

DIGITAL WELLNESS: EMERGING TRENDS, EXPERIENCES AND INNOVATIONS

¹Mr. Amit Kumar,

Assistant Professor of Law, The ICFAI University, Jharkhand, email id -

amitsingh49@gmail.com

²Mr. Indranil Barat,

Assistant Professor, ICFAI University, Jharkhand, email id -

indranilbarat0801@gmail.com

³Dr. Harkirat Singh Bal,

Assistant Professor, ICFAI University, Jharkhand, email id - singhkirat487@gmail.com

⁴Dr. Hemanta Kumar Panda,

Professor, ICFAI University, Jharkhand, Email id - hemant.panda2012@gmail.com

⁵Mr. Aditya Shekhar,

Assistant Professor of Law, The ICFAI University, Jharkhand, email id -

aadityasfj@gmail.com

⁶Mr. Amritanshu Shekhar,

Assistant Professor of Law, The ICFAI University, Jharkhand, email id -

amritanshu211@gmail.com

⁷Dr. Dharminder Kumar,

Professor & Director, Amity Law School, Amity University, Raipur, Email id:

patial7474@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Digital wellness is the best possible level of healthiness that can be achieved by an individual using digital technology in a balanced manner. Given the current times where the usage of smartphones and social media platforms has become omnipresent in our lives, the need to adopt digital wellness as a way of maintaining overall good health has become necessary. Digital wellness involves a number of dimensions, including trends, lived experiences, and technological innovations. Purpose of the Research This paper seeks to explore how digital wellness can be adopted in today's world by examining the various trends associated with this phenomenon, the lived experience of individuals who have already undergone such experiences, and technological innovations related to this idea. Background Evolution of Digital Technology Digital technology has revolutionized human life in many ways. Today, there are many people who rely on digital technology for everything from education and communication to entertainment and leisure

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activities. Although the use of digital technology comes with several benefits, it is not free from risks. The purpose of this background is to discuss how the adoption of digital technology has influenced human lifestyle.

Keywords: Digital Wellness, Digital Detox, Screen Time, Mental Health, Technology Addiction, Digital Ethics, India, Well-being Innovations, Data Privacy, Mindful Technology.

INTRODUCTION

To begin with, digital wellness is the careful and balanced use of technology to promote physical and psychological well-being. It does not involve denying the presence of technology but being mindful enough to make sure that it does not negatively impact one's well-being. Mindful screen time, digital detoxification practices, and building healthier relationships with one's smartphone are some of the practices associated with digital wellness. The evolution of digital technology over the last thirty years has revolutionized the way humans live their lives. Technology such as the invention of the personal computer and the emergence of the internet and the smartphone, social media, and artificial intelligence have integrated themselves into our everyday activities such as working, learning, entertainment, health care, and relationships. In India, this shift has occurred rapidly, with more than 900 million internet users and a revolution in smartphones even in rural India. However, this level of interconnectivity has opened the floodgates to a series of issues ranging from digital fatigue, anxiety, lack of sleep, decreased attention spans, and an erosion of the divide between one's physical existence and their virtual world. It is critical to understand the significance of digital wellness in modern-day society.¹ With countries witnessing an increase in technology addiction, cyberbullying, and mental illness attributed to prolonged usage of screens, there is an urgent need to address the issue. Moreover, when viewed through the lens of the Digital India program of the Government of India, which aims to increase digitization across all industries, the discussion on digital wellness assumes more relevance. Today, digital wellness has become a necessity rather than a luxury; it is essential not only from the perspective of public health but also from that of constitutional rights like the right to life and personal liberty guaranteed by Article 21 and the right to freedom of speech under Article 19 of the Constitution of India.²

Understanding Digital Wellness

The notion of digital wellness is more than just reducing the time spent in front of screens. First and foremost, it stands for an intentional, mindful approach to one's interactions with technology

¹ Specker Sullivan, Laura, and Peter Reiner. "Digital wellness and persuasive technologies." *Philosophy & Technology* 34.3 (2021): 413-424.

² Feerrar, Julia. "Supporting digital wellness and wellbeing." (2020).

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that requires self-control and conscious decision-making. Several dimensions may be considered integral to the idea of digital wellness, including physical, mental, social, and emotional wellness. Physical wellness refers to such problems associated with excessive screen use as eye strain, bad posture, and sleep cycle disruptions. Mental wellness deals with stress management and coping with information overload. Social wellness is about preserving interpersonal offline connections while being cautious about comparisons and other negative aspects of social media. Emotional wellness implies regulating emotional reactions to online interactions, such as dealing with cyberbullying, trolling, and rejection in cyberspace. In academic literature, the concept of digital wellness may be discussed within the framework of positive technology and digital citizenship.³ For example, Cal Newport in his acclaimed book *Digital Minimalism* suggests that technology can be used as an effective tool for value-based actions and productive communication. The notion of digital wellness can be understood through this contradiction, where technology provides an incredible amount of utility but has been designed in such a way that conflicts with human wellness. With regards to digital wellness in the Indian scenario, one needs to consider certain socio-economic aspects. On one hand, many people are still unable to afford technology and remain digitally excluded, while, on the other hand, people from urban regions are becoming too dependent on technology, thereby developing the problem of digital dependency. The emergence of cheap smartphones and data packages like the Jio revolution has led to millions of Indians going online for the first time ever, resulting in a new category of people who have poor digital literacy skills and are susceptible to addiction through their use of technology. From a legal perspective, digital wellness relates to various basic freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution of India such as the right to health (Article 21), the right to privacy as clarified in the case of *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India*⁴, and the right to freedom of speech and expression (Article 19). The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 is also pertinent due to its contribution toward allowing people to manage their personal information, thus lessening the fear of being breached and monitored online. To sum up, exploring digital wellness goes far beyond the common practice of “disconnecting from the internet” and calls for a holistic approach which considers not only physiological well-being but also psychological strength, sociability, legal protection, and ethical considerations.

Emerging Trends in Digital Wellness

The realm of digital well-being is changing at a rapid pace, owing largely to the awareness that people have regarding the negative impact of technology and thus the need for better digital habits. One of the major new trends in the digital well-being space is the digital detox trend,

³ Feerrar, Julia. "Supporting digital wellness and wellbeing." (2020).

⁴ Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India, (2017) 10 SCC 1.

where people opt to disengage from technology voluntarily for certain periods in order to de-stress, get good quality sleep, and engage socially with others. It is also an industry in itself, with detox facilities, detox apps, and even device-free areas being introduced in metropolitan areas in India, allowing professionals and students to escape notifications for some time. Another closely linked trend is that of managing screen time, which has been incorporated by popular operating systems like Apple's Screen Time and Google's Digital Well-being. Such solutions offer the user data and limits about screen time, app usage, and even focus modes to allow people to take charge of their own digital intake. The trend in India has found popularity amongst parents worried about their children's excessive use of devices and thus led to parental control applications.⁵

Yet another important trend is the introduction of digital well-being into workplace policies. With the post-pandemic switch to the remote/hybrid work model and the emergence of problems of burnout, Zoom fatigue, and blurred lines between personal time and working hours, many companies are becoming aware of such issues. Several Indian companies in fields like IT and startups have launched screen-time breaks, no-meeting days, and mental counseling among other benefits. The idea of the right to disconnect has been recognized by many countries through legislation, even if the Indian government has failed to do that thus far. Still, some of India's High Courts have emphasized the need for maintaining work-life balance in the modern reality through provisions contained in Article 21 of the constitution. On a similar note, schools and other educational establishments around the world are adopting digital wellness education programs aimed at educating children about the harmful effects of constant screen time and the advantages of living a balanced life.⁶

Mindful social media use has become an important trend as well. People have begun to edit their social media streams by blocking negative users, unfollowing pages that cause stress, and moving to networks that value health above all else. The introduction of the 'Like' feature in Instagram and reminders about screen time on TikTok are indicative of the trend. Moreover, the return to analogue the preference for paper books, traditional games, journaling, and outdoor recreation is being positioned as a conscious rebellion against the overload of digital technology. This is evident in India through the increasing trend of community libraries, art classes, and nature escapes that discourage the use of gadgets.⁷

⁵ Karthikeyan, V., and Y. Palin Visu. "14 Future Directions Trends in Digital and Health and Wellness." *Cybersecurity in Healthcare Applications* 246 (2025): 3254.

⁶ Putrevu, Jayaprada, and Charilaos Mertzanis. "Wellness sector transformation: A systematic review of trends, challenges, and future research directions." *Journal of Economic Surveys* 40.2 (2026): 1000-1026.

⁷ Karthikeyan, V., and Y. Palin Visu. "Future Trends and Directions in Digital Health and Wellness Security." *Cybersecurity in Healthcare Applications*. Chapman and Hall/CRC, 2025. 246-262.

Technology-wise, there have been increasing advancements in the area of wellness through the development of artificial intelligence-powered wellness assistants. Further, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has come out with advisory notes on how to responsibly use social media, and awareness programs focusing on cyber safety and digital hygiene. The National Education Policy, 2020, too, focuses on incorporating digital literacy along with ethics to create an era where technology is not just a means of connectivity but wellness is also valued at par with it.

Experiences and Impact of Digital Technology on Individuals

In the context of personal experience, the relationship between individuals and technology in the digital era seems paradoxical. On the one hand, technological advancement has created a more level playing field with regard to access to knowledge, education, healthcare, and business opportunities. A student from an underdeveloped village in India can leverage the power of digital technology to gain access to high-quality educational material and career advice through online courses. A budding entrepreneur in a tier-2 city in India may rely on social media websites to effectively market his products and services to a wider audience at relatively lower costs compared to traditional marketing tools. Technology played a vital role during the COVID-19 pandemic in facilitating work and education while being confined to homes and helped people maintain contact with each other. The use of applications such as Zoom, Google Meet, and WhatsApp became essential during the lockdown period to facilitate communication with others.⁸

But the very same technology that brings people closer also drives a wedge between them. Screens used for education often create distraction and lead to fatigue. The issue experienced by nearly all respondents regardless of their age category can be defined as digital fatigue. It refers to the state of mental tiredness that occurs due to prolonged screen usage, notification overload, and excessive multitasking while utilizing various digital tools. Indian IT specialists suffer from technostress that includes symptoms like fatigue, vision problems, sleep deprivation, and being always busy with work that does not end even when people get home. Elevated cortisol levels associated with technostress lead to low productivity and poor job satisfaction. Another group of people that has been exposed to adverse effects of excessive screen use are students, especially in recent years since most learning processes have been transferred online due to pandemics. Researchers at the Indian Council of Medical Research report a significant increase in cases of myopia, insomnia, and anxiety in children after they spent much time using electronic devices.⁹

⁸ Hill, Rowena, Lucy R. Betts, and Sarah E. Gardner. "Older adults' experiences and perceptions of digital technology:(Dis) empowerment, wellbeing, and inclusion." *Computers in Human Behavior* 48 (2015): 415-423.

⁹ Bentley, Sarah V., et al. "The digital divide in action: how experiences of digital technology shape future relationships with artificial intelligence." *AI and Ethics* 4.4 (2024): 901-915.

Probably the most concerning aspect about this experience would be its impact on the mental well-being of individuals. Since such platforms were created in order to generate maximum interest through content that triggers people and makes them feel inadequate or even anxious and depressed, their use in India has had serious consequences, especially for young people living in urban areas. In a country where success is measured by number of likes, followers, shares, and similar things, users feel the need to create an appealing persona in front of everyone, which leads to the development of a vicious circle of feeling dissatisfied and comparing oneself to others. FOMO, a term referring to the feeling of fear of missing out something interesting, also leads to the addiction of constantly checking one's phone or social media account. This, alongside cyberbullying and harassment, creates new forms of trauma, including social isolation, decreased academic performance, and even self-harm in some cases.¹⁰

The physical ramifications are no less alarming. Extended use of the screen is connected with computer vision syndrome, headaches, bad posture, and a sedentary lifestyle that causes obesity and heart-related issues. The blue light emanating from the screen interferes with melatonin production, which regulates sleep patterns; this results in insomnia and poor-quality sleep. With India being a country where sleep disorders had not received much attention in the past, the popularity of late-night scrolling has made the problem worse. Finally, the incessant pinging of notifications has been known to diminish one's attention span and affect cognitive performance, preventing people from concentrating on their work or reading.¹¹

Innovations in Digital Wellness

Increasing demands for more healthy digital behaviors have led to a series of innovations ranging from technology, design, policy, and behavioral sciences. Technologically, most modern devices come with embedded technologies for digital wellbeing that include real-time dashboards of users' behaviors, time restrictions per application, focus mode for silencing notifications during certain times, and bedtime mode that reduces screen time hours before bedtime. In comparison to standalone apps, these are embedded features that require no installation but are directly available to all users through the operating system. In India, where Android phones dominate, Digital Wellbeing features by Google have been accessed by millions of Indians giving them complete control of their digital behaviors. Moreover, Samsung, Xiaomi, and OnePlus have

¹⁰ Sokhulu, Lerato Hlengiwe. "Students' experiences of using digital technologies to address their personal research needs during the COVID-19 lockdown." *African Identities* 19.4 (2021): 436-452.

¹¹ Betts, Lucy R., Rowena Hill, and Sarah E. Gardner. "'There's not enough knowledge out there': Examining older adults' perceptions of digital technology use and digital inclusion classes." *Journal of Applied Gerontology* 38.8 (2019): 1147-1166.

included customized wellness features specific to Indian consumers including game launcher restrictions and student focus mode for competitive examinations.¹²

Apart from OS-level tools, there are many independent wellness apps that have been developed. Games like Forest, where users can grow virtual trees if they refrain from using their mobile phones, have found many followers in India. Other useful apps include Offtime, where users can prevent themselves from using distracting apps and control calls and texts, while keeping track of their usage behavior. There are also apps that help people become more mindful of what they do and offer them meditation sessions tailored specifically for people who are tired of screens. Indian start-ups have also started offering their own versions of apps in this category. Apps like "Digital Detox" and "Mindhouse" by YourStory have included mental well-being programs and screen-life balancing techniques, taking cues from local practices of yoga nidra, pranayama, and guided relaxation in native languages.¹³

AI is becoming increasingly relevant in digital wellness innovation efforts. Using artificial intelligence, a digital assistant is capable of analyzing user behavior patterns, detecting times when there is high risk of distraction, and providing proactive interventions. For example, using certain machine learning tools, it is possible to detect mindless scrolling and automatically start a relaxation exercise. Another application of artificial intelligence is the development of chatbots that help relieve stress, anxiety, or any other negative experience during interaction with technology. These chatbots utilize natural language processing capabilities to assist people who experience cyberbullying or feel anxious when using the internet. Furthermore, artificial intelligence algorithms can be employed to learn user behaviors to offer personalized interventions in the form of suggestions on taking breaks, limiting certain applications, and managing their digital lifestyle. In particular, Indian models trained in local languages such as Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, and Marathi will enhance effectiveness of such applications.¹⁴

Wearable technology has also played a substantial role in digital well-being. Modern smartwatches and fitness bands from companies like Apple, Fitbit, and even Indian companies such as Noise and Boat have incorporated functionalities that check one's screen time usage, alert the user if he/she has been inactive for an extended period, and also keep a tab on their sleep routine to help them get better sleep. These devices can be synced with health applications on smartphones, giving users a comprehensive analysis of their well-being both digitally and physically.

¹² Casillo, Mario, et al. "Integrating the internet of things (IoT) in SPA medicine: innovations and challenges in digital wellness." *Computers* 13.3 (2024): 67.

¹³ Rossi, Mirko. "Digital health: usage of innovative mobile technologies for health and wellness." (2021).

¹⁴ Carlsson, Christer, and Pirkko Walden. "Digital wellness services and sustainable wellness routines." *European, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern Conference on Information Systems*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017.

Lastly, innovations in policy are also being made within the government apparatus. Advisories by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology for cyber hygiene, the focus on digital literacy with ethics consciousness as laid down in the National Education Policy 2020, and the rising significance of the right to disconnect through the courts are examples of institutional innovations aimed at digital wellness. The proposed Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, in providing the user increased control over his data, helps reduce the apprehension related to data misuse as a part of digital wellness. The above mentioned initiatives, ranging from very minute to systemic innovations, from the individual app to national policies, signify a conscious effort towards a redesigning of the digital space with human wellness as the primary concern.

Legal, Ethical and Social Concerns

The quest for digital wellness involves several other factors other than self-restraint and technology. From the legal viewpoint, the main issue relates to protecting the rights of individuals in the ever-growing and more sophisticated digital ecosystem. According to the Constitution of India, right to privacy constitutes one of the fundamental rights under Article 21 as recognized in the famous case of *K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017). At the same time, many of the devices aimed at achieving digital wellness such as screen time trackers, usage analytics, and artificial intelligence-powered wellness assistants require access to massive amounts of personal data. This creates the issue of whether there was proper consent obtained from the users, who own the information, as well as what might happen to it if mishandled.¹⁵ One of the most important developments in this field comes from the introduction of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, which provides a legislative mechanism for regulating data processing, obtaining consent from the user, as well as imposing penalties for breaching any of the laws stated therein. Moreover, the lack of a legal provision specifically designed to address digital addiction or the “right to disconnect” in India renders the user helpless against a platform built for addiction. Although certain high courts in India have acknowledged the significance of maintaining a proper balance between work and leisure time as well as freedom from persistent digital interference, there is still no single piece of legislation similar to the French “right to disconnect” rule, under which the employer cannot force the employee to respond to his/her emails outside work hours.

There are similar ethical implications and issues that arise out of the nature of the digital technologies themselves. First and foremost is the irony of the technological solution to the problems caused by the same technology. The wellness technologies, although useful, are

¹⁵ Mahmud, Kafi, Mukesh Kumar, and O. P. Midha. "Regulating Digital Health: Legal Perspectives on Medical ICT and Home Wellness Devices." *Journal of Cultural Analysis and Social Change* (2026): 299-305.

created by companies whose profit model depends upon making the technology addictive in order to maximize their profits. Therein lies the ethical problem of whether this is even a valid approach to addressing the problem. Take, for example, a social network company that offers a screen-time limit feature on its application but, at the same time, uses sophisticated algorithms to keep the users hooked to their devices for as long as possible. Such technologies can be said to be more of an ethical charade that merely helps the user feel better about himself/herself without making any meaningful change to the situation. When the AI assistant provides recommendations regarding taking breaks and restricting certain apps, this constitutes soft paternalism, which although is done with good intentions, it may undermine one's autonomy. It should be noted that digital wellness devices can become instruments of control for companies or educational organizations that want to monitor employee or student adherence to these guidelines instead of encouraging healthy habits. The "first do no harm" principle should prevail in the design of these technologies to ensure that they promote independence and freedom from addiction.¹⁶

Social issues also pose a challenge to the discussion surrounding digital wellness especially within the context of India. The foremost among these is that of the digital divide, which refers to the disparity between people who have access to technology and those who lack such access. As already mentioned, digital wellness is premised upon the availability of choices and options when it comes to utilizing technology. However, for several millions of poor Indians residing in remote parts of the country, digital technology provides access to fundamental services such as financial services, educational institutions, health facilities, and even government programs. Thus, the idea of digital detox or conscious consumption may unwittingly favor the more privileged individuals from cities who have the luxury of choosing whether or not they wish to engage with their smartphones. Moreover, the communal aspect of living cannot be overlooked in the quest for individual wellness through technology. Several studies reveal that shared use of technological devices is prevalent across many Indian households and therefore individual strategies might overlook other factors that are important. Yet another social issue concerns the vulnerability of particular demographics such as children and adolescents. In 2020, India introduced its new National Education Policy which highlights that digital literacy is required but there is no regulatory framework to ensure online safety of minors which makes them vulnerable to various issues like addiction, exploitation, and harmful content. Moreover, social conventions for parenting have changed as many parents resort to giving their children gadgets when they cry because of hunger as a means of pacifying them, thus making them dependent on technology at

¹⁶ Jr Rogayan, Danilo V., and Lea F. Dollete. "Gearing up for the era of digital wellness: challenges and opportunities." *Journal of Public Health* 47.1 (2025): e140-e141.

an early age. Similarly, the elderly population is vulnerable due to their reliance on technology for various activities.

Challenges in Achieving Digital Wellness

In spite of an increasing awareness and rise in digital well-being initiatives, there are still many challenges in attaining true digital wellness. These challenges range across psychological, technological, socio-economic, legal, cultural, and organizational areas, all of which interconnect and reinforce each other to create complex issues that are hard to solve. Psychologically, perhaps the biggest obstacle to achieving true digital wellness is the addictive nature of using technology. The architecture of digital interfaces has been constructed to take advantage of human psychology through reward variability, social validation loops, and the fear of being left behind. Overcoming such addictions requires far more than willpower; it needs a re-engineering of one's surroundings, which itself is extremely difficult when one's job, education, and social life are all dependent on the use of technology. Technology addiction has recently been identified by the WHO as a behavioral addiction. However, treatment remains a big problem for many, especially in countries like India, which lacks the necessary healthcare facilities for mental illnesses. There is also great stigma around the topic of technology addiction, leading most people to deny having any problems with their usage habits.¹⁷

From the perspective of technology, the wellness tools themselves are often subject to some form of limitation. As mentioned earlier, many of the wellness applications in question are created by the same companies that gain from engaging with customers, making a conflict of interest an intrinsic element here. Wellness is rarely enabled by default; on the contrary, it usually requires effort from the part of the end-user. Additionally, any user who feels strongly about staying engaged with the platform would find it easy to bypass the tool altogether. Its effectiveness, in turn, would also be hindered by the environment in which it operates – one that seeks to maximize screen time. Algorithmic manipulation will always remain a significant problem, with recommendation engines constantly fine-tuned in order to retain engagement. Algorithms themselves tend to be a 'black box', making it impossible for consumers to learn just how they shape their behavior. From the perspective of India, where much of the population uses low-end devices to connect to the Internet, this issue might be compounded by the level of technological knowledge required.¹⁸

¹⁷ Kari, Tuomas, et al. "Implementing a digital wellness application into use—challenges and solutions among aged people." *International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020.

¹⁸ Carlsson, Christer, and Pirkko Walden. "Digital wellness services and sustainable wellness routines." *European, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern Conference on Information Systems*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017.

One of the most important socio-economic issues is certainly related to socio-economic inequalities. First and foremost, the digital divide, which refers to the division of individuals who have access to technology and those who lack such access, makes the discussion around digital wellness fundamentally asymmetric. Indeed, for people coming from poor families, digital devices are more likely to help them find jobs, study online, and use public services than distract them from wellness. Thus, concerns about maintaining connections to earn money take precedence over other considerations. Furthermore, the idea of digital wellness in general sounds like an extra expense and privilege when one cannot even get internet access easily. As far as wellness practices are concerned, it might be inappropriate to talk about them in rural areas where there is only one digital device per several family members, making personalized wellness tools impossible. Last but not least, the price of the above-mentioned tools, including counseling and special applications, becomes yet another barrier. Even free tools presuppose a certain degree of technological competence and self-consciousness.

Lastly, the paradox of agency lies at the heart of each of these issues. While the concept of digital wellness necessitates that people exert deliberate control over their usage of technologies, the platforms themselves have been developed to weaken such control. Solutions to problems that depend wholly on individual agency unfairly put the onus on the user, disregarding the systemic factors that influence human actions. To attain digital wellness, both individual and structural changes must be made, including changes to the design of platforms themselves, as well as accountability from businesses and legal protection for citizens. Until such systemic changes are made, digital wellness will continue to be more idealistic than realistic for most Indians.

Recommendations and Future Prospects

Solving the complex problems associated with digital well-being calls for a holistic and multi-party strategy that transcends individual accountability and focuses on broader reforms in legal, technological, educational, and social sectors. The solutions outlined below are meant to be implementable, situation-specific, and rooted in the Indian legal and sociocultural system, yet forward-looking as well.

From a legal and regulatory viewpoint, the primary suggestion is the need to pass a law in the form of Digital Wellness Act or at least incorporate digital wellness provisions within some existing legislation. Such legislation should ensure that there is a statutory right to disconnect, which would state that employers shall not make employees engage in communication related to work outside work time with exceptions in emergency situations. In fact, many countries, including France, Italy, and several others have enacted such laws, and the Ministry of Labour and Employment, in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, should consider the appropriateness of adopting such laws for the Indian working force,

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especially within IT, BPO, and gig economy segments. Moreover, the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 must have specific provisions related to the problem of addictive digital platform design. One of such suggestions would be a requirement to conduct a wellness impact assessment prior to launching new products. The platforms must ensure that wellness is the default setting as opposed to leaving the responsibility of opting into it on the user. Regulation of algorithmic transparency is equally essential since the users must have the freedom to know how their personal information is being utilized to shape their actions, and there needs to be a requirement for platforms to disclose the elements that maximize engagement and undermine wellbeing. This comes at an opportune moment when the Draft Digital India Act, which aims to supersede the Information Technology Act of 2000, comes into existence.

From a technological and corporate perspective, the suggestions include promoting ethical design and corporate social responsibility. International and national technology companies need to shift their paradigms from using engagement metrics that maximise users' interactions with their products and move towards a design that supports well-being at all costs. Specifically, this would involve designing user-centric interfaces that promote user autonomy, prevent excessive interaction and engagement with applications through compulsions, and incorporate useful defaults, including grayscale mode, notification bundling, and mandatory downtime for the user. In addition, the notion of the attention economy needs to be disrupted, by making sure that technology company profit models are aligned with promoting user well-being and by offering subscription models instead of models that profit through advertising revenues earned from keeping users occupied with screens. Startups in India, as well as traditional companies in the country, need to be incentivised with tax breaks and innovation grants to develop locally relevant solutions that support digital wellness among the Indian population. In addition, they need to be offered in multiple Indian languages and be culturally sensitive and appropriate.

In the field of education, digital wellness should become an integral part of the curriculum at least from the primary school stage onwards. The National Education Policy 2020 already focuses on digital literacy and ethical use of technology, but there should be specific courses for managing screen time, algorithmic thinking, online safety, and the value of being off the internet. Training of teachers needs to ensure that the early warning signs of digital addiction are identified, and basic interventions are made. Digital wellness should form part of the orientation programmes offered by universities and professional bodies, as well as specific counselling services for technology-induced psychological problems. Public awareness drives can promote a healthy dialogue about digital wellness through mass media, social media platforms, and community-based awareness drives. Such public awareness campaigns need to be regionally focused and customized to various demographics including rural communities.

As we look towards future opportunities, the trend that is set for digital wellness will be influenced by several trends that emerge. These include ambient computing, wearable technologies, and Internet of things. While the proliferation of these technologies makes the task of disengaging even more difficult, it is possible to leverage these technologies through proactive and AI-enabled systems that take care of the wellness of the users in real time. The advent of the metaverse and virtual reality will introduce new paradigms to be considered for addressing presence and immersion within virtual spaces. From the positive aspect, the discourse on digital wellness and ethics alongside the voices of the former advocates of the industry who have become critics suggests a new wave of societal expectations. Consumers will demand products and services that respect their time and attention, and governments are beginning to act in response. Given India's rich diversity in the digital space, the country has potential to become a frontrunner in digital wellness innovation in the global context by learning from the best practices abroad and inventing its own. The future of digital well-being will be realized through an ecosystem that supports the well-being of human beings by empowering them, protecting their rights, and ensuring that they have the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in the digital world. The path to realizing this vision is not easy, but it can be achieved through collective effort.

CONCLUSION

The emergence of digital wellness has been identified as an urgent imperative due to the increasing digitization processes across Indian society. In this regard, this research paper has discussed the definition and development of digital wellness, the recent trends in the discussion of digital wellness, as well as people's experiences and consequences of using technology. At the same time, there has been provided a critical assessment of the ethical, legal, and social problems that are linked to the topic and the challenges faced in the process of achieving digital wellness. Digital wellness should be regarded as a complex social phenomenon as well as the solution for which it is crucial to implement certain changes from different aspects – legal framework, technological solutions, education policy, corporation strategy, etc. Otherwise, the process of achieving this goal is doomed to failure due to the lack of adequate measures. Therefore, in order to ensure the successful development of society in general, as well as digital society, in particular, the issue of digital wellness should become a priority issue in India.

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