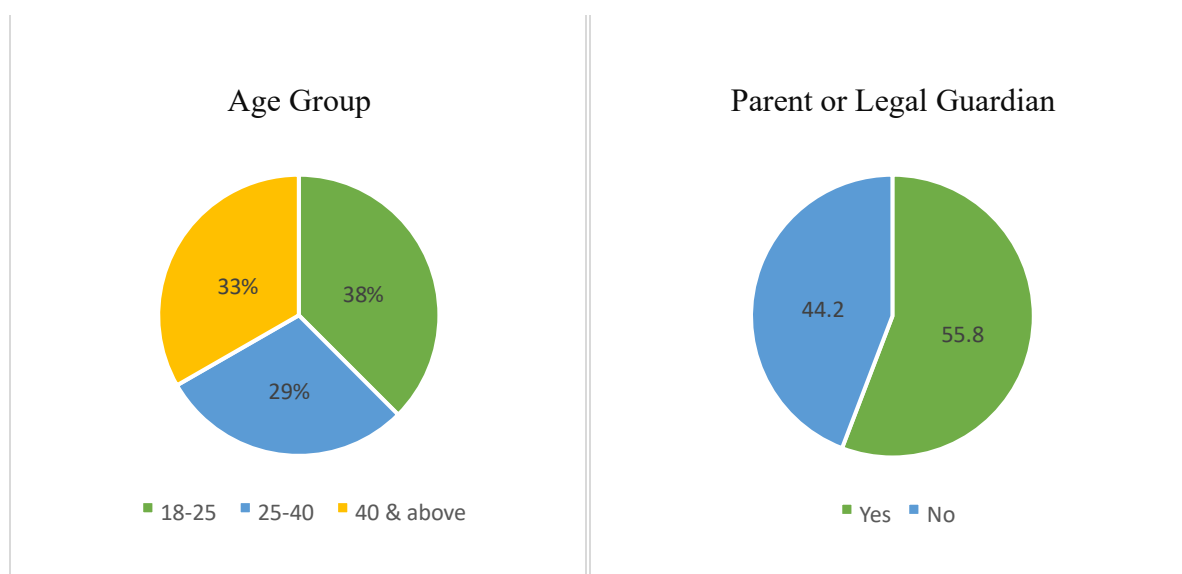
<sup>15</sup> *S Vijayakumar v. Union of India and Ors.* [W.P. (MD) No.23323 of 2018].

of existing regulatory mechanisms and suggested that the Union Government should explore the possibility of enacting legislation similar to Australia’s law, which imposes a ban on social media use by children below a specified age.

### The Empirical Study

The research on regulation of social media of children was conducted through a comprehensive survey using a Google Form. To gain a diverse range of perspectives, participants included individuals from various age groups and included parents and legal guardians, as well as individuals without children. This multi-faceted approach aimed to understand public opinion on regulation of social media for children and its implications.

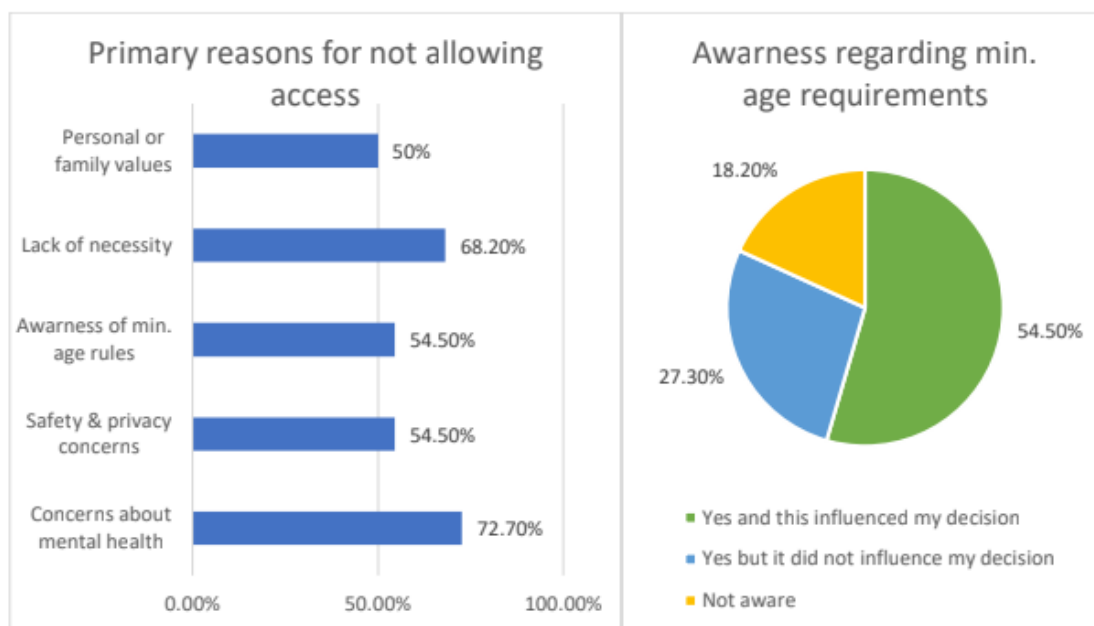
The preliminary question of the survey revealed a balanced representation of age groups among the respondents with 37.5% of the respondents being from the age group of 18-25, 29.2% being from ages 25-40 and the rest from ages 41 and above. The survey further sought to identify whether the respondents were parents or legal guardian of a child or not, with 55.8% responding yes and the rest stating otherwise. This balanced distribution of respondents ensured that the responses reflected a wide range of viewpoints, enhancing the credibility and depth of the research.



Depending on whether the respondent was a parent or legal guardian or not, they were asked different sets of questions. This distinction was made to ensure that the responses were relevant and reflected informed viewpoints from different experiences. Parents or legal guardians were further asked whether their child used social media or not and follow up questions were asked

accordingly to understand age of access, mode of access or reasons for restricting use.

The first question asked to parents or legal guardians whose children did not use social media sought to identify the primary reasons for restricting access. The most commonly cited reasons were concerns relating to mental well-being of the child and perceived lack of necessity for social media use at a young age. Safety and privacy concerns along with awareness of minimum age requirements prescribed by platforms were also emerged as significant factors. When asked about awareness of social media platform’s minimum age requirements and parental consent requirements, a majority of respondents (54.5%) stated that they were aware and that this knowledge influenced their decision to restrict access. Meanwhile, 27.3% were aware of these requirements but it did not affect their decision, and 18.2% stated that they were not aware of the minimum age or consent rules at all.



When asked about the appropriate age for children to start using social media, 63.6% of respondents indicated 18 years and above, while 27.3% suggested 16–18 years. They were then asked whether they would allow their child to use social media, with 36.4% responding yes, 31.8% no, and 31.8% being unsure. This indicates that despite many respondents believing that children should start social media use at a later age, a majority are likely to allow it due to its growing influence despite its potential adverse effects.

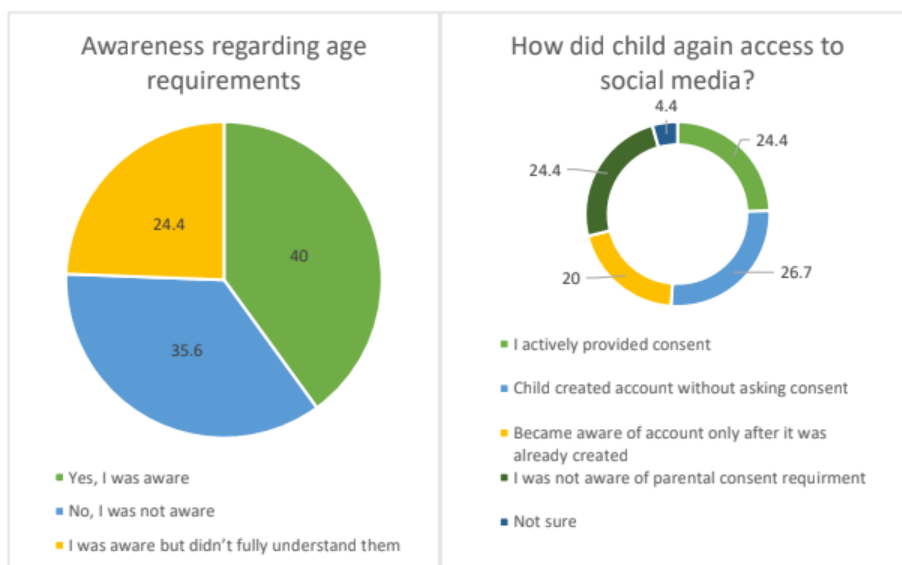
For parents whose children use social media, 66.7% stated that their child was 15 years or older at the time they began using social media, while 26.7% indicated an age between 10 and 14

years. A 6.7%, stated that their child began using social media below the age of 10. This reflects early exposure to social media platforms despite the presence of age-based access norms. A clear majority of parents reported WhatsApp and Instagram as the primary social media platforms used by their children. WhatsApp is commonly used for educational purposes and to stay connected with peers. However, platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat were also reported to be widely used. Owing to the content-driven nature of these platforms, they may expose children to inappropriate content and negatively affect their mental and emotional well-being.

Most parents cited safety concerns, educational purposes and for social interaction with peers as the primary reasons for allowing their child to access social media. Some parents said that they allowed because of social pressures and their child's insistence. In these cases parents had little choice as social media was now a common part of child's life and they felt that if they didn't allow their child would feel isolated or left out.

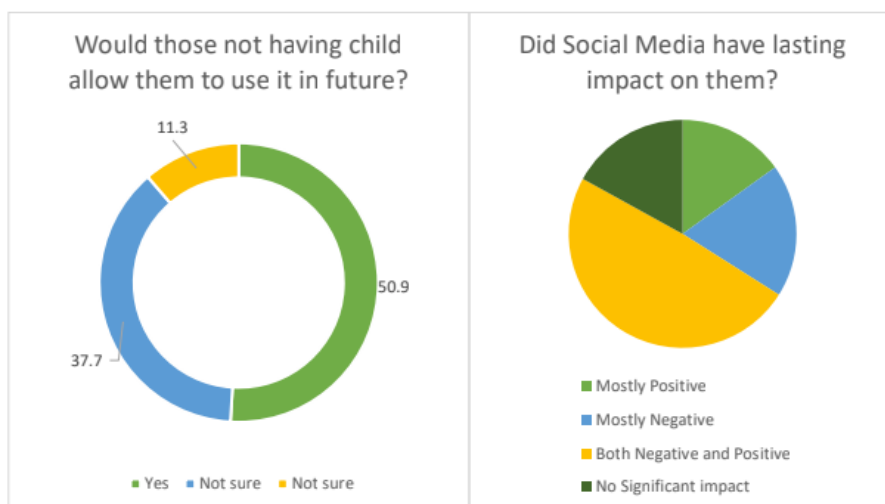
When asked about awareness of age requirements and parental consent policies on social media platforms, 40% of parents said they were aware, 35.6% said they were not aware, and 24.4% said they were aware but did not fully understand these rules. This shows that many parents either do not know about these policies or do not clearly understand them, which is concerning because current systems rely heavily on parental awareness and consent.

Regarding how children gained access to social media, 24.4% of parents said they actively gave consent. However, many responses showed that parents often have limited control over their child's online access. About 26.7% said their child created an account without asking for permission, and 20% became aware of the account only after it had already been created. In addition, 24.4% of parents were not aware of parental consent requirements, and 4.4% were unsure. These findings suggest that children frequently access social media on their own, often without fully understanding its consequences, and that parents cannot monitor their child's online activity at all times.



The questions directed at non-parents aimed to understand their experiences with social media and to assess whether these experiences would influence their decision to allow their children to use social media in the future.

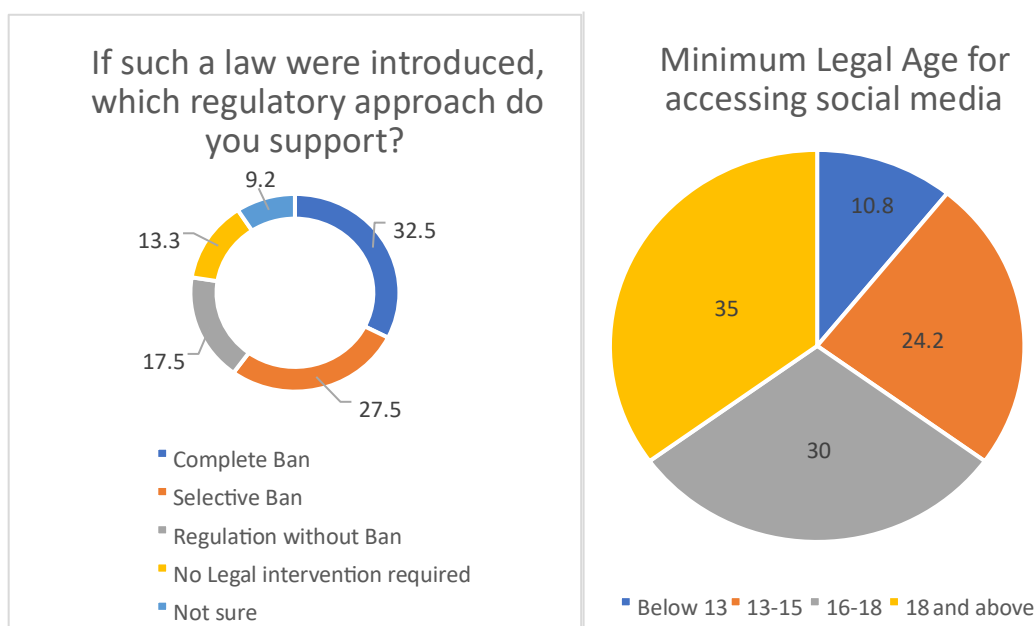
Among these respondents, the most commonly used social media platforms were Instagram and WhatsApp. Facebook was also reported as being used by several respondents, although its relevance has declined over time. Platforms such as Snapchat and X were used by a smaller proportion of respondents. When asked whether they were aware of minimum age requirements at the time they first joined social media, 45.3% stated that they were aware, 41.5% reported that they were not aware, and 13.2% were unsure. Overall, this group appeared to be relatively more aware of platform policies and age-related requirements, possibly due to increased digital exposure and experience over time.



Additionally, respondents were asked to reflect on whether their own early exposure to social media had a lasting impact on them. While 15.1% viewed this impact as mostly positive and 18.9% as mostly negative, a significant proportion 49.1% reported experiencing both positive and negative effects. A further 17% indicated that early exposure had no significant impact. When asked whether they would allow their child, or a child under their care, to use social media platforms in the future, 50.9% of respondents answered in the affirmative, while 37.7% expressed uncertainty and 11.3% stated that they would not allow such use. This mixed experience appears to explain both the cautious uncertainty expressed by many respondents and the willingness of others to allow limited or supervised use by children in the future.

The final set of questions were posed to all respondents to assess broader perceptions regarding social media and child well-being. When asked whether excessive use of social media negatively affects the well-being of children, 45.9% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed, while 19.2% remained neutral and the remaining respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Respondents were also asked to evaluate the adequacy of existing safeguards and terms of use on social media platforms in protecting children. A majority of respondents (53.4%) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that current protections are sufficient. This indicates a widespread perception that existing platform policies and self-regulatory mechanisms are inadequate, reinforcing the need for stronger regulatory oversight and more effective child-specific safeguards in the digital environment.



Ultimately, respondents were asked whether India should have a specific law regulating children's access to social media platforms. More than 60% of the respondents answered in the affirmative, reflecting strong public support for legislative intervention in this area. Respondents were further asked about the regulatory approach they would prefer if such a law were introduced. A majority of respondents (32.5%) supported a complete ban on children's access to social media, while 27.5% favoured a selective or conditional ban based on age or platform-specific factors. In contrast, 13.3% believed that no legal intervention was necessary. With respect to the minimum legal age for accessing social media platforms, 35% supported an age threshold of 18 years and above, 30% preferred the 16–18 age bracket, and 24.2% favoured allowing access between 13 and 15 years. This indicates a growing recognition of the limitations of existing safeguards and the perceived need for a clearer legal framework to protect children in digital spaces.

Responses across different categories of participants revealed nuanced perspectives on regulating children's access to social media. Parents and legal guardians largely supported regulatory intervention due to concerns relating to children's mental well-being, online safety, and exposure to inappropriate content. Their responses reflected practical challenges in monitoring children's online activities and a recognition that existing platform safeguards are insufficient. Non-parent respondents, drawing from their own experiences of early social media exposure, expressed more cautious views, acknowledging both the benefits and harms of social media. While many recognised its role in communication and learning, they also highlighted long-term negative impacts such as anxiety, overuse, and reduced attention, which informed their preference for age-based or conditional regulation rather than unrestricted access.

The findings of this empirical study highlight a clear and growing demand for a structured legal framework in India to regulate children's access to social media platforms. A majority of respondents supported the introduction of a specific law, with preferences leaning towards complete non-intervention. The data indicates widespread concern over the adequacy of current safeguards, limited awareness of age requirements, and the ease with which children bypass parental consent mechanisms.

### **Comparative Study with Other Countries**

Globally, states have gradually come to reckoning that children's unrestricted access to social

media needs to be regulated as the existing frameworks fail to protect the rights of children. There has been a global shift towards broader frameworks and stronger state intervention, moving from the earlier data protection focused regulations.

In 2024, Australia became the world's first country to ban social media for children under the age of 16 years by passing its Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act, 2024<sup>16</sup>. The law mandates a minimum age of 16 years for creating and maintaining a social media account on specified social media platforms namely, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Reddit, Twitch, Threads, and Kick. It applies not only to new users but also mandates the deactivation of existing account if the user is below the prescribed age. Tech companies that own these platforms could face fines of up to \$50 million if they don't take reasonable steps to stop under-16s from having accounts.

The Australian Government says the social media ban is needed to protect the mental health and wellbeing of Australian children and teens<sup>17</sup>. They believe the risks of social media, such as cyberbullying, harmful content, and online predators, outweigh the positives. However, the law excludes digital platforms such as Messenger Kids, WhatsApp, Google Classroom and YouTube Kids from its scope because they are designed with restrictive and child specific features limiting social interactions and having enhanced parental controls.

Inspired by Australia's legislative reforms, the European Union also took a coordinated response in light of rising concerns regarding negative effects of social media on children. In November 2025, the European Parliament adopted a non-legislative report by a 483-92-86 vote thereby symbolising their consensus towards stricter regulations for use of social media by children<sup>18</sup>. The report sets a minimum prescribed age of 16 for social media across EU nations and a mandatory parental consent for children aged 13-15.

In the case of *K.U. v. Finland*<sup>19</sup>, a 12-year-old was targeted by a predator on an internet site. European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), ruled that the right to privacy (Article 8) includes a "positive obligation" for the state to protect children from online harm. The court held that

---

<sup>16</sup> Australia Legislation, Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024.

<sup>17</sup> Helen Livingstone, Australia has banned social media for kids under 16. How does it work?, The BBC (Jan 23, 2026) <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cwyp9d3ddqyo>.

<sup>18</sup> The European Parliament Press release (Notified on Nov.26, 2025).

<sup>19</sup> *K.U. v. Finland*, The European Court of Human Rights (Application no. 2872/02).

children's rights to protection outweigh a platform's right to absolute anonymity or data confidentiality, setting the stage for mandatory age-verification laws.

In the United States of America at the federal level, multiple legislations have been introduced since 2022 seeking to impose age verification requirements for children's access to social media platforms. The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)<sup>20</sup> restricts the collection of personal data of children under 13 years of age without parental consent. Recent legislative proposals such as the Kids Online Safety Act<sup>21</sup> and the Kids Off Social Media Act<sup>22</sup> indicate a shift towards age-based access restrictions and platform duties of care.

The United Kingdom has adopted a more platform centric and regulatory model focused on safety by design rather than an outright ban on social media platforms. The Online Safety Act, 2023<sup>23</sup> imposes a statutory duty of care on online platforms to prevent children from the harms posed by the use of these social media platforms.

However unlike Australia, neither the United States nor the United Kingdom has introduced an outright statutory ban on children's access to social media platforms, with both jurisdictions instead relying on consent-based regulation, platform duties of care, and safety-by-design obligations rather than age-based prohibitions. In contrast, several European states are moving closer towards restrictive models with Denmark announcing plans to prohibit social media use for children below the age of 15 and Norway actively considering the introduction of similar age-based restrictions.

In countries that have introduced stricter regulation for age-based restrictions on children's access to social media the focus has shifted from individual responsibility to child protection. These countries recognise that children are particularly vulnerable to the psychological and social harms posed by unregulated digital platforms. Such frameworks aim to reduce long-term harm while placing responsibility on the State and platform operators rather than on children or parents alone. This approach reflects a growing recognition that digital environments, unlike traditional spaces, require proper structural regulation to protect young users.

---

<sup>20</sup> United States of America legislation, The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) 1998

<sup>21</sup> United States of America legislation, The Kids Online Safety Act 2022

<sup>22</sup> United States of America legislation, The Kids Off Social Media Act 2024

<sup>23</sup> United Kingdom Legislation, The Online Safety Act 2023

## **Conclusion**

The need of the hour is to introduce a specific legal framework in India to regulate children's access to social media platforms. The findings of this research, supported by empirical data, clearly indicate widespread concern among both parents and non-parents regarding the impact of social media on children's mental well-being, safety, and overall development. Excessive and unregulated use has been linked to anxiety, sleep disruption, reduced attention spans, and increased exposure to harmful or inappropriate content, making the absence of a clear legal framework particularly concerning.

The empirical data further reveals that children are increasingly accessing social media platforms without effective supervision. Many parents reported that children often create accounts independently, sometimes providing parental consent themselves without informing or consulting their parents. This lack of oversight exposes children to risks such as cyberbullying, privacy violations, and unhealthy online behaviours at an early age. These patterns demonstrate that reliance solely on parental consent and platform self-regulation is insufficient. Even if a complete ban may not be practical, the findings strongly support the need for selective, age-based restrictions combined with stronger safeguards and accountability mechanisms.

India should draw valuable lessons from international approaches adopted by jurisdictions such as Australia, the European Union, and the United Kingdom, which have recognised the longterm impact of early and unrestricted social media exposure on children. These countries have adopted measures aimed at reducing addictive design, limiting harmful content, and ensuring platform responsibility. Such approaches acknowledge that while social media can offer benefits, unregulated exposure during formative years can adversely affect children's psychological health, social behaviour, and sense of self.

Judicial developments in India have consistently acknowledged the seriousness of these concerns while deferring the issue of access-based regulation to the legislature and recognising it as a matter of policy. However, given the growing evidence of harm, increasing digital dependence among children, and strong public support for regulation, legislative intervention has become imperative. While courts may continue to exercise restraint, there is a clear need for coordinated action by the legislature and executive to address this issue. A timely and childcentric law would help prevent long-term harm, promote safer digital engagement, and

ensure that children's rights and well-being are adequately protected in an increasingly digital society.