

## Social Behaviors and Separation Anxiety in Unattended Social Media User Children of Working Women (in Lahore District)

Sana Iqbal\*

### Abstract

*In this research article, the discussion moves around children who faces a prolonged separation anxiety, which does not diminish even with parent's best efforts. 88.4% results showed that when parents go to work, usually children use social media content unattended. Children use social networking apps which are not age restricted and can put a negative impact on their social behaviors. Survey method is conducted to get the results for the research on this issue. 88.4% results proved that children of working women face separation anxiety. It is recommended in this research that awareness on these issues can make parents able to grasp the only way they can control anxiety issue in their children and have an eye on their social media use, which is to build healthy relationship with their children and gain their trust so that they share everything with their parents.*

- Vol. I, No. 1 (2018)
- Pages: 40 – 57

**Key Words:** Social Behaviors, Separation, Anxiety, Social Media Users, Working Women

### Introduction

Children are always dependent on parents and they need special attention of parents in growing age. Mother plays an important part in children's life because they always need a mother to listen and understand. "It's natural for your young child to feel anxious when you say goodbye. In early childhood, crying, tantrums, or clinginess are reactions to separation" (Helpguide, n.d). On the other hand, usage of social media has now the significant part of our routine life. When parents go to work, usually children use social media content unattended. Children use social networking apps such as Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook and spend hours on gaming and watching videos on YouTube, which are not age restricted and can put a negative impact on their social behaviors, because not all of these sites provide healthy environment to children. Therefore, parents need to be aware of the content that their children are using on the social media.

Separation for hours with parents (especially mothers) creates a change in social behaviours and separation anxiety in children and they start using social media more often which takes their anxiety to another level. "Some kids experience separation anxiety that doesn't go away, even with a parent's best efforts. These children experience a continuation or reoccurrence of intense separation anxiety during their elementary school years or beyond" ( Stone, Otten, Soenens, Engels., & Janssens, 2015). Not only broken family children face anxiety, but also in happy families, children face anxiety problems in early age due to long hours of separation from mothers with busy work schedules. This study aims to investigate the percentage of anxiety and behavior of children because of their unattended social media activities. As parents are the one who can guide children the best pathway. The researcher wanted to know the contribution of parents in children's wellbeing and the effects of staying away from parents for hours. Social media has many adverse effects on children which are needed to be observed by the parents. Many children are not even aware of the privacy settings and age restrictions which may cause their mind to go through unhealthy activity. "If separation anxiety is excessive enough to interfere with normal activities like school and friendships, and lasts for months rather than days, it may be a sign of a larger problem which may lead to separation anxiety disorder" (Smith, 2016). So this study will also let parents aware of what separation anxiety actually is.

Using social media may be just a piece of entertainment for children, but actually they are wasting a lot of their valuable time. Their routine, sleeping habits, appetite, mental health and behaviors affect a lot. So, it's necessary to have a check and balance on the activities of children when they use social media. And it is important to spend quality time with children so that they may share their routine, secrets, problems and everything they are going through, with their parents. Separation anxiety has becoming a common problem among children of working women, and social behaviors of their children are also affected by this anxiety as they start living in isolation or they misbehave and sometimes children don't mix up in gatherings easily. "What parents aren't always prepared for is the return of separation anxiety in kids. "Both school-age children and adolescents can struggle with separation anxiety and, in some cases, it can result in Separation Anxiety Disorder" (Hurley, 2009). Web based content usage is the most harmful addiction of our daily lives. The new digital age has brought extraordinary developments in technology that has altered the way many people access and use information and children get attracted to the entertainment easily. Humans are social animals and they cannot live alone but these consistent technological developments that help to connect the world can be seen as either beneficial or harmful to social relationships, as growing children cannot think the way their parents or an adult think.

### Background of the Study

This topic is taken by researcher because children are most sensitive and they have priceless value in our lives, and parents cannot ignore them knowingly. Now a days social media is used by every single person but a mature person knows very well how to deal with any issue but children are immature, they need to be supervised by someone who can teach them the right way. Parents play a

\*MPhil scholar, SMCS, UMT Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

very important role in upbringing of their children because they can guide them and educate them to control their behaviors in different situations. Nobody should leave children on their own to ruin their childhood, mental health and their lives just for the entertainment from social media content. Working mothers need to be well aware of the long term harmful effects of social media usage, and rising separation anxiety in their children.

If children's social behavior seems suspicious, or clinginess to parents has been seen, it is a symptom of growing anxiety which needs to be sorted out before it gets worse. Lack of proper attention and quality time may cause it to rise. Therefore, parents need to listen to their children and have discussions for the sake of their wellbeing.

### **Problem Statement**

Social media plays an important role in everyone's life because it is a source of entertainment, infotainment and it is easily accessible, but unattended children are being affected by social media in many ways because they are not aware of its consequences therefore researcher wants to know the role of parents in guiding, monitoring and supervising their children's social media activities. Networking sites affect children in many ways and they have adverse effects on children's lives as they may get involved in unhealthy activities. And sometimes they get too much addicted to the usage of social media that it becomes almost impossible to make them leave their online activities. Children won't allow anyone to disturb their privacy and they make a comfort zone around them and don't like to get out of it to make a part of any other human activity around them.

Problem gets worse because most of the parents are not aware of separation anxiety and its symptoms, and they may not be ready for the consequences of leaving children alone for multiple hours. Parents unknowingly mistreat children because of the increasing negative behaviours, instead of giving them attention to understand their emotional needs. If this anxiety is not being treated well in early stages, it could get worse with time. Prolonged anxiety disorders may be seen in teenagers.

### **Elements**

Researcher needs to have a look on some elements of the anxiety and behaviours to understand the significance of the topic.

### **Separation Anxiety**

It's normal for little youngsters to feel on edge when guardians bid farewell. In youth, crying, fits of rage, or tenacity are responses to detachment and a typical phase of advancement. Separation anxiety can start before a kid's first year of life, and may go on until a youngster is seven years of age. In any case, the force level and timing of separation nervousness differ colossally from kid to youngster. Concern of a child on leaving mother or father is ordinary, in any event, when your youngster is more established. You can facilitate your kid's anxiety and uneasiness by remaining patient and predictable, and by delicately however immovably setting limits.

A few children experience separation nervousness which does not diminish, even with a parent's earnest attempts. These kids experience a continuation or reoccurrence of exceptional separation anxiety during their primary school years or past. In the event that separation anxiety is over the sufficiently top to meddle with typical exercises like school and kinships, and goes on for quite a long time as opposed to days, it might be an indication of a bigger issue prompting separation anxiety disorder.

### **Stages**

There are two stages of separation anxiety. First one, which is already discussed, can get worse and transfer to the second stage. Separation anxiety issue is the second and not an ordinary phase of advancement, yet a genuine enthusiastic issue described by outrageous pain when a kid is away from the guardians. In any case, since typical separation anxiety and separation nervousness issue share huge numbers of similar side effects, it tends to be befuddling to attempt to make sense of if the kid simply needs time and understanding or has a progressively significant issue.

The main differences between normal separation anxiety and separation anxiety disorder are the intensity of child's fears, and whether these fears keep them from normal activities. Kids with separation anxiety issue may get upset at simply the idea of being ceaselessly from mother or father, and may gripe of ailment to abstain from playing with companions or going to class. At the point when side effects are sufficiently extraordinary, these nerves can signify a confusion. But no matter how fretful the child becomes when separated from a parent even for a little time, separation anxiety disorder is a treatable issue. Parents can do much easier practices with a lot of ideas to make a child relax and feel safe while going through anxiety.

### **Symptoms**

Some symptoms of anxiety include fear of losing a closed person or sometimes it may lead to a fear of some bad happening. Stress that an unwanted and unknowing occasion will prompt lasting separation. Hesitance in going to school. Avoiding to go to sleep. Feeling physically sick as a stomachache or headache. Clinginess with parents. Teeth grinding. Lack of confidence. Fearful attitude. Shyness and need to stay in isolation. More attracted to social media content which leads to misbehave and negative social behaviours. Stubbornness and insecurity issues.

### **Reasons**

Separation anxiety happens in light of the fact that a kid feels perilous somehow or another. Anything that may have thrown children's

world off balance, made them feel threatened or upset their normal routine. If a parent can pinpoint the root cause or causes, it will be one step closer to helping children through their struggles.

A routine change can be a cause of separation anxiety in children, like if a mother starts a job. Or it can be a change in environment. Changes in environment or atmosphere, like move to another school, new residence, or day care situation, can trigger separation anxiety because children are not used to it and are fearful of facing it alone. Stressful situations like staying away from a parent for long hours, switching schools, divorce, or the loss of a loved one, including a pet, can trigger separation anxiety problems. On the other hand, separation anxiety can be inherited or transferred from parent's way of behavior or parent's own anxiety and stress. Parents and children can feed one another's anxieties. The attachment bond is the emotional connection formed between children and their parents. A healthy relationship between parents and child is a guarantee that the kid will have a safer and confident feeling, comprehended and quiet enough for ideal turn of events. Unhealthy relationship with parents is the main reason of anxiety in children because they need to be listen and understood.

### **Consequences**

The results of separation anxiety lead to mental health problems and it grows with the age. Children may get attracted to more social media content and may get negatively affected by it. They may not be able to have positive attitude with family relationships. Children affected by anxiety and media content may not be able to understand and behave in a natural manner of discipline, success and every aspect of life. Parent's irritable reaction towards attitude of children might worsen the problem, which may lead to a prolonged anxiety and disturbed social behaviours in children. Parents who know how to deal with the situation can help their children getting out of the anxiety issue.

### **Social Media Effects**

Psychologists have watched and observed terrible impacts of online networking on the psychological well-being of children. A research has proved that children who use social media content more than three hours a day, may experience psychological illness and poor mental health. If they get too much involved in using such content, they may get badly affected by it as they may have addicted to stay in isolation.

### **Precautions and Cure**

Children are important for their parents and they don't want children to stay stressful. It would be a relief for parents if they successfully help their children overcoming anxiety. Parents should not tell children to resist separation anxiety, but to help them fighting against it with different techniques is a good idea to make them feel safe. It is important to make the child feel safe and comfortable in his surroundings. Being sympathetic with children is good for them so they can get better with time.

For sympathizing with children to help them with anxiety issue, parents need to know the issues faced by their children. For a kid who may as of now feel disconnected by their confusion, the experience of being tuned in to can have an amazing mending impact. Sympathy is good for boosting their confidence but parents should remind them that they were fine and able to stay calm while separating from parents. It's healthier for children to talk about their feelings as they do not benefit from avoiding it. Parentsought to be prepared for change focuses that can cause uneasiness or nervousness for children, for example, going to class or meeting with other kids to play and a parent should avoid a drop off to whom child is attached. Parents should be stay calm while dropping off so that children learn to stay calm as well.

It's good to build healthy relationship with children so that they share secrets and problems with their parents. Giving them attention and getting in touch with them is also a healthy way to reduce anxiety. Take them along to work and give them quality time may also be helpful in reversing the effects of anxiety in children. Encouraging child to participate in healthy social and physical activities may also be a reversal technique for anxiety.

### **Significance of the Topic**

This study is conducted to guide parents on how to control anxiety issues in children and what behavior should they adopt to build healthy relationship with children. So the basic aim of this study is to examine parental attention to avoid children's excessive social media activities because social media addiction in children is increasing day by day. Children are getting away from the reality as they only focus on what they see on social media. They are getting away from face to face communication. Social media excessive usage is creating a distance between parents and children relationship. And it is the main cause of anxiety and negative social behaviors of children.

The fundamental aim of this study is to provide a guideline to readers that parents need to make a healthy relationship with their children and how could they deal with their children in future. This study helps parents to understand the unattended social media usage related issue and a guideline to monitor their children for avoiding any anxiety in them. There are a thousand ways to get children busy with other healthy activities. Parents can guide their children and monitor them even if they really have to go away from them for work.

The main thing is that children are most important for parents and for the future of society, and their mental health should not be ignored at any cost. Our society will sow what we reap in our children. So parents need to be extra conscious about the overall

routine of children of all ages. Children need extra care and attention in every age and every aspect of life. Only a mother can enlighten them with love and care. Both parents should be careful in upbringing their children to make them successful.

## **Objectives**

Objectives of the study are as follows:

- To evaluate the symptoms, reasons and solutions of separation anxiety in children of working women, and to aware parents about it.
- To calculate the social behaviors of children affected by unattended usage of social media.
- To examine the ways of parental monitoring on children regarding social media activities.
- To know the perceptions of parents regarding the mental health of children affected by excessive use of social media unattended.
- To investigate strategies that parents adopt to monitor their children social media activities.
- To conclude the results for how to lower the percentage of separation anxiety in children of working women.
- To learn the ways of making a healthy relationship between parents and children.

## **Literature Review**

Writing a literature review means a study of scholarly and academic sources, (for example, books, diary articles, and propositions) identified with a particular theme or exploration question. It is frequently composed as a major aspect of a thesis, dissertation, or research paper so as to arrange your work comparable to existing information. This literature review has been divided in to the following themes:

- Impact of social media usage on children's social behaviors.
- Separation anxiety in children of working women.

### **Impact of Social Media on Children's Social Behaviors**

Strasburger et.al (2010) research on the topic of Health Effects of Media on Children and Adolescents. In their study they discussed that children use a lot of social media content more than seven continuous hours which affects their eating habits and disturbs their routine life. The main modes of media used by children are laptops, mobile phones or personal computers and some of the children have access to the TV and gaming consoles in their rooms. They don't allow parents to interfere in their privacy and the harmful content affects them negatively as they get involved in sexual or abusive activities. Scientists and researchers focused on the negative effects of using social media and the results are concerning ( Strasburger, Jordan, & Donnerstein, 2010).

O'keeffe et.al (2011) examined The Impact of Social Media on Children, Adolescents, and Families and they discussed that it is an alarming situation that social media content is not good for children and their relationships. Parents should be well aware of what their children are doing on internet because all social networking sites are not age restricted or safe. Excessive use of social media leads children to media harassment and they get stuck in harmful situations (O'Keeffe & Pearson, 2011).

Ali (2016) researched about "Social Media and Youth in Pakistan: Implications on Family Relations" and said that Social Networking Sites (SNS) are progressively turning into a focal point of conversation in the scholastic writing over the globe. The ebb and flow research showed that in Pakistan, family relations are affected by the excessive use of social media and networking sites. This study is conducted to know the complications of family relationships boosted by the use of social media and 94% results showed that it is the main cause of disturbing social relations. It is studied that young people who use SNS started to stay in isolation and get addicted to the isolated atmosphere. They don't want anybody in their surroundings to disturb them or to interfere in their privacy. They don't try to manage healthy relationship with their family members (Ali, 2016).

McDool et.al (2016) were concentrated on "Social Media Use and Children's Wellbeing" as they explained in their study that childhood conditions and practices have been appeared to have significant industrious and prolonged impacts. One part of childhood that has changed drastically in the previous decade, and is causing worry among strategy creators and different bodies liable for protecting kids, is the coming of web-based social networking, or online long range informal communication. This exploration investigates the impact of kids' computerized interpersonal interaction on their abstract prosperity. We utilize an enormous delegate test of 10-15 year olds over the period of 2010 to 2014 from the UK Household Longitudinal Study, and gauge the impact of time spent visiting on social sites on various results which reflect how these kids feel about various parts of their life, explicitly school work, family, friends, school joined in and life all in all ( McDool, Powell, Roberts, & Taylor, 2016).

O'reilly et.al (2018) examined the topic "Is social media bad for mental health and wellbeing? Exploring the perspectives of adolescents" and observed that notwithstanding developing proof of the impacts of web-based social networking on the emotional well-being of young people, there is as yet a deficiency of exact examination into how youths themselves see internet based life, particularly as information asset, or how they draw upon the more extensive social and media talks to communicate a perspective. Young people apparent web based life as a danger to mental prosperity and three topics were recognized: (1) it was accepted to cause state of mind and tension issue for certain teenagers, (2) it was seen as a stage for digital harassing and (3) the utilization of web-based social networking itself was regularly surrounded as a sort of 'dependence' (O'Reilly, Dogra, & Whiteman, 2018).

## Role of Parents towards Making Healthy Relationship with their Children

Mody & Murthy (1988) researched "The study of mental health of children of working mothers". In this study researchers assessed the mental health of fifty Indian children of working mothers and of fifty children whose mothers did not work. Insight and intelligence was estimated utilizing Raven's Colored Progressive Matrices. Character was estimated utilizing the Children's Personality Questionnaire, and change was estimated utilizing a pre-youthful modification scale. Results uncovered more unfortunate knowledge scores in children of working moms at the 12-yr-old level. Children of working moms were thoughtless in the early years and genuinely somewhat precarious however autonomous at later years, when contrasted with the children of non-working moms. Poor modification was noted in children of working moms (Mody & Murthy 1988).

Gretchen (1994) assessed "Working women and motherhood: Separation experiences". This study examined the impacts of day care upon a lady's mental prosperity as far as the detachment uneasiness she encounters when leaving her youngster to go to work. The significant factors distinguished as perhaps affecting partition nervousness incorporated the accompanying: clash between mother's present convictions about mothering and her work status; spouse's help of mother's business status; and youngster's general change in accordance with day care (Gretchen, 1994).

Almani et.al (2012) examined the study of the Impacts of Working Mothers on the Development of Children in Pakistan. In their investigation they examined that in Pakistan, working mothers are more sensitive in taking a decision to leave their children unattended at homes, when they need to go to work for hours. Discussions have been made against the work routine of mothers and also pros of this schedule are shown. Some studies say that working mothers cannot pay attention on their child's well-being and they should not work with mother-hood. Some says that working mothers more likely teach their children to be disciplined. Both sides of this sensitive issue is being a part of discussion in this study (Almani, Abro, & Mugheri, 2012).

## Theoretical Framework

This research study is about social behaviors and separation anxiety in unattended social media user children of working women, therefore the Attachment Theory by John Bowlby applies to this research study. Attachment theory is a explains the bonding, attachment and connection of children with their parents and close people. It is a study about the emotional needs, psychological health and emotional attachment of people and relations. Children in early age needs to get attached with their parents and it is important for their early developmental years. It is their emotional need which affects their physical development as well. The theory was formulated by psychiatrist and psychoanalyst John Bowlby.

## Significance of Patterns

There is a broad assemblage of exploration exhibiting a noteworthy relationship between connection associations and children working over various spaces. Early unreliable connection doesn't really foresee challenges, however it is a risk for the kid, especially if comparable parental practices proceed all through adolescence. Contrasted with that of safely joined children, the alteration of shaky kids in numerous circles of life isn't as sufficiently based, putting their future relations and attachments.

Attachments shaped with peers impact the procurement of social aptitudes, scholarly turn of events and the arrangement of social character. Order of youngsters' friend status (mainstream, disregarded or dismissed) has been found to anticipate resulting change. Uncertain kids, especially avoidant children, are particularly powerless against family hazard. Their social and conduct issues increment or decrease with weakening or improvement in child rearing. Be that as it may, an early secure connection seems to have an enduring defensive capacity. Similarly, as with connection to parental figures, resulting encounters may modify the course of improvement.

## Research Study Relation with the Theory

This theory applies to the study in a way that it relates separation anxiety in children of working women. It also explains the parenting styles with the children's behaviors as it depends on how the child would behave are the result of how the parents treated them. Results of this study would also specify the age and attachment levels (patterns) of children with their parents. As the study belongs to participation of parents regarding monitoring social media activities therefore children would spend that much time on social media that would be acceptable for children but again it depends on the healthy relationship between children and parents. This theory exactly explains what the study is about. We can co-relate the topic of study with this theory.

## Research Questions

- To what extent can a working mother monitor the social media activities of children?
- What types of strategies do parents adopt to make healthy relationship with their children to lower the percentage of anxiety?
- Do children allow parents to disturb their privacy and accept parental interference in their social media activities?
- How do working mothers manage children time and work time?
- Are parents well-aware of the anxiety issue?

## Methodology

To fulfill the objectives of research and to get answers to the research questions, researcher needs a research methodology, which is

a design to conduct the research on the particular topic.

## **Research Design**

Survey method is chosen for the study to gather data on the topic of separation anxiety and social behaviours of unattended social media user children of working women in Lahore district, because researcher wants to know parent's point of view and issues from which children are going through. Survey research is used to gather the opinions, beliefs and feelings of randomly selected groups of individuals. The aim of this survey is to find a solution to these problems and educate parents about it. Because awareness of the issue is necessary to handle the problem in a better way.

## **Survey Type**

Online survey is chosen to distribute the questionnaire among the population through social networking like WhatsApp and e-mail.

## **Population**

The total population of this study contains parents in Lahore city, especially working mothers. Single working women were also targeted to respond.

## **Sampling Technique**

Simple random sampling technique is used for this research study to reach every possible part of the population in Lahore.

## **Sample Size**

Planned research sample size was 100, from which 69 responses are recorded and analyzed, including working mothers, their husbands, and single working women.

## **Research Tool**

A questionnaire comprising 26 questions is developed as a data collection tool, under the study of objectives and research questions. Questionnaire is prepared with multiple choice questions in a clear and informative way to have an unbiased response from the audience.

## **Statistical Analysis**

Surveyplanet.com is used to collect data and analyze the statistical result. Frequency and percentage of answers is obtained to clearly explain the results.

## **Survey Result**

Survey is conducted on this topic of research. Questionnaire comprising 26 questions is designed to gather data. Online interview survey is done for the study to gather data on the topic of separation anxiety and social behaviours of unattended social media user children of working women in Lahore district, because researcher wants to know parent's perspective and issues from which children are going through.

Parent's awareness and perceptions are recorded through different questions. Survey research is used to gather the opinions, beliefs and feelings of randomly selected individuals, working mothers, their husband and single working women.

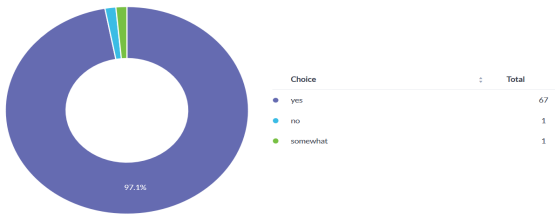
With the help of this survey researcher has been able to find a solution to these problems and educate parents about it. Because awareness of the issue is necessary to handle the problem in a better way.

Statistical analysis of this survey is done by researcher for results. Presentation of results is in pie chart form and explained briefly in percentages of gathered answers.

Research questions analysis is also done and presented in pie charts with explanations of questions related to research query. An overall discussion on result analysis is also created. The gathered data is presented and analyzed in a proper manner to make it easier to understand. Recommendations and conclusion will be helpful for readers to evaluate the whole article and to understand the issue and solutions properly.

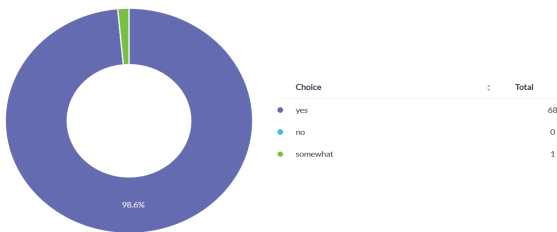
## Result Presentation

Q1 Are both parents equally responsible for well-being of children?  
Multiple Choice



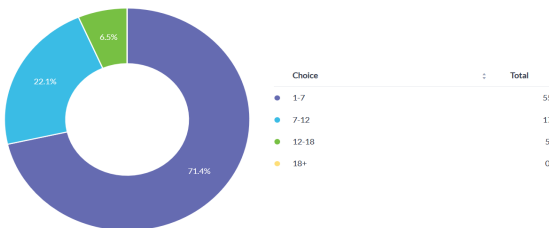
97.1% people responded positive to the question and are agreed that both parents are equally responsible for wellbeing of children.

Q2 Do separation from mother affect children?  
Multiple Choice



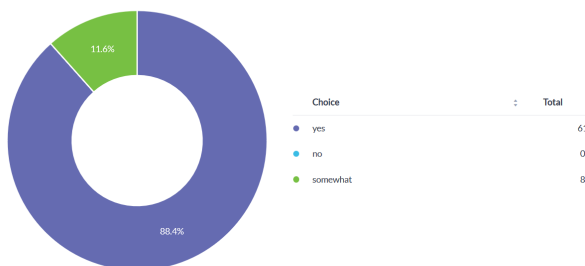
98.6% people say that separation from mother affects children.

Q3 Children of which age group are more affected by separation from working mother?  
Multiple Choice



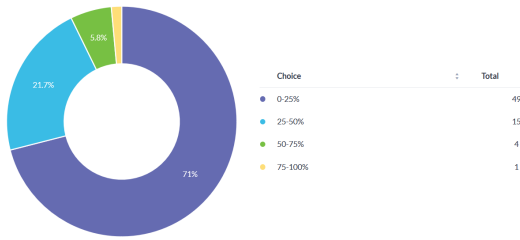
This result shows that mostly 1 to 7 years old children are affected by separation from their mother due to busy work routine.

Q4 Does this separation turns into anxiety in children?  
Multiple Choice



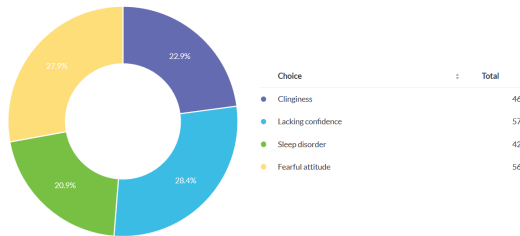
88.4% people think that this separation turns into anxiety. According to 11.6% of respondents, separation turns into anxiety to some extent and it doesn't affect on the whole.

Q5 What percentage of parents are aware of separation anxiety in children?  
Multiple Choice



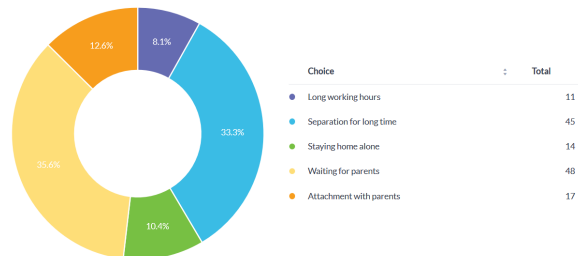
The result is showing that 71% people selected the first choice of answers. It is concerning that only 25% parents are aware of the issue of separation anxiety.

Q6 What are common symptoms of separation anxiety?  
Multiple Choice



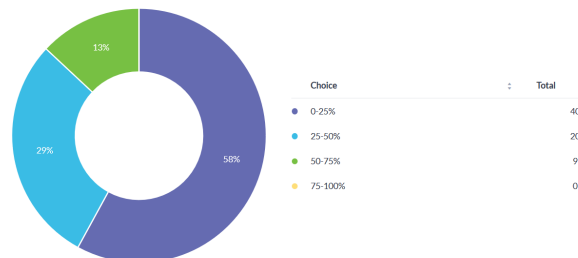
All of the four answers are almost equally selected by respondents, which shows that clinginess, lack of confidence, sleep disorder and fearful attitude are the symptoms of separation anxiety.

Q7 What are the reasons of separation anxiety in children?  
Multiple Choice



Separation for long hours and waiting for parents are the main reasons of increasing anxiety in children.

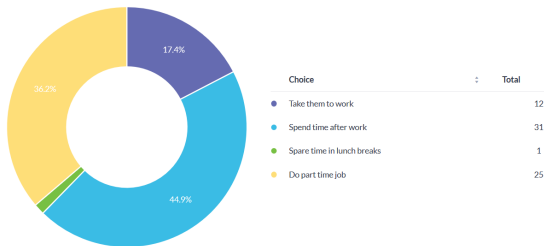
Q8 What percentage of working mothers spend quality time with their children?  
Multiple Choice





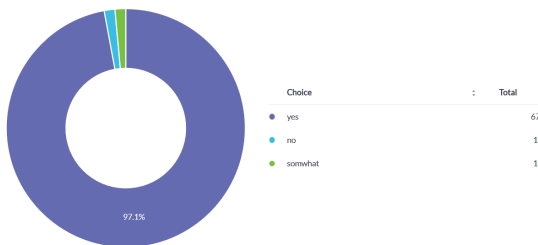
According to 58% people, 0 to 25% working mother spend quality time with their children. And 29% think that up to 50% working mothers spend quality time with their children, which is concerning.

Q9 How working mothers can manage their time with children?  
Multiple Choice



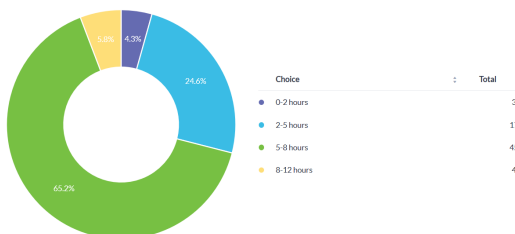
44.9% people say that mothers can manage to spend time with children after work. While 36.2% of them think that doing a part time job is a better option for spending more time with their children.

Q10 Is it necessary for parents to build healthy relationship with children?  
Multiple Choice



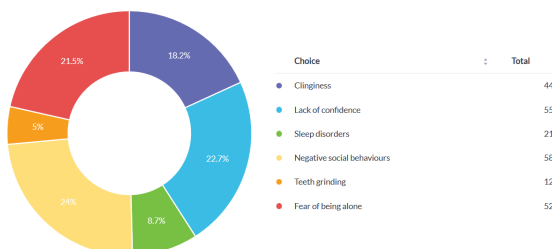
This result shows the significance of healthy relationship between parents and children as 97.1% of the population is agreed that building and maintaining a healthy relationship with children is mandatory.

Q11 How much quality time should be spent with children to build healthy relationship?  
Multiple Choice

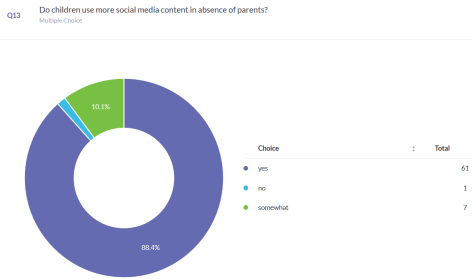


According to 65.2% answers, 5 to 8 hours of quality time may be enough to build healthy relationship with children.

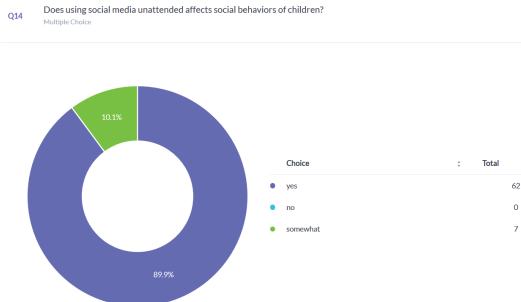
Q12 What type of negative effects do you see in children with separation anxiety?  
Multiple Choice



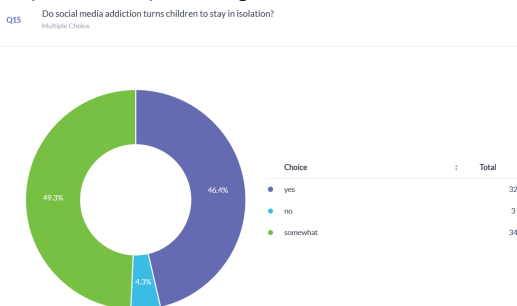
All of the answers including clinginess, lack of confidence, sleep disorders, negative social behaviours, teeth grinding and fear of being alone, are the negative effects of separation anxiety, which are noted by the respondents.



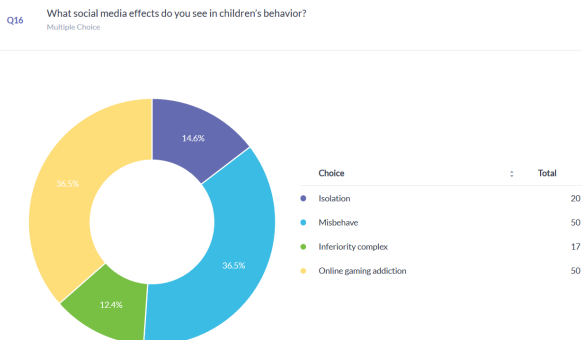
88.4% of people say that children use more social media in absence of parents.



89.9% respondents accept that using social media unattended affects social behaviours of children.



46.4% people are sure that social media addiction turns children to stay in isolation, whereas 49.3% of them think that to some extent it creates a behaviour of being isolated. But the result takes us to the point that social media addiction is leading children to isolation, no matter it affects 100% or less.



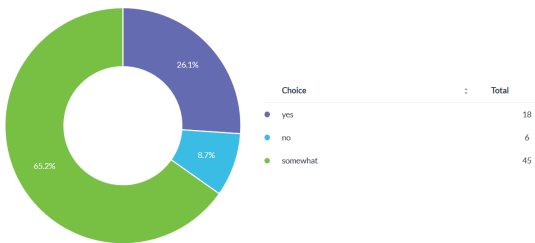
36.5% people reported misbehave and online gaming addiction in children's behaviour who use social media more often. Whereas isolation is also a concerning choice of 14.6% people.

Q17 Do children allow parents to interfere in their privacy?  
Multiple Choice



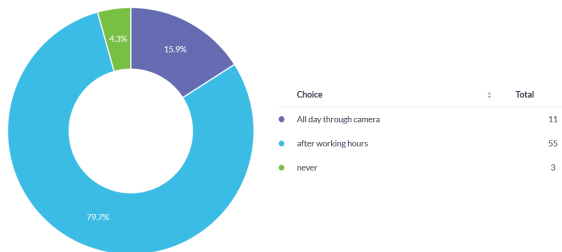
63.8% people observed that children don't allow parents to interfere in their privacy.

Q18 Should parents interfere in children's privacy?  
Multiple Choice



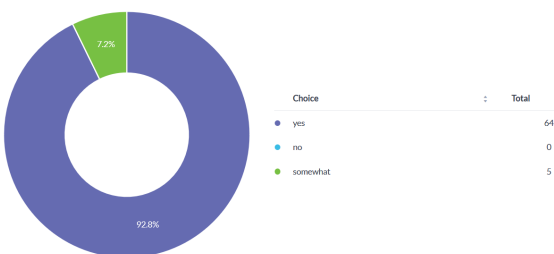
65.2% people think that parents should interfere in children's privacy to some extent. 26.1% definitely agree to interfere to have a check on children.

Q19 To what extent a working mother can monitor social media activities of children?  
Multiple Choice



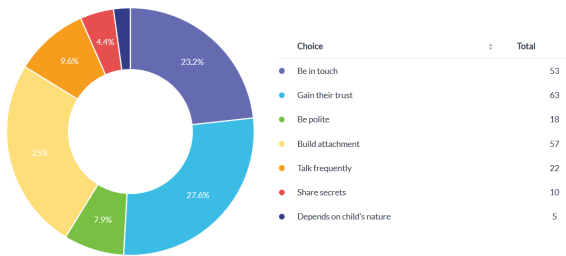
79.7% people think that working mothers can monitor their children's social media activities only after working hours.

Q20 Do children share their secrets with friendly parents?  
Multiple Choice



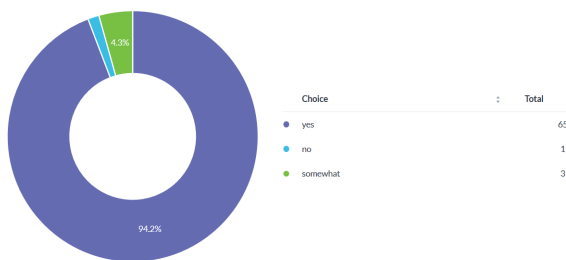
It's good to see that 92.8% people agree that children share their secrets with friendly parents.

Q21 How parents should build healthy relationship with children?  
Multiple Choice



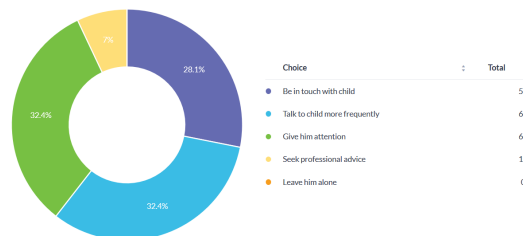
Parents can build healthy relationship with children by gaining their trust, building attachment with them and being in touch with them.

Q22 Do sharing thoughts decreases anxiety and improves social behaviors?  
Multiple Choice



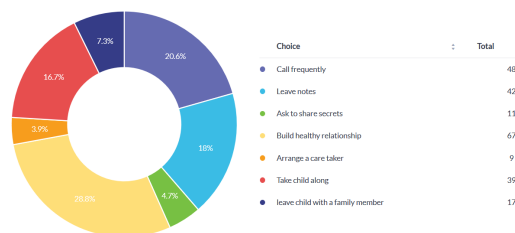
According to 94.2% respondents, sharing thoughts definitely reduces anxiety levels and improves social behaviours of children.

Q23 What strategies should parents adopt to decrease anxiety in children?  
Multiple Choice



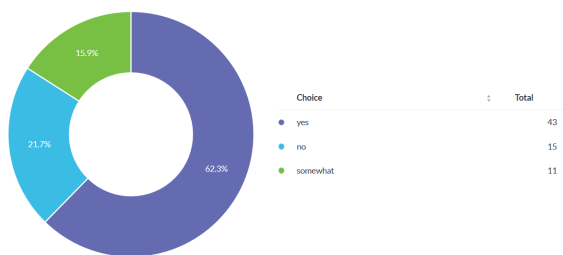
Be in touch with child, talk to child more frequently and give children attention, are the most accepted strategies that should be adopted by parents to reduce anxiety in children.

Q24 Being a working mother, how would you keep an eye on your child's activities?  
Multiple Choice



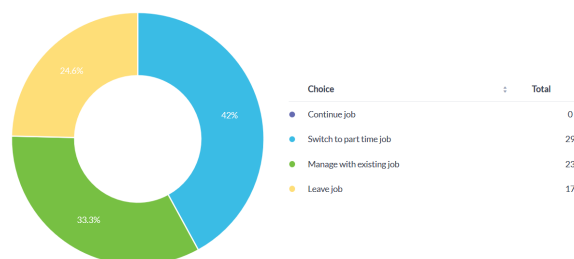
Most of the people chose three options to keep an eye on child's activities. They think that they can monitor their children by calling frequently, leaving notes and building healthy relationship with them. Taking child along is another favourite option of 16.7% people.

Q25 Should a mother leave job and prioritize her children?  
Multiple Choice



Leaving a job and prioritize children is best option for 62.3% people, on the other hand 21.7% think that it is not the only option.

Q26 What will you prefer if your child get separation anxiety because of your job?  
Multiple Choice



Surprisingly nobody wants to continue job if their child is going through separation anxiety because of their job. 42% people prefer to switch to part time job, 33.3% think it's better to manage with existing job, and 24.6% advices to leave job.

## Result Analysis

The results of the questionnaire show the percentage partition of the answers given by respondents. According to the results 97.1% people responded positive to the question and are agreed that both parents are equally responsible for wellbeing of children. So it is required that both parents should be concerned about the issues faced by children.

98.6% people say that separation from mother affects children. And definitely all are agreeing that a child needs mother especially in early ages. This result shows that mostly 1 to 7 years old children are affected by separation from their mother due to busy work routine. Because these are the emotional developmental years, in which children learns to respond and needs attention to understand their own emotions.

88.4% people think that the separation from mother, even for few hours, turns into anxiety. According to 11.6% of respondents, separation turns into anxiety to some extent and it doesn't affect children on the whole. Unknowingly the separation leads to mental stress which becomes the reason of increase in anxiety levels.

The result is showing that 71% people think that parents are not completely aware of separation anxiety issue. It is concerning that only 25% parents are aware of the issue of separation anxiety. And they don't even understand the severity of the problem. Clinginess, lack of confidence, sleep disorder and fearful attitude are the symptoms of separation anxiety.

Separation for long hours and waiting for parents are the main reasons of increasing anxiety in children. Other reasons also affect children but most of the respondents think that main reasons are separation for long time and waiting for parents that is stressful for them and makes their mind anxious.

According to 58% people, 0 to 25% working mother spend quality time with their children. And 29% think that up to 50% working mothers spend quality time with their children, which is concerning. Every child needs parent's (especially mother) attention. And if they don't spend good time with their children, they might see the worst results in their children's behaviours.

44.9% people say that mothers can manage to spend time with children after work. While 36.2% of them think that doing a part time job is a better option for spending more time with their children. The result shows the significance of healthy relationship between parents and children as 97.1% of the population is agreed that building and maintaining a healthy relationship with children is mandatory. According to 65.2% answers, 5 to 8 hours of quality time may be enough to build healthy relationship with children.

All of the answers including clinginess, lack of confidence, sleep disorders, negative social behaviours, teeth grinding and fear of being alone, are the negative effects of separation anxiety, which are noted by the respondents.

88.4% of people say that children use more social media in absence of parents. Which is definitely unattended and parents can't monitor them at that time. 89.9% respondents accept that using social media unattended affects social behaviours of children. 46.4% people are sure that social media addiction turns children to stay in isolation, whereas 49.3% of them think that to some extent it creates a behaviour of being isolated. But the result takes us to the point that social media addiction is leading children to isolation, no matter it affects 100% or less.

36.5% people reported misbehave and online gaming addiction in children's behaviour who use social media more often. Whereas isolation is also a concerning choice of 14.6% people. 63.8% people observed that children don't allow parents to interfere in their privacy. 65.2% people think that parents should interfere in children's privacy to some extent. 26.1% definitely agree to interfere to have a check on children. No matter what, it is necessary for parents to monitor their children's activities especially on social media. Because children don't know what is good for them and what is not. 79.7% people think that working mothers can monitor their children's social media activities only after working hours.

It's good to see that 92.8% people agree that children share their secrets with friendly parents. So it is important to build a good relationship with children. Parents can build healthy relationship with children by gaining their trust, building attachment with them and being in touch with them. As most of the respondents chose these answers. According to 94.2% respondents, sharing thoughts definitely reduces anxiety levels and improves social behaviours of children. Because children need someone to listen to them and understand, so they would share their problems if they would trust their parents and it would be helpful to improve their behaviours.

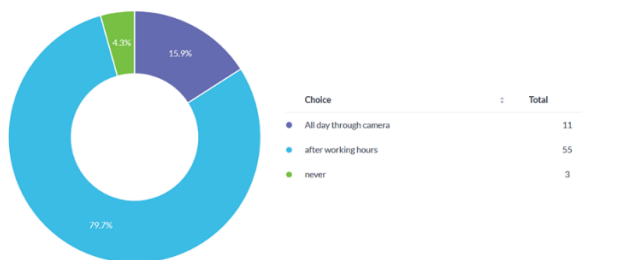
Be in touch with child, talk to child more frequently and give children attention, are the most accepted strategies that should be adopted by parents to reduce anxiety in children. Most of the people chose three options to keep an eye on child's activities. They think that they can monitor their children by calling frequently, leaving notes and building healthy relationship with them. Taking child along is another favorite option of 16.7% people.

Leaving a job and prioritize children is best option for 62.3% people, on the other hand 21.7% think that it is not the only option. Leaving a job is not always a good idea because parents can control this problem just by adopting strategies that may help their children to get out of the anxiety issue and other negative effects of social media usage. Surprisingly nobody wants to continue job if their child is going through separation anxiety because of their job. 42% people prefer to switch to part time job, 33.3% think it's better to manage with existing job, and 24.6% advices to leave job.

### Analysis of Research Questions

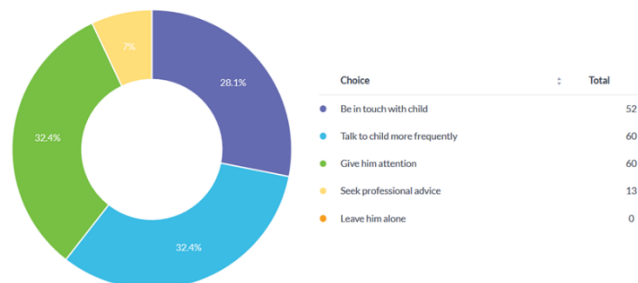
Data analysis is being useful for analyzing the answers to research questions. After having the results of questionnaire, analysis of research questions can be done to recheck whether it has a match with the results.

Result showing answers to the first research question are concerning. To what extent can a working mother monitor the social media activities of children?



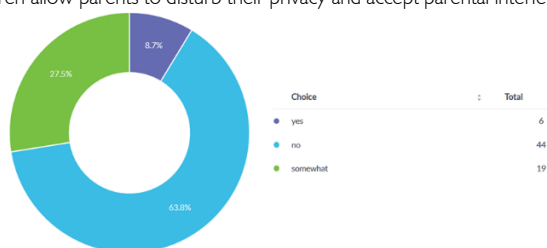
A working mother can monitor the social media activities of children only after working hours. As 79.7% people think that working mothers can monitor their children's social media activities only after working hours. 88.4% of people say that children use more social media in absence of parents. Which is definitely unattended and parents can't monitor them at that time.

What types of strategies do parents adopt to make healthy relationship with their children to lower the percentage of anxiety?



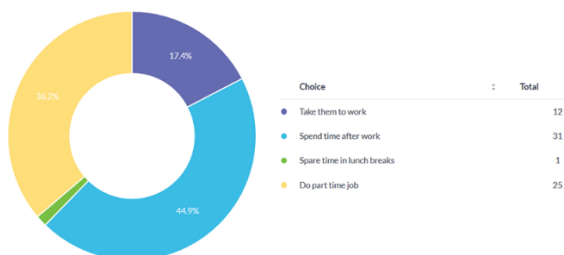
Be in touch with child, talk to child more frequently and by giving him attention, parents can decrease anxiety in their children. This research query covers many questions in the questionnaire which includes discussion on healthy relationship, required time to build healthy relationship, attitude and strategies adopt by parents to build healthy relationship with children. Talking about the strategies, parents can build healthy relationship with children by gaining their trust, building attachment with them and being in touch with them. According to 94.2% respondents, sharing thoughts definitely reduces anxiety levels and improves social behaviours of children. Because children need someone to listen to them and understand, so they would share their problems if they would trust their parents and it would be helpful to improve their behaviours. The result shows the significance of healthy relationship between parents and children as 97.1% of the population is agreed that building and maintaining a healthy relationship with children is mandatory. According to 65.2% answers, 5 to 8 hours of quality time may be enough to build healthy relationship with children. It's good to see that 92.8% people agree that children share their secrets with friendly parents. So it is important to build a good relationship with children.

Do children allow parents to disturb their privacy and accept parental interference in their social media activities?



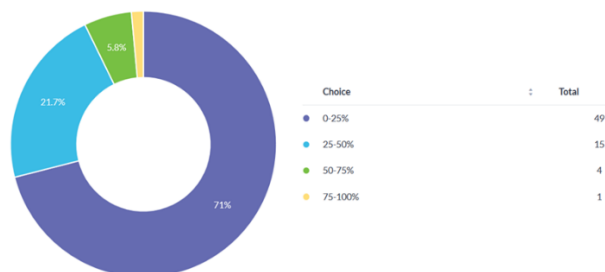
Some questions are designed to get the opinions about privacy of children and what should parents do. 63.8% people observed that children don't allow parents to interfere in their privacy. In another question, 65.2% people think that parents should interfere in children's privacy to some extent. 26.1% definitely agree to interfere to have a check on children. No matter what, it is necessary for parents to monitor their children's activities especially on social media. Because children don't know what is good for them and what is not.

How do working mothers manage children time and work time?



According to the result of designed questions, mother can manage to spend time with their children only after working hours, as 44.9% responses show that mother spend time with their children after working hours, so some strategies they can follow to make it possible to spend more time with their children. Mothers can take children to work if possible, they can be in touch with children through any means, they can make time in lunch breaks but the most picked option by 36.2 % respondents is switching to part time job so that mothers can have more time to spend with their children. The main reason to manage time for children is to make them less anxious and healthier mentally.

Are parents well-aware of the anxiety issue?



After analyzing all the results, researcher reaches to the conclusion that most of the parents are not completely aware of the anxiety issue and effects of social media, so they don't understand the consequences seen in children's behaviours. They try to control them but they don't know what exactly they should do to solve these behavior issues. It needs a better understanding of the problem and strategies to control it correctly.

## **Discussion**

Both parents are equally responsible for the well-being of their children. And children grow more confident when they see their complete family spending good time with each other. Work routine of a mother can make a child feeling separated and alone. Mostly 1 to 7 years old children face anxiety issues because they don't understand their developing emotions, and they need parents to help them understand and control their emotions. Separations for long hours from mother often leads to anxiety problems in children, which may increase with age and could get worst in teenage, if not handled properly in early ages. The most highlighted reason of increasing in anxiety among children, is that parents are not well aware of the issue. As according to the results only up to 25% parents know what separation anxiety really is.

It is necessary to build healthy relationship with children to help them grow happy and healthy, and it could only be possible if parents spend quality time with them. Daily 5 to 8 hours of quality time are required to build healthy relationship with toddlers and preschoolers. Otherwise children feel lack of confidence and it affects the social behaviours, because they use more social media in absence of parents. Social media addiction leads children to stay in isolation to some extent. Which may turn into online gaming addiction and they start misbehaving. Children mostly don't allow their parents to interfere in their privacy, but to some extent it is necessary for parents to interfere and keep an eye just to monitor child's social media activities.

Sharing thoughts decreases anxiety and children share their secrets with friendly parents so they should gain child's trust and be in touch to build healthy relationship with children. Talk to child more frequently and give him attention are the easiest ways to be closer to children's heart. Leaving a job is not the only option to value and prioritize children. Mothers can switch to part time jobs or manage with the existing jobs by calling children frequently from work, leaving notes for them, taking them along and spending quality time with them to build healthy relationship, just to make sure that they are physically and mentally healthy. It is equally recommended for both parents to spend quality time with children to decrease anxiety problems and to make sure that anxiety don't prolong to the teenage.

## **Future Research**

Sub-topics and points, which can be obtained for future research on the related topic, may be useful to get better results and more understanding of the similar issue.

- Toddler's emotional understanding by parents and help children in understanding their emotions.
- Future of children of working women, who faced anxiety issues and problems regarded mental health and social behaviours.
- Awareness and understanding mental health, social behaviours, relationship limitations and finding ways to fight with problems.

## **Conclusion**

After getting the results of survey and completion of this article, researcher has come to the conclusion that children are always dependent on parents and they need special attention of parents in growing age. Mother plays an important part in a child's life because children always need a mother to listen and understand. On the other hand, using social networking sites and usage of social media has put an impact on our daily lives as we have made it necessary for us. When parents go to work, usually children use social media content unattended.

Separation for hours with parents (especially mothers) creates a change in social behaviours and separation anxiety in children and they start using social media more often which takes their anxiety to another level. Separation anxiety has become a common problem among children of working women, and social behaviors of their children are also affected by this anxiety as they start living in isolation or they misbehave and sometimes children don't mix up in gatherings easily.

Parents play a very important role in upbringing of their children because they can guide them and educate them to control their behaviors in different situations. If children's social behavior seems suspicious, or clinginess to parents has seen, it is a symptom of growing anxiety which needs to be sort out before it gets worst. Problem gets worst because most of the parents are not aware of separation anxiety and its symptoms, and they may not be ready for the consequences of leaving children alone for multiple hours.

The results of separations anxiety lead to mental health problems and it grows with the age. Children may get attracted to more social media content and may get negatively affected by it. Psychologists have watched terrible impacts on youngster's life that are affecting emotional well-being and mental health of children.

Nobody likes that their children face or experience anxiety issues, every parent would want to help them overcome anxiety. Parents can give children a feeling of being safe rather than teach them to avoid anxiety by not talking about it. It's good to build healthy relationship with children so that they share secrets and problems with their parents.

As expected, this study is guiding parents on how to control anxiety issues in children and what behavior should they adopt to build healthy relationship with children. Researcher successfully reached the fundamental aim of this study that is to provide a guideline to readers that parents need to make a healthy relationship with their children and how could they deal with their children in future. It is recommended not to avoid it as it can come again if not properly cured. Separation anxiety can go away if parents help their child in fighting with anxiety by adopting different strategies. Tolerating anxiety should be taught to children to help them fight with it.



## Recommendations/Suggestions

Parents attempt to shield on edge kids from their apprehensions, yet overprotecting can really worsen the anxiety. Parents should guide their children about their security regarding online content and media usage. Here are some suggestions through which children can get rid of anxiety issue. These recommendations are helpful to eliminate social media negative effects.

- Positive and realistic expectations should be expressed by parents. Promising a child that what he fears won't happen, is not the right way of making him confident, but do express confidence that he'll be able to manage whatever happens.
- Anxiety should not be eliminated; parents should try to help a child manage it. The most ideal approach to assist children with overcoming anxiety is to assist them with figuring out how to endure it to their level best. After some time, the anxiety will reduce.
- Avoiding things just because they make a child anxious, is not a good idea. Shutting eyes to avoid problematic issues is not a solution because the problem would be back. It should be helped to eliminate or diminish the anxiety.
- Respect children's feelings, but empowering them is not good. Validating feelings doesn't mean agreeing with them. So if a child is terrified about something, do listen and be empathetic, but encourage a child to feel that he can face the fears.
- Asking leading questions is a bad job. Children should be encouraged to share their problems and how they feel about them.
- Child's fears shouldn't be reinforced.
- Encouraging behavior will let your child know that you appreciate how hard he's working, and remind him that the more he tolerates his anxiety, the more it will diminish.
- When we're afraid of something, only the first step seems hardest. So if a child is nervous about something, don't discuss it until you need to.
- Sometimes it helps to talk about how the fear should be handled? Preplanning can be helpful for children.
- Try to practice healthy ways of fighting anxiety. Anxiety can't diminish by pretending that we don't have stress issue, if children see parents managing anxiety issues calmly, they will also learn to be patient and calm in the tough situations.
- Parents should consult experts for proper psychological education before child birth.
- Establishing time and making rules for age restrictions on using social media content is a good option.
- Regularly check children's privacy settings must be done to keep them safe.
- Keep children's profile private.
- Ensure they're not posting individual subtleties, including telephone numbers, address, or registration.
- Parents should gain children's trust to stop them from posting photos or videos which threaten their safety or character.
- Parents should teach children to never accept a stranger's friend request.
- Setting guidelines and rules for their social media use should be strictly managed.
- Have an open dialogue with your child is good for their understanding.
- Don't let your children use social media just because you have busy schedule or they are clingy and anxious. Make it possible to give them quality time instead.

Parents should follow the same rules they make for their children, so that children can easily accept to follow the rules as well.

## References

- Almani, A. S., Abro, A., & Mugheri, R. A. (2012). Study of the Effects of Working Mothers on the Development of Children in Pakistan. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 164-171.
- McDool, E., Powell, P., Roberts, J., & Taylor, K. (2016). *Social Media Use and Children's Wellbeing*. CEDE – Creating and Exploring Digital Empathy.
- Stone, L., Otten, R., Soenens, B., Engels, R., & Janssens, J. (2015). Relations Between Parental and Child Separation Anxiety: The Role of Dependency-Oriented Psychological Control. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 3192–3199.
- Strasburger, V., Jordan, A., & Donnerstein, E. (2010). Health effects of media on children and Adolescents. *Official journal of American academy of Pediatrics*.
- Ali, R. (2016). Social Media and Youth in Pakistan: Implications on Family Relations. *Global Media Journal*.
- Helpguide. (n.d). *Separation Anxiety and Separation Anxiety Disorder*. Retrieved from Helpguide: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/anxiety/separation-anxiety-and-separation-anxiety-disorder.htm>
- Hurley, K. (2009). *Separation Anxiety in Children: How to Help your Child with Separation Anxiety Disorder*. Retrieved from Psycom.net: <https://www.psychom.net/separation-anxiety-disorder-children/>
- O'Reilly, M., Dogra, N., & Whiteman, N. (2018). Is social media bad for mental health and wellbeing? Exploring the perspectives of adolescents. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 601-613.
- O'Keeffe, G. S., & Pearson, K. C. (2011). The Impact of Social Media on Children, Adolescents, and Families. *Pediatrics: official journal of the american academy of Pediatrics*, 800-804.
- Smith, S. O. (2016). *The Gentle Parenting Book*.
- Mody, S. N., & Murthy, V. N. (1988). The study of mental health of children of working mothers. *Journal of Personality and Clinical Studies*, 4(2), 161–164.
- Mathieu-Hansen, Gretchen A, "Working women and motherhood: Separation experiences" (1994). *Dissertations available from ProQuest*. AA19503797. <https://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AA19503797>