

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

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ABSTRACT:

The substantial effects of social media on the mental health of teenagers in the twenty-first century are explored in this chapter. It critically examines the possible effects on young people's mental health of their significant use of various social media platforms and delves deeply into this participation. The topic covers a wide range of topics, such as the startling frequency of cyberbullying, the negative impact of skewed body image beliefs, the widespread fear of missing out (FOMO), and the worrisome addictive tendencies linked to social media usage. The chapter also illuminates social media's positive aspects, explaining how it may create virtual support networks and lead initiatives to raise awareness of mental health issues. Finally, this investigation yields a strategic plan for cultivating a balanced and positive relationship with social media. The techniques mentioned below attempt to provide teenagers with the skills they need to reap the benefits of these platforms while proactively reducing the potential negative outcomes discussed previously. By implementing these measures, individuals, caregivers, educators, and legislators work together to create a digital world that protects and improves the mental health of future generations.

Keywords:

Social media, adolescent mental health, cyber bullying, mental health awareness, media support

INTRODUCTION:

Adolescence, frequently referred to as the critical transition between childhood and adulthood, is a profoundly changing developmental stage. The rise of social media platforms has permanently transformed the terrain on which adolescents traverse these important changes. Social media, with its vast virtual worlds, has introduced unparalleled modes of communication and interaction, significantly altering the dynamics of relationships and self-presentation.

The digital age has seen an exponential increase in the usage of platforms that enable quick sharing, engagement, and networking, giving teenagers a powerful arsenal for expressing themselves, connecting with others, and exploring the complexities of the world around them. In traversing this complicated terrain, we hope to empower stakeholders—from teenagers to educators, parents, and policymakers—to embark on a shared journey to cultivate a digital landscape that promotes resilience, empowerment, and holistic mental health.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

To further comprehend the phenomenon being studied, the literature was explored. Various studies show that adolescents are among the most insatiable users of social networking platforms. They spend a significant chunk of their everyday lives on social media platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, Whatsapp, TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter.

McCrae et al. (2017), explore the positive significant correlation between number social media platforms across all three negative emotional states- depression, anxiety, suicidal idea, and stress. Similarly, other studies found a positive relationship between time spent scrolling through social media app and negative body image on Facebook. Those who had spent more time on social media had 2.2 times the risk of reporting eating and body image concerns, compared to their peer who spent less time on social media.

Seabrook and Kern (2016), explore the positive interaction, social support and social connectedness on social networking sites. Whereas negative interaction and social comparison on social networking sites were related to higher level of depression and anxiety.

Adams and Kisler (2013) found that many adolescents sleep with their phones under their pillows and wake up to read and respond to texts.

(Lenhart et al., 2010) found that today's teenagers share more self-created content, opinions, and links to other content online than any other demographic.

METHODOLOGY:

The survey method was used in this study. A sample comprised of 100 students those who are mobile users frequently. In the current investigation, data were collected using the DASS-42 created by Lovibond & Lovibond (1995). The scale contains 42 components. DASS assessed three related negative emotional states: depression, anxiety, and stress. This scale contains 14 items that represent sadness, anxiety, and stress. There is a four-point scale ranging from did not apply to me to some of the time, a large portion of the time, and most of the time.

Hypothesis:

1. The excess use of social media negatively impacts the adolescents' psychological well-being.
2. Social media negatively impact the social well-being of adolescents.

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH:

Adolescents' self-esteem, interpersonal interactions, and psychological well-being have all been influenced by social media platforms. Through the media, today's adolescents interact with groups other than those in school. Social media is widely used by teenagers. For example, according to a 2009 national poll, 73% of teenagers use social networking sites (SNS), up from 55% in the previous three years (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010). Thus, it is essential to comprehend how social media affects youngsters.

Table 1: Socio-economic profile of the respondents

Variable	Statement	Percentage
Gender	Male	46
	Female	54
Age	16-17	13
	17-18	55
	18 above	32
Years of using	1-3 yrs	57
	3-6 yrs	38
Most used Apps	Facebook	20
	Instagram	32
	Whats app	58
	Youtube	36
	Snapchat	28
	twitter	9

Particularly in the context of India, gender is a significant variable. As a result, both boys and girls were taught about the effects of media on both genders. 46% of the participants were men and 54% were women, according to the table. Similarly, gender and religion are significant factors that can have a profound effect on people's lives.

In order to gain insight into social media usage, questions on respondents' years of social media usage were posed. Most of them claimed to have very recently—between one and three years ago—began using social media. WhatsApp is the most frequently utilized app. The YouTube app is preferred by respondents for social media use, particularly for conversation and humorous video creation.

Table 2: Psychological effects of excessive social media use on viewers

		Z score	T value	Rank
1	Mental tiredness	-1.90	30.82	3
2	FOMO*** and Anxiety	0.84	58.40	1
3	Lack of self esteem	-2.62	23.49	4
4	Depression	-1.86	31.14	2

* Key: 0-33 score low impact **33-66 above score -high impact

*** FOMO (Fear of missing out)

The quantitative analysis is carried out using a variety of statistical techniques. These strategies have been shown to be reliable when analysing data. The composite index has been created to assess the impact of social media on adolescents. T-scores and Z-scores were employed, and the indicators were ranked based on their positive and negative impact on social media.

Addiction to social media is a global epidemic that is rapidly increasing. Any addiction can have a direct impact on an individual's psychology. Addiction and fixation with social networking have been shown to induce bad feelings in youth for a variety of reasons (Pantic, I., 2014). Online Social Networking and Mental Health. (Cyberpsychol Behav Soc Netw, 17:652–657). As a result, an opportunity has been created to better understand the psychological influence of social media on its users. The ranking was determined using the Tvalue, and it was discovered that social media has an impact on the mental health of its users. Users expressed anxiety, which scored high (58.40).

However, it does poorly on various psychological measures, such as sadness, mental exhaustion, and low self-esteem. Furthermore, an effort was made to determine why they feel apprehensive when utilizing social media. Many respondents expressed fear of missing out (FOMO). FOMO is the psychological perception that people are missing out on a social opportunity or setting. This mindset necessitates frequent communication with people and knowledge of what their friends are up to (Beyens et al., 2016; Elhai et al., 2016). Smartphones' widespread use has made it difficult for individuals to maintain social connections. Anxiety is closely associated with FOMO, as expressed by respondents.

Table 3: Social impact of over utilization of social media on the users

		Z score	T value	Rank
1	Social isolation	0.54	55.30	2
2	Victim of cyber bullying and crimes	-0.71	42.91	4
3	Impact on education	-1.26	37.09	5
4	Addiction of social media	1.28	62.52	1
5	Impact on family ties	0.06	50.57	3

* Key: 0-33score low impact**33-66 above score -high impact

After examining the psychological influence of social media, an attempt was made to comprehend the social impact of media. Table 3 shows that media addiction was frequent among adolescents, ranking first. Adolescent media addiction causes a variety of other social concerns, including social isolation and a negative impact on family relationships. Group talks with the respondents revealed that they frequently avoid conversations with their family members. They went on to say that they prefer to communicate their ideas with strangers via social media.

Following data analysis, it was discovered that excessive social media use had a significant impact on an individual's social well-being. As a result, it proposes a considerable and strong relationship between social media exposure and teenagers' social well-being.

CONCLUSION:

The primary goal of the research was to investigate the connections between people's well-being and social media use. Teenagers' social well-being and their exposure to social media were found to be significantly positively correlated. Undoubtedly, increased internet accessibility has shown advantages. But the critical time that can determine a person's destiny is adolescence. There are many

apps available in the app store, and access to additional social networking websites is a significant issue. Furthermore, they squander valuable time that could be allocated to studying and extracurricular pursuits. Additionally, because they are too preoccupied with texting and chatting on social media, those who use it tend to avoid talking to their family members.

The amount of cybercrime is skyrocketing. Therefore, it is recommended that seminars and workshops be held at the school level to inform teenagers of their legal rights. It is also recommended that kids notify their parents about any threats or blackmail they get from anyone they meet online. In order to reduce the amount of time teenagers waste conversing and engaging in other pointless activities on social media, it is also advised that regular counselling be provided at schools and colleges.

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