



Behind the Screen:

**Study on Adolescents' Digital Interaction and Online Sexual
Exploitation and Abuse in India**

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Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ANM	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist
AWW	Anganwadi Worker
CBI	Central Bureau of Investigation
CCPWC	Cyber Crime Prevention Against Women and Children
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Child
CRY	Child Rights and You
CSAM	Child Sexual Abuse Material
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DS	Development Solutions
FACT	Freedom from Abuse of Children from Technology
GOI	Government of India
HFC	High Frequency Check
ICPF	India Child Protection Fund
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDI	In Depth Interview
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPC	Indian Penal Code
ISP	Internet Service Providers
IT Act	Information Technology Act
IWF	Internet Watch Foundation
IWF	Internet Watch Foundation
JJ Act	Juvenile Justice Act
LEAs	Law Enforcement Agencies
NCMEC	National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children
NCPCR	National Commission for Protection of Child Rights
NCR	National Capital Region
NCRB	National Crime Records Bureau
NCRP	National Cybercrime Reporting Portal
NFHS	National Family Health Survey
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIMHANS	National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences
OBC	Other Backward Caste
OCSEA	Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
OTT	Over-The-Top
PDP	Personal Data Protection
PFI	Population Foundation of India

POCSO	Protection of Children from Sexual offences
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
SC	Scheduled Caste
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TARSHI	Talking About Sexual Health and Reproductive Issues
TRAI	Telecom Regulatory Authority of India
UDAYA	Understanding the lives of adolescents and young adults
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
WHO	World Health Organisation

Executive summary

This study on adolescents' digital interactions and online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA) in India, was undertaken with a two-fold objective. (1) Understanding the type and amount of social media activity among adolescents. As well as their parents' and teachers' understanding and perceptions of adolescent digital engagement. (2) The second objective was to analyse the adolescents' understanding, awareness, experience, and mitigation of OCSEA, as well as the parents' and other stakeholders' perceptions.

Given these objectives, a cross-sectional mixed method study design was adopted, with secondary and primary methods of data collection. The study was undertaken with adolescents, their parents, and teachers, from urban, peri-urban, and rural locations in four states – Bihar, Delhi, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh. The methods included:

- Literature and secondary data review – on the nature and extent of digital use and OCSEA in India, the legal and regulatory frameworks, efforts of the government and other key stakeholders.
- Quantitative survey – with 822 adolescent boys and girls, 219 parents and 45 teachers, across four states
- Qualitative interactions – 40 interactions with adolescents, parents, teachers, civil society organisations, and technology/social media companies. The key findings emerging from the study are as follows.

The key findings emerging from the study are as follows.

Adolescent digital access and use

- Access to the mobile phone and internet was universal. A higher proportion of adolescent boys owned personal mobile phones, while more girls had shared access.
- A majority of adolescents used the internet daily. A greater proportion of adolescent boys and those in urban locations used the phone daily, and for more hours each day.
- Adolescents used the internet primarily to access social media platforms. Other uses included education and learning, downloading music, playing games, instant messaging and to meet people.
- Adolescents used the internet to communicate with known persons; however, nearly 30% of them communicated with strangers/people they did not know; and 70% communicated with second degree contacts.
- A larger proportion of adolescents above 15 years of age used and accessed the internet, as compared to those 13-15 years of age.
- Parents were aware of the extent of internet use among their adolescent wards and the common uses of the internet - such as for education and to access social media. However, they appeared to be much less aware of the extent to which the adolescents used the internet to meet new people or visit chat rooms or for instant messaging.
- YouTube and WhatsApp were the most popular social media platforms among adolescents, followed by Facebook and Instagram. Instagram and Twitter were the more popular among urban adolescents.
- 63% of adolescents and 74% of parents reported parental supervision/monitoring of phone and internet use by adolescents. Checking of phones and devices was the most popular method of monitoring. Adolescent girls were subject to more rules, limited time and use of the internet, in addition to checking of phones.

Internet risk perception, understanding of OCSEA and its redressal

- Dating and gaming websites/apps, chat rooms were seen as the most unsafe, followed by social media platforms. Online shopping and educational platforms were seen as safer. Despite considering them unsafe, adolescents accessed social media.
- Exposure of adolescents to sexual content was seen as a significant risk. This was more so for adolescent girls, than boys.
- Most adolescents understood OCSEA. However, they also considered financial fraud, making jokes, and posting rude views online as OCSEA. As with adolescents, both parents and teachers understood OCSEA, but needed more clarity on the differentiation between online sexual abuse and general online abuse. Adolescents above 15 years of age were more aware on what constitutes OCSEA.
- Awareness of laws and rules to prevent online sexual abuse was limited. Teachers were more aware of this than adolescents and their parents.
- Parents and teachers had spoken to adolescents on safe/responsible online behaviour. However, conversations on dealing with sexually explicit/X-rated content, or talking about personal things such as sex, was limited.
- Parents and teachers had spoken to adolescents on safe/responsible online behaviour. However, conversations on dealing with sexually explicit/X-rated content, or talking about personal things such as sex, was limited.
- For adolescents, sources of information on OCSEA were primarily the internet, social media platforms and friends/peers.
- Initial insights suggest that adolescents exposed to information/education on OCSEA had better awareness and understanding of OCSEA compared to those who did not receive any information/education.

Experiences of OCSEA

- 15% of adolescents had faced at least one incident related to online sexual abuse or exploitation - a higher proportion of urban boys reported this. Among those who faced at least one OCSEA incident, 67% of adolescents above 15 years of age had faced an incident, as compared to 33% of those who were 13-15 years of age. Boys and those above 15 years were also the groups that access the internet the most.
- The most common incident reported was 'coming across sexually explicit content when surfing the internet'.
- While reported by only 1% adolescents, a slightly higher proportion of girls reported someone online talking to them about sex when they did not want to; and being threatened or embarrassed by someone posting or sending messages about them to other persons. Several such incidents, faced by adolescent themselves and friends/peers were reported during qualitative interactions.
- A significant denial and lack of acknowledgement of their wards having faced OCSEA was noted among parents.
- Among those who had faced at least one OCSEA related incident, 55% faced it on Facebook, followed by YouTube, WhatsApp and then other social media and Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms. Analysis suggests that a greater degree of parental supervision is associated with adolescents reporting lower incidents of OCSEA.
- The common ways of managing incidents of OCSEA included deleting or blocking a person/source and changing privacy settings. 17% of respondents who had faced an incident did not do anything about it, and only 5% reported it to a service provider.

- Adolescents feared telling their parents of any incidents of OCSEA; more so girls, who feared significant punitive action, including discontinuation of education and early marriage.

With expanding internet access, a greater proportion of adolescents are likely to be exposed to OCSEA. The silence on issues of sex and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) in the community, prevent acknowledgement of the problem, effective information sharing and redressal. Girls are at a particular disadvantage, with access to phones and internet being gendered, rules and supervision being gendered, and even punitive action and implications being gendered.

Recommendations

There is a need for a multi-stakeholder effort to ensure a safer internet eco-system for children and adolescents in the country. In the context of the safer online interactions and redressal of OCSEA among adolescents, the recommendations are as follows.

- Overarching policy and system recommendations
 - Need for a clear and common definition of OCSEA, with common interpretation and redressal across policies and stakeholders
 - Need to strengthen evidence base on OCSEA to inform policy and systems reform and strengthening
 - Define clear processes and systems to address OCSEA, including for holistic victim support
 - Strengthen existing redressal systems, including police systems and helplines, to ensure easy access to children and adolescents. Wider public awareness on available helplines and systems.
 - Effective regulation of the private sector and technology companies to identify and report incidents of OCSEA.
- Public awareness and digital literacy – including the development and institutionalisation of a plan for digital safety and literacy to reach all citizens of the country. This would include the development of an age-appropriate curriculum and modules to be embedded within the school curriculum and circulated through online and offline modes.
- Comprehensive sexuality education – provided through schools
- Building capacities and empowering key stakeholder groups, including parents, teachers, and police officials to provide information, coach and guide adolescents on the identification and management of OCSEA; and ensure redressal with sensitivity.

For each of the recommendations, it is important to ensure a gender lens. For instance, evidence should be gender segregated, system strengthening efforts should ensure that efforts are taken to address the concerns and challenges for girls. Similarly, capacity building efforts should ensure that stakeholders are sensitised to the situation and concerns of girls.

The key to effective management of OCSEA is to empower parents/caregivers, children and adolescents with information, develop effective systems, and create a conducive environment where issues of sexual health and abuse could be discussed constructively.

Section 1: Introduction and context setting

Setting the context for the study, this section presents a review of literature on six key areas - the scale and nature of internet and social media adoption by adolescents; the internet consumption patterns among adolescents, the definition and scale of online sexual abuse; the Government of India (GOI) laws and regulations pertaining to online sexual abuse; the role of tech organisations, and efforts of civil society organisations (CSOs) in addressing online sexual abuse and ensuring a safe online environment. The review is based on information collected through an internet based/ desk review of documents. While concentrating on India, the review also draws occasional inferences from other countries to complement the study.

The desk review is complemented by primary data collection in the form of quantitative surveys and qualitative interactions with adolescents, their parents, schoolteachers and organizations/ experts working on child protection. The results from the same are presented in the subsequent sections of this report.

Use of internet and social media is rising dramatically among adolescents, and the age is reducing

India is emerging as one of the largest internet users in the world with the fastest growing rate of cellular phone penetration with more and more people accessing the internet through their mobile phones. Different studies report varying numbers of internet users with one of the primary uses of the internet found to be for social networks. India is ranked second for accessing social networks after China¹. Additionally, India is becoming increasingly attractive as a global target consumer market with more and more international brands venturing into the Indian territory across all product verticals.

In 2017, India had over 480 million active internet users across the country. The figure has jumped to over 622 million by 2020². The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) states that as of 21st September 2021, there were 809.2 million internet subscribers of which 794.88 were broadband subscribers and 39.4 million were narrowband subscribers, which means that this smaller number of people had limited accessibility to the full scope of the internet³. 65% of the internet users in the country are between 12 and 29 years of age (IAMAI and Nielsen, 2019), and about 31% are those aged 12–19 years of age (ibid.)⁴. With the adoption of a blended approach of education, due to the physical restrictions placed on school-learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the age of children using internet and social media is rapidly reducing.

The available data on the gender and social group segmentation show wide disparities. The IAMA-Kantar Report ICUBE 2020 suggests that out of every 100 internet users in India, 58 are male and 42 are female. On the other hand, the National Family Health Survey 5 (2019–21) (NFHS) displays a much wider gulf in these numbers, with 57.1% of the male population having ever accessed the internet vis-à-vis 33.3% of the female population.

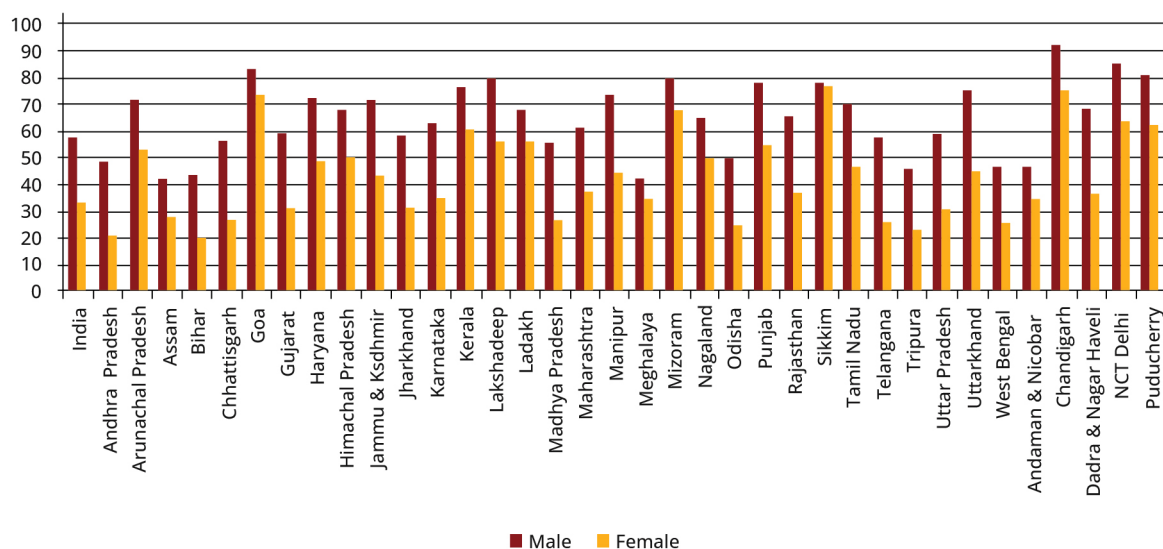
¹<https://www.statista.com/statistics/278341/number-of-social-network-users-in-selected-countries/>

²IAMA(KANTAR) Internet Adoption Report in India ICUBE 2020

³TRAI, Press Release No.2/2022, Indian Telecom Services Performance Indicator Report https://www.trai.gov.in/sites/default/files/PR_No.02of2022.pdf

⁴IAMA, Nielsen Digital in India Report 2019—Round 2

Figure 1.1 Percentage of individuals who have ever used the internet- State-wise gender divide (NFHS 2019-21)



When looking at the urban-rural divide, the figures for gender disparity in internet access are 72.5% of males and 51.8% females in the city with the corresponding figures for rural areas being 48.7% and 24.6%, respectively. The figures for variation in internet access on the basis of caste also yield differences with some studies suggesting that “ST individuals have 27 percentage points lower access to the Internet as compared to the other individuals”⁵.

As for social media, there were over 518 million active users who spent most of their screen time on various social networking websites. It is interesting to note that the age group that dominates most of these social networking platforms are young people.

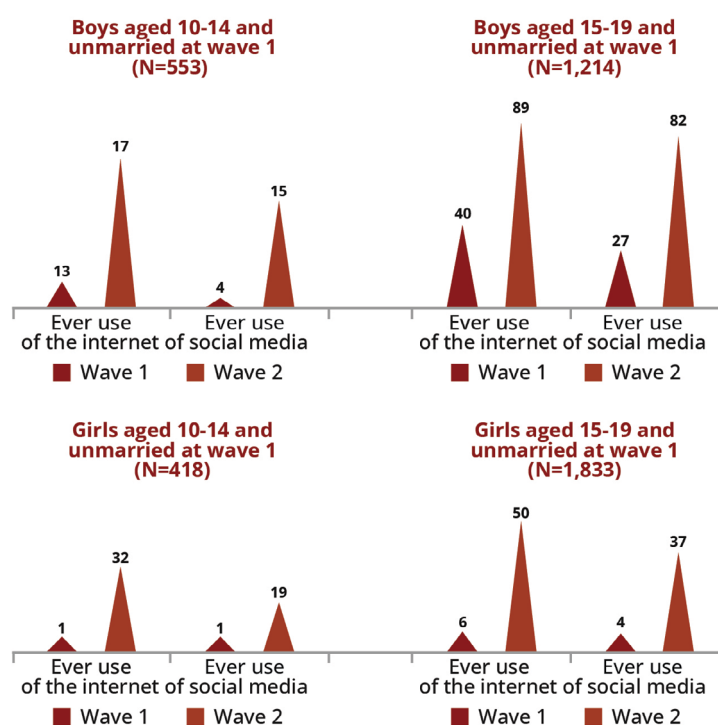
The age of children on social media is progressively decreasing, despite Facebook and Instagram mandating a minimum age of 13 to access their platforms. A study undertaken by the apex child rights body the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), in 2021 across six states of India, found that 38% of 10-year-olds have Facebook accounts, while over 24% had Instagram accounts. This trend of very young children using social media platforms has been steadily growing. For example, the UDAYA longitudinal study⁶⁷(Understanding the lives of adolescents and young adults) of adolescent boys and girls aged 10–19 by the Population Council show an increasing trend in the use of internet and social media from 2015-16 (Wave 1) to 2018-2019 (Wave 2), in less developed states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

⁵Vaidehi, R., Reddy, A. B., & Banerjee, S. (2021). Explaining Caste-based Digital Divide in India. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2106.15917*.

⁶https://www.projectudaya.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Exposure-to-media_Bihar.pdf

⁷https://www.projectudaya.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Exposure-to-media_UP.pdf

Figure 1.2: Percentage of boys and girls who ever used the internet and social media at Wave 1 and Wave 2, Bihar, 2015–16 and 2018–19



Notes: All Ns are unweighted. Differences between wave 1 and wave 2 were significant ($p < 0.01$) for each category; the analysis is restricted to those who had completed five years or more education at wave 1.

A pan-India survey (conducted by the Institute for Governance, Politics and Social Media Matters, and Youth Online Learning Organisation) on patterns of internet use by youths⁸ in India, 2020, found that 85% of non-adult users in India have access to smartphones. Most of them are online five hours a day and 80% admitted to using social media. A growing number of youths are also watching videos on OTT platforms other than YouTube.

With the setting in of COVID-19, social media consumption is reported to have increased by 70% in the first five months of the pandemic and the period has seen a 45% increase in the number of postings that are being done by users on various platforms like Instagram, Facebook and Twitter⁹.

Choice of social media platforms differs by age and is dynamic in nature

Over the years, there has been a proliferation of social media platforms. Of these, Instagram has become more popular and more widely used by adolescents as compared to Facebook. In the India survey on patterns of internet use by youths (2020), almost 70% stated Instagram as their first choice as far as social media is concerned, about 20% reported Facebook as their first choice. Only 5% of the users reported Twitter as their first option. Interestingly, the banned social media platform TikTok is the most popular among female respondents, other than Instagram.

⁸The links of survey conducted during June – July 2020 lockdown period were circulated across various social media platforms and 1154 valid responses were used. The all-India survey also comprised Northeast India. Maximum responses came from Maharashtra followed by Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. As per the sample, female and male respondents were 48% and 51% respectively while 1% reported their gender to be other.

⁹Ahmed, E. (2019, April 28). Use of Social Media by Teens: Pros and Cons. Retrieved from Social Media Magazine:

<https://www.socialmediamagazine.org/use-of-social-media-by-teens-pros-cons/>

Figure 11 : Usage of social media platforms as First Choice

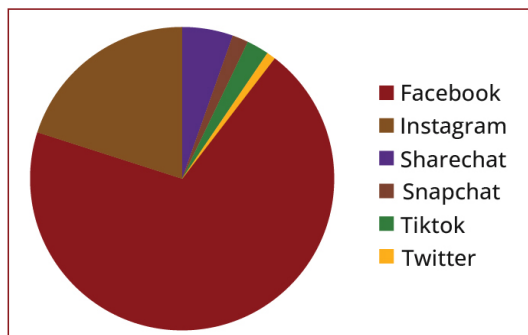
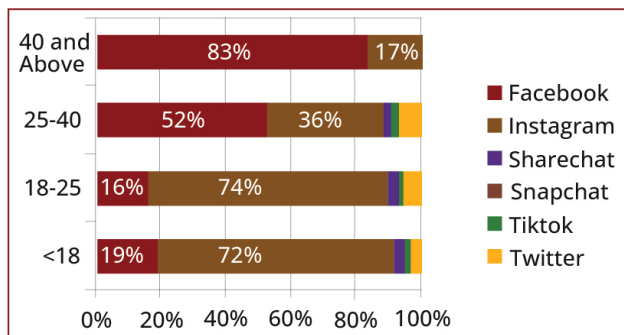


Figure 12: Age wise decomposition of social media platforms as First Choice



Source: India survey on Patterns of Internet use by youths (2020)¹⁰

There is a thin line between responsible and risky behaviour in consumption

Adolescence is a time when the youth are attempting to forge and define their identities, find their place in society, and foster a sense of belonging to a community that calls out to them. So, while a large percentage of young people use the internet to access educational programs, they also use social media platforms as fora for identity development and to build a sense of self and acceptance¹¹.

According to the all-India study conducted by McAfee's Tweens, Teens and Technology Report in 2014 covering adolescents in the 9-17 age bracket, two-thirds (66%) of youth in India said they felt more accepted on social media than they did in real life. 72% felt important or popular when they received a lot of "likes" on the photos posted of themselves on social media. This was particularly true for those who felt isolated or marginalised, for instance youth who found shelter in "...virtual communities (that) provide safe alternative spaces for LGBTQ youth to communicate and express themselves with an invisible audience, free from physical harm"¹². This may indicate a binary between the dangerous world offline and a more sanitised virtual existence online, but the risks particular to the internet must be highlighted even as we appreciate the possibility for affirmation and connection.

Research reveals that social media can create peer motivation and inspire young people to develop new and healthy habits. Adolescents can also find positive role models online. Studies show that adolescents who express their opinions on social media experience increased well-being. It often serves as a medium for one to exhibit one's creations, hone burgeoning opinions and connect with like-minded people from all over the world. It can also be a vehicle for advocacy and crowd-sourced societal impact that allows for examining not only what is topical in their region but to even widen their gaze beyond their immediate context to developments on a scale that can go global. Digital skills and active participation online are also essential to future work and personal development in contemporary society and, overall, have been correlated with a sense of well-being¹³.

¹⁰<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Hh-jAvU1n-mPDopCp-YLod4qblVmp9IV/view>

¹¹Paul Best, Roger Manktelow, Brian Taylor, Online communication, social media and adolescent wellbeing: A systematic narrative review, Children and Youth Services Review, Volume 41, 2014, Pages 27-36,

¹²Leanna Lucero (2017) Safe spaces in online places: social media and LGBTQ youth, Multicultural Education Review, 9:2, 117-128

¹³Global Kids Online (2019). Global Kids Online: Comparative Report, UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti However, the report stresses a constant need for oversight of online activity by parents, civil society and governmental agencies to allow for online existence to have positive outcomes for the children.

At the same time, the study by McAfee points out that young people often overshare what would be considered private information publicly, both intentionally and unintentionally. This is despite the majority (80%) of Indian youth being aware that their online activity can reveal their identity, which could have real world consequences. Of those surveyed, 90% have done or posted something risky online, 70% have posted their contact details like email, phone, home address, etc. This demographic is more trusting of the virtual world and the strangers that people it, despite knowing that it is risky. As per the survey, 53% had met someone in person that they first met online. Of them, 52 % had chatted during online gaming, 49% on TV show fan pages and 42% live tweeting and others during a live show.

The study also showed that 63% of youth did not turn off their location or GPS services across apps, leaving their locations visible to strangers, and only 46% enabled privacy settings on their social networking profiles to protect their content. Keeping up with their community's expectations and giving in to peer pressure, 64% even admitted having tried reinventing themselves online by trying to appear older or creating a fake profile or posting photos that were not their own. Moreover, 46% said that they would put themselves in danger to see more engagement/activity on their posts (e.g., more likes, comments, shares, or retweets).

Similarly, an all-India survey on patterns of internet use by young people by the Institute for Governance, Policies and Politics and Social Media Matters and Youth Online Learning in 2020 revealed that nearly 30% of respondents admitted to having shared sensitive information online, while half of them accepted that they had watched online pornography and 40% agreed to knowing peers who had watched pornographic content on the internet.

But every study does not prioritise the doom and gloom of it all. In January 2022, Aarambh India published The Ideal Internet Report 2019-2020, Understanding the Internet of Children and Young People. The study set out to understand the internet on the children's own terms without stressing notions of safety and harm over and above the affirming aspects of their experiences online. The survey was conducted with 155 respondents between 13 and 31 years of age in 6 cities with varied social locations in terms of caste, class, gender and sexuality. Given that this is the age range that has had the greatest amount of exposure to the internet, the continuity drawn between those whose adolescence began with the mainstreaming of the internet in India and those who have grown up in a world far more saturated by the online, the discussion of the internet is less binary and more nuanced. There is an acknowledgement of both, the dangers that lurk as well as a celebration of the creative potential and possibilities of the internet. For instance, if fake accounts are seen as something inherently wrong on the internet that signal nefarious intent, the report quotes queer children and girls using them as a way to ensure their own anonymity and safety. The ideal internet was conceptualised as fast, consistently available, safe, private, gender-neutral in terms of access and free from censorship. The aspirational elements were counterbalanced by an explicit need to know how to safeguard oneself on the internet. A key finding was also that while 69% of respondents knew about reporting mechanisms, the interface was too cluttered and overwhelming to make actual use of it.

What constitutes online child sexual abuse varies across organisations and needs to be standardised

The World Health Organisation defines child sexual abuse as “the involvement of a child in sexual

¹⁴Siddharth Pillai, Teemol Thomas and Uma Subhrmaniam (2022) Understanding the Internet of Children and Young People in India:

The Ideal Internet Report 2019 – 2020, Aarambh India, Mumbai

activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent...resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power" (WHO, 1999).

In recent years, the use of the internet and social media by children and adolescents has increased, and with it, the risk of a new type of endangerment: online sexual abuse. This has become a major issue of concern.

Looking at the different definitions used by organisations; terms like harassment, abuse and exploitation seem to be used interchangeably. According to Childnet International, online sexual harassment is defined as "unwanted sexual conduct on any digital platform. It includes a wide range of behaviours that use technology to share digital content such as images, videos, posts, messages, pages, etc."

UNICEF defines the term sexual abuse and exploitation as:

- (a) Engaging in sexual activities with a child who, according to the relevant provisions of national law, has not reached the legal age for sexual activities (this does not apply to consensual sexual activities between minors), and
- (b) Engaging in sexual activities with a child where use is made of coercion, force, or threats; or abuse is made of a recognised position of trust, authority, or influence over the child, including within the family; or abuse is made of a particularly vulnerable situation of the child, notably because of a mental or physical disability or a situation of dependence.

Child sexual abuse becomes sexual exploitation when a second party benefits monetarily, through sexual activity involving a child. It includes harmful acts such as sexual solicitation and sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent in prostitution. The Council of Europe Convention covers situations in which a child or another person is given or promised money or other form of remuneration, payment or consideration in return for the child engaging in sexual activity, even if the payment/remuneration is not made (UNICEF —Ending Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse - OCSEA, 2021)¹⁵.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has come up with a glossary of definitions of online child sexual abuse. The new global terminology guidelines ("Luxembourg Guidelines"), which are now available to all major child protection agencies and organisations around the world, as well as lawmakers and the media, have introduced standard interpretations of terminology. Through practical guidance on navigating the complex lexicon of commonly used terms relating to the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, including their online dimensions, they seek to inform the discourse and collaboration on a common framework for child protection.

The lack of consistent standardised terminology that clearly defines OCSEA muddies efforts to create awareness around it among people and sustains bureaucratic redundancies in enforcement of its redressal. A stable glossary would go a long way in coordinating efforts between civil society organisations, policy, law enforcement and the public to tackle the issue head on. The particularities of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) as a medium of child abuse and exploitation requires strict definitions that emphasise the new risks that cannot be covered by pre-existing laws and thus require specialised technical assistance to draft.

¹⁵United Nations Children's Fund (2021) Ending online child sexual exploitation and abuse: Lessons learned and promising practices in low- and middle-income countries, UNICEF, New York

The tactics of online sexual exploitation and abuse by predators have multiplied. Example of some tactics are as below: -

- Grooming to gain trust. Grooming is the process of establishing/building a relationship with a child either in person or using the internet or other digital technologies to facilitate either online or offline sexual contact with that person. They develop a relationship using specific strategies such as complimenting over and over, provide lots of attention and affection, kindness, gifts, money. Online grooming does not happen through a linear process (Black et al., 2015; Elliot, 2017); it happens through a dynamic process driven by the motivation and capabilities of the offender and the offender's ability to manipulate and control the victim.
- Blackmail is similar to the common understanding of the term. To get something by threatening to hurt the person such as by publishing sexual photos/videos of the person unless one does what they want.
- Love bombing is to give an abundance of compliments and affection to gain love and trust as a precursor to sextortion.
- Luring is when a person uses online communication to contact someone, they think is under 18, to make it easier for them to commit a sexual offence against that person.
- Persistence is to keep asking for something, even when refused.
- Using pity/guilt includes making the victim feel sorry for them, or guilty about something, so that the victim may be manipulated into doing what the predator wants.
- Sharing sexually explicit material includes sending unwanted sexually explicit material (pornography, nude photos of themselves, etc.), trying to convince the victim this type of unsolicited sexual behaviour is acceptable.
- Sextortion is when someone uses a sexual photo/video to blackmail or coerce someone into doing what they want. For example, threaten to share a nude or semi-nude photo of you with your school or post it online unless given money or send more sexual photos/videos or meet them in person
- Sexting. Researchers have suggested that sexting practice, even if seemingly consensual, may lead to non-voluntarily sexting in response to pressure as well as lack of consent for the forwarding of images.

In addition, increased use of communication and ed-tech apps for online learning have also raised concerns about the personal data of students; the accountability of those who have access to said data in keeping it private; how it is being used; and whether it is being kept safe. Many apps include learning analytics that help track student progress and this data could be identifiable. These technologies have previously posed privacy problems.

Thus, in addition to the urgent need to standardise definitions and terminologies, there is also a need to include the emerging tactics of abuse and exploitation online, along with aspects of data privacy and theft, when defining online sexual exploitation and abuse.

¹⁶Human Rights Watch, 25th May, 2022, "How Dare They Peep into My Private Life" Child's Rights Violations by Governmental Organisations that Endorsed Online Learning During the Covid-19 Pandemic <https://www.hrw.org/report/2022/05/25/how-dare-they-peep-my-private-life/childrens-rights-violations-governments> . It discusses the unfortunate harvesting of children's data by EdTech applications to be sold for potential ad revenue to tech giants like Google and Meta.

Scale of online sexual abuse in India – Indian children are the fastest-growing victim group of online sexual abuse.

The study by McAfee Corp — a global software company — entitled Life Behind the Screen of Parents, Tweens and Teens in May 2022¹⁷ found that the Indian children have the highest exposure to online risks and are among the youngest to reach mobile maturity. Despite this, India lacks robust and representative data documenting online experiences of the country's children. In the Global North, there is already a considerable body of theory, evidence, and expertise regarding children's online experiences, but it is important to acknowledge that this may not necessarily apply to children's experiences in the Global South.

In a compilation of reports on child sexual abuse material (CSAM) found online, India stands right on top of the global list, with 11.7% of the total reports or at 19.87 lakh reports of such material uploaded from the country. This is followed by Pakistan, which contributes 6.8% of all reports (11.5 lakh reports). Bangladesh is fourth with 5.5 lakh reports and a share of 3.3% (The Hindu - Most online content on child sexual abuse from India, April 18,2020)¹⁸.

India reported over 24 lakh instances of online child sexual abuse during a three-year period between 2017-20 with 80% of the victims being girls below the age of 14 years, according to Interpol data. The data also indicates that content and consumers of CSAM are growing at a sharp rate with one study reporting that 1.16 lakh queries on child pornography were made on a single internet search engine (Business Standard, 17 Nov. 2021)¹⁹.

A recent report by India Child Protection Fund (ICPF), reported that consumption of CSAM spiked by **95%** during the lockdown. Terms such as child porn, sexy child and teen sex videos appeared in frequent searches as per a report citing data from the pornography website, Pornhub.

According to a study conducted by CRY²⁰ on how children interfaced with the internet, with an emphasis on risk perception and addiction, with adolescents in the 13-18 age bracket from eight schools in Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR), there were numerous alarming findings. One in every three adolescents exposed to the internet are victims of cyberbullying and other forms of online abuse and nearly half of the users display some level of addiction. When broken down across different categories of abuse, it is found that 10% of adolescents experienced cyberbullying, 10% had either their profile misused, or account hacked and 23% had seen a morphed image or video online. The Internet Watch Foundation recorded a 77% rise in child 'self-generated' sexual material from 2019 to 2020. When it came to interacting with other people on the internet, while a resounding majority (63%) said that they only accepted friend requests from those they knew in their immediate circles, i.e., offline, the rest admitted that they accepted requests from second degree contacts and even absolute strangers.

The study also documents the almost impulsive need to be online and the loss of self-regulation that some children reported: 48% of respondents displayed any level of addiction to the internet, and severe internet addiction was observed in one percent of respondents, mainly among boys. Internet addiction tended to increase with age and was greater amongst those adolescents who had their own room at home, owned a mobile device, and did not have both parents at home. Lack of control was very widely prevalent among the sample adolescent population (60%).

¹⁷McAfee Corp, May 2022, Life Behind the Screens of Parents, Tweens, and Teens—India

¹⁸Ramya Kannan, Most Online Content on Child Sexual Abuse from India, The Hindu, April 18th 2020

¹⁹Press Trust of India, India Reported over 24 L Online Child Abuse Cases in 2017-20: Interpol, Business Standard, 17th Nov, 2021

²⁰Child Rights and You (CRY), 2020, "Online Safety and Internet Addiction (A Study Conducted Amongst Adolescents in Delhi-NCR)", February 2020; New Delhi

It was found that 4.6% of the respondents showed signs of severe lack of control. 57% of respondents had a score indicating mild to extreme anticipation while using the internet and 44% of respondents displayed indications of neglecting their social life because of spending time on the internet (CRY, 2020, "Online Safety and Internet Addiction).

Government of India is making efforts but more needs to be done to effectively prevent, detect and prosecute the offenders.

The policy and legal framework for cybersecurity in India is evolving and, notwithstanding several shortcomings, is fairly enabling. It can be used effectively, even with its limitations, to build a comprehensive strategy and action plan for addressing the issue of child online protection in the country through concerted and coordinated efforts by various stakeholders.

India has been active in international efforts to recognise and protect the rights of children, and to safeguard them against abuse and exploitation. "India was an early ratifier of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (CRC) of 1990, and in 2002 it acceded to the Second Optional Protocol to the CRC, which further strengthens the CRC's provisions for online and offline offences against children." (ORF - A pandemic of abuse: How India is protecting its children online, June 2022).

However, India, does not have enough specific laws and regulations explicitly meant for addressing all forms of online sexual abuse, or enforcement officials, with the specialised expertise to handle these issues in a comprehensive manner. The above convention was drafted in the nascency of the internet and does not cover the scope and extent of abuse in the context of contemporary mass media.

Currently, online sexual abuse is being processed under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012. Different sections of the Act cover parts of online abuse; such as Section 13 covers child pornography produced and distributed through information and communication technologies; Section 11(vi) provides that a person who entices a child for pornographic purposes or gratification, with sexual intent is said to commit sexual harassment upon a child. Further this Section states that a person is said to commit sexual harassment when such person "repeatedly or constantly follows or watches or contacts a child either directly or through electronic, digital or any other means" with sexual intent. The section addresses, with less specificity than may be desired, the real-world predation of children that is made possible by online interaction. There are also other laws on child sexual abuse under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which can be used.

The main law specifically relating to online child cyber bullying is the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 (amended 2008), which covers cases of cyberbullying. Section 66E of the IT Act deals with the violation of the privacy of a person. This section states that any person who violates the privacy by transmitting, capturing, or publishing private pictures of any other person without the consent of such person shall be punished with up to three years imprisonment or fine up to two lakh rupees or with both. Section 67B(c) of IT Act, 2008 also punishes the enticement of children in an online relationship with the purpose of publishing or transmitting of materials depicting children in a sexually explicit act in electronic form. However, these provisions do not explicitly use the term 'grooming' or 'online stalking' but help in initiating a case against such abusers.

In line with the European Union General Data Protection Regulation (EU GDPR), the GOI is in the process of enacting the Personal Data Protection Bill (PDP), 2019. The bill is proposed to effect a comprehensive overhaul of India's current data protection regime governed by the Information Technology Act, 2000. The PDP bill deals with children's data privacy, along with issues around children's use of online services including educational apps, the role of service providers and restrictions on profiling of children. The law would bar profiling, tracking, or monitoring the behaviour of children or use targeted advertising on children. There are restrictions placed on processing children's data in such a manner that it may cause significant harm to children and any violation comes with heavy penalties. Further, all technology companies which may not be directed at children but are used by them must process their data in their best interests. However, the Bill in its current form is ambiguous regarding understanding of best interests or what constitutes significant harm and other such terms for these provisions to be effectively implemented.

For reporting purposes, all cities in India have a dedicated cybercrime cell. The Government has also set up two chief mechanisms for self-reporting online child sexual abuse which are the POCSO e-Box, a virtual complaint management system, and the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP).

The GOI also works with global organisations and initiatives such as Internet Watch Foundation, UNICEF, and the WeProtect alliance, which brings together experts from the government, the private sector and civil society to protect children from sexual exploitation and online abuse globally.

The scale and pervasiveness of online abuse in India, recorded by Interpol, prompted the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to begin a more comprehensive undertaking to work against suspected distributors of online child sexual abuse material in India, with several Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) under the scanner for their liability in hosting such material. The CBI also committed to becoming a National Nodal Agency for Interpol²¹.

Certain shortcomings in Indian laws and government response need to be recognised and addressed as below: -

- There exists an abject lack of quantitative and qualitative data on the subject. There is a need for improving the loop, starting with data collection, analysis, and action. Until 2012, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) did not include statistics on online sexual abuse and exploitation of children with the result that the issue received little attention in India. Now, the database records such crimes under the POCSO Act, 2012, the IT Act, 2000, and the Indian IPC, 1860. In 2019, the Government created a cell for online child abuse and exploitation within the CBI. The actual number of incidents of exploitation and abuse is not available given that NCRB only records reported crimes. The public at large does not seem to be aware of these mechanisms for reportage and redressal, nor is there a conscious effort to make the experience of online sexual abuse as a cognisable offence, for which a child can lodge a complaint. This explains the gulf between the number of self-reported crimes and the numbers published by international intelligence organisations: “In 2020-21 the POCSO e-Box registered 151 complaints and NCRB 1105. By contrast, the NCRB received 2,725,518 reports from the US based National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) in 2020 alone. The NCRB receives Tipline reports from the NCMEC, which it then shares with state-level law enforcement agencies (LEAs), encouraging them to take action (ORF, 2022)”.
- The existing Indian laws are not sufficient to effectively prevent and combat the various cyber threats such as grooming, and sexting, considering the specificity of digital sociality and adolescent internet usage.
- Gaps also exist in the manner policies are formulated and implemented. As pointed out in the study by CRY, while the government is developing the internet governance policy frameworks, there is a need for cohesion between the forums for internet governance policies and child protection. Currently the two work in isolation. The internet governance policy should be developed in partnership with child protection stakeholders such as the Police, Ministry of Women and Child Development, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, to decide online policy measures that facilitate disclosure and reporting, as well as ensure victim support and rehabilitation in accordance with the best interests of the child victim.

²¹Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Women and Child Development, several measures taken by the Government to prevent online sexual abuse and exploitation of children, 20th July, 2017 <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=168731>

- A major issue of concern is the limited specialist expertise among local law enforcement officials to tackle online child abuse and exploitation in terms of reporting, investigation, evidence handling and child sensitivity. While officers who are likely to investigate or respond to crimes against children undergo mandatory training for child protection laws (POCSO 2012 and Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act, 2015), they tend to divert all cases with an internet element to cyber cells, which only have one or two officers, who are likely overburdened with cases and have no special training in child protection, resulting in delays. This also has implications for centralisation of investigation skills to a few officials. There is inadequate training and technology for handling as well as ensuring admissibility of digital evidence. It is noteworthy that cybercrime police departments are often focused on fraud

The ICT companies' failure to stop online sexual abuse calls for better regulation and protection measures

Social media organisations play a critical role in preventing online child sexual abuse. Several ICT companies have created initiatives to address online sexual abuse in partnership with civil society organisations. For example, Facebook has worked with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) on online safety programmes for adolescents and parents. Google and Facebook have supported Learning Links Foundation, which works with education professionals and policymakers to improve online education systems. 'The Twitter for Good Initiative' addresses issues related to freedom of expression, women in technology, emergency crisis response, improving access and inclusion and digital citizenship. Several social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. have put in place different mechanisms but the predators are slipping through the cracks when files are uploaded, according to the New York Times' reporting . Amazon, whose cloud storage services handle millions of uploads and downloads every second, does not even look for the imagery. Apple does not scan its cloud storage, according to federal authorities, and encrypts its messaging app, making detection virtually impossible. Dropbox, Google, and Microsoft's consumer products scan for illegal images, but only when someone shares them, not when they are uploaded. And other companies, including Snapchat and Yahoo, look for photos but not videos, even though illicit video content has been exploding for years (When asked about its video scanning, a Dropbox spokeswoman said it was not a "top priority").

The largest social network in the world, Facebook, thoroughly scans its platforms, accounting for over 90% of the imagery flagged by tech companies last year, but the company is not using all available databases to detect the material. And Facebook has announced that the main source of the imagery, Facebook Messenger, will eventually be encrypted, vastly limiting detection (New York Times – Tech companies are failing to stop online sexual abuse, 2019).

This calls for better regulation and incorporation of protective measures. In 2017, to help prevent circulation of CSAM online, MeitY had mandated all Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in India to sign up with Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), a private not-for-profit entity based in the UK that offers systems that can filter, and block CSAM-hosting websites listed by Interpol. Thereafter, IWF approached several large service providers like Airtel, Reliance Jio, Vodafone and Tata Telecommunications to join hands against CSAM, but three years on,

²²Keller, M.H., Dance, G.J.X., Child Abusers Run Rampant as Tech Companies Look Away, The New York Times, Nov 2019. The authors, citing these companies, speak specifically to the tension between the consumer demand for privacy versus the societal responsibility of moderating uploaded data that enables OCSAE.

only one (TATA Telecommunications) out of over 150 operational ISPs has signed up (Business Line [“Online child sexual abuse: Industry players ignore govt fiat on partnering IWF” 2021](#)).

During the pandemic, the GOI enforced the [Information Technology \(Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code\) Rules, 2021](#) that seeks to address, among other things, the issue of child sexual abuse on social media. The IT Rules call upon social media intermediaries to prohibit their users from publishing or transmitting CSAM; make it mandatory for intermediaries to develop tools to identify CSAM and block user access to such content. The rules also enjoin intermediaries to help trace the first originator of information when confronted with a judicial order for the investigation or prosecution of an offence related to CSAM or sexually explicit material. The IT Rules call upon social media intermediaries to prohibit their users from publishing or transmitting CSAM; make it mandatory for intermediaries to develop tools to identify CSAM and block user access to such content.

According to some analysts, the IT rules are problematic. For social media platforms to help trace content, they would have to break their [end-to-end encryption](#), compromising the security of all online communications on the platforms. Besides, the rules do not suggest a definite mechanism for enforcing traceability. Also, given that the IT Act from which the rules stem does not empower the government to dictate technical changes to platforms, the very legality of the rules becomes debatable. Thus, while in principle the IT Rules seek to tackle OCSEA, it is hard to see how they might be implemented unless these issues are resolved ([ORF - A pandemic of abuse: How India is protecting its children online, 2022](#)).

Efforts to empower children and their eco-system by non-government organisations

Until companies and governments figure out a way to regulate online activities and protect children, parents play a critical role in looking out for their children’s safety online. Some CSOs are making attempts to address online child sexual abuse. For example, the Tulir Centre for the Prevention and Healing of Child Sexual Abuse is raising public awareness of child sexual abuse and prevention and offers support services for child victims. Bachpan Bachao Andolan’s 2015 Full Stop campaign raised awareness of cyberbullying, cyberstalking, and non-consensual sexting. Freedom from Abuse of Children from Technology (FACT), a programme launched by the Asian School of Cyber Laws, informs parents and children about online threats and how to mitigate them. Population Foundation of India (PFI) has launched SnehAI, a chatbot that seeks to address the lack of availability of accurate information on sexual and reproductive health and raises awareness on consent, and violence. Powered by artificial intelligence (AI), SnehAI provides adolescents a platform where they can get information on a range of issues that affects them. It seeks to equip adolescents with information and resources to identify and report online abuse. New Delhi-based Breakthrough has used the digital space for its media campaigns and dialogue with young audiences against gender-based violence and discrimination. The group has also taken up issues of online harassment and violence against women and girls and methods for addressing them. Breakthrough has used the online space to create a dialogue with young boys and girls to examine their own beliefs and social norms pertaining to gender relations and violence against women and girls. The Cyber Peace Foundation incorporated child online protection in its programs via two initiatives: the ‘E-Raksha Seminars’ in schools to raise awareness of children of the risks and threats when using internet and social media; and the ‘I-Safe Project’ specifically targeting youth to sensitise them on cyber-abuse, cyber-harassment and cyber-extremism implemented in collaboration with the Policy Perspective Foundation.

There are also several national and global alliances such as WeProtect, India Child Protection Fund, Internet Watch Foundation, among others, working on ensuring a safe online environment for children and adolescents, and to enable information on online safety.

Some internet “de-addiction” centres have been set up in India. The National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) set up a “Services for Healthy Use of Technology Clinic” to offer counselling support to help addicted persons to replace excessive technology usage with healthy usage. An internet de-addiction centre was also set-up by the Delhi-based Uday Foundation two years ago to counsel children and parents and to wean them away from excessive

use of the internet by engaging them in social welfare activities. This free service has handled approximately 100 cases of internet addiction in the last two years, with a significant number of younger children seeking assistance. The Mumbai-based initiative, Aarambh India, works on the issue of child sexual abuse. Its website is the first national resource portal on online child sexual abuse and exploitation, which it seeks to locate within the broader framework of child protection in India and elsewhere. It also has a separate section on online safety for children with videos and other resources. Aarambh provides support services for child victims of online abuse and exploitation. Recognising the threat posed by websites that carry CSAM, it is collaborating with the United Kingdom-based IWF. A reporting button on its website links to the IWF hotline for reporting CSAM, whereafter IWF assesses the material and, if illegal, takes steps to remove it.

It is also important to look at efforts that have been made in the larger area of sexual health and initiatives that promote sex education and empower adolescents and young people to make informed decisions in the realm of sexuality, safety, and consent. There has been a great deal of work done in terms of pushing forward initiatives of sexual education for children and women, and for the LGBTQIA+ community. Organisations like Love Matters have a long-standing engagement with issues of consent, specifically pertaining to minors, and advocate for an attunement towards sex that does not shame, encourages curiosity and foregrounds the importance of safety. TARSHI (Talking About Sexual Health and Reproductive Issues) is an organisation based out of Delhi that, as their name suggests, focuses on initiating and enriching conversations around sexuality, LGBTQIA+ issues, reproductive rights, sexual health, gender-based violence, while affirming sexuality and sexual curiosity across the full spectrum.

Although CSOs are doing a commendable job of creating public awareness about digital safety and building resilience among children to deal with potential harm online, the narrow focus or limited reach of their initiatives does not adequately address the growing need for informed and responsible use of technologies. Taking these interventions to scale remains a major challenge. A coordinated response—including common content focus, sharing of lessons and the evolving concerns of children through a common platform, coordination of action and resources, institutionalisation through inclusion in the school curriculum, and peer education—could guide the way forward (UNICEF – Child Online Protection in India, 2016). In addition, the GOI needs to learn, adopt, and implement them at a scale.

In recent times, there have been some efforts undertaken by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), which has launched a cyber safety booklet for adolescents in the year 2019²³. The booklet discusses topics such as digital security, digital rights and responsibilities, and digital law. In July 2021, the CBSE also issued a circular to all affiliated schools on the provision of free training on cyber security to teachers²⁴. It is expected that teachers, once trained, will be able to impart information on cyber security to the students. Some efforts have also been undertaken by schools themselves to hold webinars/ sessions for students on cyber security²⁵. As with civil society efforts, the efforts at a school level, are also at a small scale, focussing more on basic internet security. Issues such as online abuse are not widely addressed.

²³<https://www.cbse.gov.in/cbsenew/documents/Cyber%20Safety.pdf>

²⁴https://cbseacademic.nic.in/web_material/Circulars/2021/52_Circular_2021.pdf

²⁵[https://dpsrpk.net/interactive-session-on-cyber-security/.](https://dpsrpk.net/interactive-session-on-cyber-security/)

The need for a safe internet eco-system

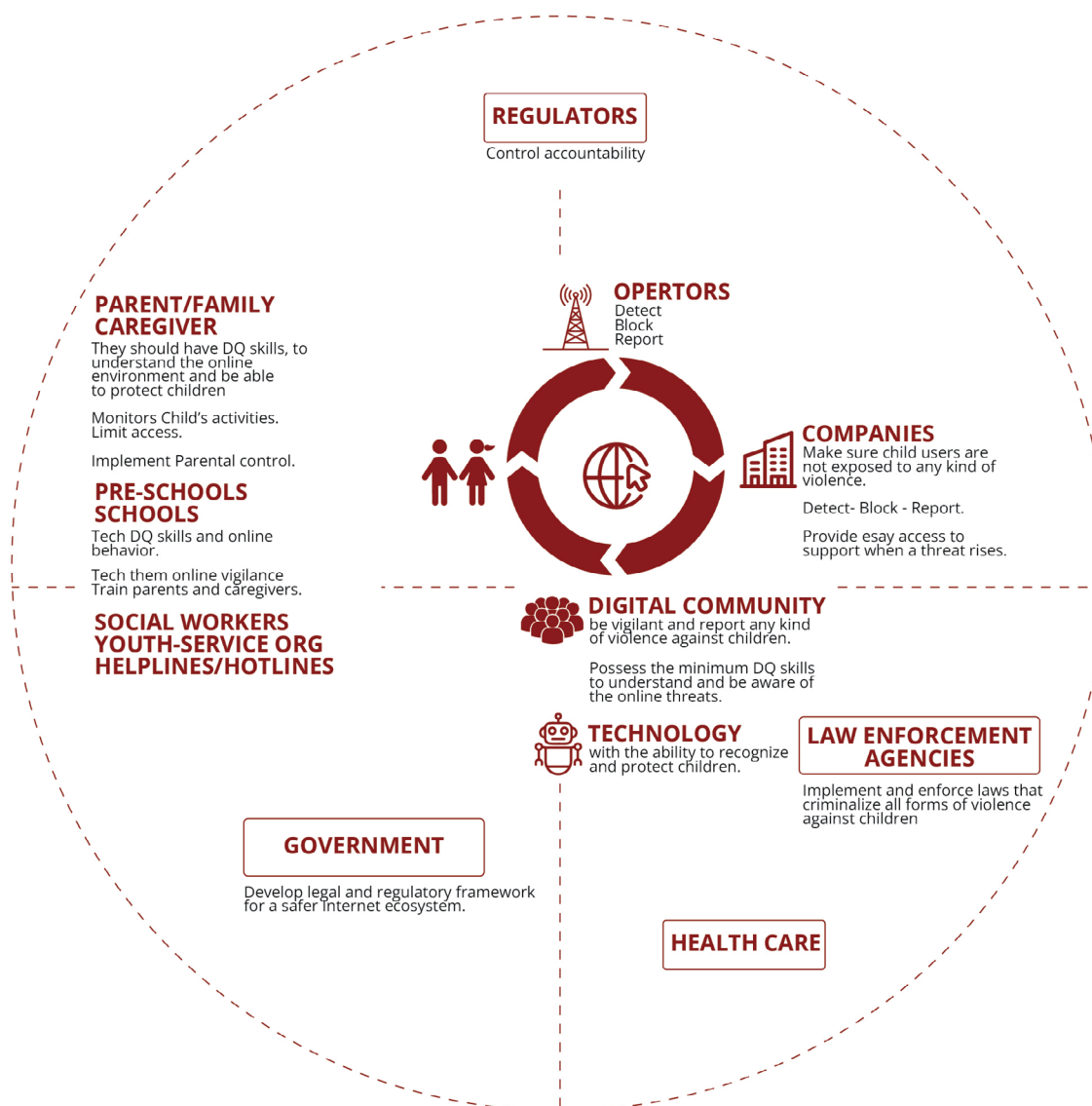
The internet is increasingly penetrating every part of human life and will soon be everywhere, touching every person on the planet. To navigate this system, safeguards to protect children from risks need to be immediately put in place. Everyone is a stakeholder in this—children, parents, teachers, schools, governments, and the private sector—no one can afford not to be vigilant.

But to understand what needs to be done to keep children safe when they are online, it is important to first understand what 'safe' looks like. What would a system look like, in which children were as safe as possible? And how would a child within that system experience the internet?

A schematic and guidance for a safe internet eco-system for children is provided by Digiwatch, a Geneva-based internet platform, which outlines a role for various stakeholders (Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3: Broadband Commission for sustainable development – Child Online Safety, 2019.

Safer Internet Ecosystem



Source: Iina Fernandez del Portillo.

The following are some recommendations for carving out the beginnings of such an environment:

- Strengthen the evidence base for informed policy and public awareness. The data on the extent, pattern, and trends of children's usage of digital technologies and online sexual abuse in the country is patchy. Research is being undertaken on small samples that is indicative of certain trends in children's interface with internet and the vulnerability to child sexual abuse but there is the need for more studies for analysing large scale data that factors in class, caste, religion and gender. Additionally, children's experiences with the internet— particularly their perception of risks and harm need – to be accessed.
- Integrate child online protection in processes to strengthen child protection systems and define a specific intervention package for holistic support for victims of child online abuse. It is critical to recognise that risks and crimes do not occur online in isolation. Hence strong linkages between online and offline spheres and different stakeholders need to be made to ensure child protection, effective prevention of abuse and timely response by authorities.
- Advocate to make the Indian laws and regulation comprehensive by adopting standardised terminologies which will incorporate all forms of online child sexual abuse. These should be reviewed regularly to keep pace with new forms of online sexual abuse of children. It is critical to develop approaches that do not criminalise children and adolescents for harmful online behaviours.
- Incorporate specialised insights from tech and cyber-security experts, both in the development of cyber tools to identify OCSEA and in nuancing the legal framework that redresses it. Given the global scale of decentralised networks of online child predation, and cybercrime generally, tech and data instruments are invaluable in the investigation of such crimes. This is where AI can bring its strengths to the fight. AI can draw conclusions, solve problems, or take actions by analysing options and reasoning without the need for hard-coded instructions for each scenario.
- Better regulation and monitoring of private sector corporations to prevent online child sexual abuse. Establish and reinforce collaboration between the ICT industry and law enforcement actors to ensure effective reporting and redressal of online child sexual abuse.
- Build capacities of the services providers to handle cases of online child sexual abuse effectively. Develop a program to strengthen capacities for child online protection across the child protection system. Create capacities for online counselling of child victims and child offenders involved in online abuse and exploitation (e.g., ChildLine India).
- Develop a plan to institutionalise and mainstream digital safety and literacy to reach a very large proportion of children, caregivers, and relevant professionals. This would include developing an age-appropriate 'Digital Safety, Literacy and Citizenship' Curriculum to be integrated and mainstreamed in the school curriculum across subjects, particularly as part of the ICT curriculum thereby ensuring active and meaningful engagement of children and adolescents in protecting themselves and their peers from online abuse and exploitation.
- Enable and empower parents and caregivers to play an active role in preventing and protecting children from online abuse and exploitation. Support caregivers, educators, and parents to understand what children should know, to be able to guide them appropriately and responsibly. The existing awareness-building programmes lack common content focus, are fragmented, and have limited outreach. There is a need for a coordinated approach for equipping children, caregivers, teachers and public with skills for safeguarding against online threats and being responsible digital citizens.
- Provide children with resources and platforms to seek support when required. The government needs to introduce comprehensive sex education in school curricula. The aim is to educate children and adolescents to make decisions informed by contextually situated research on their digital environment and ensure their safety without policing them or rote preaching. Develop programmes for children for age-appropriate life-skills and education, which incorporate the understanding of problems in the online context.

- Ensure adequate state budgetary allocations are made by the government to implement a robust mechanism towards ensuring children's online safety. Although the budget for child protection has seen an increase of 44%, from Rs 1,089.36-1,573.82 crore (Budgetary estimates for 2022-23), there is no clarity in terms of what portion of it will go to address online safety of children, since there is no such component under the child protection umbrella.

A review of literature indicates an increase in social media use, more so among adolescents, with India emerging as a global leader in internet users across the world. For adolescents and young persons' accessing the internet and social media platforms, there is a thin line between responsible and risky behaviour. The internet offers opportunities for young persons to be motivated, seek inspiration, pursue education, and feel an increased sense of wellbeing. However, young people also overshare private information intentionally and unintentionally, putting themselves at risk. There is also the risk of online sexual abuse. There are currently, no standardised definitions globally, or in India, to define OCSEA and what it constitutes. Further, mechanisms to address OCSEA are limited, more so in India. Literature indicates that with rapid internet penetration, children in India are the fastest growing victim group, subject to online sexual abuse. Given this, the study seeks to better understand the nature and extent of online engagement and experiences of online sexual abuse among young persons in four states in India. A better understanding of the extent and nature of OCSEA, will enable strengthening the policy and programmatic interventions. The study also seeks to understand how OCSEA is understood among key stakeholders – adolescents, their parents and schoolteachers, and their knowledge on redressal mechanisms too. This will help enable inputs to empower key stakeholder groups to understand, address and manage OCSEA.

This report provides details on the study objectives and methodology and the findings from the primary data collection with adolescents, their parents, and teachers.

Section 2: Study objectives and methodology

2.1 Study objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1) Understand digital interactions among adolescents

- a) To identify the extent of online and social media usage among adolescents
- b) To identify the popular social media platforms among adolescents
- c) To understand the gaps in knowledge and abilities of parents/guardians and teachers to ensure safe digital interactions for the adolescents
- d) To provide policy recommendations for safe online digital interactions

2) Online child sexual exploitation and abuse

- a) To assess the current knowledge and awareness levels regarding online CSEA among adolescents, parents, and teachers
- b) To assess the prevalence of online CSEA among adolescents
- c) To assess the current strategies and legal measures available to tackle the cases of online CSEA among adolescents in India compared to other developed countries
- d) To assess the help-seeking behaviour among online CSEA survivors and ascertain the support platforms they reached out to.
- e) To determine the effectiveness of these support platforms
- f) To provide policy recommendations to protect adolescents from OCSEA

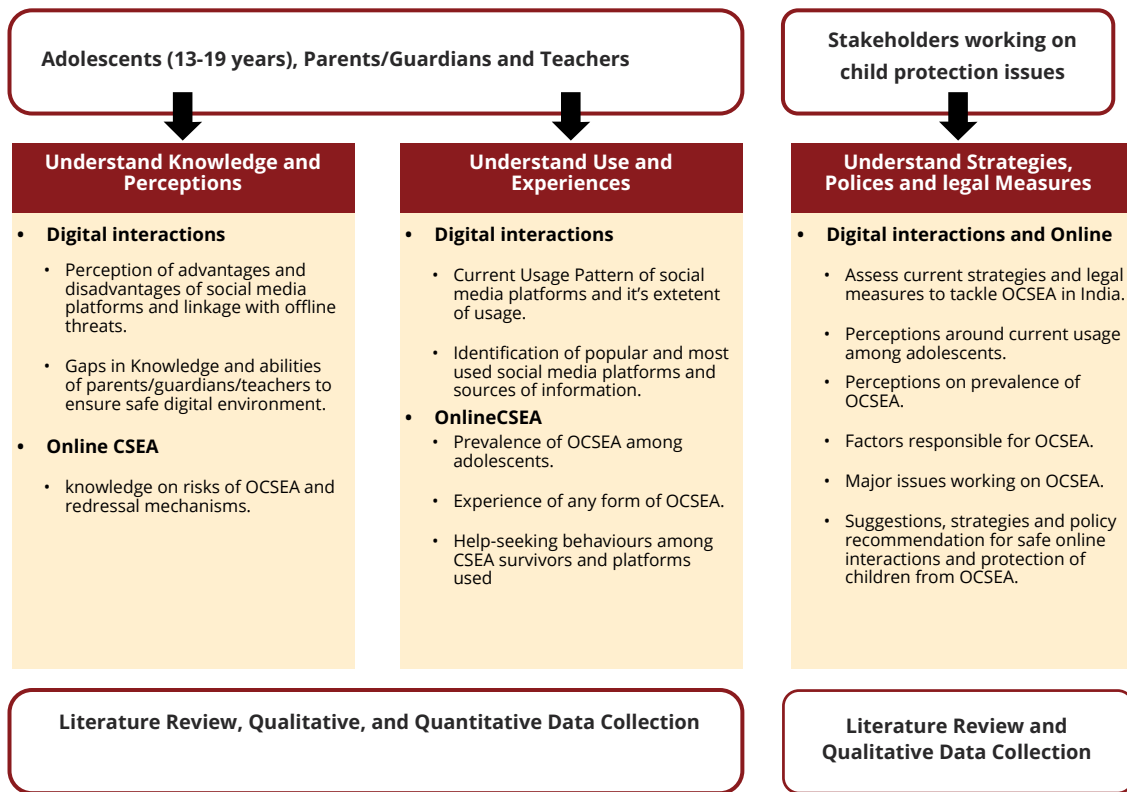
Thus, the objectives are two-fold. The first objective is to understand the type and amount of social media activity among adolescents; along with the parents'/guardians' and teachers' understanding of and perceptions of adolescent engagement. The second objective is to analyse the adolescents' understanding, awareness, experience, and mitigation of OCSEA, as well as the parents' and other stakeholders' perceptions. Based on this, policy recommendations are proffered.

In the absence of a standardised definition of Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA), this report will use the Childnet definition for OCSEA - "unwanted sexual conduct on any digital platform. It includes a wide range of behaviours that use technology to share digital content such as images, videos, posts, messages, pages, etc."

2.2 Framework for the study and areas of enquiry

Given the objectives, the framework for the study is outlined in Figure 2.1. The framework presents the key respondent groups, the overarching themes of enquiry and the proposed methods. The details of the areas of enquiry for each of the respondent groups and the study methodology is presented subsequently.

Figure 2.1: Study framework



Key areas of enquiry

Given the objectives and the framework, the areas of inquiry are as follows:

Secondary literature review/desk review

- India-specific legal and regulatory frameworks/ provisions to prevent online child sexual abuse, their review, gaps and challenges.
- Existing evidence on the scale and prevalence of online child sexual abuse in India.
- Digital adoption by adolescents in India, divided by age, gender, social groups.
- Efforts to address online child sexual abuse by government, civil society, tech companies and corporates.
- Learnings and best practices for a safer internet environment for children

Primary data collection

1) Adolescents (13-19 years)

Quantitative survey

Digital access and use

- Access to digital tools/devices
- Nature and extent of usage of digital devices
- Access to and use of different social media platforms
- Reasons and purpose of use of internet.

Awareness/ perceptions on OCSEA

- Awareness, understanding of online child sexual abuse
- Perceptions on OCSEA – risks, its impact
- Awareness on issues of online safety, responsible internet use, available platform, existing laws, and regulations.
- Sources of information related to OCSEA

Experiences of OCSEA

- Experiences of online harassment/exploitation/abuse
 - Platform/space where they experienced the incident
 - Response/redressal if any
- Help-seeking behaviour

Quantitative survey

The qualitative interactions were built on the areas of enquiries listed for the quantitative survey, and further details on the following were obtained:

- Digital access and use – differences in access and usage across different demographic groups
- Perceptions on OCSEA – understanding of OCSEA, what is considered offending/harmful/ troubling/distressing and why; perceived risks of online engagement; impact of OCSEA on children and adolescents; differences in perceptions across different groups
- Understanding of different systems/redressal mechanisms for OCSEA and their functioning; sources of information on the same
- Experiences of OCSEA among adolescents/peer groups; how are these addressed; types of support groups available – support from parents and teachers
- Recommendations on child friendly cyber safety mechanisms.

2) **Parents/ Guardians and Teachers**

Quantitative survey

- Awareness on the internet/social media platforms, their use
- Perceptions on OCSEA – what it is, risks, impact on children and adolescents
- Awareness on regulatory/redressal mechanisms
- Experiences of managing OCSEA, if any; redressal mechanisms used

Qualitative interactions

- Digital access and use among children and adolescents –
 - Awareness and perceptions on extent of use of internet/social media by children and adolescents
 - Perceptions on risks of internet use
 - Role of parents/teachers in children’s digital access/use and its regulation
- Understanding and perceptions on OCSEA –
 - What they understand by OCSEA
 - What they consider exploitation and abuse
- OCSEA – regulation and redressal
 - Understanding and perceptions on laws and regulations for online abuse, specifically for children
 - Knowledge and understanding of redressal forums, support platforms and other mechanisms to address online sexual abuse

- Awareness and access to tools/platforms/resources – online and offline; awareness on Snehai
- Experience of managing any incidents of OCSEA – experience of reporting cases/accessing support
- Role in supporting adolescents who have experienced OCSEA
 - Role parents and teachers should play – how they should support the adolescent
- Role in enabling safe online behaviour
 - Understanding/perceptions of their role and responsibilities in ensuring a safe digital experience for children and adolescents
 - Efforts made to keep children safe online
 - Role of schools in online safety for children
 - Recommendations for how can online sexual abuse can best be tackled at different levels

3) takeholders working on child protection issues (cyber security specialist, tech corporates, civil society organisations working on child protection and safeguarding)

Qualitative interactions

- Extent of internet and social media usage by children and adolescents
- Understanding and scale of online child sexual abuse in India - the key risks and issues
- Ways to recognise online child sexual abuse
- Factors responsible for OCSEA
- Current efforts to address OCSEA
- Key gaps and challenges in the current efforts made at different levels
- Existing support mechanisms, their effectiveness, gaps and challenges
- Efforts of their own organisations, their impact and key learnings
- Recommendations on efforts needed to address the gaps and challenges going forward
- Areas of strategic engagement with different stakeholders – the government, education systems such as schools, parents and guardians, tech companies and corporates

2.3 Study methodology

A cross-sectional mixed method study design was adopted, with secondary and primary methods of data collection.

Secondary data collection - desk review

An internet-based search using Google and other open-source databases was undertaken. Studies and journal articles, media articles and grey literature were included in the secondary review. A combination of key words and phrases were used. While the focus of the review was on India, literature from the global context was also reviewed, to inform the recommendations. The articles/studies and literature gathered were classified into thematic areas – internet penetration and digital use, OCSEA and how it is defined, nature and extent of OCSEA experiences, policy, and programme actions to address OCSEA and recommendations. The information in each of these thematic areas was synthesised and has been presented in Section 1 of this report.

Primary data collection

The primary data collection further added to the secondary review, to seek more nuanced insights and perspectives from adolescents, their parents/guardians, teachers and other stakeholders.

The primary data collection included:

- A quantitative survey with adolescent boys and girls, their parents, and teachers; and
- Qualitative interactions with the same respondent groups, and other stakeholders working on child protection issues

Respondent groups

The respondent groups for the study included:

- Adolescent boys and girls – 13 to 19 years of age
- Parents of adolescent boys and girls
- Teachers (in government and private schools in the study states)
- Other stakeholders working on issues of child protection, including cyber security specialist, tech corporates, civil society organisations working on child protection and safeguarding

Method of Data Collection

For data gathering, the study used a convergent parallel design using a mixed methods approach. Data was collected both qualitatively and quantitatively at the same time. The data was gathered from 4 states - Bihar, Delhi, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh (UP).

Quantitative data collection

The respondents for the quantitative survey were chosen across rural, urban, and peri-urban regions, with a sample size powered at 80% and a confidence interval of 95% at the region level.

To determine the sample size for a cross-sectional study that is powered at 80%, we used the following formula:

$$N = \frac{Z^{2(p+q)}}{d^2}$$

Where Z is the z-score of CI at 95% (1.96), p is the prevalence of OCSEA, q is (1-p), and d=(1-power)*p .

A systematic literature review of 55 studies conducted on child sexual abuse in India estimated that between 4% and 41% of girls and 10% and 55% of boys in school and college experienced child sexual abuse. Assuming prevalence rates to be between 35%-40% for adolescents, the proposed sample size for each region (rural, urban, peri-urban) was **250 respondents**. In other words, for each region, a total 250 completed surveys were needed.

Regarding the adolescents, only those who provided assent and whose parents/guardian provided consent were recruited for the quantitative data collection. The sample for parents and teachers was purposive, to enable their insights. The details of the sample for the quantitative survey are given in Table 2.1.

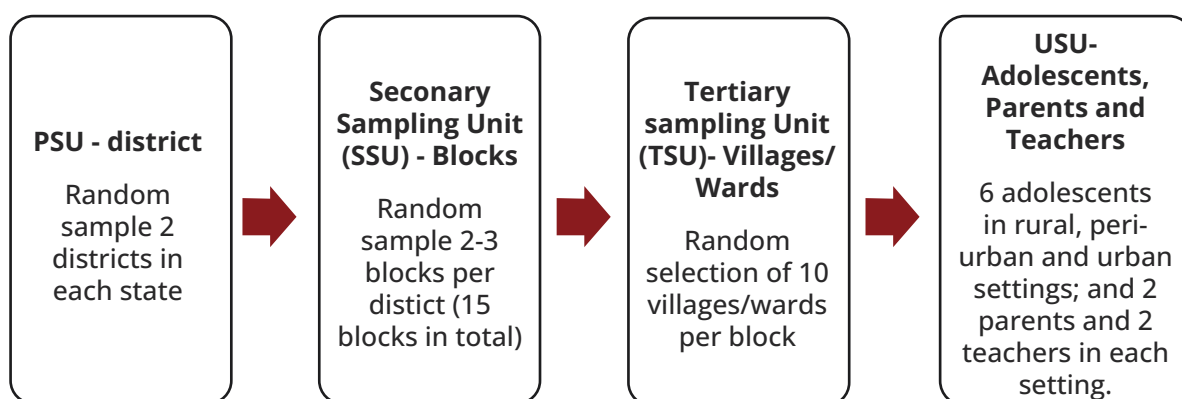
²⁶Choudhry, V., Dayal, R., Pillai, D., Kalokhe, A. S., Beier, K., & Patel, V. (2018). Child sexual abuse in India: A systematic review. *PLoS one*, 13(10), e0205086. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0205086>

Table 2.1: Sample for quantitative data collection

Respondent group	Proposed sample size – quantitative survey		Samples completed ²⁷
Adolescents (13-19 years)	Rural	250 adolescents (across the 4 states)	269
	Peri-urban	250 adolescents (across the 4 states)	269
	Urban	250 adolescents (across the 4 states)	284
	Total	750 adolescents (across the 4 states)	822
Parents	Rural	60 (across the 4 states)	65
	Peri-urban	60 (across the 4 states)	70
	Urban	60 (across the 4 states)	84
	Total	180 (across the 4 states)	219
Teachers	Rural	15 (across the 4 states)	15
	Peri-urban	15 (across the 4 states)	15
	Urban	15 (across the 4 states)	15
	Total	45 (across the 4 states)	45

Sample selection

A stratified multi-stage random sampling strategy was used, with the primary sampling unit (PSU) being the district. 2 districts were selected randomly in each state. Within each district 2-3 blocks were randomly selected. Within each block, a random number of villages/wards were selected, and a randomly selected number of households were surveyed from each ward/village. The stratification was done at urban, rural, and peri-urban settings, such that a total of 15 blocks were selected, representing each stratum. All households in the neighbourhood were screened to identify the respondents, and only households with adolescents (between the ages of 13-19) were surveyed. Within each household, 1 adolescent was randomly selected to administer the survey. Parents were surveyed from the same households where adolescents were surveyed (see Table 1-3 in Annexure 2 for details of districts where the survey was undertaken).



Qualitative Data Collection

Qualitative data was collected from all three respondent groups. The number of adolescents' qualitative interactions included an equal number of boys and girls and an equal division between urban, peri-urban, and rural areas. Details of respondents for qualitative interactions conducted are given in Table 2.2.

²⁷Data for all samples completed has been reported in the subsequent sections

Table 2.2: Sample for qualitative data collection

Respondent group	Method	Sample – qualitative completed		
Adolescents (13-19 years)	In-Depth Interview (IDI)	Rural	6	
	IDI	Peri-urban	6	
	IDI	Urban	6	
		Total	18 (across the 4 states)	
	Case study	Total	4 cases²⁸	
Parents	IDI	Rural	2	
	IDI	Peri-urban	2	
	IDI	Urban	2	
		Total	6 (across the 4 states)	
Dyads		Total	4	
	Teachers (teaching middle school & above)	IDI	Rural	2
		IDI	Peri-urban	2
IDI		Urban	2	
	Total	6 (across the 4 states)		
Other stakeholders	CSOs and tech/social media companies	Total	6 (CSOs 4; tech companies 2)	

Sample Selection

PSUs randomly selected for quantitative data collection were also used for qualitative data collection. Within the selected PSUs for each state, purposive sampling was used to recruit adolescents, parents/guardians and teachers.

Support of local organisations in each the states was sought, in addition to snowballing, to recruit respondents for the qualitative data collection. Regarding the adolescents, only those who provided assent and whose parents/guardians provided consent were recruited for qualitative interactions. Parents and teachers and other stakeholders working on child protection issues were selected purposively.

2.4 Brief overview of the execution of the study

The inception meeting and inception report ensured a common understanding of the study objectives, areas of inquiry, methodology, timelines, deliverables and execution plan. The inception meeting helped in understanding the purpose of the study and the expectations of PFI. Persons for communication, from PFI and Development Solutions (DS), were identified; and the study timeline and next steps were discussed.

The **desk review** provided a context to the study and enabled the drafting of the tools for the study. **The study tools** were shared with PFI for feedback, following which, they were translated to Hindi and pre-tested. Qualitative tools developed and outlined the key questions and pointers for the researchers to probe further. The quantitative tool was scripted in SurveyCTO for data collection. Qualitative interactions were recorded, when feasible, with consent from the respondents.

Prior to data collection, an **ethics approval** for the study was sought from the DS IRB. Following an initial presentation, changes to the study protocol were made, based on suggestions of the IRB members, and then final approval was granted.

²⁸4 case studies were developed using details from the IDIs.

The team for data collection was identified based on their experience with similar work and felicity with the language and understanding of local contexts. An effort was made to ensure a predominantly gender-balanced team.

A **two-day training** programme was developed for the quantitative data collection. As two batches had to be trained, it took a total of 4 days. The training was focused on providing a study overview, familiarisation with study tools and data collection platform (SurveyCTO), and ethical protocols. For the qualitative researchers, one-day virtual training was conducted, which, in addition to the aspects mentioned above, was focused on documentation of the interactions. The final selection of the team was made based on the post-training evaluation by the core team involved in undertaking this study.

A detailed **field execution plan** was developed, to guide the process of data collection. A team of four supervisors (one in each state) and 16 team members (4 in each state) collected the quantitative data in about 22 days. The data collection was supervised by the field coordinator and project team at DS. Qualitative researchers and note-takers were engaged in the qualitative data collection, which was completed in 10 days. Interactions with 'other' stakeholders at a national level were led by the DS core team .

Data quality was ensured through high-frequency checks (HFCs), back-checks, and spot-checks to detect programming errors, surveyor errors, data fabrication, and other issues during data collection. The supervisors returned to 20% of respondents (adolescents and parents) to confirm that the field investigators visited them and re-asked specific questions to compare with the original responses. The supervisors also performed spot-checks during data collection. The DS core team undertook daily debrief calls with the field team members in each state, to understand and address any challenges. Feedback based on the HFCs, and back-checks were also provided.

Cleaned and anonymised quantitative data was used for analysis. An analysis and tabulation plan were developed. The data was analysed using STATA 17. Detailed notes/transcripts from the qualitative interactions and from the semi-structured interactions were entered in content matrices and the qualitative data was thematically analysed.

Insights from the quantitative survey, qualitative interviews and desk review were triangulated for this report.

2.5 Challenges and limitations

Some of the challenges faced during data collection and the limitations of the study include:

- Hesitancy among respondents in: a) sharing details on experiences of exposure to sexual content or online sexual abuse; and b) answering sensitive questions. Researchers and enumerators spent time at the beginning of the interactions in building rapport, which made the respondents comfortable.
- Given the sensitive nature of the study, there were challenges in parents providing consent.
- Due to the above-mentioned challenges, data collection took longer than expected.
- During qualitative interactions, researchers observed that most respondents reported details of incidents of abused faced by their friends/peers, rather than any personal experiences. It is likely that even if they faced incidents themselves, they chose to present it as experiences of friends/ peers. The few respondents who did share details, asked the researchers not to mention the same to anyone; stating that they would rather forget about the incidents, than share it with anyone.

- Respondent mobilisation for qualitative interactions in Delhi was challenging. Despite significant time and effort, garnering support from local organisations was challenging. Consequently, the qualitative interactions in Delhi were restricted to locations primarily where local mobilisation support was possible. These locations did not necessarily overlap with the quantitative survey areas.
- Scheduling interactions with 'other stakeholders' was also challenging. There was significant non-response from tech/cyber security specialists. The two proposed interactions with this group were not completed. Interactions with NGOs and tech companies also took much longer than anticipated.

To overcome the challenges of hesitance among respondents, researchers spent time initially during the interactions to build rapport to make respondents comfortable. Respondents were encouraged to share whatever information possible, and they were comfortable with. They were assured of their right to refusal and to stop the interaction whenever they felt so. Support of local organizations was sought to mobilize respondents for qualitative interactions, where feasible. Support of the team at PFI was sought to enable interactions with NGOs and tech companies.

Section 3: Respondent demographics, digital use and interactions

This section begins by providing an overview of the respondent demographic details. It then goes on to detail the digital and internet access among the adolescent respondents of the study. It outlines how adolescents use the internet. It also highlights parents' and teachers' perspectives on the digital and internet use among adolescents.

3.1 Respondent demographics

Demographic details – adolescent respondents

A total 822 adolescent respondents were surveyed. Of these, 33% each (269 respondents) belonged to peri-urban and rural locations. 34% adolescent respondents belonged to urban locations (Table 3.1.2, Annexure 1). 213 (26%) adolescent respondents hailed from Bihar, 120 (15%) from Delhi, 224 (27%) from Rajasthan and 265 (32%) from Uttar Pradesh (Table 3.1.1, Annexure 1).

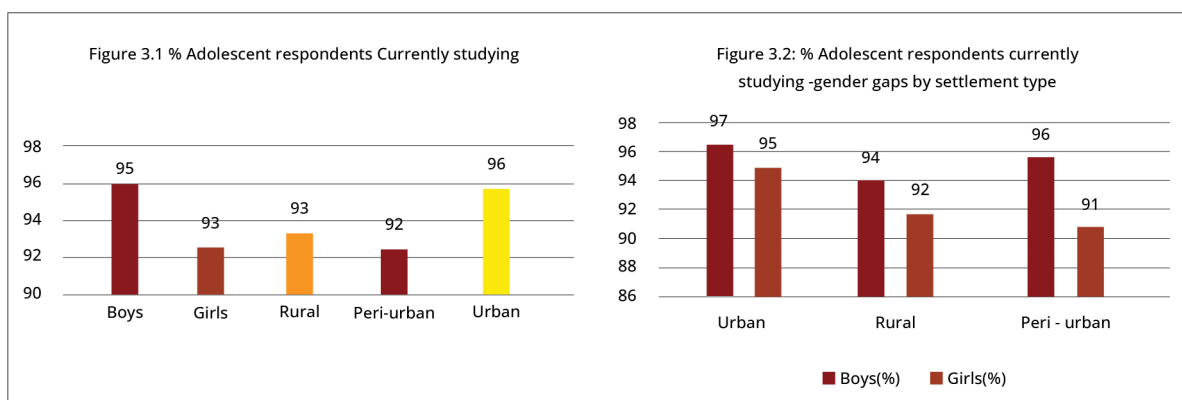
Of the total adolescent respondents, 51% were boys and 49% girls (Table 3.1.4, Annexure 1). 95% of respondents were Hindus and 5% Muslims (Table 3.1.5, Annexure 1). 58% of the respondents reported to belong to the 'Other Backward Classes' (OBC). The proportion of OBCs was the highest in rural locations, reported by 65% rural adolescents, as compared to 57% in peri-urban locations and 52% in urban locations. 23% belonged to Scheduled Castes (SC), 14% to the general castes and 6% of respondents belonged to Scheduled Tribes (ST) (Table 3.1.6, Annexure 1).

The average age of adolescent respondents was 16 years. 27% of respondents were 13-14 years of age; 37% 15-16 years of age; and 36% 17-19 years of age. A similar age distribution was noted among the boy and girl respondents; and across settlement types – rural, peri-urban and urban (Table 3.1.3., Annexure 1).

3% of adolescent respondents were married. The proportion was similar for both genders and across settlement types (Table 3.1.11., Annexure 1). The average age of married boys was 17 years, and that of married girls was 17 years (Table 3.1.12, Annexure 1).

Educational and occupation details – adolescent respondents

94% of respondents – 95% boys and 93% girls – reported to be currently studying. 96% of respondents in urban locations reported to be currently studying, as compared to 93% in peri-urban and 92% in rural locations (Figure 3.1). A greater gender divide, in those currently studying, was noted in peri-urban locations as compared to rural and urban locations. In peri-urban locations, 96% boys were currently studying, as compared to 91% girls. This difference between boys and girls currently studying was only 2% in urban and rural locations (Figure 3.2).



Among those currently studying, 20% respondents (22% boys and 18% girls) were in middle school (Classes 6-8); 49% respondents (41% boys and 39% girls) were in secondary school (Classes 9-10) and 28% respondents (26% boys and 30% girls) were higher secondary school (Classes 11-12). 12% respondents were also pursuing college graduation. A slightly higher proportion of respondents in peri-urban and urban locations (71% and 70% respectively) were in secondary and higher secondary school, as compared to those in rural location (63%). A higher proportion of rural respondents were in middle school (25%, as compared to 19% and 16% in peri-urban and urban locations) (Table 3.1.8, Annexure 1). Thus, despite a similar age distribution, a higher proportion of respondents in rural locations were studying in lower classes, as compared to their peri-urban and urban counterparts.

Among the 6% respondents currently not studying, 47% had completed up to secondary school and 12% up to higher secondary school. A higher proportion of girl respondents (17% of 30) had completed higher secondary school, as compared to their boy counterparts (5% of 19) (Table 3.1.9, Annexure 1). Among those currently not studying, 4% reported to be preparing for jobs and 12% (of 49 - all boys) were employed either full time or part time (Table 3.1.10, Annexure 1).

Demographic details – parents of adolescents

Of the 219 parents surveyed, 27% each were from Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, 25% from Bihar and 21% from Delhi (Table 3.1.13, Annexure 1). 30% parents surveyed were from rural locations, 32% from peri-urban locations and 38% from urban locations (Table 3.1.14, Annexure 1). 57% parent respondents were females and 43% males. 54% parent respondents were mothers of the adolescents surveyed, 36% were fathers and 9% guardians (Tables 3.1.16 and 3.1.15, Annexure 1).

As with the adolescents, 95% parents reported to be Hindus and 5% Muslims (Table 3.1.17, Annexure 1). A slightly lower proportion of parents (54%), as compared to the adolescents reported to belong to OBC; and a slightly higher proportion reported belonging to general castes (17%) and SC (24%). A similar proportion of parents and adolescents reported to belong to the ST category (Table 3.1.18, Annexure 1).

Educational and occupation details – parents of adolescents

21% of the parents had never attended school; 30% females, as compared to 9% males. 23% reported to have completed middle school, 18% secondary school and 10% higher secondary school. A higher proportion of male parents had completed secondary and higher secondary school, as compared to female parents. Comparing across settlement types, the highest proportion of parents who had not attended school was in peri-urban locations (26%), followed by rural (22%) and then urban locations (15%). Higher proportion of parents in urban (37%) and peri-urban (27%) locations had completed secondary and higher secondary school as compared to rural locations (17%) (Table 3.1.19, Annexure 1). Thus, it appears that parents in urban locations had a better educational status, as compared to those in peri-urban and rural locations.

46% of respondents (80% of females) were home makers. The highest proportion of home makers was in urban locations (63%), followed by rural (37%) and then peri-urban locations (34%). A majority of males (60%), more so in rural and peri-urban locations, were agricultural labourers or cultivators. In peri-urban and urban locations, 13% of parents were engaged in businesses/shops, or were salaried employees in Government and private organisations. 13% of parents in peri-urban locations, 8% in rural locations and 6% in urban locations were engaged as skilled and unskilled labour (Table 3.1.20, Annexure 1). Parents (more so females) in urban locations, despite having better education, were primarily home makers.

Demographic and education details – teachers

Of the 45 teachers surveyed, 71% were male and 29% female. 15 teachers each were surveyed from rural, peri-urban, and urban locations (Tables 3.1.23 and 3.1.22, Annexure 1). 71% of the teachers had B.Ed. degrees, followed by 16% who reported to have completed their post-graduate education (Table 3.1.25, Annexure 1). 47% of the teachers had been teaching in the government

schools for 1-5 years, 38% for 5-10 years and 13% for more than 10 years (Table 3.1.26, Annexure 1). 73% taught Classes 6-8, 24% taught Classes 9-10 and 2% taught Classes 11 and 12 (Table 3.1.27, Annexure 1).

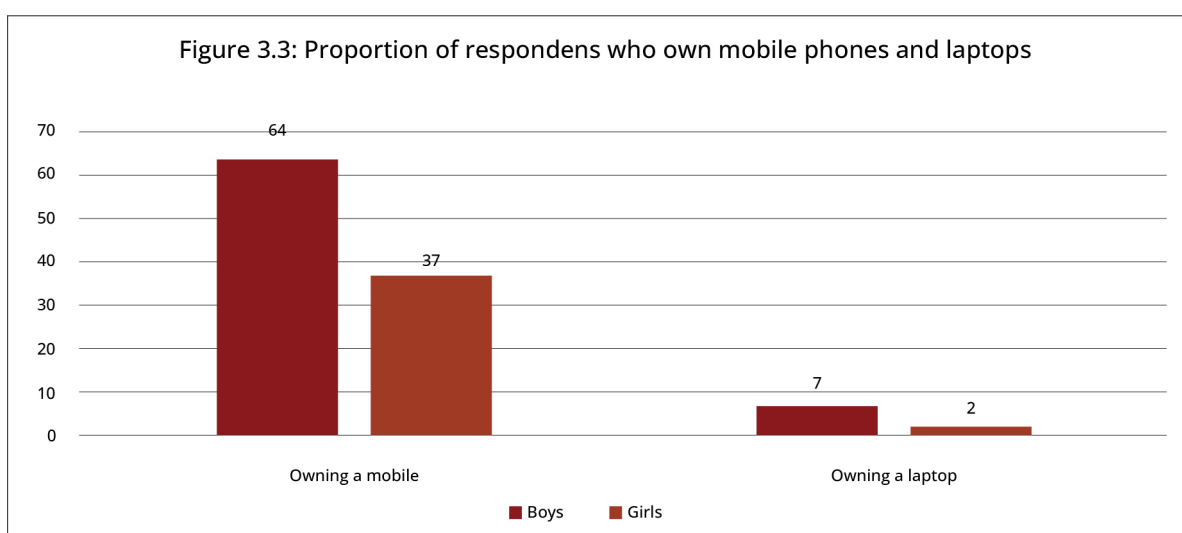
The profile of respondents interviewed qualitatively, was similar to the respondents surveyed.

Having understood the respondent demographic, the next few sub-sections outline adolescents' access to digital devices and the internet; their use of the internet; and parental supervision. Perspectives of the parents and teachers on the same is also outlined.

3.2 Access to digital devices

Studying the patterns of device access helps gain insights on the access and use of the internet, which in turn will determine the exposure to OCSEA among adolescents.

Of the total adolescent respondents 51% reported to owing a mobile phone – 64% boys and 37% girls (Figure 3.3). A slightly higher proportion of respondents in urban (55%) and peri-urban (52%) locations reported to ownership of a mobile phone, as compared to those in rural locations (45%). The gender gap in ownership of mobile phone was the lower in urban locations (23%) as compared to rural and peri-urban locations (28%) (Table 3.2.1, Annexure 1). Among those who did not own a mobile phone, all respondents had shared access with parents, friends, or other family members. A higher proportion of girl respondents reported to sharing a mobile phone (63%) as compared to their boy counterparts (37%) (Tables 3.2.1, Annexure 1).



N = 822. Male = 418. Female = 404

A very small proportion of adolescent respondents reported to owning a laptop. (Figure 3.3). The adolescent respondents unanimously preferred to use the phone to access the internet (reported by 98% adolescents, see table 3.2.2, Annexure 1).

During qualitative interactions as well, adolescents and parents reported that more boys tend to own mobile phones, as compared to girls. In one instance in Uttar Pradesh, a boy reported dropping out of school for a few days to undertake manual labour so he could buy a smart phone. Parents, recognising the threat posed by the internet, preferred it if their girls did not use the phone and internet. They felt that girls' using the internet would expose them to unnecessary online conversations, information and possible harassment. Hence, they restricted girls' access to the internet, by not allowing them to own mobile devices. The girls instead accessed the internet on shared devices.

“Our son has his mobile phone and only he uses the internet. The daughter does not use the internet.” – A parent, Delhi

“The camera gets switched on at times without the person knowing it, and then everybody can see you on the internet. Girls should be careful while using phones” – A parent, Rajasthan

An increase in phone use following the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown was reported. Parents had to give their phones to their children to access online classes. Some adolescents who did not use the phone prior to the pandemic, had to learn and use the same for online classes. The increase in phone and internet use post-COVID-19 and increased social media consumption, has also been widely reported in secondary literature and other surveys (see Section 1 of the report).

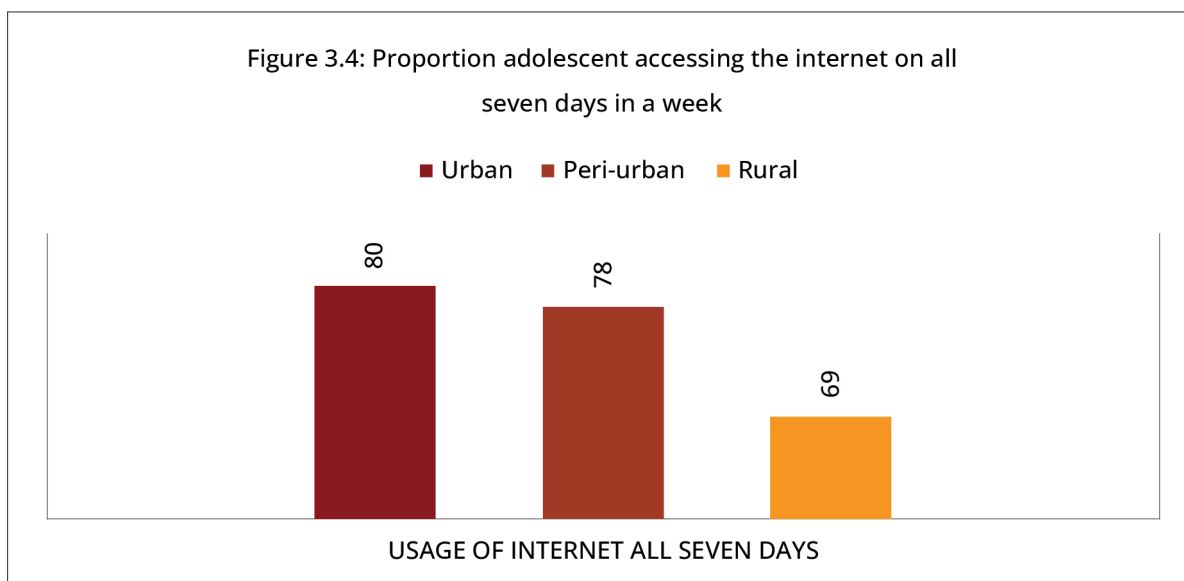
“I have been using phone so much more after COVID. Before that, I hardly had any knowledge of how to operate a phone” – An Adolescent Girl, Delhi

Teachers corroborated that while both girls and boys had access to digital devices and the internet, girls usually had ‘restricted access’ and limited ownership of devices, as compared to boys.

3.3 Internet access and use

All (100%) adolescent respondents had access to the internet (Table 3.3.1, Annexure 1). 91% of the respondents (92% boys and 90% girls) reported last using the internet on the day or the day just before the survey. A slightly higher proportion of respondents in urban locations (93%) reported accessing the internet on the day and the day preceding the survey, as compared to those in peri-urban (91%) and rural locations (88%) (Table 3.3.2, Annexure 1). Comparing across age groups, a significantly higher proportion of adolescents, more than 15 years old, reported to using the internet on the day of the survey (83%) as compared to those 13-15 years of age (65%). However, a higher proportion of those 13- 15 years of age reported using the internet on the day preceding the survey and in the last week (Table 3.3.15, Annexure 1).

Three-fourth (76%) of the adolescent respondents used the internet on all seven days of the week. 79% of the boys as compared to 73% of the girls used the internet on all seven days of the week. A slightly higher proportion of urban respondents (80%) reported using the internet on all seven days as compared to those in peri-urban (78%) and rural locations (69%) (see Figure 3.4). Only 65% of adolescent girls in rural locations accessed the internet on all seven days as compared to 76% and 78% of adolescent girls in peri-urban and rural locations respectively (Table 3.3.3, Annexure 1). On an average, adolescents more than 15 years reported using the internet for 6.3 days a week, while those under 15 years used the internet for an average 5.8 days a week (Table 3.3.16, Annexure 1).



N = 822. Urban = 284. Peri-Urban= 269. Rural = 269

33% of adolescents used the internet for 1-2 hours a day, 21% for 2-3 hours and 10% for 3-4 hours,

each day. 25% of adolescents used the internet for less than one hour and 12% used it for more than four hours a day. 74% of girl respondents reported using the internet for less two hours, a day. Whereas among boys nearly 70% reported using the internet for more than hour, for up to

four hours in a day. (Tables 3.3.4, Annexure 1). **Thus, access to the internet among adolescent boys appear to be higher than girls – with a greater proportion having ownership to phones, accessing the internet on all seven days and using the internet for a greater number of hours each day.**

Across age groups, all respondents who reported using the internet for more than 8 hours a day were more than 15 years. A higher proportion of respondents in this age group also used the internet for 2-8 hours a day, as compared to those who were 13-15 years. Among respondents who used the internet for less than one hour a day, 60% were 13-15 years (Table 3.3.17, Annexure 1). **Thus, adolescents older than 15 years of age, used the internet more than their younger counterparts**

Across settlements, a slightly higher weekly and daily usage of the internet was reported in urban locations as compared to peri-urban and rural locations (Tables 3.3.4, Annexure 1).

During qualitative interactions, adolescents reported mostly using the internet and phone during the day; more so those who shared access. Among those who owned phones, reported using it at night to view social media sites and entertainment videos.

All parents reported that their wards accessed the internet. Majority parents (81%) said that their wards accessed the internet on all seven days of the week. A higher proportion of parents in urban and peri-urban locations (83% each) reported their wards accessed the internet on all seven days of the week, as compared to those in rural locations (75%) (Table 3.3.6, Annexure 1). This corroborates with the weekly internet usage reported by adolescents.

As with adolescents, 72% parents (77% males and 68% females) reported their wards used the internet for more than one hour, for up to four hours a day. The daily average internet use among adolescents, reported by the parents was 3.02 hours. A higher proportion of parents in urban locations reported their wards to be using the internet for more than four hours in a day (Table 3.3.7, Annexure 1). Thus, **parents appear to be aware of the extent of internet usage by their adolescent wards.**

Among teachers, only 29% reported that their students accessed the internet in schools (Table 3.3.8, Annexure 1). During qualitative interactions, teachers reported that most schools had a no tolerance policy, and that internet access was available only to teachers and faculty members. In peri-urban and urban contexts despite the no-mobile policy, students sometimes accessed their phones in the schools. As with parents, teachers said that there was an increase in mobile phone use during the COVID-19 pandemic, where phones and the internet had to be used for education.

“Mobiles are not allowed in our school. The mobile was used only during the Corona period because at that time there was a gap in the education of the children, so to cover that, the mobile was used in the school by the teachers and the students. Use of mobile phones in school premises is absolutely prohibited. During the smart classes in the school, only the internet is used by the control room authorities” – Teacher, Rajasthan.

“We have a strict no phone policy in school, but despite this, students do bring it. If we get to know a student has their mobile in class with them, we immediately take the phone away and request them to collect it after school”- Teacher, Uttar Pradesh

Purpose of internet usage

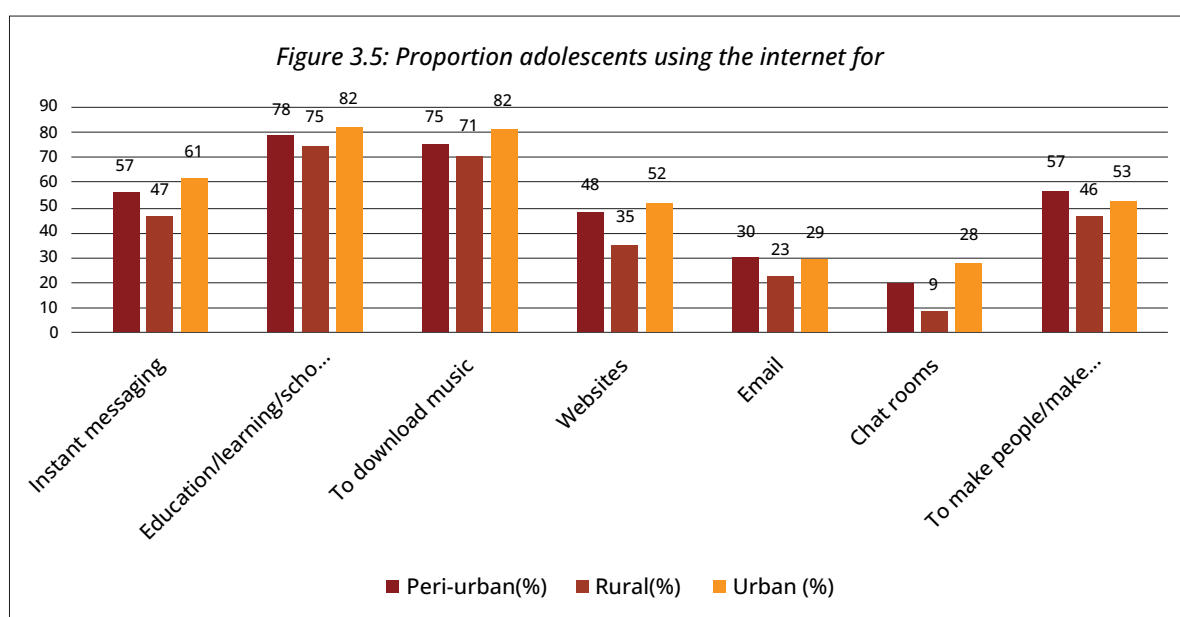
Nearly all the adolescent respondents (98%) reported using the internet to access social media platforms. This was reported by boys and girls alike. 79% reported using the internet for educational/ learning purposes or to do school assignments (81% boys and 77% girls). Other popular uses of the internet were - to download music, play games, for instant messaging and to meet people or make friends (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Use of the internet, as reported by adolescents

Purpose of internet use	Total (%)	Boys(%)	Girls(%)
Social media platforms	98	98	98
Education/learning/school assignments	79	81	77
To download music	76	76	76
Playing games	63	76	51
Instant messaging	55	62	48
To meet people/make friends	52	65	38
Websites	45	56	34
Email	27	38	17
Chat rooms	19	26	12
Blog/Online Journal	14	12	17
Online dating	5	5	5
Total (N)	822	418	404

As can be seen from Table 3.1, a greater proportion of boys reported using the internet to play games, for instant messaging, to access websites and chat rooms, and to make friends/meet people as compared to the girls.

Comparing across settlements, a higher proportion of adolescent respondents living in urban settlements reported using the internet for educational purposes, to download music, visit websites and for instant messaging. A similar proportion of respondents in urban and peri-urban locations used the internet to play games; this proportion was lower in rural locations (Figure 3.5, Table 3.3.9, Annexure 1).



N= 822. Urban = 284. Peri-Urban = 269. Rural = 269.

Comparing across age groups, a statistically higher proportion of adolescents over 15 years of age, used the internet to access websites, email, chatrooms, to download music, for online journaling and blogs, to access social media and to make friends (Tables 3.3.18.1-11, Annexure 1).

During qualitative interactions as well, adolescents reported using the internet for education, to chat with friends through WhatsApp, to watch videos and for entertainment through social media. While adolescents appear to use the internet in multiple ways, the predominant uses of the internet were to access social media for entertainment, for education and instant messaging.

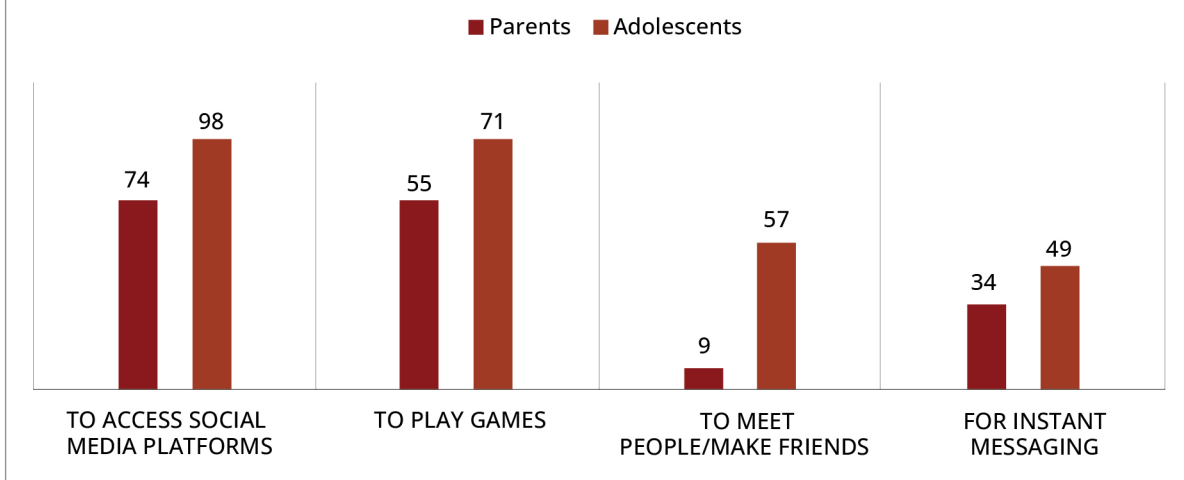
77% of adolescents also used the internet to communicate with people – friends, family, or those they met online (Table 3.3.10, Annexure 1). Of this group, nearly 90% of adolescents communicated with persons who were their own age and family that they knew and often met. 68% communicated with persons of their age, but did not meet them often; 72% communicated with family they did not often meet; and 62% communicated with people they personally knew. 71% of adolescents reported communicating with people they met online through friends and family, 14% communicated with those met through dating apps and 27% communicated with those they did not know in person (Table 3.2). Thus, **in addition to communicating with family and friends, a significant proportion of adolescents also communicated online with persons they did not know well.** The study by the Internet Watch Foundation also indicates that nearly 40% of respondents reported to accepting friend requests from second degree contacts and even absolute strangers (see Section 1 of the report).

Table 3.2: People adolescents communicated with by using the internet

People communicated with by using the internet	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
People of own age who are often met	88	93	82	87	85	90
People of own age who are not often met	68	84	51	71	67	65
Family that is often met	91	92	89	91	89	91
Family that is not often met	72	83	60	72	74	70
People personally known	62	69	55	62	61	63
People met online through friends and family	71	76	65	72	72	69
People you get information from	82	83	81	78	75	91
People met through an online dating app	14	15	13	17	15	11
People you don't know in person but know online in other ways (than mentioned above)	27	27	27	25	26	30
Total number of respondents (N)	634	418	404	269	269	284

84% of parents (87% in urban locations, 85% in rural locations and 80% in peri-urban locations) were aware of the purpose for which their wards used the internet. Of these, 75% reported their wards using the internet for education (79% urban, 80% peri-urban, 64% rural). 74% parents believed that their wards used the internet to access social media platforms (87% rural, 77% peri-urban and 63% urban), 60% reported them downloading music, 55% reported them playing games, 34% using instant messaging; and only 9% believed that their wards used the internet to meet people and make friends (Table 3.3.12, Annexure 1). These proportions were much lower than those reported by their adolescent wards (Figure 3.6). **While parents appeared to be aware of the extent of internet use among their adolescent wards, and of the common uses of the internet – such as for education and to access social media; they seemed to be much less aware of the extent to which the adolescents used the internet to meet new people or visit chat rooms or for instant messaging.**

Figure 3.6: Comparative analysis of purpose of internet use, as reported by parents and their adolescent wards(%)



N = 183 - Parents who were aware of the purpose for which their wards used the internet and their adolescent wards

Among teachers who were aware of the purpose of internet use by students, 87% (of 39) reported internet to be used by students for education, followed by 79% who said that it was used to access social media platforms. 77% reported adolescents playing games on the internet, 62% to download music and 44% for instant messaging. As with parents, teachers appeared to be aware of the common/ predominant uses of the internet by adolescents. During qualitative interactions, teachers felt that owing to COVID, the use of phones for education was now inevitable; however, that the primary interest of adolescents and young persons was to use social media, make reels and videos to be uploaded on Instagram and TikTok, to play games and chat with friends.

“According to me, Class 11th-12th students might be watching study related videos on internet but not very willingly. Most of their time would on internet would be spent on watching movies, playing games, listening to songs, watching song videos, chatting with friends on WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook”
 – Teacher, Bihar

“For studying, children mostly make use of YouTube. During COVID, WhatsApp groups were formed for students to share homework and other notices. Also, online classes were scheduled, which students used to join. Children use WhatsApp to chat with their friends and Instagram for their entertainment purpose. They use TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Moj apps to make reels, short videos and upload them online”
 – Teacher, Rajasthan

Digital platforms used

The most popular social media platforms used by adolescents were YouTube and WhatsApp (Table 3.3). These two platforms were reported to be the most common across settlement types and among boys and girls too. This was followed by Facebook and then Instagram. Instagram was more popular among urban adolescents as compared to their rural and peri-urban counterparts. A similar trend was seen in use of Twitter and other OTT platforms with urban adolescents reporting a higher usage, as compared to peri-urban and rural adolescents. This social media preference reported, appears to be different from the India survey on patterns of internet use by youth (2020), where Instagram was reported as the top social media choice. It is likely that with majority girl respondents having shared access to phones, personal accounts on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram were limited. This was reported by the adolescent girls during qualitative interactions. They reported using social media platforms through their parents or siblings accounts.

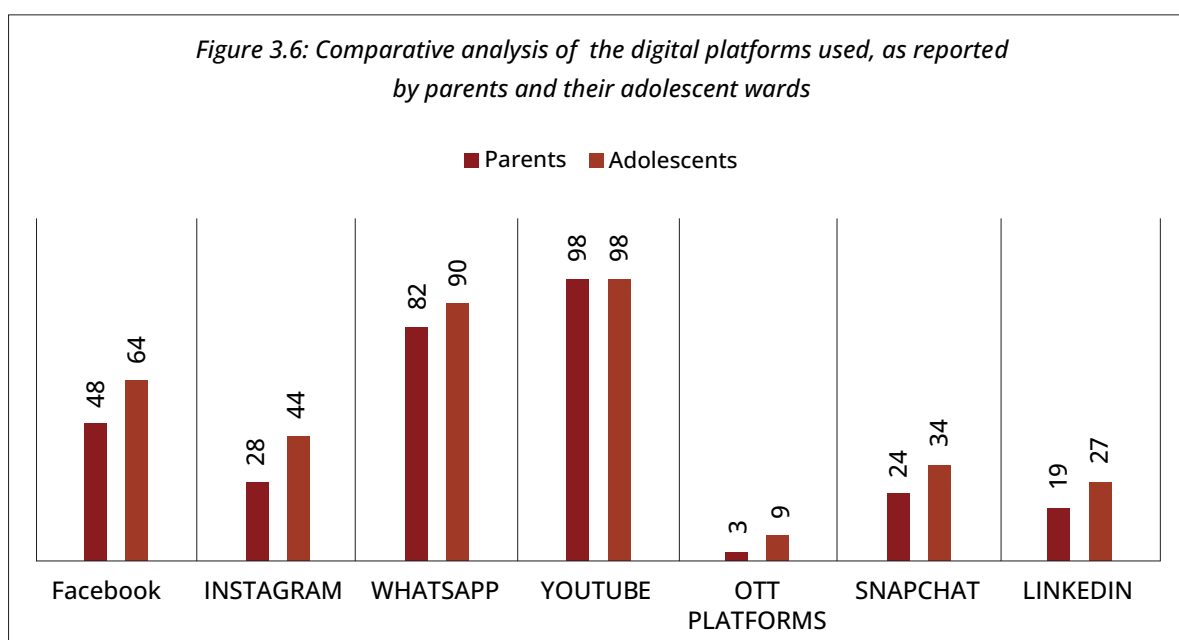
“My mother and father both have an account on Facebook but not me. I sometimes watch stories on FB uploaded by other people. I do not have any account on social media apps.” – Adolescent Girl, Bihar

Table 3.3: Social media usage, as reported by adolescents

Social Media Platform	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
YouTube	96	95	97	96	97	95
WhatsApp	87	84	89	88	86	85
Facebook	61	83	38	64	57	61
Instagram	46	61	31	47	34	57
Snapchat	39	40	39	42	32	44
LinkedIn	30	31	29	31	30	30
MX Taka tak	14	10	18	15	13	14
OTT Platforms	10	17	4	10	7	13
Twitter	6	7	4	6	3	9
Josh	6	4	7	7	3	6
Snare Chat	4	2	7	6	5	3
Tinder	2	0	3	2	1	2
Total N	822	418	404	269	269	284

In addition to the above-mentioned platforms, during qualitative interactions, rural adolescent respondents reported to using the Diksha App for education during COVID-19. Urban adolescents reported using Unacademy and Utkarsh Apps.

As can be seen from Figure 3.7, most parents were aware of the social media platforms that their wards were accessing.



N=182 – Parents who were aware of the purpose for which their wards used the internet, and their adolescent wards

Teachers reported their students used YouTube and WhatsApp, followed by Facebook and Instagram.

Interactions with representatives of CSOs highlight the explosion of phone and internet access in the last two years, owing to COVID-19. The representatives felt that while there was a digital divide, with those in urban locations having greater access, the divide had reduced significantly due to COVID-19. During the lockdown, many parents were forced to buy phones and ensure internet access for their adolescent wards to pursue education. The primary difference in rural-urban access was that in rural locations, there was shared access to devices, more so among girls. Other than for educational purposes, the uses of the phone and internet reported by CSO representatives included social media use (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok), watching entertainment videos and playing video games.

3.4 Parental supervision

63% of adolescents – 70% of girls and 57% of boys – reported that their internet use was supervised by their parents or an adult. A higher proportion of urban adolescents (67%) reported that their internet use was supervised, as compared to those in peri-urban (62%) and rural locations (60%). Adult/parental supervision was reported highest by urban girls at 76% (Table 3.4.1, Annexure 1).

The most common methods used for monitoring included – checking devices to supervise internet activity – reported by 85% of adolescents (91% of boys and 80% of girls). This method was most reported by rural adolescents (88%) followed by peri-urban and urban adolescents (84% each). Other methods included rules limiting hours and purpose of internet use. A greater proportion of girl respondents reported these rules, as compared to boys (Table 3.4). **It appears that, as with the ownership of devices and internet access, the parental supervision was also gendered. Adolescent girls appeared to be subject to more rules; while with boys, the monitoring usually involved checking of devices.**

Parents corroborated this during qualitative interactions. They highlighted that given the greater risk of adolescent girls being exposed to unwanted materials and persons, it was better to monitor their use than face challenges and societal embarrassment later. A mother from Bihar said that whenever her daughters asked for the phone to study, she stayed in the same place and ensured that they did not open anything other than the educational videos and materials. One of the adolescent girls from Delhi also stated that it was better for parents to check the phone, as doubts often led to phone access being taken away and even preparation for early marriage.

“...I think it is fine to check young children’s phones and monitor their internet usage once in a while by the parents. It is necessary because if parents have the slightest doubt on the child and if he/she does not permit them to check their phone, the doubt escalates and sometimes results in early marriage preparation by the parents. So, it is better that they check the phones and let the child study further.” – Adolescent Girl, Delhi

A greater proportion of respondents in urban locations reported the use of software to monitor internet activities – including software monitoring online access, spam mails, pop-up ads, sexually explicit content, chat rooms and those that limit the time spent online (Table 3.4).

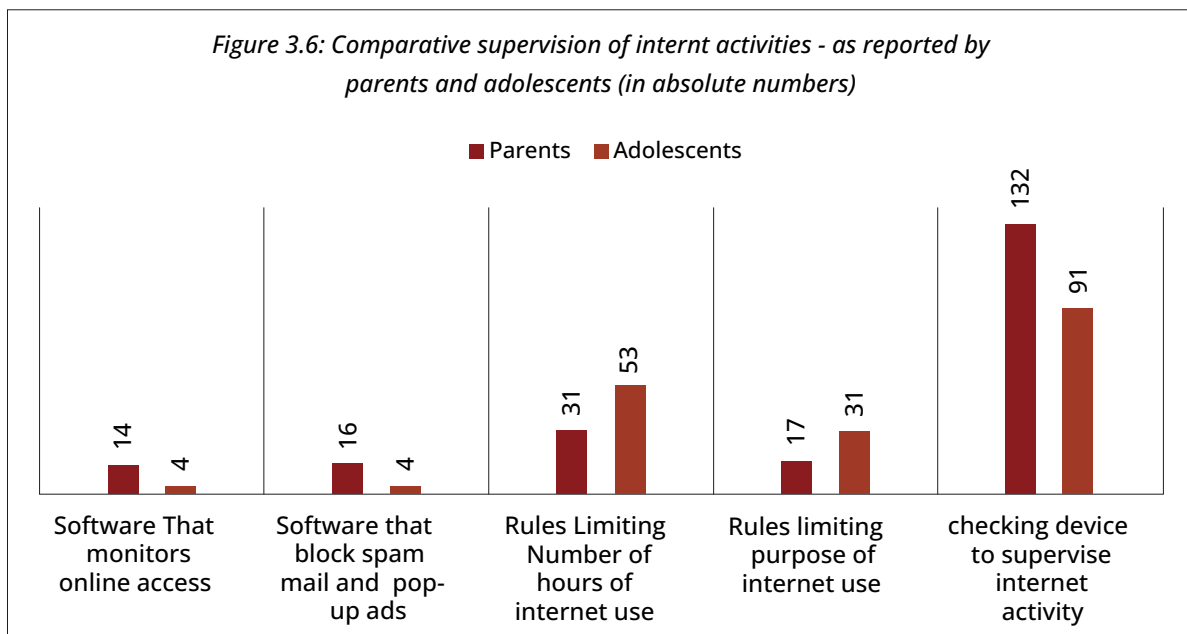
Table 3.4: Methods of parental supervision, as reported by adolescents

Method of supervision	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Software that monitors online access	5	3	8	6	3	7
Software that blocks spam mail and pop-up ads	5	3	7	5	2	8
Software that filters sexually explicit images/websites	2	3	1	1	2	2
Software that blocks/controls use of chat rooms	0	0	0	1	0	1

Software that limits time spent on internet	1	2	1	2	1	1
Rules limiting number of hours of internet use	24	14	33	27	26	20
Rules limiting number purpose of internet use	12	12	12	13	14	9
Checking device to supervise internet activity	85	91	80	84	88	84
Total (N)	519	237	282	166	162	191

Among parents, 74% reported that they monitored their wards' internet activities. As also reported by adolescents, a higher proportion of parents, in urban locations, monitored their wards' internet activities, as compared to those in peri-urban and rural locations. Similar methods of monitoring – including checking device and rules limited hours and use of the internet were reported by parents. A greater proportion of parents in urban locations reported using software to monitor internet activities (Table 3.4.5, Annexure 1).

An analysis of the responses of the 162 (74%) parents who reported monitoring their wards' internet activities, and their wards responses on parental supervision indicates that only 114 adolescents (of the 162) reported their internet activities to be supervised. In other words, nearly 30% of adolescents of this group were unaware that their internet activities were being monitored. Some differences in the methods of monitoring were also noted. A lower number of adolescents, as compared to their parents, reported the use of software, and checking of devices. This could indicate parents monitoring adolescent's internet activities without them being aware (Figure 3.8).



Parent N = 162. Adolescent N = 114

Qualitative interactions with adolescents, suggest that while they found parental monitoring irritating and hassling at times, they felt it was necessary. The monitoring, they felt, ensured that the child was protected from harm and risks of the internet. Several respondents who shared phones with their siblings, also reported to checking the phones thoroughly, to ensure that their siblings were not watching inappropriate content or did not reveal personal information.

“We should have to monitor what our younger siblings are watching on the internet because there are a lot of notifications coming up on the internet, and if they get clicked then some inappropriate material, which contains sexual content or romantic scenes, are displayed. And they develop their interest in such

things and then feel like searching for them again and again” – Adolescent Boy, UP

Adolescents were also scolded by their parents for excessive internet and phone use. Some parents stopped children from using their phones and the internet after excessive gaming.

“My mother is not educated so if I am reading something on WhatsApp, she will doubt me and ask my elder sister to check what I am doing- this becomes irritating at times” – Adolescent Boy, Delhi

“Initially my mother used to permit me to use the phone and internet, but when she saw that I am spending a lot of time on PubG, she forbade me” – Adolescent Boy, Bihar

A few adolescents reported that their parents did not supervise their internet use. Parents, on the other hand, felt that for those working, it was challenging to work fulltime as well as monitor children’s internet use.

“No, our parents never monitor what we are watching on the internet. They do not understand much about mobile phones and the internet. But my parents always ask – what we are watching? So, I say that I am watching things related to my studies or I am talking to my friends” – Adolescent Boy, Rajasthan

“The parents are working hard to support their children. During lockdown all of us worked hard to be able to afford a smart phone. Now when a child asks for phone to study, nobody knows what they are doing. How much a mother can do? It becomes very tough”– Mother, UP

The need to monitor adolescents’ internet use was reported by nearly all parents with whom qualitative interactions were undertaken. Though the parents trusted their children, they outlined risks being exposed to obscene pictures or videos, fake information, or even just excessive screen time, which could be harmful to their health. Most said that they made the effort to view and monitor adolescents’ phone use. One mother in Bihar went to the extent of saying that she ensured that her son, daughter-in-law, and daughters gave her their phones at night to prevent misuse of the internet.

“Children should be monitored with the internet to prevent viewing of any obscene pictures or videos such as fake information being circulated about everything” Mother, Delhi

“There are always risks that must be taken care of. Children need to be guided so that they don’t look up unnecessary things and use internet only for important information relevant for their education. There are so many inappropriate websites on the internet, which need to be avoided by the children” – Father, Rajasthan

Teachers felt that the primary responsibility of supervision was that of the parents. During school hours, there was limited monitoring done in schools, which included surprise bag checks to ensure that students did not have phones. If phones were found; or it was seen that students were using the internet in schools, the parents were informed.

3.5 Internet first usage and importance

79% adolescent respondents first started using the internet between the ages of 11-15. The mean age for first using the internet was 14 years. No differences across gender and settlement types in age at first usage were noted (Table 3.5.1, Annexure 1). 79% adolescents had begun using the internet for the first time in the last three years, and 31% in the last two years. This corroborates the increase in internet usage, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

78% parents also reported that their wards first started using the internet between 11-15 years of age. A higher proportion of parents in urban and peri-urban locations reported this age group, as compared to those in rural location. 20% of parents from rural locations reported that their wards first started using the internet at 16-17 years of age (Table 3.5.2, Annexure 1).

When asked about their views on the importance of the internet, 79% of adolescent respondents reported the internet to be important or extremely important for them (Table 3.5.3, Annexure 1). 76% of parents said that they trusted their wards to be responsible or completely responsible in using the internet. A higher proportion of parents in rural locations trusted their wards to be

responsible or completely responsible in using the internet (Table 3.5.4, Annexure 1). 62% teachers trusted their students to be responsible or completely responsible in using the internet (Table 3.5.5, Annexure 1).

Key takeaways

- Access to the mobile phone and internet was universal. A higher proportion of adolescent boys owned personal mobile phones, as compared to girls. Those who did not own phones had shared access.
- A majority of adolescents used the phone on all seven days of the week, and on an average for 2-4 hours a day. A greater proportion of adolescent boys used the internet on all seven days of the week, and for more hours each day. Thus, access to phones and the internet is gendered.
- The weekly and daily use of the internet was also slightly higher in urban locations, as compared to peri-urban and rural locations.
- The most popular use of the internet, by adolescents, was to access social media platforms. Other uses included education and learning, downloading music, playing games, instant messaging and to meet people.
- Adolescents used the internet to communicate with known persons; however nearly 30% communicated with strangers/people they did not know; and 70% communicated with second degree contacts.
- Parents were aware of the extent of internet use among their adolescent wards and the common uses of the internet - such as for education and to access social media. However, they appeared to be much less aware of the extent to which the adolescents used the internet to meet new people or visit chat rooms or for instant messaging.
- YouTube and WhatsApp were the most popular social media platforms among adolescents, followed by Facebook and Instagram. Instagram and Twitter were more popular among urban adolescents.
- 63% of adolescents and 74% of parents reported parental supervision/monitoring of phone and internet use by adolescents. Checking of phones and devices was the most popular method of monitoring.
- As with the ownership of devices and internet access, the parental supervision was also gendered. Adolescent girls appeared to be subject to more rules; while with boys, the monitoring usually involved checking of devices. Parents articulated several risks of internet use, more so for girls, making the case for monitoring and stricter rules for girls.

Section 4: Internet risk perception and awareness of OCSEA

This section begins by exploring the perception of the respondent group on the risks and threats posed by internet use. It goes on to outlining their perception and awareness of OCSEA, and the available laws and redressal mechanisms to address OCSEA.

4.1 Internet risk perception

85% of adolescents believed that using the internet and social media posed a threat to privacy and security. This perception of threat was higher among urban adolescents (91%) as compared to those in peri-urban (81%) and rural locations (82%) (Table 4.1.1, Annexure 1). Echoing the views of the adolescents, 88% of parents and 93% of teachers believed that the internet and social media was a threat to the privacy and security of young persons (Tables 4.1.2 and 4.1.3, Annexure 1).

When asked about their opinion on sharing personal information on digital platforms, adolescents, and parents alike, felt that sharing personal information on romantic/dating websites, chat rooms, and gaming websites was riskier than on educational platforms and shopping websites. A greater proportion of parents, as compared to adolescents, felt that sharing personal information on social media platforms and gaming websites/Apps was unsafe (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Percentage of respondents who felt it was unsafe to share personal information on digital platforms

Platforms	Adolescents - % unsafe	Parents - % unsafe
Romantic/dating websites and apps	64	61
Chatrooms	54	56
Gaming websites/apps	48	68
Social media platforms	41	60
Online shopping websites	28	35
Educational platforms	9.00	16
Total (N)	822	218

A higher proportion of adolescent girls (55%) as compared to boys (27%), felt that it was unsafe to share personal information on social media websites. The same was the case with gaming websites. On the other hand, a higher proportion of adolescent boys felt it was unsafe to share personal information on chatrooms (59%) and romantic/dating websites and apps (70%), as compared to their girl counterparts (48% chatrooms and 59% dating websites/apps) (Table 4.1.4.1-4.1.4.6., Annexure 1). It is likely that with more adolescent boys personally owning phones, their ability to access chatrooms and dating websites may be higher, and hence may have a greater risk perception.

Teachers reported that gaming and dating websites were the most unsafe to share personal information (82% each), followed by chatrooms and social media websites.

Thus, the common perception across all respondent groups appears to be that dating and gaming websites/apps, chat rooms were the most unsafe, followed by social media platforms. Online shopping and educational platforms were seen as safer.

During qualitative interactions, respondents – adolescents, parents and teachers alike, primarily highlighted the risks of exposure to sexual content. Respondents felt that with increased access to the internet, exposure to sexual, X-rated, and inappropriate content was inevitable. Adolescents had varying perspectives on exposure to sexual content. Some felt that watching such content was wrong and could lead to data leaks, affect education and concentration, and lead young people

astray. Girls particularly reported that if they were caught viewing such content, their phone and internet access could be terminated. They also highlighted that if girls shared personal information or photographs with boys, their lives could be significantly affected if the boys' posted the photographs online. Hence, they highlighted the importance for girls to practice safe online behaviour. Adolescent boys highlighted that often boys watched such content out of curiosity; and that watching sexual content should be acceptable for those above 18 years of age or suitably mature boys. Several adolescents mentioned that watching sexual/X-rated content even once could make them susceptible to getting such content in the future too.

Adolescents highlighted incidents where, while using phones under parental supervision, pop-ups and ads, with sexually explicit content had come up. The parents had seen that and asked them to ignore it. None of them reported to have been caught viewing sexual content. However, a boy reported that his friend had been caught by his father while watching sexually explicit (pornographic) content, while another mentioned that his uncle had been caught by his mother. In both cases, they had been scolded and their phones taken away.

"If any advertisement or links pop-up randomly on a mobile screen and we click on it and watch it by mistake; then if our family members noticing us watching this, they think that we do not study by using the internet. We are only watching such adult content on the internet. Then they get the wrong idea about us. This is a big risk" – Adolescent Girl, UP

The gender differences in 'what is considered an online risk' or risk perceptions was highlighted by adolescent girls and boys. Nearly all adolescents highlighted that it was more acceptable for boys and married persons to watch sexual content, as compared to girls. Girls watching such content could not only impact the girls (as highlighted above), but also lead to embarrassment and shame for the family.

"Single girls can get penalised if they are caught watching sexual content. For boys on the other hand, it is seen as acceptable. At the most, they might be scolded" – Adolescent Boy, UP.

Parents expressed concern on the risks that the excessive internet exposure placed on their wards. Other than exposure to sexual/obscene content, the risks of wrong/misguided information and fake news were highlighted by parents. Some went on to say that using the internet posed physical and mental risks for children. Concerns on online sexual harassment were also raised. Parents reiterated the views of the adolescents, that the risks of online use were more for girls than boys.

"My daughter was chatting with her male classmate. This created some issues and problems in our family" – Parent, Delhi

"Girls should be given a phone once they reach home and not before that. Access to internet and phone can lead to bad things as well. While boys can be given access to a phone anytime- they go out, so they need it to work and talk to people" – Parent, Bihar

Teachers felt that looking at sexual content online, did pose risks; but adolescents were curious about sex-related content and that it would be difficult to prevent them from viewing it. There was a perception that such content was seen more by those who lived by themselves or in hostels. In rural community settings, it was more challenging to get the privacy to view such content. Some teachers expressed concerns regarding addiction to sexual content could impact the mindset and future of adolescents. They highlighted the risk that once exposed to such content, (a) adolescents could actively seek it out; and (b) it could appear on their online feed.

"In society, if a girl or boy is caught watching some sexually explicit material or performing some sexual act, the girl is blamed much more than the boy. Boys still get some discount because of their gender. It is unacceptable but such norms exist in society" – Teacher, Bihar

While highlighting the risks, teachers pointed out that it was acceptable and important for adolescents to watch videos on sex education. They felt that often sex education videos were also seen as 'bad' content by parents and families, limiting adolescents' access to such information.

Civil society respondents said that viewing of sexually explicit/pornographic content was common among adolescents and young persons. Despite the government ban on pornographic websites, respondents believed that content was easily available through social media and Google search, putting adolescents at risk. One of the respondents felt that with the government having banned the big websites, the pornographic content now available was more violent, giving adolescents a false sense of what could be seen as 'appropriate'. She went on to say that one of young persons in their field area said that 'without slapping, sex was incomplete'. Another respondent highlighted a similar situation, where an adolescent girl felt that it was appropriate for a boy to see her 'boobs', as long as her face was not visible in the picture. With the rapid increase in internet access, the ability of parents to ensure that risks were mitigated was difficult. She narrated another incident, where a girl's phone was closely monitored by her mother; however, the girl installed a few apps to chat with boys from across the world. When the conversations were over, she would uninstall the apps, so her mother did not know; and install them again, when needed. The need for greater understanding among young persons on what is 'appropriate and safe' and what could be risky, was highlighted.

Other online risks mentioned included phishing, hacking, catfishing, and misuse of content posted on social media. Some of the adolescent girls mentioned that they filtered/screened unknown callers to ensure safety and avoid any risks.

Additionally, teachers expressed concerns regarding addiction to the internet and gaming, which affected the mental health of adolescents. They also mentioned exposure to violence through videos and gaming, as risks.

"There are several risks such as - One of our students who used to excel in class during his primary schooling, has now lost interest in studying due to this distraction caused by the internet and mobile phone. Children get so sucked into it that they start ignoring their studies. All of them play various video games on their phones, which have a lot of violence in them. This makes them aggressive and anti-social as children. Further nowadays, children think that playing games on the mobile is equivalent to going out and playing with friends; this affects their physical health too"- Teacher, Bihar.

Teachers also corroborated the differences on how online risks were perceived for boys and girls, subjecting girls to greater monitoring and limiting their access. CSO respondents echoed these views by stating that there was a protectionist attitude when it came to girls accessing phones and the internet; hence the common perception was that girls were more at risk than boys.

4.2 Understanding of OCSEA

83% of adolescents, 75% of parents and 93% of teachers reported that children/adolescents could be sexually abused or exploited online. A higher proportion of adolescents in urban locations (89%) reported the possibility of online sexual abuse, as compared to those in peri-urban (81%) and rural locations (79%). A similar trend is noted among parents, where 80% of urban parents reported the possibility of online sexual abuse, as compared to 73% of peri-urban and 71% of rural parents (Tables 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.3, Annexure 1).

Among adolescents who believed that children/adolescents could be sexually abused or exploited online, nearly 90% or more reported OCSEA to constitute- financial fraud, rumours about sexual behaviours, being asked to share or shown sexually explicit content, having sexually-oriented discussions, and receiving messages with advertisements or links to X-rated content. A slightly higher proportion of adolescent boys, as compared to girls, and those living in urban locations reported each of these aspects (Table 4.2.4, Annexure 1). 79% and 48% of adolescents respectively, felt that people making jokes online and visiting or viewing pornographic content was also OCSEA (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2. What OCSEA constitutes – as reported by adolescents

What constitutes OCSEA	% Adolescents
Financial fraud or cheating someone financially	94
Spreading rumours about sexual behaviour online	92
Receiving sexually explicit content (images, videos, posts, messages, pages)	92
Being asked to share sexually explicit content - such as sexy/nude photograph	92
Being shown/shared sexually explicit images and/or videos without permission	92
People having sexual discussions (even after they have been asked to stop)	91
People posting rude things about views/ posts online	90
Receiving messages with advertisement or links to X-rated content	89
People making jokes online	79
Visiting/viewing a pornographic website or content	48
Total (N)	684

Given the definition of OCSEA for this study - “unwanted sexual conduct on any digital platform. It includes a wide range of behaviours that use technology to share digital content such as images, videos, posts, messages, pages, etc.”. All options in Table 4.2, highlighted in green could be considered OCSEA. **It appears that a majority of adolescents understood what OCSEA constitutes. However, they also considered other aspects – such as financial fraud, making jokes and posting rude views online as OCSEA. There is hence a need for clear information to be imparted to adolescents on what OCSEA is, and how it can be prevented?**

Comparing across groups, on an average, respondents above 15 years of age were able to correctly identify/classify 5.4 instances as OCSEA, as compared to 4.9, among adolescents in 13-15 years group (Table 4.2.7, Annexure). **Thus, those above 15 years of age were more aware on what constitutes OCSEA.**

Among parents and teachers, 90% or more in each respondent group felt that all the listed aspects, except for people making jokes online and visiting/viewing pornographic content online, was OCSEA. All (100%) teachers reported that being shown or shared sexually explicit images/videos with, without permission, and posting rude posts online constituted OCSEA. 98% of teachers also felt that people making jokes online was OCSEA (Table 4.3). **As with adolescents, both parents and teachers appear to understand OCSEA but need more clarity on the differentiation between online sexual abuse and general online abuse.**

Table 4.3. What OCSEA constitutes – as reported by parents and teachers

Which can be considered OCSEA	Parents (%)	Teachers (%)
Visiting/viewing a pornographic website or content	55	38
Receiving messages with advertisement or links to X-rated content	91	93
Being shown/shared sexually explicit images and/or videos without permission	93	100
Receiving sexually explicit content (images, videos, posts, messages, pages)	92	95
People posting rude things about views/ posts online	90	100
Being asked to share sexually explicit content - such as sexy/nude photograph	91	95
People having sexual discussions (even after they have been asked to stop)	91	95
People making jokes online	81	98
Spreading rumours about sexual behaviour online	95	98

Financial fraud or cheating someone financially	96	95
Total (N)	163	42

Interactions with CSO representatives reflect a varied understanding and articulation of OCSEA. One of the respondents said that child pornography is OCSEA, another said that if a child or adolescent is talking to someone over the internet and the conversation made them uncomfortable, or if sexually explicit content was shared, that would be OCSEA. The third felt that consensual conversations, even if sexually explicit should not be considered OCSEA; and another said that the definition of OCSEA would depend on the laws and rules of the country. As mentioned in Section 1 of this report, there is a need for a standard definition of OCSEA and what it constitutes, specific to the Indian context.

4.3 Awareness of laws and redressal mechanisms for OCSEA

Only 39% of adolescents and 45% of parents reported that there were laws or rules in India to prevent online sexual abuse and exploitation. Only 33% of rural adolescents reported to be aware of such laws, as compared to 41% and 42% of peri-urban and urban adolescents respectively. A similar trend was noted among parents with urban parents being the most aware of the availability of laws (Tables 4.3.1 and 4.3.2, Annexure 1).

Among adolescents who were aware that there were laws/rules to prevent online sexual abuse and exploitation, 44% could not name any law or rules. Others named the JJ Act, Indian Penal Code, POCSO (2012) and the IT Act, in decreasing proportions respectively (Table 4.3.3, Annexure 1). Among parents, 36% could not name any laws or rules. The others reported to be aware of the Indian Penal Code, the POCSO, the JJ Act and the IT Act (Table 4.3.4, Annexure 1).

A much higher proportion of teachers – 87% reported that there were laws or rules in India to prevent online sexual abuse and exploitation. Of this group (39 of 45), 82% reported the POCSO Act, 72% the Indian Penal Code, 62% the JJ Act and 51% the IT Act as the available laws and rules to prevent online sexual abuse and exploitation (Table 4.3.6, Annexure 1).

During qualitative interactions as well, adolescents and parents reported they were unaware of any laws or rules to address online sexual abuse. Teachers reported they were aware of the POCSO Act.

Teachers thus appear to be more aware of the laws and rules to prevent online sexual abuse and exploitation. There is need for greater awareness among adolescents and their parents.

93% of adolescents, 95% of parents and 100% of teachers were aware that a police complaint could be filed if someone is sexually exploited online. A higher proportion of urban adolescents and parents were aware of this (Tables 4.3.7, 4.3.8 and 4.3.9, Annexure 1).

Specifically for sexual abuse among children and adolescents, 65% of adolescents, 67% of parents and 91% of teachers had heard of online platforms or helplines where sexual abuse among children and adolescents could be reported (Tables 4.3.10, 4.3.11 and 4.3.12, Annexure 1). Of those who had heard of online platforms/helplines for reporting, the most popular was the police station – cyber cell, followed by the 1098 ChildLine helpline. A greater proportion of teachers were aware of more helplines for OCSEA, as compared to adolescents and their parents (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Different respondents' awareness on online platforms/helplines where OCSEA can be reported

Online platforms/ helplines where OCSEA can be reported	Adolescents (%)	Parents (%)	Teachers (%)
Police station - cyber cell	98	98	100
Govt. online crime reporting portal	7	10	61
CCPWC	11	19	51
National Crime Records Bureau	1	1	41
POCSO e-box	11	9	63

NGO complaint cells/platform- Bachpan Bachao Andolan	13	14	22
IWF Aarambh India reporting portal	6	12	15
1098 helpline number	50	35	80
Others	1	1	2
Total(N)	538	145	41

Among adolescents who were aware of helplines, a greater proportion of boys reported that they were aware of the ChildLine (58%) as compared to girls (42%). A higher proportion of urban adolescents and parents were aware of NGO complaint cells, the IWF- Aarambh reporting portal, the Government online crime reporting portal and the CCPWC (Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children) as compared to their peri-urban and rural counterparts (Tables 4.3.13, Annexure 1).

During qualitative interactions, in addition to police complaints, adolescents mentioned that if they came across sexually explicit content, it could be reported to the social media platform (such as Instagram). In the urban locations, adolescents had heard of NGOs, who could support those who had faced any incidents of OCSEA.

“Since I watch reels on Instagram, I know that if any reel with adult content is displayed then we can report them to Instagram as there is an option to report” – Adolescent Girl, Rajasthan

“I am not aware, but one Google search can inform us about all the places where these matters can be reported. I am aware that we can report to police and cybercrime cell. I have heard the name of Cyber Crime Prevention Against Women and Children’ (CCPWC) and POCSO e-box. I don’t know the name of the NGOs, but I know that such NGOs work in India to support the cause” – Adolescent Boy, Bihar

Parents reported that their awareness of the police, cybercrime cell and helplines came from newspapers, posters of the ChildLine helpline number; and one parent reported to getting information from the TV show crime patrol.

Teachers said that in case of any incidents related to OCSEA, they could be reported to the police and that helpdesks had been set up at police stations. They also reported that helpdesks of social media platforms and NGOs were operational. Sexual offences could be reported to the 1098/ChildLine helpline; or on the emergency number 112. In UP, teachers reported to the 1090 women’s helpline number for stalking and abuse. Teachers stated that the sexual crimes could be registered under the POCSO Act, or with the district/state and national commissions for protection of child rights. Other than newspapers and TV news, teachers in UP said they had received a book and undergone a training on online sexual abuse and cyber security.

Awareness on the helplines for OCSEA were limited largely to the police cybercrime cell and the ChildLine. The sources of information on the helplines for parents and teachers were largely newspapers and TV. The need for more structured information to adolescents, parents, and teachers on the available online platforms/helplines and how OCSEA can be reported, is indicated.

4.4 Information and education on OCSEA

Having understood the respondents’ internet risk perceptions and their awareness on various aspects of OCSEA, including redressal; this sub-section seeks to outline the sources of information for adolescents on online safety and OCSEA.

Parents are an important source of information for adolescents, and they also supervise and monitor their internet use. 53% of adolescents informed that their parents had spoken to them on one or more aspects of online safety/responsible online behaviour (Table 4.5).

Nearly 50% of adolescents said that their parents had spoken to them about the risks of giving out personal information on the internet, 40% about chatting with strangers on the internet and 27% about responding to offensive messages. A higher proportion of boys reported that their parents

had spoken to them on giving out personal information, chatting with strangers, and responding to offensive messages.

A much lower proportion of adolescents reported that their parents had spoken to them on responding to sexually explicit/X-rated content or talking about personal things like sex. 15% or fewer parents spoke to their wards about responding to sexually explicit content, talking about personal matters like sex and dealing with X-rated pop-ups. A greater proportion of female parents (mothers) are said to have spoken to their wards about these aspects. It is likely that mothers' conversations with their daughters on these aspects, which is also reflected in a greater proportion of adolescent girls having reported a parent having spoken to them on this. Given the perceptions of parents that girls are more at risk to online sexual abuse and harassment, this is to be expected.

62% parents had spoken to their wards about online safety/responsible online behaviour. A majority had spoken about giving out personal information (59%) and chatting with strangers (46%). A higher proportion of urban adolescents reported that their parents had spoken to them on various aspects of online safety/responsible online behaviour (Table 4.5; Table 4.4.2, Annexure 1).

Table 4.5 Parents having spoken about online safety/responsible online behaviour – as reported by adolescents

Have your parents ever spoken to you about	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Giving out personal information on the internet	49	50	48	50	46	50
Chatting with strangers on the internet	40	42	38	38	39	42
Responding to messages that are offensive/mean or nasty	27	29	26	25	28	29
Responding to any sexually explicit content or materials	11	8	15	10	9	16
Talking online about very personal things like sex	10	6	14	8	7	14
Dealing with X-rated pop-ups/messages or spam emails	8	6	11	7	6	12
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284

During qualitative interactions, parents highlighted the importance of speaking to adolescents on online abuse and harassment. Parents, more in peri-urban and urban locations, had spoken to their children about dealing with sexually explicit content, pop-up ads, sharing of personal information, online safety and talking to strangers online. In urban locations, one of the parents had also spoken about good touch, bad touch, pregnancy, and contraception with his children. Some of the parents had highlighted that it was important that information was given, but also that the children obey the parents, so they do not fall prey to sexual harassment.

“Yes, it is important. If we will not talk about these topics to children, then they will think it is alright and they will do it. If we talk about these things, they will have in mind that my father has forbidden me from doing it, so they may not do it” – Parent, Delhi

Among teachers, 82% had spoken to their students on online safety – 76% on giving out personal information, 66% on chatting with strangers, 60% on responding to offensive messages, 44% on responding to sexually explicit content, 31% on dealing with X-rated pop-ups/messages and 29% on talking about personal things like sex (Table 4.4.3, Annexure 1). A greater proportion of teachers, as compared to parents had spoken to their students on online safety. . In qualitative interactions, teachers highlighted the importance of talking to adolescents on issues of online safety. While there was no guidance on online safety in the curriculum, most said that they had spoken to their students during classes on online safety and not revealing personal information online. One

teacher reported that the school principal had directed him to take sessions on digital literacy and online safety. Another mentioned that online safety is sometimes discussed during the prayer hour in the school.

67% of teachers had shared that the schools provided training sessions/ information on OCSEA, in the quantitative survey. This, however, was mentioned only by one teacher in the qualitative interactions, who stated that the school conducted training sessions on safe online behaviour, use and misuse of the internet, cyber security, and child protection policies for children above 14 years of age. As mentioned earlier, efforts in schools were more sporadic sessions or conversations by teachers on online safety. None of the teachers, during qualitative interactions, reported that any student had asked them for information on OCSEA.

Not many adolescents referred to teachers and schools as sources of information on OCSEA. Only 36% of adolescents (39% boys and 33% girls) said they had received a training or information from schools on online sexual exploitation and abuse. A significantly higher proportion of urban adolescents (50%) reported this as compared to those in peri-urban (30%) and rural locations (28%) (Table 4.4.4, Annexure 1). Only 17% parents reported that their wards had received any training or information on OCSEA from schools.

“No, neither our schoolteacher has ever told us anything about this; nor has there been any training arranged in our school about cybercrime and cyber security” – Adolescent Boy, Rajasthan

Sources of information on OCSEA, other than parents and schools, as reported by adolescents included – friends and siblings (60%), internet/Google (48%), books and magazines (33%), and social media platforms (28%). A greater proportion of adolescent girls relied on friends and siblings, books, and magazines for information; while more boys reported the internet/Google and social media platforms as sources of information. 14% adolescents reported no sources of information on OCSEA or responsible online behaviour (Table 4.4.5, Annexure 1). Parents and teachers reported similar sources of information for adolescents on OCSEA (Tables 4.4.6 and 4.4.7, Annexure 1). Teachers believed that parents and families were the best source of information for adolescents on online safety and especially on online sexual harassment and abuse. They believed that mothers could talk to their daughters on this and fathers’ to their sons. One teacher suggested that IT experts and professionals could be invited to schools to share information on OCSEA with the adolescents.

54% of adolescents above 15 years of age and 46% 13-15 years of age said they had received information/education/training on OCSEA from parents or schools. This difference, however, is not statistically significant (Table 4.4.13, Annexure 1). On an average, adolescents who had received information/education/training on OCSEA were able to correctly identify 5.4 instances of OCSEA. Those who did not receive any education correctly identified, on an average, 4.8 instances of OCSEA. This difference is statistically significant (Table 4.2.7, Annexure 1). Thus, the data indicates that education/information provision to adolescents leads to better identification and understanding of OCSEA.

3% of adolescent respondents – 6% girls (0% boys), 5% in urban locations and 3% in peri-urban locations (0% in rural locations) had heard of the Snehai App (Table 4.4.8, Annexure 1). 7% parents (13% in urban locations and 6% in rural locations) and 33% teachers had also heard of this App (Tables 4.4.9 and 4.4.10, Annexure 1).

Parents and teachers had spoken to adolescents on safe/responsible online behaviour. Adolescents corroborated that they had received information from parents. However, a lower proportion of parents and teachers had spoken on issues of dealing with sexually explicit content, X-rated pop-ups/messages and talking about personal matters like sex. Among those who had spoken on these issues, the information appeared to be directed more at adolescent girls. Other sources of information for adolescents on OCSEA included friends and family, the internet, and social media platforms.

Key takeaways

- Dating and gaming websites/apps, chat rooms were seen as the most unsafe, followed by social media platforms. Online shopping and educational platforms were seen as safer.
- Exposure of adolescents to sexual content was seen as a significant risk. This was more so for adolescent girls than boys.
- Most adolescents understood OCSEA. However, they also considered other aspects – such as financial fraud, making jokes and posting rude views online, as OCSEA. As with adolescents, both parents and teachers understood OCSEA; but needed more clarity on the differentiation between online sexual abuse and general online abuse.
- Awareness of laws and rules to prevent online sexual abuse was limited. Teachers were more aware than adolescents and their parents.
- Awareness on the helplines for OCSEA were limited largely to the police cybercrime cell and the ChildLine. The sources of information on the helplines for parents and teachers were newspapers and TV.
- Parents and teachers had spoken to adolescents on safe/responsible online behaviour. However, conversations on dealing with sexually explicit/X-rated content, or talking about personal matters such as sex was limited.
- For adolescents, sources of information on OCSEA were largely the internet, social media platforms, friends, and family. While teachers reported speaking to students on online safety; adolescents did not see schools and teachers as a source of information.
- It is also interesting to note that despite parents and teachers speaking to adolescents on various aspects of online safety, including chatting with strangers (and adolescents reporting that parents had spoken to them on chatting with strangers), a significant proportion communicated with strangers and second-degree contacts online (as seen in Section 3).

Section 5: Experiences of OCSEA

This section presents the experiences of online sexual abuse/exploitation among adolescents. It will discuss the prevalence of OCSEA; the redressal mechanisms and methods of addressing OCSEA by adolescents; and the way forward, in preventing and addressing OCSEA in the future.

5.1 Experiences of OCSEA

In the quantitative survey, 15% of adolescents (19% boys and 12% girls) reported to have faced at least one of the seven situations related to online sexual abuse or exploitation. 17% of urban adolescents, 16% in peri-urban locations and 12% in rural locations, had faced at least one of the situations. It would thus appear that a higher proportion of urban and peri-urban boys had faced one or more incidents related to OCSEA (Table 5.1). Comparing across age groups, among those who faced at least one OCSEA incident, 67% adolescents above 15 years of age had faced an incident, as compared to 33% in the 13-15 age category (Table 5.1.6, Annexure 1). As seen in the earlier section, adolescents above 15 years of age were more aware of OCSEA, and hence more likely to have reported the same as well.

Table 5.1: Incidents related to OCSEA faced by adolescent respondents

Incidents related to OCSEA	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
When doing an online search or surfing the web, you found yourself in a website that showed pictures of naked people or people having sex	12	15	10	14	9	14
Received e-mail or message with ads/links to explicit/X-rated content or websites	8	9	6	8	7	7
Received sexually explicit content (images, videos, posts, messages) from a known or unknown person	3	4	3	3	3	3
Someone online talked to you about sex when you didn't want to	0.36	0.24	1	0	0.37	1
You were asked for sexual information about yourself (when you did not want to answer)	1	2	0.25	1	1	1
You were asked to do something sexually explicit that you did not want or were uncomfortable with	1	1	1	0.37	1	1
You were threatened or embarrassed by someone posting or sending messages about you for other people to see	1	0.72	1.24	1	1	1
Faced at least one OCSEA incident (of the seven above)	15	19	12	16	12	17
Total (N)	822	418	404	269	269	284

A close review of Table 5.1 indicates that the most common incident reported was 'coming across sexually explicit content when surfing the internet'. As seen in the earlier sections of this report, given that adolescent boys have greater access to the phone and internet, it is plausible that they are more exposed to such incidents. Similarly, those above 15 years of age have a greater access to the internet and reported facing more OCSEA incidents.

This was followed by receiving emails or messages with ads/links to sexually explicit content. This again was reported by a slightly higher proportion of adolescent boys. 3% of adolescents received sexually explicit content from known or unknown persons. A slightly higher proportion of girls reported someone online talking to them about sex when they did not want to; and being

threatened or embarrassed by someone posting or sending messages about them to other persons (Table 5.1).

Assessing the association between parental supervision and facing OCSEA; of the respondents who faced at least one instance of OCSEA, 48% reported being supervised by parents/adults. On the other hand, among those who did not face any incidents OCSEA, 66% were supervised by parents/adults. Thus, a greater parental supervision, is associated with adolescents reporting lower incidents of OCSEA. This association is statistically significant (p=0.001; Table 5.1.7, Annexure 1).

While a positive association is seen in the case of parental supervision, the same is not the case between having received education/training on OCSEA and facing incidents of OCSEA. No significant association is noted between having faced an instance of OCSEA and having received education/training on the same (Table 5.1.8, Annexure 1).

During qualitative interactions, nearly all adolescents acknowledged that their friends, or persons of their age group, watched sexually explicit content, more so boys than girls; hence they were at the risk of exposure to one or more forms of OCSEA.

“Yes, most of the adolescents use the internet to watch sexual content. The main reason is there are a lot of changes in the body at this age, like hormonal changes, and all are sexually active in this age. That’s why they do it, even when they don’t want to do it” – Adolescent Boy, UP

Some of the incidents related to OCSEA, faced by adolescents and their peers are presented as follows.

Incident type	Incidents reported
<p>When doing an online search or surfing the web, you found yourself in a website that showed pictures of naked people or people having sex</p>	<p>As with the quantitative survey, this was the most common type of incident reported during qualitative interactions – videos, links, and ads to sexually explicit content came up while adolescents browsed the web, Google searched or watched videos/content on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram or on gaming websites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When searching for biology educational videos, some wrong videos and content come up” • “When playing video games, especially on third party browsers (lower publicity games) and apps, such ads or photos come up” • “Once when doing a Google voice search, some inappropriate content came up” • One girl from Rajasthan, working in a factory part-time, shared the phone with a colleague. After that, whenever she searched for or saw videos, sexually explicit content came up. <p><i>“I take phone to watch education related video but within an hour, I start to feel like watching some song videos or serials. During that time only, some inappropriate videos also come up, so I watch it. Sometimes, it has also happened on Facebook, but I ignore it on FB” – Adolescent Girl, Bihar</i></p> <p><i>“I am a student of Biology, so sometimes I do some subject matter search and something else comes up, sometimes my parents see that. They feel this is wrong. Parents do not stop me from using the internet but then they scold me and do not allow me extended use. This happened in YouTube.” – Adolescent Girl, Delhi</i></p>

<p>Messages and links shared through WhatsApp</p>	<p>Adolescents, more so girls reported receiving messages and links with sexually explicit content from known and unknown contacts, even peers and cousins. WhatsApp groups created by schools during COVID-19, were an opportunity for boys to gain access to phone numbers of girls; through which, a few shared sexually explicit X-rated contents.</p> <p><i>“There were some boys in the school WhatsApp group, who had sent a sexual content video in the school group. That WhatsApp group was connected to my father’s mobile because I used to use his phone. So, my father saw that video. After that, he complained about it to a teacher. Sir removed those boys from the group. And Sir changed the settings so that only the admin can send the messages in that WhatsApp group” – Adolescent Girl, Rajasthan</i></p> <p><i>“School groups are formed on WhatsApp. So, obviously the number is shared with people present in the groups. It has happened once or twice that I got messages and calls from some boys. Once I was added to some group randomly and even very dirty pictures were shared in the group by some person” – Adolescent Girl, Delhi</i></p> <p>One girl reported receiving a pornographic/blue film from her cousin. <i>“My cousin shared a video on WhatsApp and told me to watch it, because it’s a good video. I opened the video, and it was a blue film. So, I deleted the video and blocked him on WhatsApp. Unknown persons have never shared any such thing with me” – Adolescent Girl, Bihar</i></p> <p>A adolescent girl from Bihar narrated an incident where she and her friend had gone to a cybercafé to create an email id for her friend. The person at the cybercafé copied her friend’s phone number and then called her and shared inappropriate/dirty messages and sexually explicit content on her WhatsApp.</p> <p>Adolescent girls also reported getting such content on their Facebook and Instagram accounts. One adolescent boy from Bihar reported that his friend was in a WhatsApp group where sexually explicit content was shared on a regular basis.</p>
<p>Being threatened with nude images</p>	<p>One adolescent girl reported an incident where she was threatened by an acquaintance who sent her a nude image claiming it was ‘her’. The image did not have a head. He blackmailed her saying that he would share the pictures on the internet. The respondent called the 1090 helpline number and filed a complaint.</p> <p>A adolescent boy in Delhi said that his female friend was blackmailed by someone who sent some inappropriate pictures of her. Her photos were then shared on the internet. She and her brother later filed a police complaint, and the police caught the culprit.</p> <p>A adolescent girl from Delhi shared that her friend was contacted by a male on the internet who told that he has inappropriate images of her and if she did not share more such images, then he would show those images to her family members.</p>

	Adolescents felt that girls were more targeted (than boys) to send, receive and share sexually explicit content.
Being contacted to perform sexual acts/do inappropriate things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A adolescent boy in Rajasthan mentioned that his friend was contacted by a group of men to perform sexual acts. • A girl was asked to wear lighter and transparent clothes in an Insta-gram message • Other girls said that they had received solicitous messages on WhatsApp and Instagram
Someone online talked to you about sex when you didn't want to	<p>A adolescent girl stated that she was contacted by an unknown person via video calls. He shared some inappropriate videos with her despite her messaging him to stop.</p> <p>"Once an unknown person made video calls to me. He shared some inappropriate videos with me. I messaged him and said - 'Brother, who are you? Why are you sending all this stuff with me? Please don't send me such things and don't call me'" - Adolescent Girl, Rajasthan</p> <p>Another adolescent girl shared an incident, where from multiple numbers someone sent her messages and voice notes saying that he loved her on WhatsApp. She also received video calls from two of the numbers. She sought help of her uncle who blocked all the numbers.</p>

Case 1: A adolescent girl being blackmailed by a male abuser

Location: Khushi Nagar, Uttar Pradesh

This incident was narrated by an 18-year-old girl from a village in in Khushi Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. The respondent was studying in Class 12. Her father was a general physician employed with the government of Uttar Pradesh and posted away from the family.

A friend of the respondent had befriended two boys online and was chatting with both. The respondent advised her friend not to chat with both boys, as that would be seen as 'cheating'. She particularly advised her to stop talking to one of boys who later became the 'blackmailer' and 'abuser'.

The abuser overheard this conversation over the phone (when the respondent was talking to her friend) and yelled at the respondent. He tried to contact the respondent after this incident too. The respondent, however, had blocked the abuser from all platforms except on the 'home phone', which was with the respondent's father. The abuser created a fake profile on Instagram and threatened to have private pictures of the respondent. He tried to blackmail her into becoming his girlfriend; said that otherwise he would leak her private pictures. He also sent her a headless nude image of a woman stating that these were her pictures and that he would leak them.

The respondent warned him that she was not scared of his false threats. However, she was worried about him calling on the home number, which her father had. The respondent told the abuser that she would report him to the police if he did not stop. The abuser was not bothered by the threats and in turn said that he would make a mockery of her image in society.

After two days of blackmail, the respondent called the 1090 women's helpline number in UP and reported the incident. She was asked to send screenshots and phone recordings. Two days after she made the report, the abuser reached out to the respondent and apologised. He requested her to take back the complaint, as he was worried that it would affect his sister's wedding.

Case 2: A adolescent girl being harassed by a male abuser

Location: Bhagalpur, Bihar

A 19-year-old girl from Bhagalpur, Bihar shared an incident that happened to her friend. Her friend (victim) was subject to harassment by a male abuser and sexually explicit content was shared with her without her consent.

The respondent and her friend (victim) visited a cybercafé to create an e-mail account. While entering her phone number to create the account, a boy (abuser) at the café copied her phone number. He started sending her inappropriate (sexually explicit) messages on WhatsApp. He would randomly call the victim at odd hours and even turned up outside her house several times. This incident frightened the victim and made her extremely anxious. She was too scared to reach out to her family, as they would discontinue her education and marry her off. She felt trapped and helpless. She shared information about the incident only with her friends (one of whom was the respondent). She did not contact anyone in the police, as she did not want her parents to know about the incident.

The respondent said that adolescents wished to seek support without their family knowing about anything. Families usually suppressed the situation to prevent any public knowledge of the incident. She went on to say that girls were also scared of reaching out their families, as they would be blamed. She hopes that in the future, parents would stand up for their daughters' rights and help them seek justice. She was not aware of any laws/regulations on OCSEA, and other than reporting to the police. She was not aware of any other way in which the victim's situation could be addressed.

"Because of the way society functions, young girls are looked down upon and never supported. People in society always consider girls to be at fault. They say: 'Oh, if such a message has come, this must be the girl's fault, or 'she shared the number herself and that is why this is happening'. They would never think that some other person could fraudulently extract the number. And then they would taunt the girl and the family. That's why girls as well as the family members keep these matters secret and simply try to marry the girl off." – Adolescent Girl, Bihar

How adolescents felt about the incidents

None of the adolescent boys expressed any feelings about these incidents of OCSEA. It was primarily the girls, who expressed the following emotions/ feelings.



“Yes, it has happened like this many times, that I am studying or searching for some school-related materials and this kind of webpage with sexual content opens. I remove it quickly before anyone sees it. I feel very scared. If Mummy/Papa see it, they will think I have done something wrong” –Adolescent Girl, Rajasthan

“I didn’t react as such by looking at those ads. I just removed them because if someone else around me sees it, it will not give a good impression. On WhatsApp, when I saw those images, I immediately told my mother. I didn’t even open the videos, I went straight to my mother” – Adolescent Girl, Delhi

As mentioned earlier in the report, girls, especially those with shared access, were subject to more rules and monitoring by parents. There was also a perception that girls were more vulnerable and exposed to risks of online sexual exposure than boys. They also lacked information and faced greater punitive action from families, as compared to boys. This is reflected in the feelings of the adolescent girls – where in addition to them feeling angry, scared, and irritated with the content and perpetrators; they were also scared of their parents and families and how they would react.

Among parents, only 3% (of 218) reported their wards to have faced at least one incident related to OCSEA. 6% of wards of the same parents reported that they had faced at least one incident (Table 5.1.2, Annexure 1).

A denial that their wards/children faced incidents of OCSEA was noted among parents in qualitative interactions as well. While they acknowledged that online sexual harassment was a concern and prevalent issue, most parents said that their children had faced no incidents of online abuse. Few said that it was likely that their wards may have seen a few sexually explicit pop-ups/ads. etc. Few shared that the wards might be hesitant in sharing even if they did come across such content. Only one parent reported that her daughter had received some sexually explicit content from an unknown sender. She asked her daughter to block the number. However, the predominant perspective was their wards did not face any issues online.

“No. My children have not reported anything like this. Such ads might be coming because when I use phone, I see such ads, so my children might also be seeing them, but I know they do not open it or use it intentionally. We have also advised our children if something inappropriate comes up on the mobile, block it or simply cross it” - Parent, UP

Teachers reported not knowing much about incidents of OCSEA. Only one teacher highlighted an incident where a girl student’s phone was hacked, and her personal information misused.

The qualitative interactions appear to suggest that several adolescents and their peers had faced incidents of OCSEA. In the quantitative survey, only 15% reported to have faced any incidents. It is likely that the respondents may have been hesitant to share information in a shortened timeframe and format. A significant denial and lack of acknowledgement among parents is also noted.

Platforms where adolescents faced incidents related to OCSEA

Table 5.2: Platforms on which adolescents faced incidents related to OCSEA – reported by adolescents

Platform	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Facebook	55	71	30	50	72	49
YouTube	42	26	70	36	63	35
WhatsApp	34	32	39	34	38	33
Instagram	14	13	17	16	13	14
Snapchat	5	3	9	9	3	2
Twitter	3	1	6	7	0	2
Moj	3	1	6	5	3	2

Josh	2	3	2	7	0	0
Tinder	1	0	2	2	0	0
OTT Platforms	1	1	0	0	3	0
MX Taka tak	1	1	0	2	0	0
Total(N)	125	78	47	44	32	49

Among those who had faced at least one OCSEA related incident, 55% faced it on Facebook, followed by YouTube, WhatsApp and then other social media and OTT platforms. While a higher proportion of adolescent boys faced OCSEA incidents on Facebook, a higher proportion of girls faced them on most other platforms (Table 5.2).

Among parents (7 of 219) who reported that their wards had faced incidents related to OCSEA, 5 reported YouTube as the platform where their wards had faced the incident (Table 5.1.4, Annexure 1).

5.2 Managing incidents of OCSEA

Among adolescents who had faced at least one OCSEA related incident, 64% (80% boys and 38% girls) reported to have deleted or blocked the person/source. 25% changed their privacy/contact settings. 17% respondents (30% girls) did not do anything, only 3% spoke to a trusted adult/peer and just 5% reported the incident to a service provider. A higher proportion of adolescents in urban locations reported not doing anything and just changing their privacy settings (Table 5.3).

Similar perspectives were shared by adolescent respondents during qualitative interactions. The most common way of managing any incidents related to OCSEA was to block the person and content; or leave any WhatsApp group where such content was shared.

Table 5.3: Actions taken to address incidents related to OCSEA, as reported by adolescents

Actions taken to address incidents related to OCSEA	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Deleted/blocked the person/source	64	80	38	66	66	61
Asked the person to stop contacting	6	1	13	5	13	2
Changed privacy or contact settings	25	27	21	18	28	29
Spoke to a trusted adult or peer about the incident	3	3	4	5	3	2
Reported the incident to the service provider	5	6	2	7	6	2
Did not do anything	17	9	30	14	16	20
Refused/did not wish to answer	6	0	17	9	6	4
Don't know/Can't say	3	0	9	2	0	6
Total (N)	125	78	47	44	32	49

Most adolescents feared reporting any incidents. They mostly feared their parents' reactions and the implications that it might have on their future internet use, their education and life. Reporting any incidents related to OCSEA was seen as a source of shame and embarrassment for girls and their families.

"Children will talk to parents only if they listen to them and understand their perspective. Telling parents creates so many problems, that's why they avoid it. The parents become suspicious about the girl; how did her contact number reach the boy" – Adolescent Girl, Bihar

“Our parents have not gone through such situations. So, there is a generation gap; and they do not have much experience of such situations. They can surely help us, but it will take time for them to understand such situations” – Adolescent Boy, Bihar

Some of the other ways that adolescents managed incidents related to OCSEA included:

Informing/seeking support from friends and siblings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing the incidents with friends and siblings (since it cannot be shared with family) • Few reported that friends/siblings provided advice and even accompanied to police station or when informing those in authority • Most adolescents said that they would approach friends and siblings first and then parents, if needed
Informing those in authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This included hostel wardens, parents or guardians, if the matter became serious or difficult for the adolescents to handle on their own.
Reporting to the police/calling helplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One respondent who was being blackmailed by an acquaintance, called and filed a complaint in the 1090 helpline. She was asked to share screenshots of the details. The helpline staff followed up with her till the incident was addressed and messages stopped coming. After two days of the complaint being lodged, the concerned person apologised • Filing a police complaint was not a very prevalent practice. Few did not know the process of filing a police complaint; others did not want to reach out to the police to avoid stigma and the need to tell their families. A few also believed that the police would blame the women for the incident.

Case 3: A adolescent girl being blackmailed by a male abuser

Location: New Delhi

The case was reported by an 18-year-old adolescent boy from New Delhi, currently in his first year of college. The respondent narrated an incident of OCSEA faced by a female friend and how it was managed.

The abuser (male) was a ‘friend’ of the victim (female friend of the respondent) on a social media platform. The abuser and the victim did not know each other personally and were only friends through the social media. The abuser sent a message to the victim on the social media platform (as a direct message), saying that he had access to some inappropriate photos of her. Over a few days, he blackmailed the victim to send him more such images, else, he would show the photographs he had to her family. The victim, scared and fearful, gave in to the demand of the abuser and sent him the photographs he wanted. Following this, the abuser put these private photographs on the internet.

At this point, the victim reached out her friend (the respondent) and sought his support and counsel on what she should do. The respondent advised her to file a police complaint. The victim took into confidence her brother too; and with support from her friend and her brother, she filed a police complaint. Following the complaint, the abuser was identified to be a resident of Noida and was arrested by the police.

The respondent said that seeking support of the police was a helpful solution and should be done when someone is facing an incident of OCSEA. He believed filing a complaint at the police station was more helpful than registering the complaint online, since the online procedures were slow. He also felt that approaching the police/NGO helplines or cyber cell authorities was better than victims reaching out to their families. Families tend to panic; blame the girls; and subject them to significant punitive action, rather than contact the police to address the issue.

“We should take the help of staff who manage cybercrime portals, and NGOs, because family members will try to suppress the matter. And especially if something happens to the girls, then their parents do not want this to be known to the outside world.” – Adolescent Boy, Delhi

Of the 7 parents who reported that their wards faced OCSEA related incidents, 2 refused to answer or said that they 'didn't know' when asked on how they managed the incident. 1 did not do anything and 1 deleted/blocked the person/source of the incident (Table 5.2.1, Annexure 1).

CSO representatives highlighted several gaps in the current systems of management of OCSEA:

1. Lack of adequate know-how and training among officials in the management of OCSEA. For instance, a respondent highlighted that a police official may not know what grooming is. The concern of victim shaming was also highlighted.
2. Lack of sensitivity and bureaucratic procedures in dealing with cases of sexual abuse – both online and offline
3. Authorities were often overwhelmed with the volume of crimes and workload and preferred to take up only very critical cases.
4. Poor implementation of provisions of current laws and regulations. Most CSO representatives felt that the acts and laws in themselves were comprehensive, however, that governments lacked political will and intent to effectively implement them.
5. Lack of information on the laws/acts and provisions to address online and offline sexual abuse

The ChildLine (1098) helpline was recognised as one of the more effective mechanisms. Respondents mentioned that any calls to the ChildLine were always investigated.

Addressing incidents of OCSEA through schools

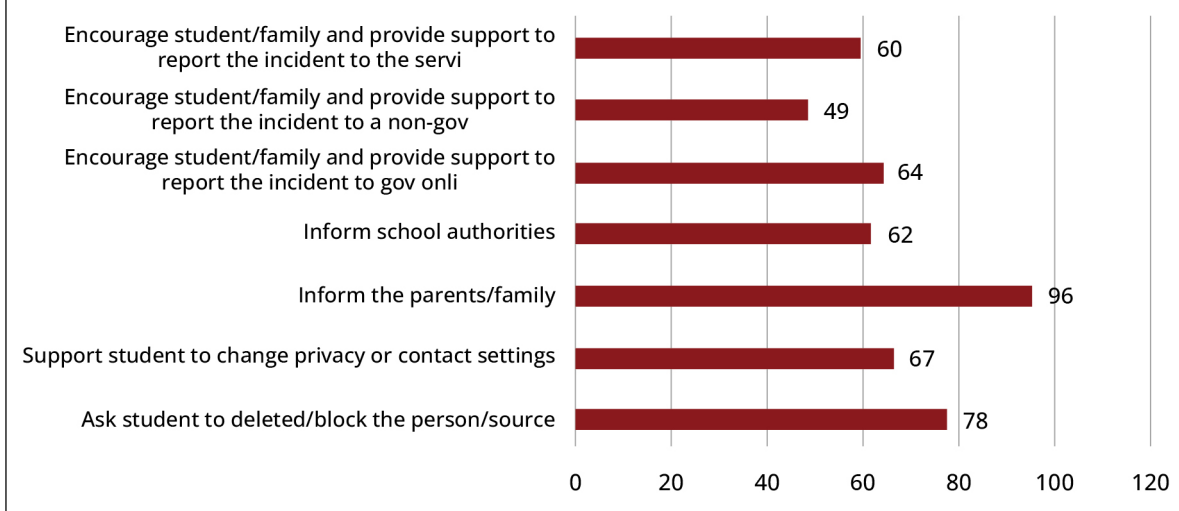
During qualitative interactions, most teachers reported that there were no redressal mechanisms for OCSEA in schools. However, a few did speak of:

- Informal forums on adolescent health for girls such as Kishori Manch and Meena Manch which were used by teachers to talk about OCSEA and internet safety
- Teachers offered guidance when required
- A few schools had a complaint box and teachers were trained to enable guidance to students on OCSEA
- Schools counsel and guide students and their parents on incidents of abuse and harassment

In the quantitative survey, teachers encouraged students and families to report any incident related to OCSEA to government online helplines, service providers and NGOs. They also encouraged students to delete/block the source/person and change privacy settings. However, most teachers felt that it was the responsibility of the parents to guide and support adolescents on OCSEA, and nearly all teachers said that they would report any incidents to the parents (Figure 5.1).

While teachers reported no major redressal mechanisms in schools for OCSEA; the adolescents also did not reach out to teachers either – for information or redressal. A few teachers, however, felt that more could be done. One teacher said, "We want to proceed and tell them more. We think menstruation is the link from where we can start and tell them about intercourse, pregnancy, and sexual abuse, etc. But this can be done only if we are permitted. Schools do not permit, and adolescents do not want to listen as they are shy. If we can start talking about menstruation, we can use that opportunity to talk about other aspects such as OCSEA, too".

Figure 5.1: Addressing OCSEA incidents among students - as reported by teachers (in%)



Case 4: Best practice - effort by the Government school in Rajasthan to provide sessions to students on online safety

Location: Tonk, Rajasthan

A principal of a senior secondary school in Tonk district, Rajasthan highlighted the importance of talking to adolescents and young persons on online abuse and safe online behaviour. He mentioned the importance of comprehensive sex education for addressing OCSEA. He felt that at present, adolescents and young persons had no sources of information on sex education and turned to watching pornographic/X-rated content on the internet. In searching for information on sex/bodily changes, adolescents came across pornographic content, which they watched. He also felt that after a certain age, watching such content should be accepted as normal. However, adolescents should be given the needed information so they understand the changes in their bodies and what is safe and what is not.

In his school, efforts have been made to provide training sessions on safe online behaviour for students, 14 years and above. As a part of the training sessions, information is provided on cyber and internet security. The students are trained through multiple activities to make them aware of the internet and how it can be used. The topics covered also include child protection policies, use and misuse of the internet, and mobile phones, and details of 'wrong/inappropriate' websites.

he school has trained teachers on solving students' problems if they face any online abuse. The students are also strictly banned from using mobile phones in the school premises.

Efforts of Technology and social media companies in addressing OCSEA

One social media company and one OTT platform were approached in this study. They revealed the following information regarding efforts at ensuring user safety.

The efforts at ensuring user safety, more so, for those below 18 years of age were guided by IT Act Rules 2021, in addition to companies having their own safeguarding policies and programmes.

The OTT platform highlighted that while users below 18 years of age may be watching content on their platform, they did not gather age details for anyone registered on the platform. In other words, it was impossible for them to ascertain whether a 60-year-old or a 6-year-old was watching the content on their platform. They, however, did undertake a very detailed user rating process, specific to the law/rules and cultural sensitivities, in each of the countries. Accordingly, content

tags are created, which are put in the description of the content – for instance, if it had nudity, or sex, or violence. The user can then decide if they would like to view the content. They also invested in creating localised age ratings, specific to each country, on the basis of which the content tags were also put. Parental controls were also created, where parents could block titles by ‘type’ or even create a separate ‘child’ user, with age settings, where only content specific to the age will be shown.

Further, in compliance with the IT Rules 2021, robust grievance redressal mechanisms have been established where anyone could complain about any content on the platform. With a three-level appellate system, the company believed that this was one of the most robust grievance redressal mechanisms in the world.

Given that they did not gather any age information, the OTT company reported not to have faced any incidents of OCSEA related to their platform. Further, that they were more a one-way consumption platform – where they put out content, that was viewed by others; with minimal user interaction. This reduced the risk of any OCSEA experiences.

The need for greater parental awareness and guidance in effectively controlling social media and content viewership among adolescents was articulated. The need for more effective partnerships between companies and state/central governments, to better implement the provisions of the IT Act and Rules 2021 was also noted.

5.3 Implications of OCSEA on adolescents’ lives

Across all three respondent groups, qualitative interactions indicated a unanimous opinion that incidents of OCSEA impacted girls more than boys. This has been noted earlier in the report as well. The implications of OCSEA on adolescents’ lives were articulated as follows.



Mental stress and anxiety – in receiving sexually explicit content; on account of not sharing information with parents/family; and if family found out



Defamation of the adolescent girl and her family

Punitive action from the family

Access to phone and internet can be taken away, which could affect education
For females, they can be pulled out of education/education stopped
Female can be married early, if found to be associated with any OCSEA incident

“Yes, it happens mostly with the girls. If the parents come to know then they get the girls married; they cannot complete their education. They must live in the in-laws’ house and the desire to study also has to end; and they have to manage everything without studying”. –Adolescent Girl, Rajasthan

Parents and teachers added that excessive internet use, in general, impacted mental and physical health and well-being of adolescents. They were concerned about addiction of adolescents to the internet. Excessive internet use and exposure to OCSEA, they felt, affected focus and consequently the education of adolescents. It could also lead to mental stress. Teachers added that adolescents who faced incidents of OCSEA may lose self-confidence. As reported by the adolescents, teachers also felt that such incidents could have a greater impact on girls – that they would be blamed, withdrawn from education and married.

“Students are often unaware of what they do on the internet. Their small actions could lead to incidents of OCSEA. This affects their mental health. After the incident, they would be subject to boundaries and limitations due to societal pressure. If something were to happen to a girl, no matter how good she is in studies, her education would be discontinued, and her parents will marry her off. They will not even see if the groom is worthy, they will simply marry her to whomever they can find. The girl would also be at the receiving end of insults and embarrassment. This further affects their mental health. One small mistake can affect their future life” – Teacher, Bihar

What makes adolescents vulnerable to OCSEA?

Parents and teachers believed that adolescents became vulnerable to OCSEA due the following:

- Inadequate education and awareness among adolescents; including lack of awareness on sex and sexual relations – which makes them curious and want to seek out information
 - Teachers felt that the unwillingness of parents to talk about issues of sex and sexual health with their adolescent children was a concern, which made adolescents use the internet to get information, exposing them to the risk of OCSEA
- Lack of guardian monitoring and inadequate guidance from the family
- Lack of mental maturity among adolescents
- Access to internet and digitisation; lack of awareness on the implications of excessive internet use
- Chatting with unknown persons and clicking on wrong links. A few teachers said that when adolescents feel lonely, they speak to strangers on the internet, putting themselves at risk.

“The main reason is that the mental maturity of adolescents is very low, due to which they start walking on the wrong path” – Parent, Bihar

“The adolescents, nowadays, are not able to judge what is the right and wrong. There is so much information available to them. Additionally, in today’s time, owning a smart phone with internet connection has become a normal thing- when a child has access to internet 24/7, this makes them vulnerable to mistakes and challenges online” – Teacher, UP

“Even at home, parents do not talk about sexual health with children. They think that children will learn on their own and they will come to know everything with time. But they themselves do not talk with their children. Children use the internet to find out information; and later, if by chance, some girl commits some mistake, then they blame their daughters” – Teacher, Bihar

Who is responsible for OCSEA?

Parents and teachers held the following persons and factors responsible for OCSEA:

<p>AT AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The persons/online abusers – those sharing content with adolescents/or blackmailing them •Parents/guardians – for not monitoring and allowing children to view sexually explicit content •Lack of awareness among parents on OCSEA, phone addiction •The adolescents viewing the content 	<p>AT A SYSTEM LEVEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Those creating sexually explicit content and making this easily available on the internet •Increased digitisation and internet access among adolescents •Tech companies – for poor regulation •Societal norms – which prevent conversations on SRHR
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CSO representatives felt that the scale of sexual abuse – both online and offline were massive. From own parents to strangers on the street, children and adolescents were vulnerable to sexual abuse from all quarters. Specifically, regarding online abuse, those who used the internet extensively and in an unregulated fashion were seen as more vulnerable. Girls, and those belonging to LGBTQIA+ communities were also vulnerable, owing to patriarchal attitudes, inability of women to raise their voice and need for acceptance and companionship among the LGBTQIA+.

Grooming, blackmailing, and child pornography were reported as the common forms of OCSEA in India. Children and adolescents being impressionable, were seen as easy targets for all these forms of abuse. One of the respondents highlighted that among adolescent and young persons, receiving nude and sexually explicit content was a common practice. A phenomenon called 'dick see' was common, where girls or even boys were sent penile images. Such images were sent even to unknown social media accounts. One of the respondents, whose social media profile reads that she is a 'sexual health trainer', reported that she received a lot of unsolicited sexual content.

Family members and those from the peer group were seen as the primary perpetrators of online sexual abuse. CSO representatives felt that in an online world, it was often difficult to identify and apprehend the perpetrators, as they hid behind profiles with fake details. It was also challenging, as adolescents often do not share details of any incidents they might have faced with family or authorities. The larger silence of the community on issues of sex and sexual abuse, was seen as an impediment to identification and addressing the issue of OCSEA.

As mentioned by all other respondent groups, the implications of OCSEA were reported more for girls. While action was taken against boys, who perpetrated online violence, there were greater implications to the lives of girls. One of the respondents narrated an incident where a schoolgirl shared some sexually explicit photos and videos of herself with her long-term boyfriend. The boyfriend shared it with his friends, and it was put on the internet. The boys and the girl were suspended from school. But the girl was beaten by her parents, and she was no longer allowed to leave the house. Also, her images and videos were forever on the internet, leading to mental trauma and depression. All respondents felt that excessive pornographic exposure and exposure to OCSEA could have long-term implications on the physical and mental well-being of children and adolescents.

5.4 Addressing OCSEA – the way forward

Given the rising digital use, experiences of OCSEA, and their implications; adolescents, parents, and teachers, shared their perspectives on the way forward in addressing some of the challenges of OCSEA. The recommendations shared were at an – (a) Individual/family level; (b) at the school level; and (c) at a systemic level.

Recommendations at an individual/ family level

The recommendations at an individual level included the role of adolescents themselves, the role of parents, friends, and peers.

Role of adolescents in preventing/addressing OCSEA

- Ensure privacy settings in the phone and apps
- Block unknown contacts
- Caution in sharing photos and videos online and on apps
- Use lesser-known social media apps – where sexually explicit content is less prevalent
- Moderate the use of internet

Role of parents

The role of parents was seen as crucial by all three stakeholder groups. A two-fold role for parents was outlined in preventing and addressing OCSEA

(1) In monitoring and supervision

- Restrict phone and internet access among adolescents
- Use apps to monitor phone use among adolescents
- Ensure rules and supervision on phone and internet use
- Share internet and social media accounts with children to curb them watching explicit content

(2) In guidance and information provision to adolescents

- Explain to adolescents/children why viewing sexually explicit content is wrong, or how it can be harmful
- Help adolescents make the right choices, talk openly about SRHR and online sexual abuse and remove stigma on these issues
- Discuss online safety and good behaviour to tackle online sexual abuse
- Guide and support if an adolescent/child faced an OCSEA incident (mentioned only by one parent)

“When a child or adolescent watches some inappropriate content, they are scolded by parents, but no explanations are provided as to why it is wrong. So, the curiosity remains with the child, and s/he again watches it and falls into the spiral. So, parents should explain to the child what is wrong and what is right and why is it so; they should give the reasons as well” – Adolescent Girl, Bihar

“Parents should make their children aware that if you get any inappropriate websites or pop-ups on the internet, then you do not have to visit them” – Adolescent Boy, Delhi

“Parents can talk to the child and explain the pros and cons of such things so that child does not take a wrong step. If the child looks worried, parents should ask them what is bothering them and find out solution to their problems” – Parent, Bihar

Role of friends and peers

The role of friends and peers was seen more to provide support to a victim of OCSEA, provide help in informing the family or persons of authority in case of an incident, help peers make good choices online; and enable support and information for effective use of the internet and safe online practices.

For adolescents, parents, and peers to fulfil their roles in preventing and addressing OCSEA, the need for awareness and education was outlined. Respondents highlighted the need for education on online sexual abuse, laws and regulations for online safety and abuse, and management and redressal of OCSEA. Particularly for the parents, the need for behaviour changes and counselling so they could coach/guide their adolescent wards’ in managing OCSEA and create an environment where adolescents could openly share their concerns, was mentioned. The need to better equip parents with awareness of technology/internet and its management was also outlined

“The primary caregiver is the family; the family needs to be educated on sexual abuse and that should be done through the government, school, and NGO. The parents need to be aware about all these things. Children are smart and aware, but the parents are not, unfortunately”. – Teacher, Bihar

Recommendations at a school level

The recommendations at a school level included:

- Sessions by teachers/ schools on
- Safe online practices
- Online abuse
- Management of online abuse, including details on helplines
- Support to children/adolescents to file police/cybercrime cases in case of any incidents of OCSEA
- Guidance and counselling to children/adolescents if cases of OCSEA are brought to the notice of the teachers or school authorities
- Information to parents if a child/adolescent is caught watching sexually explicit content
- Provision of comprehensive sexuality education in schools

“Schools have a major role since children spend a major portion of their childhood in school. Right from the start, regulated use of internet should be taught to the children. Teachers can teach students how internet can be used for doing good things and not getting into trouble. And even if one gets into trouble, teacher should explain to children right from beginning that they can talk to teachers or parents without any hesitation “- Adolescent Boy, Bihar

Teachers mentioned that for schools to effectively provide information and support to adolescents on online sexual abuse, they would need greater cooperation and understanding from parents. They also mentioned that the school could be stricter in monitoring device use on campus and provide training to adolescents and their parents on OCSEA. One teacher suggested that a cyber expert who could investigate incidents, would also help school authorities in creating a safer environment for students.

Recommendations at a systemic level

At a systemic level, majority recommendations were for the government. These included:

- Restricting/banning sexually explicit content
 - Ban sexually explicit content – block sexual content from the internet and social media
 - Ban sexually explicit content from educational portals/platforms where students access educational content
 - Age restrictive access on certain content on the internet
 - Maintain records and data of persons accessing such contents and sites, and take punitive action against them
- Generating awareness on SRHR and online sexual abuse
 - Build awareness/ run campaigns on online abuse (through apps and other forum)
 - Include sex education in the curriculum
- Ensuring laws and policies on online safety and OCSEA, and that they are followed.
- Ensuring that devices are used only for education and contact details of students not shared with all – only with teacher, if needed
- Strengthening redressal systems

- Provide adolescents with greater information to adolescents (and guardians) on the process of filing complaints
- Enable ease in processes of filing complaints, so persons are not scared and are encouraged to file complaints against online sexual abuse
- Devise systems for counselling and guidance to perpetrators of online sexual abuse and violence

“Government can come up with an app so that there is information about what is right and wrong, what is sexually inappropriate behaviour, how people do it, what are the ways it can be done, how to avoid such situations or how to tackle these situations. Such information can reach to the children and adolescents in online mode through apps”. – Adolescent Girl, Bihar

The government is encouraging usage of apps and technology for studying, especially during COVID. There should be separate phones with the sole purpose of education. That phone should only have educational apps and information and numbers of parents and teachers. The parent when buying it should have installed various restrictions on it” – Teacher, UP

The other system level recommendations were for technology/social media companies to ensure better regulation and moderation of social media posts, photos, user profiles and not allowing sexually explicit content to be published or made easily accessible.

Respondents also felt that NGOs and CSOs could engage in an awareness building role at a community level, to educate adolescents and parents on OCSEA and how to manage it. NGOs could provide counselling support to victims of OCSEA.

CSO representatives articulated the need for better implementation of the laws and regulations, strengthening of the laws to ensure international standards of safety, ratification, and membership to international coalitions/alliances/partnerships for online safety (such as the WeProtect Alliance). At the school level, the need for ensuring comprehensive sexuality education, including identification and management of OCSEA was mentioned. Training and sensitisation of teachers to effectively engage with students and empower them to be aware of their rights, the laws and redressal mechanisms was the need. The need for awareness building among communities on OCSEA through panchayats and local service providers (ASHA, ANM, AWW) was also mentioned. Respondents articulated a multi-pronged approach addressing adolescents, their parents, teachers, and communities at large to break the silence on SRH issues, so aspects of online and offline abuse could be identified and effectively addressed.

Key takeaways

- 15% of adolescents had faced at least one incident related to online sexual abuse or exploitation. A higher proportion of urban and peri-urban boys had faced one or more incidents related to OCSEA.
- The most common incident reported was ‘coming across sexually explicit content when surfing the internet’. A slightly higher proportion of girls reported someone online talking to them about sex when they did not want to; and being threatened or embarrassed by someone posting or sending messages about them to other persons.
- The qualitative interactions appear to suggest that several adolescents and their peers had faced incidents of OCSEA. It is likely that the respondents may have been hesitant to share information in a shortened timeframe and format in the quantitative survey. A significant denial and lack of acknowledgement of their wards having faced OCSEA was noted among parents.

- Among those who had faced at least one OCSEA related incident, 55% faced it on Facebook, followed by YouTube, WhatsApp and then other social media and OTT platforms.
- The common ways of managing incidents of OCSEA included deleting or blocking a person/source and changing privacy settings. 17% respondents who had faced an incident did not do anything and only 5% reported it to a service provider.
- Adolescents feared telling their parents of any incidents of OCSEA; more so girls, who feared significant punitive action including discontinuation of education and early marriage.
- Incidents of OCSEA impacted girls more than the boys. Incidents of OCSEA among girls also had implications for their families and were seen as shameful and embarrassing.
- No mechanisms for redressal for OCSEA were reported in schools.

Conclusion And Recommendations

This study on adolescent's digital interactions and online child sexual exploitation and abuse in India sought to understand the extent and nature of digital interactions among adolescents and their exposure to OCSEA.

Digital access and use

Both secondary literature and primary surveys indicate universal access to the phone and internet. A higher proportion of adolescent boys owned phones; and more girls had shared access. The internet was accessed daily, for 2-4 hours. The use was higher among adolescent boys and those in urban locations. Experts alluded to the explosion in phone and internet access owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is evident from secondary literature as well. With education going online, even those who did not have access, were forced to buy phones, and enable internet access for their children to continue their studies.

Adolescents reported accessing social media as the primary use of the internet; other than education and learning, music, playing games, instant messaging and to meet people. In addition to using the internet to communicate with known persons, a significant proportion of adolescents also communicated with second degree contacts and strangers on the internet. While parents were aware of the extent of internet use among their adolescent wards, they did not know the extent to which adolescents used the internet to meet people, or for instant messaging, or to visit chat rooms.

Parental supervision of phone and internet use, while seen as important, was limited to checking of devices by parents from time to time. A small proportion of parents, more in urban locations, used monitoring software. Consequently, the use of the phone and internet by adolescents was largely unregulated. Girls were subject to more rules, limiting their time and nature of internet use.

While adolescents used the internet to access social media, 85% of them believed that using the internet and social media posed a threat to privacy and security. Sharing information on dating websites/apps, chat rooms and gaming websites was seen as riskier, by parents and adolescents, than educational platforms and online shopping websites. Parents believed that using the internet was more dangerous for adolescent girls. While the risk of exposure to sexually explicit content was both for adolescent boys and girls, parents did not articulate significant risks for boys. All respondents reported that adolescents, more boys than girls, viewed sexually explicit content on the internet – either by accident, or intentionally.

Understanding of OCSEA and how to address it

There exists no standardised definition for OCSEA globally, or in India. Consequently, the way OCSEA is understood and articulated is non-uniform and perspective-driven (even among experts and CSOs). Adolescents and their parents, understood all forms of online abuse, including financial fraud and posting rude comments on the internet to be part of OCSEA. There is a need for greater clarity on what constitutes OCSEA and how it is different from other online abuse.

Awareness on the laws and rules in the country that address online sexual abuse was limited. Teachers were more aware on this. Awareness on helplines, to address any cases of OCSEA, were limited to the police cybercrime cell and ChildLine.

Parents and teachers spoke to adolescents on safe and responsible online behaviour but limited the conversations when it came to dealing with sexually explicit/X-rated content or on talking about sex online. The silence and hesitancy in talking on issues of sex and SRHR, thus limits adolescents' awareness of appropriate online behaviour and their ability to manage any OCSEA. They consequently relied on the internet, social media platforms and friends to gather information on this. CSO representatives highlighted this as a significant challenge, making adolescent vulnerable to misinformation from unverified and unreliable sources.

Experiences of OCSEA

15% of adolescents had faced at least one incident related to online sexual abuse or exploitation, a higher proportion of boys and those in urban locations. This is also the group that accesses the internet the most. The most common OCSEA related incident was 'coming across sexually explicit content when surfing the internet'. Although reported only by 1% of adolescents, a slightly higher proportion of girls reported someone online talking to them about sex when they did not want to; and being threatened or embarrassed by someone posting or sending messages about them to other persons. Several such incidents, faced by adolescent and friends/peers were reported during qualitative interactions. Facebook, followed by YouTube and WhatsApp, were the common platforms where adolescents faced incidents of OCSEA.

Of the parents who reported that adolescents were likely exposed to sexually explicit content, 97% denied their wards ever having faced any OCSEA. There, thus, appears to be a denial and lack of acknowledgement of their wards facing OCSEA. It is likely that this limits parental intervention to prevent or address OCSEA. Adolescents also feared telling their parents about any incidents of OCSEA; more so girls, who feared significant punitive action including discontinuation of education and early marriage. For girls, facing OCSEA not only impacted their lives and well-being, but also sharing this brought shame and embarrassment to the family.

Adolescents dealt with OCSEA by deleting or blocking a person/source and changing privacy settings. 17% of respondents who had faced an incident did not do anything and only 5% reported it to a service provider. There was also hesitation in contacting the police, as that would involve telling the family. Only, when left with no choice, did adolescents seek support from the police or other service providers. CSO representatives highlighted the challenges in effective identification of perpetrators of online violence and the need to strengthen existing reporting and redressal mechanisms.

Thus, with expanding internet access, a greater proportion of adolescents are likely to be exposed to OCSEA. The silence on issues of sex and SRHR in the community, prevent acknowledgement of the problem, effective information sharing and redressal. Girls are at a particular disadvantage, with access to phones and internet being gendered, rules and supervision being gendered, and even punitive action and implications being gendered.

Recommendations

As outlined in Section 1 of this report, there is a need for a multi-stakeholder effort to ensure a safe internet eco-system for children and adolescents in the country. Some of the specific recommendations to ensure safer online interactions and redressal of OCSEA among adolescents are as follows.

Overarching policy and systemic recommendations

- **Defining OCSEA** – There is a need to define OCSEA in the Indian context, with a clear articulation of which incidents comprise OCSEA and which do not. The same definition needs to be acknowledged in all acts and policies, with common interpretation and redressal. For instance, how OCSEA is defined in the IT Act, should be the same as in the POCSO Act, with a clear articulation of what could be considered an offence under POCSO and what not. All technology and social media companies should be held accountable to the definition.
- **Strengthening the evidence base to inform policy and systems** – Available data and information on the nature and extent of OCSEA is limited. There should be robust systems for data gathering and collation from multiple sources – including self-reporting through online portals, police complaints, portals such as the NCRB, helpline databases, and data from technology companies. This data should be assessed and analysed to better understand the extent and nature of OCSEA to make the required policies and undertake system reforms. Given the gendered nature of the internet and digital access and the implications of OCSEA on women, data should be gender-disaggregated and analysed.

- Defining clear processes and systems to address OCSEA – Including defined mechanisms for identification, reporting, perpetrator punishment, and intervention packages for holistic support for victims of online child sexual abuse. The links between systems of redressal of online and offline abuse should be clearly mapped and defined. There is also a need for gender-sensitive and transformative approach in defining the systems and mechanisms to enable girls and women to overcome existing challenges to report incidents of OCSEA and access redressal mechanisms.
- Enabling system access and strengthening – Systems should be defined and implemented in a manner such that they are easily available and accessible, especially to children, adolescents and adolescent girls, through online and offline modes. Good helpline models such as the ChildLine and women’s helpline could be strengthened to better address issues of online abuse.
- Regulating the private sector and technology companies effectively to identify and report incidents of OCSEA. Ensuring that the redressal mechanisms outlined in the IT Act and Rules 2021 are followed.

To enable the above, there is a need to acknowledge OCSEA as an issue affecting children and adolescents in the country and political will to address the same.

Ensuring public awareness and digital literacy

There is a need to develop and institutionalise a plan for digital safety and literacy to reach all citizens of the country. This would include developing an age-appropriate and gender-sensitive ‘digital safety and literacy’ curriculum to be integrated into the school curriculum across subjects. The curriculum and modules could also be made available to the public at large, through their digitisation in video formats and circulation through social media platforms. Local service providers and elected representatives could also be engaged to circulate links to the online content and videos.

Platforms and resource libraries – online and offline could be created, where children, adolescents and adults could seek information and guidance on digital safety and redressal of abuse. Information on systems of reporting and available helplines should be widely circulated through online and offline modes.

Enabling comprehensive sexuality education

The need for comprehensive sexuality education is evident; not only to address OCSEA, but to empower children and adolescents with the needed information for their sexual and reproductive health and well-being. Comprehensive sexuality education will enable adolescents to better understand their bodies, access needed information and services and effectively address any SRH concerns and sexual abuse that they might face.

Building capacities of stakeholders

Other than parents, the two stakeholder groups who could have an immediate effect in the information provision and management of OCSEA are teachers and police personnel.

- Teachers, while have some knowledge, need capacity-building and support to engage with adolescents on digital literacy/safe online behaviour and addressing OCSEA. Short modules and capacity-building sessions could be designed for teachers to engage with adolescents on digital literacy, OCSEA and its redressal. Capacities of teachers will have to be built to strengthen their knowledge, address attitudes and their ability to engage with adolescents. It is also critical to build teachers’ capacities to enhance their ability to address challenges of adolescent girls, more so those who may have faced incidents of OCSEA.
- Police personnel play a key role in the redressal of OCSEA. However, they are often overburdened and not sensitised to the needs of the adolescents. The police personnel responsible for managing child protection issues, and those in the cybercrime cell, could also be trained on aspects of OCSEA – its identification and management. The capacity-building for

for these personnel will also have to ensure attitudinal shifts and guidance on sensitive management of adolescents, particularly girls who seek to file complaints.

- There is also a need to sensitize and build capacities of media personnel/houses to enable appropriate and sensitive reporting on issues of OCSEA and to use the media to enable information on cyber safety and OCSEA. Social media platforms should be leveraged for this, as many young persons access these for information.
- Capacity of CSOs working on SRHR and with adolescents could be built for them to engage with adolescents on issues of cyber security and OCSEA as well.

The key to effective management of OCSEA is to empower parents/caregivers, children and adolescents with information, effective systems, and a conducive environment where issues of sexual health and abuse could be discussed constructively.

Annexure 1: Data tables

Section 3.1 Respondent Demographics- Adolescents

Table 3.1.1. State of the respondents- Adolescents

State of the respondent	Frequency	Urban		Rural		Peri-urban							
		Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)						
Bihar	213	26	27	25	28	32	18	23	14	32	33	28	27
Delhi	120	15	17	13	10	0	33	37	29	0	0	11	8
Rajasthan	224	27	24	31	31	32	19	12	27	31	33	29	33
Uttar Pradesh	265	32	32	32	32	36	29	28	31	37	34	33	31
Total N	822		418	404	269	269	284	145	139	135	134	138	131

Table 3.1.2. Settlement type of respondents- Adolescents

State of the respondent	Frequency	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Peri-urban	269	33	33	32
Rural	269	33	33	33
Urban	284	35	35	34
Total N	822		418	404

Table 3.1.3. Age of the respondent- Adolescent

Age of respondent	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Urban		Rural		Peri-urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
13	10	9	11	8	10	12	10	15	9	12	9	7
14	16	18	14	16	16	17	22	11	17	15	16	16
15	18	17	19	17	19	17	15	18	17	21	17	17
16	19	18	21	19	18	21	20	22	16	21	19	19
17	15	15	16	19	15	12	11	14	17	12	17	21
18	16	16	17	16	17	16	14	19	19	15	16	17
19	5	7	3	4	5	5	8	1	6	4	6	3
Total N	822	418	404	269	269	284	145	139	135	134	138	131

Table 3.1.4. Gender of the respondent- Adolescent

Gender of the respondent					
Gender	Frequency	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Boys	418	51	51	50	51
Girls	404	49	49	50	49
Total(N)	822	Gender	269	269	284

Table 3.1.5. Religion of the respondent- Adolescent

Religion of the respondent												
Religion	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Urban		Rural		Peri-urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Hindu	95	95	94	94	96	94	97	92	96	97	93	94
Muslim	5	5	6	6	4	6	3	8	4	3	7	6
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	145	139	135	134	138	131

Table 3.1.6. Caste of the respondent- Adolescent

Caste of the respondent												
Caste	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Urban		Rural		Peri-urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
General	14	14	13	15	12	14	12	17	12	11	18	11
ST	6	5	7	5	4	8	8	9	3	4	4	7
SC	23	21	24	23	19	25	24	25	19	19	20	27
OBC	58	59	56	57	65	52	54	49	66	65	58	56
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Total (N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	145	139	135	134	138	131

Table 3.1.7. Status of education - Adolescent

Status of education												
Are you currently studying	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Urban		Rural		Peri-urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Yes	94	95	93	93	92	96	97	95	94	92	96	91
No	6	5	7	7	7	4	3	5	6	8	4	9
Total (N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	145	139	135	134	138	131

Table 3.1.8. Current year of education- Adolescents

If yes, what are you currently studying												
Currently enrolled	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Urban		Rural		Peri-urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Primary school - up to class 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Middle school - class 6 to 8	20	22	18	19	25	16	16	16	30	20	20	18
Secondary school - class 9-10	40	41	39	41	38	42	47	36	33	43	42	39
Higher secondary school - class 11 - 12	28	26	30	29	25	29	25	34	26	24	27	33
College - graduation	12	11	12	11	12	13	11	14	11	12	11	10
College - post graduation	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Total (N)	773	399	274	251	250	272	140	132	127	123	132	119

Table 3.1.9. Highest level of education- Adolescent

If no, what is the highest level of education you have completed?												
Highest level of education	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Urban		Rural		Peri-urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Primary school - up to class 5	10	11	10	0	11	25	20	29	13	9	0	0
Middle school - class 6 to 8	24	21	27	28	32	8	0	14	25	36	33	25
Secondary school - class 9-10	47	63	37	56	42	42	80	14	63	27	50	58
Higher secondary school - class 11 - 12	12	5	17	11	11	17	0	29	0	18	17	8
College - graduation	2	0	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Not completed primary school	2	0	3	0	0	8	0	14	0	0	0	0
Never attended school	2	0	3	0	5	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
Total (N)	49	19	30	18	19	12	5	7	8	11	6	12

Table 3.1.10. Status of employment- Adolescent

If not studying, are you currently employed												
Employment status	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Urban		Rural		Peri-urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Unemployed	84	63	97	72	84	100	100	100	63	100	33	92
Unemployed preparing for jobs	4	5	3	11	0	0	0	0	13	0	17	8
Employed part time	8	21	0	17	5	0	0	0	0	0	50	0
Employed full time	4	11	0	0	11	0	0	0	25	0	0	0
Total (N)	49	19	30	18	19	12	5	7	8	11	6	12

Table 3.1.11. Status of marriage- Adolescent

Status of Marriage												
Are you currently married	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Urban		Rural		Peri-urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Yes	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	2
No	97	97	98	97	97	98	97	98	98	97	97	98
Total (N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	145	139	135	134	138	131

Table 3.1.12. Mean age of marriage- Adolescent

Status of Marriage												
Mean age of marriage	Total	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban	Rural	Urban	Urban		Rural		Peri-urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Mean	17	17	17	17	17	17	16	18	17	18	17	17
Total (N)	21	11	10	7	7	7	4	3	3	4	4	3

Parents- Demographics

Table 3.1.13. State of respondent- Parent

State of the respondent	Frequency	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Bihar	54	25	35	17	27	32	17
Delhi	45	21	12	27	13	0	43
Rajasthan	60	27	26	29	30	32	21
Uttar Pradesh	60	27	28	27	30	35	19
Total N	219		94	125	70	65	84

Table 3.1.14. Settlement type of respondent- Parent

Settlement type of respondents				
	Frequency	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Peri-urban	70	32	38	27
Rural	65	30	33	27
Urban	84	38	29	46
Total N	219		94	125

Table 3.1.15. Relationship with the respondent- Parent

Relationship with the adolescent					
Relationship	Frequency	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Mother	118	54	46	49	64
Father	78	36	46	42	23
Guardian	20	9	6	9	12
Others	3	1	3	0	1
Total N	219		70	65	84

Table 3.1.16. Gender of the respondent- Parent

Gender of the respondent				
Gender	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Male	43	51	48	32
Female	57	49	52	68
Total N	219	70	65	84

Table 3.1.17. Religion of respondent- Parent

Religion of the respondent						
Religion	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Hindu	95	96	94	93	97	95
Muslim	5	4	6	7	3	5
Total (N)	219	94	125	70	65	84

Table 3.1.18. Caste of respondent- Parent

Caste of the respondent						
Caste	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
General	16	12	20	14	12	21
ST	6	3	8	1	11	6
SC	24	28	21	33	20	19
OBC	54	57	51	51	57	54
Total (N)	219	94	125	70	65	84

Table 3.1.19. Educational qualification of respondent- Parent

What is the highest level of education you have completed?						
Highest level of education	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Primary school - up to class 5	15	16	14	14	15	14
Middle school - class 6 to 8	23	30	18	19	29	23
Secondary school - class 9-10	18	21	15	16	9	26
Higher secondary school - class 11 - 12	10	11	10	11	8	11
College - graduation	5	4	5	4	5	5
College - post graduation	1	2	1	0	2	2
Not completed primary school	8	7	8	10	11	4
Never attended school	21	9	30	26	22	15
Total (N)	219	94	125	70	65	84

Table 3.1.20. Occupation of the respondent- Parent

Occupation of the respondent						
Occupation	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Agricultural Labour	11	19	6	14	15	6
Cultivator	21	40	6	24	28	12
Livestock rearing	1	2	0	1	2	0
Unskilled Labour	5	7	2	7	3	4
Skilled Labour	4	7	2	6	5	2
Employed/ salaried in private Organisation	2	4	1	3	3	1
Employed by government	2	2	2	1	2	4
Business/ Shop	8	16	2	9	6	8
Housemaker/ housewife	46	1	80	34	37	63
Total (N)	219	94	125	70	65	84

Teacher demographics

Table 3.1.21. State of the respondent- Teachers

State of the respondent	Frequency	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Bihar	11	24.44	6.67	46.67	20
Delhi	7	15.56	13.33	0	33.33
Rajasthan	14	31.11	46.67	20	26.67
Uttar Pradesh	13	28.89	33.33	33.33	20
Total N	45		15	15	15

Table 3.1.22. Settlement type of the respondent- Teachers

Settlement type of respondents		
	Frequency	Total (%)
Peri-urban	15	33
Rural	15	33
Urban	15	33
Total N	45	

Table 3.1.23. Gender of the respondent- Teachers

Gender of the respondent				
Gender	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Male	71	60	73	80
Female	29	40	27	20
Total N	45	15	15	15

Table 3.1.24. Religion of the respondent- Teachers

Religion of the respondent				
Religion	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Hindu	96	93	93	100
Muslim	4	7	7	0
Total (N)	45	15	15	15

Table 3.1.25. Educational qualification of the respondent- Teachers

What is the highest level of education you have completed?				
Highest level of education	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Middle school - class 8	7	7	13	0
Secondary school - class 10	2	7	0	0
College - graduation	2	0	7	0
College - post graduation	16	13	20	13
B.Ed.	71	73	53	87
Vocational degree course	2	0	7	0
Total (N)	45	15	15	15

Table 3.1.26. Teaching experience - Teachers

How long have you been a teacher in government schools?				
	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Less than one year	2	0	0	7
1 year- 5 years	47	53	40	47
5-10 years	38	33	40	40
More than 10 years	13	13	20	7
Total (N)	45	15	15	15

Table 3.1.27. Teaching classes- Teachers

Which are the classes that you teach				
	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Classes 6-8	73	67	100	53
Classes 9-10	24	33	0	40
Classes 11-12	2	0	0	7
Total (N)	45	15	15	15

SECTION 3.2: Access to digital devices- Adolescents

Table 3.2.1 Device Ownership - Adolescents

Ownership	Total (%)	Ownership					Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
		Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Mobile/Smart phone	51	64	37	52	45	55	66	37	59	31	66	43
Laptop/Computer	5	7	2	6	1	6	9	2	3	0	9	3
Total N	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.2.2 Device Preference – to access the internet- Adolescents

Preference	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Mobile/Smart phone	98	98	99	97	99	98	97	98	99	99	97	99
Laptop/Computer	2	2	1	3	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	1
Total (N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.3.1 Internet Access- Adolescents

Access to internet	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total (N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.3.2 Internet Usage- Adolescents

Last time used	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Today	75	78	73	81	68	77	84	77	69	68	81	73
Yesterday	15	13	17	10	19	16	8	13	19	19	13	19
In the past week	7		7	7	10	4	7	8	10	9	4	4
In the past two weeks	1	7	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	2
In the past months	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	3
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.3.3 Internet Usage in a week- Adolescents

No. of Days	No of days in a week when internet is used						Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
1 Day	2	3	1	4	1	2	6	2	1	2	3	1
2 days	5	2	7	5	5	4	3	7	1	8	3	6
3 days	6	4	7	5	8	4	2	8	7	8	3	6
4 days	7	8	5	6	9	6	7	5	12	6	6	5
5 days	4	3	5	2	7	2	1	4	5	10	2	2
6 days	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1

All 7 days	76	79	73	78	69	80	81	76	73	65	82	78
Don't know /can't say	0		0			0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.3.4 Hours spent on the internet - Adolescents

Hours spent online while using internet on a usual day	Peri-urban						Rural		Urban			
	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)		
No of Hours												
1 hour or less	25	13	37	19	32	25	9	30	18	46	14	37
More than 1 hour to 2 hours	33	29	37	36	35	29	30	43	36	33	21	37
More than 2 hours to 3 hours	21	27	14	24	19	19	30	17	22	15	27	12
More than 3 hours to 4 hours	10	14	5	10	5	13	15	4	7	3	20	7
More than 4 hours to 5 hours	6	9	3	4	6	7	6	2	10	2	11	4
More than 5 hours to 6 hours	3	6	1	4	4	3	5	2	7	1	5	1
More than 6 hours to 7 hours	1	1	1	2	0.3	7	1	3	1	0	1	2
More than 7 hours to 8 hours	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
More than 8 hours to 9 hours	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
More than 9 hours to 10 hours	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
More than 10 hours	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Don't know/can't say	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.3.6 Internet usage in days - Parents

No of days in a week when your ward uses the internet						
No. of Days	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
1 Day	2	3	2	1	2	4
2 days	3	4	2	4	5	1
3 days	6	6	5	3	8	6
4 days	5	6	3	4	9	1
5 days	3	3	2	3	2	4
6 days	0	0	0	0	0	0
All 7 days	81	77	84	83	75	83
Don't know/can't say	1	0	2	1	0	1
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 3.3.7 Average time spent on the internet - Parents

Hours spent online while using internet on a usual day						
No of Hours	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
1 hour or less	18	11	24	17	22	17
More than 1 hour to 2 hours	41	40	42	43	52	31
More than 2 hours to 3 hours	19	23	15	20	14	22
More than 3 hours to 4 hours	11	13	10	11	6	16
More than 4 hours to 5 hours	6	7	5	6	2	10
More than 5 hours to 6 hours	2	2	2	1	0	5
More than 6 hours to 7 hours	1	2	0	1	2	0
More than 7 hours to 8 hours	0	1	0	0	2	0
More than 8 hours to 9 hours	0	0	0	0	0	0
More than 9 hours to 10 hours	0	0	0	0	0	0
More than 10 hours	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know/ can't say	0	0	1	0	2	0
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 3.3.8 Access to internet in school - Teachers

	Total (%)	Peri-Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Do your students access the internet at school	29	13	33	40
Total N	45	15	15	15

Table 3.3.9 Purpose of using the internet - Adolescents

Purpose	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Social Media Platforms	98	98	98	98	98	99	98	98	99	99	99	99
Playing Games	63	76	51	68	56	67	78	57	67	44	82	51
Instant messaging	55	62	48	57	47	61	64	49	50	44	72	50
Education/learning/school assignments	79	81	77	78	75	82	80	77	76	75	86	78
Blog/Online Journal	14	12	17	13	12	18	7	18	8	16	19	17
To download music	76	76	76	75	71	82	76	75	71	71	80	83
Online dating	5	5	5	7	4	4	8	7	3	5	4	4
Websites	45	56	34	48	35	52	63	33	44	26	61	42
Email	27	38	17	30	23	29	43	16	31	15	39	19
Chat rooms	19	26	12	19	9	28	28	11	10	8	39	17
To make people/ make friends	52	65	38	57	46	53	68	45	59	34	69	36
Total (N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.3.10 Use of internet to communicate with others- Adolescents

	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Do you use the internet to communicate with friends/family/others	77	77	77	79	70	82
Total N	822	418	404	269	269	284

Table 3.3.11 Knowledge of using Internet- Parents

Do you know the purpose for which your wards use the internet	Total (%)	Peri-Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
	84	80	85	87

Table 3.3.12 Purpose of using Internet- Parents

Purpose for using internet-parents	What do you think your child uses the internet for?					
	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Social Media Platforms	74	84	68	77	87	63
Playing Games	55	61	50	61	44	58
Instant messaging	34	31	37	30	24	46
Education/learning/school assignments	75	73	76	80	64	79
Blog/Online Journal	8	3	12	7	2	14
To download music	60	57	62	57	53	68
Online dating	2	3	2	4	2	1
Websites	17	16	18	14	7	28
Email	10	11	10	11	2	17
Chat rooms	5	3	6	5	2	7
To make people/ make friends	9	12	7	13	5	10
Total (N)	183	74	109	56	55	72

Table 3.3.13 Digital platforms used on the internet - Adolescents

Social Media Handle Used	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban			Rural		Urban			
				Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)		
Facebook	61	83	38	64	57	61	87	40	79	35	83	38
Instagram	46	61	31	47	34	57	60	33	49	19	72	42
Twitter	6	7	4	6	3	9	9	3	4	1	8	9
WhatsApp	87	84	89	88	86	85	87	89	83	90	81	89
YouTube	96	95	97	96	97	95	94	97	96	99	95	95
Tinder	2	0	3	2	1	2	1	3	0	1	0	4
OTT Platforms	10	17	4	10	7	13	17	2	10	5	23	4
Snapchat	39	40	39	42	32	44	44	39	31	33	44	45
Snare Chat	4	2	7	6	5	3	1	11	1	8	3	3
LinkedIn	30	31	29	31	30	30	33	28	27	32	32	28
Pinterest	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
MX Taka tak	14	10	18	15	13	14	10	21	5	20	14	14
Discord	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Josh	6	4	7	7	3	6	7	8	1	5	5	8
Others (specify)	3	3	3	2	1	6	2	2	1	2	6	5
Don't Know/Can't say	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total N	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.3.14 Digital platforms used on the internet - Parents

What are the social media platforms you think your ward uses						
Social Media Handle Used	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Facebook	48	77	27	52	42	50
Instagram	28	33	24	22	25	35
Twitter	9	5	13	10	0	15
WhatsApp	82	90	76	88	79	79
YouTube	98	99	98	97	98	100
Tinder	3	0	5	0	2	6
OTT Platforms	3	5	2	2	6	3
Snapchat	24	23	24	21	23	26
Snare Chat	4	1	7	7	2	4
LinkedIn	19	22	16	14	29	15
Pinterest	0	0	0	0	0	0
MX Taka tak	7	1	12	9	12	3
Discord	0	0	0	0	0	0
Josh	3	0	5	3	4	1
Others (specify)	1	0	2	2	0	1
Don't Know/Can't say	1	1	0	2	0	0
Total N	182	78	104	58	52	72

Table 3.3.15 Chi square-use of internet- last

Age group	2.7 When was the last time you used the internet?					
	Today	Yesterday	In the past week	In the past two weeks	In the past month	Total
under 15	236	80	33	4	9	362
	65.19	22.10	9.12	1.10	2.49	100.00
15+	384	45	24	2	5	460
	83.48	9.78	5.22	0.43	1.09	100.00
Total	620	125	57	6	14	822
	75.43	15.21	6.93	0.73	1.70	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 37.20 Prob = 0.0000

First row has frequencies; second row has row percentages

Table 3.3.16 T-test-Use of internet in a week, by age group

	N		Mean		diff	St Err	t value	p value
	Under 15	15+	Under 15	15+				
Days of usage	361	460	5.842	6.324	-.482	.119	-4.05	0

Table 3.3.17 Chi square-use of internet- number of hours used

Age group	2.9 How many hours are you online on a usual day when you use the internet?												Total
	1 hour or less	More than 1 hour to 2 hours	More than 2 hours to 3 hours	More than 3 hours to 4 hours	More than 4 hours to 5 hours	More than 5 hours to 6 hours	More than 6 hours to 7 hours	More than 7 hours to 8 hours	More than 8 hours to 9 hours	More than 9 hours to 10 hours	More than 10 hours	Don't know/ can't say	
under 15	125	135	66	19	11	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	362
	60.39	60.39	60.39	60.39	60.39	60.39	60.39	60.39	60.39	60.39	60.39	60.39	60.39
15+	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82	82
	39.61	39.61	39.61	39.61	39.61	39.61	39.61	39.61	39.61	39.61	39.61	39.61	39.61
Total	207	271	169	79	48	28	10	3	1	3	2	1	822
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 69.72 Prob = 0.0000

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.1 - Purpose for using internet by different age groups-Chi square

Age group	2.10.2 For email		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	308	54	362
	51.68	23.89	44.04
15+	288	172	460
	48.32	76.11	55.96
Total	596	226	822
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 51.33 Prob = 0.0000

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.2 Chi square- website

Age group	2.10.1 To go to websites		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	248	113	361
	55.23	30.38	43.97
15+	201	259	460
	44.77	69.62	56.03
Total	449	372	821
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 51.02 Prob = 0.0000

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.3 Chi square- Instant message

Age group	2.10.3 For instant messaging		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	174	188	362
	47.15	41.59	44.09
15+	195	264	459
	52.85	58.41	55.91
Total	369	452	821
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 2.55 Prob = 0.1104

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.4 Chi square- Chat rooms

Age group	2.10.4 To go to chat rooms		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	303	51	354
	46.69	32.69	43.98
15+	346	105	451
	53.31	67.31	56.02
Total	649	156	805
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 10.00 Prob = 0.0016

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.5 Chi square- game

Age group	2.10.5 To play games		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	129	233	362
	43.14	44.55	44.04
15+	170	290	460
	56.86	55.45	55.96
Total	299	523	822
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 0.15 Prob = 0.6959

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.6 Chi square- school

Age group	2.10.6 For education/ learning/ school assignments		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	79	283	362
	45.14	43.74	44.04
15+	96	364	460
	54.86	56.26	55.96
Total	175	647	822

	100.00	100.00	100.00
Pearson Chi2 = 0.11 Prob = 0.7402			
<i>First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages</i>			

Table 3.3.18.7 Chi square- music

Age group	2.10.7 To download music		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	99	263	362
	50.51	42.01	44.04
15+	97	363	460
	49.49	57.99	55.96
Total	196	626	822
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 4.37 Prob = 0.0365

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.8 Chi square- blog

Age group	2.10.8 To keep an online journal or blog		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	323	38	361
	46.14	32.48	44.19
15+	377	79	456
	53.86	67.52	55.81
Total	700	117	817
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 7.59 Prob = 0.0059

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.9 Chi square- date

Age group	2.10.9 To go to an online dating or romance site		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	345	14	359
	44.46	33.33	43.89
15+	431	28	459
	55.54	66.67	56.11
Total	776	42	818
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 2.00 Prob = 0.1570

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.9 Chi square- date

Age group	2.10.9 To go to an online dating or romance site		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	345	14	359
	44.46	33.33	43.89
15+	431	28	459
	55.54	66.67	56.11
Total	776	42	818
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 2.00 Prob = 0.1570

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.10 Chi square- social

Age group	2.10.1 To go to websites		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	248	113	361
	55.23	30.38	43.97
15+	201	259	460
	44.77	69.62	56.03
Total	449	372	821
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 51.02 Prob = 0.0000

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.3.18.11 Chi square- friend

Age group	2.10.11 To meet people/ make friends		
	no	yes	Total
under 15	211	151	362
	53.69	35.28	44.09
15+	182	277	459
	46.31	64.72	55.91
Total	393	428	821
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 28.17 Prob = 0.0000

First row has frequencies; second row has column percentages

Table 3.4.1 Parental supervision on use of internet - Adolescents

Parental Supervision	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Parental supervision of internet activities	63	57	70	62	60	67	59	65	53	68	59	76
Total N	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.4.2 Methods of parental supervision on use of internet - Adolescents

How do the adults monitor internet activities	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Software that monitors online access	5	3	8	6	3	7	2	9	4	3	1	11
Software that blocks SPAM mail and pop-up ads	5	3	7	5	2	8	2	7	4	2	4	12
Software that filters sexually explicit images/websites	2	3	1	1	2	2	2	0	6	2	0	4
Software that blocks/controls use of chat rooms	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Software that limits time spent on internet	1	2	1	2	1	1	4	1	0	1	1	1

Rules limiting number of hours of internet use	24	14	33	27	26	20	12	41	15	26	13	26
Rules limiting number purpose of internet use	12	12	12	13	14	9	11	15	13	14	13	7
Checking device to supervise internet activity	85	91	80	84	88	84	91	76	90	88	92	78
Others	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Don't know/can't say	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total (N)	519	237	282	166	162	191	81	85	71	162	85	106

Table 3.4.3 Parental supervision on use of internet - Parents

Parental Supervision	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Do you monitor or supervise the use of internet of your ward	74	68	79	74	72	76
Total N	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 3.4.5 Methods of supervision on use of internet - Parents

How do the adults monitor internet activities						
Method of supervision	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-Urban(%)	Rural(%)	Urban(%)
Software that monitors online access	9	0	14	6	2	16
Software that blocks SPAM mail and pop-up ads	10	5	13	8	4	16
Software that filters sexually explicit images/websites	1	0	2	0	0	3
Software that blocks/controls use of chat rooms	2	3	2	6	2	0
Software that limits time spent on internet	2	2	2	0	4	2
Rules limiting number of hours of internet use	19	17	20	31	21	8
Rules limiting number purpose of internet use	10	11	10	10	19	5
Checking device to supervise internet activity	81	92	74	77	89	79
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know/can't say	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total (N)	162	64	98	52	47	63

Table 3.5.1 First Usage of internet- Adolescents

Age while starting Internet Usage							Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
Years	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
5	0		1		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
7	0		0	0			0	1	0	0	0	0
8	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1
9	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	1		3	1
10	5	3	6	4	3	7	4	4	1	4	5	9
11	9	8	11	7	6	14	8	7	5	7	10	17
12	17	19	15	16	16	19	17	15	15	18	26	13
13	17	20	15	18	20	14	20	17	26	13	15	14
14	19	17	20	21	19	15	18	24	19	19	15	16
15	16	17	16	15	16	18	17	13	14	18	19	17
16	9	9	8	10	11	5	10	11	13	9	4	5
17	4	3	4	4	4	2	4	5	4	4	2	2
18	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	1
Don't Know	1	0	2	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	4
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.5.2 First Usage of internet- Parents

Years	Age when your ward first starting the internet					
	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
5	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	0	1	0	1	0	0
8	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	1	2	1	0	2	2

10	4	4	4	1	3	7
11	12	9	15	11	2	22
12	17	17	16	16	20	14
13	15	11	19	10	17	18
14	17	21	15	27	14	12
15	16	20	13	19	17	13
16	9	11	7	6	15	6
17	3	2	3	3	5	1
18	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't Know	5	2	7	6	6	4
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 3.5.3 Importance of internet- Adolescents

Importance of Internet							Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
Importance of Internet	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
1-Not at all Important	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2		4	1	1
2	4	5	4	3	6	5	3	3	7	4	4	5
3	15	12	18	12	13	19	9	15	8	19	19	19
4	23	24	22	25	26	18	26	24	24	28	21	14
5- Extremely important	56	58	54	59	52	57	62	56	58	46	54	60
Don't know/can't say	0	1			1		0	0	2	0	0	0
Total (N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 3.5.4. Trust on responsible use of internet – Parents

Parents- How much do you trust your ward to use the internet in a responsible way						
Importance of Internet	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
1- Not at all Important	1	1	2	1	2	1
2	4	4	4	6	3	4
3	18	24	13	17	14	22
4	24	24	24	23	25	25
5- Extremely important	52	46	56	53	57	47
Don't know/can't say	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total (N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 3.5.5. Trust on responsible use of internet – Teachers

Teachers- How much do you trust your students/you people to use the internet in a responsible way				
Importance of Internet	Total (%)	Peri-Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
1- Not at all Important	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0
3	38	20	60	33
4	18	27	0	27
5- Extremely important	44	53	40	40
Don't know/can't say	0	0	0	0
Total (N)	45	15	15	15

Table 3.5.6. Purpose for use of internet – Teachers

Purpose for using internet-Teachers	What do you think your student/young person uses the internet for?			
	Total (%)	Peri-Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Social Media Platforms	79	85	71	83
Playing Games	77	85	64	83
Instant messaging	44	69	21	42
Education/learning/school assignments	87	92	79	92
Blog/Online Journal	10	0	14	17
To download music	62	69	43	75
Online dating	0	0	0	0
Websites	46	31	43	67
Email	33	31	21	50
Chat rooms	8	0	7	17
To make people/ make friends	21	31	14	17
Total (N)	39	13	14	12

Table 3.5.6. Use of social media platforms – Teachers

What are the social media platforms you think your student/young person's use				
Social Media Handle Used	Total (%)	Peri-Urban(%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Facebook	91	86	89	100
Instagram	70	79	56	70
Twitter	15	14	0	30
WhatsApp	97	93	100	100
YouTube	97	100	100	90
Tinder	3	0	0	10
OTT Platforms	33	29	33	40
Snapchat	73	64	67	90
Snare Chat	12	7	0	30
LinkedIn	64	57	67	70
Pinterest	0	0	0	0
MX Taka tak	39	36	33	50
Discord	0	0	0	0
Josh	12	0	22	20
Others (specify)	0	0	0	0
Don't Know/Can't say	0	0	0	0
Total N	33	14	9	10

Table 3.5.7. Use of internet – Teachers

Do young people/students use the internet to view sexually explicit materials or videos, or chat online on issues of sex, or seek partnerships and relationships?	Total (%)	Peri-Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
		4	0	13
Total N	45	15	15	15

Section 4

Table 4.1.1 Awareness of OCSEA- Adolescents

In your view, does using the internet and social media, pose a threat to the privacy and security of young persons?												
	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Yes	85	84	86	81	82	91	80	82	79	85	92	90
Total (N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.1.2. Awareness of OCSEA- Parents

In your view, does using the internet and social media, pose a threat to the privacy and security of young persons?	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	88	85	90	86	86	90
Total (N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.1.3. Awareness of OCSEA- Teachers

Threat to privacy and security	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Does using the internet and social media pose a threat	93	100	80	100
Total N	45	15	15	15

Table 4.1.4.1. Views on safety of sharing personal information on social media platforms

Social media platforms - such as Facebook, Instagram, twitter, tinder etc.							Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Completely Safe	24	28	10	26	23	24	30	21	31	15	22	25
Safe to an extent	33	44	21	30	33	34	43	17	44	23	45	23
Unsafe	41	27	55	42	39	40	25	60	22	56	32	48
Refused/did not wish to answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know/ can't say	3	1	4	1	4	2	1	2	3	6	1	4
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.1.4.2. Views on safety of sharing personal information on educational platforms

Educational Platforms							Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
Educational platforms and websites used for learning	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Completely Safe	56	61	51	57	53	60	62	50	58	48	63	56
Safe to an extent	31	30, 86	31	31	31	31	30	31	31	31	31	31
Unsafe	9	7	11	10	11	6	7	14	9	13	6	7
Refused/did not wish to answer	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Don't know/ can't say	4	1	6	3	5	3	1	5	2	8	1	5

Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139
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Table 4.1.4.3. Views on safety of sharing personal information on online shopping sites

Online Shopping Websites							Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
Online Shopping Websites	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Completely Safe	37	40	34	39	32	40	45	33	37	28	38	42
Safe to an extent	30	34	25	29	25	34	35	24	26	24	41	27
Unsafe	28	24	32	27	35	21	29	35	33	37	19	23
Refused/did not wish to answer	0	0		0		0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know/can't say	6	2	9	4	7	5	1	8	4	11	2	8
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.1.4.4. Views on safety of sharing personal information on chatrooms

Chatroom							Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
Chatroom	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Completely Safe	8	8	9	9	7	9	10	8	7	6	6	13
Safe to an extent	13	21	5	15	11	14	24	6	16	6	23	4
Unsafe	54	59	48	57	54	50	56	57	62	46	59	42
Refused/did not wish to answer	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Don't know/can't say	25	13	37	19	28	27	10	28	15	41	13	41
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.1.4.5. Views on safety of sharing personal information on dating sites

Romantic dating websites and apps							Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
Romantic dating websites and apps	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Completely Safe	7	5	9	9	7	5	6	11	7	7	3	7

Safe to an extent	5	8	1	6	6	2	10	2	10	1	4	1
Unsafe	64	70	59	68	61	63	74	63	68	54	67	60
Refused/did not wish to answer	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Don't know/ can't say	24	17	31	16	26	29	9	24	15	37	26	33
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.1.4.6. Views on safety of sharing personal information on gaming websites

Gaming Websites	Total			Peri-urban			Rural		Urban			
	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)		
Completely Safe	17	14	20	17	19	14	13	21	20	18	8	20
Safe to an extent	26	38	15	27	22	30	43	11	29	14	41	19
Unsafe	48	45	52	49	52	44	43	55	47	57	44	44
Refused/did not wish to answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Don't know/ can't say	9	4	14	7	7	12	1	13	4	10	6	17
Total((N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.1.5.1. Views on safety of sharing personal information on social media platforms- Parents

Social media platforms	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	16	29	6	19	23	8
Safe to an extent	17	18	15	17	6	24
Unsafe	60	50	67	57	57	65
Don't know/ can't say	7	3	10	7	14	2
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.1.5.2. Views on safety of sharing personal information on educational platforms- Parents

Educational platforms and websites used for learning	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	50	64	40	44	58	49
Safe to an extent	26	19	31	26	18	31
Unsafe	16	14	17	21	12	13
Don't know/ can't say	8	3	12	9	11	6
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.1.5.3. Views on safety of sharing personal information on online shopping sites- Parents

Online Shopping Websites	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	25	25	25	21	23	30
Safe to an extent	24	29	21	19	20	33
Unsafe	35	38	33	44	32	30
Refused/did not wish to answer	0		1		2	
Don't know/ can't say	15	7	20	16	23	7
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.1.5.4. Views on safety of sharing personal information on chatrooms- Parents

Chatroom	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	6	9	3	4	5	3
Safe to an extent	7	13	3	7	2	7
Unsafe	56	63	51	36	35	51
Don't know/ can't say	31	16	43	23	23	22
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.1.5.5. Views on safety of sharing personal information on dating sites- Parents

Romantic dating websites and Apps	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	3	5	2	1	6	2
Safe to an extent	6	10	4	9	9	2
Unsafe	61	71	52	57	54	69
Don't know/ can't say	30	14	42	33	31	27
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.1.5.6. Views on safety of sharing personal information on gaming sites- Parents

Gaming Site	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	7	7	7	6	12	5
Safe to an extent	9	13	6	11	5	10
Unsafe	68	74	64	70	66	69
Refused/did not wish to answer	1	1	1	3	0	0
Don't know/ can't say	15	4	23	10	17	17
Total((N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.1.6.1. Views on safety of sharing personal information on social media platforms- Teachers

Safety	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	11	7	27	
Safe to an extent	36	47	27	33
Unsafe	53	47	47	67
Don't know/can't say	0	0	0	0
Total N	45	15	15	15

Table 4.1.6.2. Views on safety of sharing personal information on educational platforms- Teachers

Safety	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	73	67	87	67
Safe to an extent	20	27	13	20
Unsafe	7	7	0	13
Don't know/can't say	0	0	0	0
Total N	45	15	15	15

Table 4.1.6.3. Views on safety of sharing personal information on online shopping sites- Teachers

Safety	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	16	7	13	27
Safe to an extent	51	60	47	47
Unsafe	31	33	33	0
Don't know/can't say	2	0	7	0
Total N	45	15	15	15

Table 4.1.6.4. Views on safety of sharing personal information on chatrooms- Teachers

Safety	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	4	7	0	7
Safe to an extent	29	33	27	37
Unsafe	51	40	60	53
Don't know/can't say	16	20	13	13
Total (N)	45	15	15	15

Table 4.1.6.5. Views on safety of sharing personal information on dating sites- Teachers

Safety	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	4	7	0	7
Safe to an extent	29	33	27	37
Unsafe	51	40	60	53
Don't know/can't say	16	20	13	13
Total (N)	45	15	15	15

Table 4.1.6.6. Views on safety of sharing personal information on gaming sites- Teachers

Safety	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Completely Safe	2	0	7	0
Safe to an extent	11	13	7	13
Unsafe	82	80	87	80
Don't know/can't say	4	7	0	7
Total N	45	15	15	15

Table 4.2.1. Possibility of OCSEA- Adolescents

Can children/ adolescents' young persons be sexually abused or exploited online over the internet?												
							Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
Can children/ adolescents' young persons be sexually abused or exploited online over the internet?	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Yes	83	82	84	81	79	89	81	80	78	81	87	92
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.2.2. Possibility of OCSEA- Parents

Can children/ adolescents' young persons be sexually abused or exploited online over the internet?	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	75	78	73	73	71	80
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.2.3. Possibility of OCSEA- Teachers

Can children/ adolescents' young persons be sexually abused or exploited online over the internet?	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	75	78	73	73	71	80
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.2.4. Awareness on recognition of OCSEA- Adolescents

							Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
Which of the following events would you consider as online sexual abuse/exploitation	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Viewing pornographic content	48	45	51	50	54	42	43	57	52	56	42	41
Receiving messages with advertisement or links to x rated content	89	93	86	88	90	89	93	84	94	86	91	88
Being shown/ shared sexually explicit content without permission	92	93	90	90	91	94	92	88	94	88	94	95
Receiving sexually explicit content (images, videos, posts, messages, page)	92	94	91	89	92	95	93	86	94	89	94	96
People posting rude things about views/ posts online	90	92	88	87	91	93	91	83	94	87	92	93
Being asked to share sexually explicit content - such as personal photographs	92	92	2	88	91	96	88	89	94	88	94	98
People having sexual discussions (even after they have been asked to stop)	91	92	89	87	90	94	88	86	94	86	94	95
People making jokes online	79	77	81	75	81	81	72	78	78	84	81	81
Spreading rumours about sexual behaviour online	92	92	92	89	92	96	89	89	93	90	94	98
Financial fraud or cheating someone financially	94	94	93	92	92	97	94	90	94	90	95	99
Total (N)	684	343	341	217	213	254	112	105	105	108	126	128

Table 4.2.5. Awareness on recognition of OCSEA- Parents

Which can be considered OCSEA	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Visiting/viewing a pornographic website or content	55	51	58	65	57	45
Receiving messages with advertisement or links to x rated content	91	93	90	94	91	89
Being shown/ shared sexually explicit images and/or videos without permission	93	95	92	94	96	91
Receiving sexually explicit content (images, videos, posts, messages, page)	92	93	91	96	91	89
People posting rude things about views/ posts online	90	93	88	94	89	88
Being asked to share sexually explicit content - such as sexy/ nude photograph	91	93	89	94	89	89
People having sexual discussions (even after they have been asked to stop)	91	95	89	96	89	89
People making jokes online	81	85	78	80	87	77
Spreading rumours about sexual behaviour online	95	93	97	96	96	94
Financial fraud or cheating someone financially	96	95	97	96	96	95
Total (N)	163	73	90	51	46	66

Table 4.2.6. Awareness on recognition of OCSEA- Teachers

Which can be considered OCSEA	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Visiting/viewing a pornographic website or content	38	29	46	40
Receiving messages with advertisement or links to x rated content	93	93	85	100
Being shown/ shared sexually explicit images and/or videos without permission	100	100	100	100
Receiving sexually explicit content (images, videos, posts, messages, page)	95	93	92	100
People posting rude things about views/ posts online	100	100	100	100
Being asked to share sexually explicit content - such as sexy/ nude photograph	95	93	92	100
People having sexual discussions (even after they have been asked to stop)	95	93	92	100
People making jokes online	98	100	100	93
Spreading rumours about sexual behaviour online	98	100	92	100
Financial fraud or cheating someone financially	95	93	92	100
Total (N)	42	14	13	15

Table 4.2.7. Difference in awareness on OCSEA- T-test

	N		Mean		difference	St Err	t value	p value
	Under 15	15+	Under	15+				
identification index	362	461	4.967	5.444	-.478	.179	-2.65	.008

Table 4.3.1. Awareness on laws that prevent OCSEA- Adolescents

Are there any laws or rules on OCSEA in India							Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
Are there any laws or rules in India that prevent online sexual abuse and ex	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Yes	39	39	38	41	33	42	42	39	39	28	36	48
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.3.2. Awareness on laws that prevent OCSEA- Parents

Are there any laws or rules in India that prevent online sexual abuse and ex	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	45	48	42	46	38	48
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.3.3. Knowledge of laws that prevent OCSEA- Adolescents

Rules/acts	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Information Technology Act, 2000	18	12	25	20	9	24	16	25	8	11	13	32
POSCO, 2012	27	33	21	27	20	34	33	20	25	14	42	27
The Indian Penal Code, 1860	22	28	15	24	21	21	28	20	25	16	33	12
The Juvenile Justice (Care and protection of Children) Act	24	32	15	28	33	12	33	24	43	19	19	6
Others	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Don't know/ can't say	44	37	50	39	44	47	36	43	38	54	38	54
Total(N)	318	163	155	109	90	119	58	51	53	57	52	67

Table 4.3.4. Knowledge of laws that prevent OCSEA- Parents

Rules/acts	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Information Technology Act, 2000	25	20	29	25	12	33
POSCO, 2012	28	27	29	22	20	38
The Indian Penal Code, 1860	30	49	13	34	48	15
The Juvenile Justice (Care and protection of Children) Act	27	44	12	31	48	10
Don't know/ can't say	36	11	58	31	24	48
Total(N)	97	45	52	32	25	40

Table 4.3.5. Awareness on laws that prevent OCSEA- Teachers

	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	87	87	87	87
Total(N)	45	15	15	15

Table 4.3.6. Knowledge of laws that prevent OCSEA- Teachers

Rules/acts	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Information Technology Act, 2000	51	54	54	46
POSCO, 2012	82	77	77	92
The Indian Penal Code, 1860	72	85	69	62
The Juvenile Justice (Care and protection of Children) Act	62	38	69	77
Don't know/ can't say	5	8	8	0
Total(N)	39	13	13	13

Table 4.3.7. Police Complaint if exploited online- Adolescents

If someone is sexually exploited online, can they file a police complaint	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Yes	93	94	93	91	92	96	91	92	90	93	99	94
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.3.8. Police Complaint if exploited online- Parents

Can someone fill	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	95	94	97	93	94	99
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.3.9. Police Complaint if exploited online- Teachers

Can someone fill	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	100	100	100	100
Total(N)	45	15	15	15

Table 4.3.10. Awareness on helpline if exploited online- Adolescents

Have you heard of any helplines Have you heard of any online platforms or helplines to report OCSEA	Peri-urban						Rural		Urban			
	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)		
Yes	65	67	63	66	64	66	69	63	63	66	70	61
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.3.11. Awareness on helpline if exploited online- Parents

Have you heard of any online platforms or helplines	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	67	70	64	66	72	63
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.3.12. Awareness on helpline if exploited online- Teachers

Have you heard of any online platforms or helplines	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	91	87	93	93
Total(N)	45	15	15	15

Table 4.3.13. Awareness on platforms if exploited online- Adolescents

Can you name the platforms you are aware of?	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Police station/Cyber cell	98	99	96	97	98	97	99	95	100	97	99	95
Govt online crime reporting portal	7	10	4	7	2	11	11	2	5	0	13	9
CCPWC	11	11	11	11	7	14	12	10	11	3	11	19
National Crime Records Bureau	1	1	2	1	0	3	2	0	0	0	2	5
POCSO e-box	11	12	9	8	6	18	9	6	11	2	17	20
NGO complaint cells/platform- Bachpan Bachao Andolan	13	13	13	10	6	23	6	14	7	5	25	21
IWF Aarambh India Reporting portal	6	4	9	5	4	10	2	8	8	0	3	18
1098 helpline number	50	58	42	54	49	48	61	47	55	42	57	38
Others	1	0	2	1	2	1	0	2	0	3	0	1
Don't know/Can't say	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total(N)	538	282	256	178	173	187	95	83	85	88	102	85

Table 4.3.14. Awareness on platforms if exploited online- Parents

Platforms	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Police station/Cyber cell	98	100	96	100	100	94
Govt online crime reporting portal	10	12	9	7	9	15
CCPWC	19	21	18	15	11	31
National Crime Records Bureau	1	3	0	0	2	2
POCSO e-box	9	6	11	9	2	15
NGO complaint cells/platform- Bachpan Bachao Andolan	14	5	19	15	2	23
IWF Aarambh India Reporting portal	12	5	19	11	6	19
1098 helpline number	35	56	18	33	38	35
Others	1	0	3	4	0	0

Don't know/Can't say	1	0	3	0	0	4
Total(N)	145	66	79	46	47	52

Table 4.3.15. Awareness on platforms if exploited online- Teachers

Platforms	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Police station/Cyber cell	100	100	100	100
Govt online crime reporting portal	61	46	57	79
CCPWC	51	69	43	43
National Crime Records Bureau	41	54	29	43
POCSO e-box	63	62	57	71
NGO complaint cells/platform- Bachpan Bachao Andolan	22	23	21	21
IWF Aarambh India Reporting portal	15	8	29	7
1098 helpline number	80	92	71	79
Others	2	0	7	0
Total(N)	41	13	14	14

Table 4.4.1. Being talked on giving out personal information on internet- Adolescents

	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Have your parents ever spoken to you about, the following												
Giving out personal information on the internet	49	50	48	50	46	50	56	44	47	45	46	55
Chatting with strangers on the internet	40	42	38	38	39	42	46	31	39	40	41	44
Responding to messages that are offensive/ mean or nasty	27	29	26	25	28	29	29	21	31	25	28	30
Responding to any Sexually explicit content or materials	11	8	15	10	9	16	7	13	6	11	10	22
Talking online about very personal things like sex	10	6	14	8	7	14	4	12	4	10	10	19
Dealing with x rated pop-ups/ messages or SPAM emails	8	6	11	7	6	12	4	9	4	7	8	17
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.4.2. Talking about giving out personal information on internet- Parents

Have you spoken to your wards on the following	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Giving out personal information on the internet	59	64	55	56	54	65
Chatting with strangers on the internet	46	52	42	41	45	52
Responding to messages that are offensive/ mean or nasty	34	37	32	29	32	41
Responding to any Sexually explicit content or materials	15	10	19	14	6	23
Talking online about very personal things like sex	15	10	19	10	8	24
Dealing with x rated pop-ups/ messages or SPAM emails	12	6	17	9	8	19
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.4.3. Talking about giving out personal information on internet- Teachers

As a teacher, have you spoken to your students about	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Giving out personal information on the internet	76	80	67	80
Chatting with strangers on the internet	66	73	53	73
Responding to messages that are offensive/ mean or nasty	60	67	53	60
Responding to any Sexually explicit content or materials	44	47	40	47
Talking online about very personal things like sex	29	33	20	33
Dealing with x rated pop-ups/ messages or SPAM emails	31	40	20	33
Total(N)	45	15	15	15

Table 4.4.4. Receiving training in school on OCSEA- Adolescents

Have you received any training or information in school about OCSEA	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Yes	36	39	33	2974	28	50	34	25	24	31	58	42
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.4.5. Other sources of information on OCSEA- Adolescents

Source	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Internet/google	48	60	35	47	46	50	60	33	61	31	59	41
Books and Magazines	33	22	44	31	33	33	17	45	20	47	27	40
Friends and siblings	60	58	63	57	61	62	52	63	57	66	63	61
Trainings/information provided by local NGOs/organisations	4	7	1	3	4	4	7	0	7	1	7	1
Social Media Platforms	28	40	15	29	33	21	46	11	47	19	29	14
Apps	8	11	6	8	9	8	12	4	13	4	8	9
No sources of info on OCSEA or responsible online behaviour	14	17	12	17	13	13	17	17	13	13	20	6
Others	1	0	2	2	1	1	3	0	1	0	0	1
Don't know/Can't say	7	4	11	7	4	10	6	9	4	5	1	19
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.4.6. Other sources of information on OCSEA- Parents

Source	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Internet/google	34	50	22	34	40	29
Books and Magazines	27	27	27	26	29	25
Friends and siblings	47	52	43	46	48	47
Trainings/information provided by local NGOs/organisations	5	10	2	3	8	5
Social Media Platforms	18	35	5	23	25	8
Apps	6	7	4	7	8	2
No sources of info on OCSEA or responsible online behaviour	15	19	11	20	11	13
Others	1	0	2	3	0	0
Don't know/Can't say	22	5	35	11	17	35
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.4.7. Other sources of information on OCSEA- Teachers

Source	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Internet/google	82	80	67	100
Books and Magazines	64	73	47	73
Friends and siblings	60	60	53	67
Trainings/information provided by local NGOs/organisations	22	13	33	20
Social Media Platforms	67	73	60	67
Apps	31	40	33	20
Don't know/Can't say	2	0	7	0
Total(N)	45	15	15	15

Table 4.4.8. Awareness of SnehAI app- Adolescents

Have you heard of SnehAI	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Peri-urban		Rural		Urban	
							Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Yes	3	0	5	3	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	11
Total(N)	822	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 4.4.9. Awareness of SnehAI app- Parents

Have you heard of SnehAI	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	7	3	10	6	0	13
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.4.10. Awareness of SnehAI app- Teachers

Heard of SnehAI App	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	33	60	20	20
Total(N)	45	15	15	15

Table 4.4.11. Receiving training in school on OCSEA- Parents

Has your ward received any training in school on OCSEA	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	17	16	17	11	12	24
Total(N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 4.4.12. Provided training in school on OCSEA- Teachers

	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Yes	67	67	67	67
Total(N)	45	15	15	15

Table 4.4.13 Difference in education/training on OCSEA

OCSEA Education	Age Group		
	under 15	15+	Total
No education/pre-info on OCSEA	123	177	300
OCSEA educated by parents/school	41.00	59.00	100.00
	239	284	523
	45.70	54.30	100.00
Total	362	461	823
	43.99	56.01	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 1.71 Prob = 0.1913

First row has frequencies; second row has row percentages

SECTION 5

Table 5.1.1. Instances where OCSEA was found- Adolescents

Instances where OCSEA was found	Total (%)						Peri Urban		Rural		Urban	
	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
While surfing the web	12	15	10	14	9	14	17	11	10	7	17	12
Receiving e-mail or message with ads/links to explicit content	8	9	6	8	7	7	10	6	8	6	8	6
Receiving sexually explicit content	3	4	2	3	3	3	4	2	4	3	3	3
Someone online talking about sex when they didn't want to	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
Asking for sexual information when they didn't want to answer	1	2	0	1	1	1	2	0	2	0	1	1
Asking to do something sexually explicit that they were uncomfortable with	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1
Threatening or embarrassing to post/share private content with others	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	2	0	1
Total (N)	125	418	404	269	269	284	138	131	135	134	145	139

Table 5.1.2. Instances where OCSEA was found- Parents

Instances where OCSEA was found	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Received e-mail or SMS/messages with advertisements or links to X-rated we	2	1	2	1	2	2
Received sexually explicit content (images, videos, posts, messages, pages)	0	0	1	0	0	1
Someone on the internet tried to talk to them about sex when they did not	0	0	0	0	0	0
Someone on the internet asked them for sexual information about themselves	0	0	0	0	0	0
Someone the internet ever asked them to do something sexually explicit	0	0	0	0	0	0
Did anyone ever use the internet to threaten or embarrass them by posting	1	3	0	0	2	2
Total (N)	218	94	124	70	65	83

Table 5.1.3. Instances where OCSEA was found- Parents & Adolescents

Instances where OCSEA was found	Parent(%)	Adolescent (%)
While surfing the web	0	5
Received e-mail or SMS/messages with advertisements or links to X-rated we	2	2
Received sexually explicit content (images, videos, posts, messages, pages)	0	1
Someone on the internet tried to talk to them about sex when they did not	0	0
Someone on the internet asked them for sexual information about themselves	0	0
Someone the internet ever asked them to do something sexually explicit	0	0
Did anyone ever use the internet to threaten or embarrass them by posting	1	1
Total (N)	218	219

Table 5.1.4. Platforms where OCSEA has occurred- Parents

Platforms	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Facebook	14	25	0	0	0	25
Instagram	14	0	33	0	0	25
WhatsApp	14	0	33	0	25	25
YouTube	71	75	67	0	100	75
Tinder	14	0	33	0	0	25
Snapchat	14	0	33	0	0	25
Refused/did not wish to answer	14	25	0	100	0	0
Don't know/Can't say	14	0	33	0	0	25
Total (N)	7	4	3	1	2	4

Table 5.1.5. Platforms where OCSEA has occurred- Adolescents

Platform	If faced with any of the above instances, which platform is used						Peri Urban		Rural		Urban	
	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Facebook	55	71	30	50	72	49	62	27	80	58	72	15
Instagram	14	13	17	16	13	14	14	20	15	8	10	20
Twitter	3	1	6	7	0	2	3	13			0	5
WhatsApp	34	32	39	34	38	33	34	33	35	42	28	40
YouTube	42	26	70	36	63	35	17	73	55	75	14	65
Tinder	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	7				

Tinder	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	7				
OTT Platforms	1	1	0	0	3	0			5	0		
Snapchat	5	3	9	9	3	2	7	13	0	8	0	5
MX Taka tak	1	1	0	2	0	0	3	0			0	5
Moj	3	1	6	5	3	2	3	7	0	8		
Josh	2	3	2	7	0	0	7	7				
Refused/did not wish to answer	6	0	17	9	6	4	0	27	0	17	0	10
Others (specify)	6	10	0	9	0	8	14	0			14	0
Don't know/Can't say	2	0	4	0	0	4					0	10
Total(N)	125	78	47	44	32	49	29	15	20	12	29	20

Table 5.1.6. Difference in age groups in facing OCSEA

OCSEA	Age Group		
	under 15	15+	Total
Not faced OCSEA	321	377	698
	45.99	54.01	100.00
Faced OCSEA	41	84	125
	32.80	67.20	100.00
Total	362	461	823
	43.99	56.01	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 7.48 Prob = 0.0062

First row has frequencies; second row has row percentages

Table 5.1.7. Chi square- facing OCSEA and being supervised

OCSEA	2.14 Do your parents/ any adult(s) in the household, monitor or supervise your u		
	Yes	No	Total
Not faced OCSEA	459	238	697
	65.85	34.15	100.00
Faced OCSEA	60	65	125
	48.00	52.00	100.00
Total	519	303	822
	63.14	36.86	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 14.52 Prob = 0.0001

First row has frequencies; second row has row percentages

Table 5.1.8. Chi square- facing OCSEA and receiving training on OCSEA

OCSEA	Age Group		
	under 15	15+	Total
Not faced OCSEA	321	377	698
	45.99	54.01	100.00
Faced OCSEA	41	84	125
	32.80	67.20	100.00
Total	362	461	823
	43.99	56.01	100.00

Pearson Chi2 = 7.48 Prob = 0.0062

First row has frequencies; second row has row percentages

Table 5.2.1. Action taken against OCSEA- Parents

Actions	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Deleted/blocked the person/source	14	0	33	0	50	0
Reported the incident to the service provider	14	25	0	0	0	25
Did not do anything	14	25	0	0	0	25
Refused/did not wish to answer	29	50	0	100	50	0
Don't know/Can't say	29	0	67	0	0	50
Total (N)	7	4	3	1	2	4

Table 5.2.2. Action taken against OCSEA- Adolescents

If faced with any of the instances, what action did you take?							Peri Urban		Rural		Urban	
Actions	Total (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Boys (%)	Girls (%)
Deleted/blocked the person/source	64	79	38	66	66	61	83	33	70	58	83	30
Asked the person to stop contacting	6	1	13	5	13	2	3	7	0	33	0	5
Changed privacy or contact settings	25	27	21	18	28	29	21	13	15	50	41	10
Spoke to a trusted adult or peer about the incident	3	3	4	5	3	2	7	0	0	8	0	5
Reported the incident to the service provider	5	6	2	7	6	2	7	7	10	0	3	0
Did not do anything	17	9	30	14	16	20	7	27	15	17	7	40
Refused/did not wish to answer	6	0	17	9	6	4	0	27	0	17	0	10
Don't know/Can't say	3	0	9	2	0	6	0	7	0	0	0	15
Total (N)	125	78	47	44	32	49	29	15	20	12	29	20

Table 5.2.3. Action taken against OCSEA- Teachers

What would you advise if your student/ any adolescent reached out in an instance of OCSEA	Total (%)	Peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Ask student to deleted/block the person/source	78	87	60	87
Support student to change privacy or contact settings	67	73	60	67
Inform the parents/family	96	100	93	93
Inform school authorities	62	73	53	60
Encourage student/family and provide support to report the incident to govt platforms	64	73	53	67
Encourage student/family and provide support to report the incident to a non-govt platform	49	60	40	47
Encourage student/family and provide support to report the incident to the service provider	60	60	53	67
Total (N)	45	15	15	15

Annexure 2: Details of districts and locations where data collection was done

Table 1: Sample collected- Adolescents

State	District	Peri-Urban	Rural	Urban	Total N
Bihar	Bhagalpur	30	43	28	101
	Darbhangha	44	44	24	112
Total N		74	87	52	213
Uttar Pradesh	Kushi Nagar	42	50	42	134
	Mirzapur	44	46	41	131
Total N		86	96	83	265
Rajasthan	Dausa	43	44	30	117
	Tonk	40	42	25	107
Total N		83	86	55	224
Delhi	North West	17	0	58	75
	West	9	0	36	45
Total N		26	0	94	120
TOTAL N		269	269	284	822

Table 2: Sample collected- Parents

State	District	Peri-Urban	Rural	Urban	Total N
Bihar	Bhagalpur	7	10	7	24
	Darbhangha	12	11	7	30
Total N		19	21	14	54
Uttar Pradesh	Kushi Nagar	11	12	9	32
	Mirzapur	10	11	7	28
Total N		21	23	16	60
Rajasthan	Dausa	11	13	9	33
	Tonk	10	8	9	27
Total N		21	21	18	60
Delhi	North West	6	0	21	27
	West	3	0	15	18
Total N		9	0	36	45
TOTAL N		70	65	84	219

Table 3: Sample collected- Teachers

State	District	Peri-Urban	Rural	Urban	Total N
Bihar	Bhagalpur	0	2	3	5
	Darbhangha	1	5	0	6
Total N		1	7	3	11
Uttar Pradesh	Kushi Nagar	2	3	1	6
	Mirzapur	3	2	2	7
Total N		5	5	3	13
Rajasthan	Dausa	5	3	2	10
	Tonk	2	0	2	4
Total N		7	3	4	14
Delhi	North West	1	0	2	3

	West	1	0	3	4
Total N		2	0	5	7
TOTAL N		15	15	15	45

Annexure 3: Details of qualitative interactions

Table 1: Qualitative interactions

Respondent categories and research method		Total proposed	Sample completed
Adolescent			
In-Depth Interview (IDI)	Rural	6	6
IDI	Peri-urban	6	6
IDI	Urban	6	6
Parents			
IDI	Rural	2	2
IDI	Peri-urban	2	2
IDI	Urban	2	2
Dyads with parents		4	4
Teachers (teaching middle school & above)			
IDI	Rural	2	2
IDI	Peri-urban	2	2
IDI	Urban	2	2
Other stakeholders (NGOs- 4, tech companies- 2, cyber security specialists- 2)		8	6 (NGOs/CSOs 4; tech companies 2)
Total		42	40

Annexure 4: Readings for desk review

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Population Foundation of India gratefully acknowledges the support provided for this programme by the End Violence Fund.



The End Violence Partnership is a platform for collective, evidence-based advocacy and action launched in July 2016 by the UN Secretary-General with a focus on fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goal 16.2: ending all forms of violence against children by 2030.