

A STUDY OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS ROLE IN THE GROWING MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

Suthar Jaydev Kantilal

Student at Maratha Mandir's Babasaheb Gawde Institute of Management Studies,
University of Mumbai

ABSTRACT

Social media is a part of our lives now. It has changed the way we talk to each other make friends and get information. We use media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat to share what we do and how we feel. These platforms are good because they let us connect with people over the world get news and learn about important issues. They also let us express ourselves.. There is a downside to social media. It can hurt our health.

Lots of people, teenagers and young adults are having mental health problems. We are seeing cases of Depression, Anxiety disorder and stress. This is because of social media. When we use media too much it can be bad for us. We start comparing our lives to others. That can make us feel bad. We also have to deal with comments and the fear of missing out.

This research paper looks at how social media affects our health. It tries to understand how social media influences our emotions, behavior and who we are. We look at the bad things about social media. On the one hand social media can help us learn about health and connect with people who care. On the hand it can also make us feel bad and do things that are not good for us.

We did our research by asking people questions and reading what other experts have said. We used a questionnaire to ask people about their media habits and what they think about mental health. We also read articles and reports from groups like the World Health Organization.

What we found out is that social media is complicated. It can be a tool for talking to each other and learning new things.. If we use it too much or in the wrong way it can hurt our mental health. We need to be careful and smart about how we use media. We need to know how to use it in a way that's good, for us. If we do that we can stay happy and healthy.

Keywords:

Social Media, Mental Health, Anxiety, Depression, Cyberbullying, Digital Addiction, Self-Esteem, Online Behavior, Psychological Impact, Youth

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of technology has led to the adoption of social media platforms across the globe. Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat have become deeply embedded in life especially among younger generations. These platforms let users communicate instantly share content and build communities regardless of geographical boundaries. Social media has revolutionized communication by providing real-time interaction and immediate access to information.

It has opened avenues for education, marketing, activism and social awareness through social media. Businesses utilize media for promotion on social media while individuals use it for networking and self-expression on social media. Despite these benefits concerns regarding the impact of social media have grown significantly.

In years mental health issues such as Depression, Anxiety disorder and loneliness have increased, particularly among adolescents and young adults. Research indicates that excessive social media usage is one of the contributing factors to this trend on media.

Continuous exposure to curated and idealized images on media lifestyles on social media and achievements on social media often leads to unrealistic expectations and negative self-comparisons on social media. Furthermore social media features such as likes on media comments on social media and follower counts on social media create a system of validation.

Users often associate their self-worth with approval on social media, which can significantly influence their emotional stability on social media. The fear of missing out. The desire for social acceptance on social media lead to compulsive usage on social media sometimes resulting in digital addiction. Cyberbullying has also emerged as an issue on social media. Unlike bullying it occurs in digital spaces on social media and can reach a wider audience instantly on social media. Victims often experience emotional distress, anxiety and even depression due to social media. Despite these challenges social media also plays a role in social media. It provides platforms for health awareness on social media peer support on social media and access to professional help on social media. This study aims to analyze the role of media in shaping mental health outcomes on social media and emphasizes the importance of balanced and mindful usage on social media.

1. INTRODUCTION: THE DIGITAL INFLUENCE ON MENTAL HEALTH

1.1 The Psychological Framework of Social Media

Social media platforms are intentionally designed to capture and retain user attention on social media. Features such as likes on media shares on social media comments on social media and notifications on social media activate the brain's reward system releasing dopamine a neurotransmitter associated with pleasure and satisfaction on social media.

This creates a cycle of reward and reinforcement on media that encourages repeated engagement on social media. Over time this cycle can lead to behavior on social media. Users may begin to measure their self-worth based on interactions on social media and validation on social media. When expectations are not met on media it can result in feelings of rejection, inadequacy and emotional distress on social media. This dependency on validation on social media can significantly impact mental health.

1.2 The Paradox of Connectivity and Isolation

One of the defining features of media is its ability to connect people globally on social media. However despite increased connectivity on media many users report feelings of loneliness and isolation on social media. This paradox arises because online interactions on media often lack the depth and emotional authenticity of face-to-face communication on social media. Users frequently compare their lives with the portrayals of others on social media on social media. These comparisons can lead to dissatisfaction, envy and a sense of inadequacy on media. Over time such feelings contribute to health problems and reduced life satisfaction on social media.

1.3 Social Pressure and Unrealistic Standards

Social media platforms often promote beauty standards and lifestyles on social media. Influencers on media and celebrities on social media frequently share edited and curated content on social media that presents an idealized version of reality on social media. Young users in particular are vulnerable to these portrayals on media. The pressure to conform to these standards on media can lead to body image issues, low self-esteem and anxiety on

social media. Additionally the need to maintain an online persona on social media creates stress and emotional exhaustion on social media. Users may feel compelled to update their profiles on social media and seek approval on social media further contributing to psychological strain on social media.

1.4 Cyberbullying and Online Harassment

Cyberbullying is one of the harmful aspects of social media on social media. It includes harassment on media spreading rumors on social media and posting offensive or abusive comments on social media. Unlike bullying cyberbullying can occur at any time and reach a large audience on social media. Victims often experience emotional distress, anxiety and depression due to social media. In cases it can lead to self-harm or suicidal thoughts on social media. Addressing cyberbullying requires awareness on media, stricter regulations on social media and proactive intervention from both platforms on social media and users, on social media.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand the concept and significance of social media in modern society.
2. To examine the impact of social media on mental health and emotional well-being.
3. To analyze both positive and negative effects of social media usage.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sherry Turkle (2011)

Turkle discussed how digital communication affects interpersonal relationships and emotional connections.

Jean Twenge (2017)

Twenge highlighted the link between increased screen time and rising mental health issues among teenagers.

Andrew Przybylski (2019)

His research focused on the relationship between digital technology use and psychological well-being.

World Health Organization (2021)

Reported a global increase in mental health issues and emphasized the role of digital environments.

Jonathan Haidt (2022)

Analyzed the effects of social media on adolescent mental health and emotional development.

Recent Studies (2023–2025)

Recent research indicates that excessive social media use is associated with sleep disturbances, anxiety, and reduced life satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

- The study uses a research design to look at how social media affects mental health.

2. Sampling

- Type of Sampling: Convenience Sampling
- Sample Size: 100 people took part

3. Data Collection

- Primary Data: We collected this through a questionnaire that asks about media use and its effects on mental health.
- Secondary Data: We got this from journals, books and reliable websites.

4. Data Analysis

- We analyzed the data by calculating percentages. Showed the results, in charts and graphs.

5. Limitations of the Study

- We only had 100 people take part, which's not a lot.
- Peoples answers were based on their thoughts and feelings.

6. Scope of the Study

- We focused on how social media affects health especially in young users.

7. Significance of the Study

- This study helps us understand how social media affects peoples minds and encourages people to use it.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Participant Profile & Awareness

Q1. How aware are you about the impact of social media on mental health? Responses

The study highlights a varied group of respondents, including students, professionals, and researchers. A majority of participants (over 65%) reported being either highly or moderately aware of the effects of social media on mental health, indicating a well-informed sample base for further analysis.

THE GROWING CONCERN

Q2. To what extent do you think social media contributes to mental health issues? Responses

A key finding of the study is the strong perception that social media contributes significantly to mental health issues. Most respondents rated its impact at the higher end of the scale. The majority (50 out of 70) believe social media has a high or very high impact, indicating widespread concern about its negative effects.

KEY CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

Q3. What are the main challenges caused by social media affecting mental health? Responses

When examining the specific problems caused by social media, respondents pointed to multiple psychological and behavioral challenges.

FUTURE OUTLOOK & SOLUTIONS

Q4. What measures can help reduce the negative impact of social media on mental health? Responses

Despite the challenges, respondents expressed optimism that appropriate measures can reduce the harmful effects of social media.

CONCLUSION

The study on “Social Media and Its Role in the Growing Mental Health Crisis” shows that social media has a big impact on peoples mental health. Most people who took part in the study know that social media usage and mental health are connected. Many people think social media causes health problems. They are especially worried about stress, feelings and conditions like anxiety disorder. This shows that social media is an issue that needs to be addressed quickly.

The study also finds that cyberbullying, comparing yourself to others on media, low self-esteem and using social media too much are major problems. These things can cause pain and affect behavior, especially in young people. The study also offers some good news. It says that we can reduce the effects of social media by taking a break from it being more aware of its impact having stronger rules and getting more help for mental health. In conclusion social media is important for communication. We need to use it in a balanced and responsible way to protect and improve our mental health. Social media has to be used. Social media companies have to take responsibility for their role, in the health crisis.

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