

NEGATIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

Social media plays a significant role in the lives of people, remarkably the youth, who are the most affected and vulnerable to its influence. The internet has become an integral part of their daily routines, making it challenging to suggest a time limit for its use since it's so usually utilized. While social media serves valuable purposes in society, it's essential to acknowledge its negative impact on young individuals. Excessive internet usage can lead to psychological disorders among youth, impacting their sexuality, sense of identity, and physical development. Furthermore, internet interaction has contributed to the isolation of young people, significantly affecting their mental well-being and causing significant lifestyle changes, both negative and positive. This paper focuses on discussing the adverse psychological effects of social media on the youth, particularly those who spend a significant portion of their day on these platforms. As per the report by Global Web Index in 2018 revealed that the average young person spends approximately three hours on social media daily. In the light of this report, spending more than three hours a day on social media is associated with a higher risk of developing psychological problems.

Keywords: Social Media, Internet, Psychological, Youth

INTRODUCTION

Social media plays an empowering role in the society as it empowers anyone with unrestricted flow of knowledge that anyone can add in their knowledge bank, we cannot deny the role of social media that is impacting our society, culture and overall world. It helps people exchange their thoughts, ideas, raise awareness about any cause seek help and guidance, connect with different people around the globe (Knoll et al., 2020). Social media has helped people from repressive countries to raise voice in a democratic manner. It has enabled students of common interest to work and collaborate with groups with same ideas and thoughts, which further enhances creativity with wide range of commentators which include issues such as; health status, political sphere, economic sector etc (Grace et al., 2019).

It allows people to stay in touch with friends and family worldwide, regardless of their geographical locations or cultural backgrounds which benefited many people, but it also has negative impact on our lives as it leads to isolation as we have been replacing the physical and emotional support to virtual connection. It has affected us in such a way that despite of individual thinking we join any group and post our queries on that group without thinking of the consequences. Social media has turned the generation into the most anti-social as we prefer texting and online conversations (Wartberg and Kammerl, 2020).

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to represent research conducted by scholars in diverse settings, highlighting the adverse effects of social media on

youth, particularly its contribution to psychological issues.

Following are the Anxiety Disorders Symptoms of Social Media: -

- Checking social media by stopping in the middle of any conversation.
- Using social media for about more than six hours.
- Not speaking truth about spending time on social media sphere □ Isolation from friends and family.
- Struggling to limit time spent on social media.
- Experiencing distress when unable to access social media
- Strong urge to share content on social media

Social Media and Psychological issues Depression

Different researches proposed a new terminology “Facebook Depression” defined as a result of excessive time spend on social media websites which lead to the symptoms of depression among individuals (Abi-Jaoude et al., 2020; Ali et al., 2016; Sarwar, et al., 2019). Although staying connected with friends is an important part of social life but the constant engagement with the social world triggers depression among people which further leads to self-isolation which leads to self-abuse practices, aggressive behaviours and self-destruction (Scott, et al., 2016).

The depression is not only due to Facebook, but any other social media application and websites can lead to depression among the youth (Reilly, 2020).

Professor Dr. Joanne Davila and Lisa Starr and other researchers from Brook University conducted a research with the help of teenage girls that proved a link between depression, the research revealed that the excessive use of social media leads to higher risk of depression and anxiety that proved among the users. Again they re-validated the same group to find out the signs of depression and anxiety among the users who discussed their problems with other users or friends faces higher levels of depression than those who do not. Dr. Davilla stated that texting, messaging and social networking led adolescents to be more anxious which lead to depression as social media is deliberately making youth vulnerable to anxious and depressed (Yazdavar, 2020).

Social media is becoming the primary channel for youth to vent their problems when they post their problems, they receive both negative and positive comments. Anything shared online cannot be taken back as it can be found elsewhere on the internet or taken as screen shot by other leading further into depression and anxiety for the sender (Jain et al., 2012).

Dr. Mark Becker from Michigan State conducted a study through University reported 70% rise in depressive symptoms while 42% in social anxiety.

STRESS

In addition to anxiety and depression, using social platforms can also act as a stressor for its users. The survey conducted on 7000 mother’s reveals that 42% using the photo sharing app suffers from stress as being regularly alert for new messages leads to chronic stress which further leads to anxiety and stress. Another way of causing stress among users is being unrealistic to achieve perfection on the social networking websites which causes the stress hormone to release cortisol which further lead to damage the gut by opening doors to immune inflammatory in the brain and body (Pretorius, 2013).

Another cause of depression and stress is due to the illusion of happiness on virtual connections which is due to when we see other posting happy posts and photos. According to Steven Strogatz “Initially, reconnecting with long-lost friends through social media can be thrilling”. He further stated that most of the time users spend more time in maintaining the relationship with people whom they really don’t care (Dahlstrom et al., 2011).

CATFISHING

Another facet to consider is Catfishing, which involves the creation of fake identities and profiles on social media to befriend strangers. As a consequence, individuals often prioritize their interactions on social media over nurturing real-life relationships, leading to a situation where they spend more time on social media than with their family members or loved ones. A documentary film titled "Catfish" vividly illustrates the deceptive nature of these social media connections. As said by Auzeen Saedi a Ph..D scholar “the near anonymity of online

interactions made impossible things in the real world, possible in the virtual one”

RESTLESSNESS

On the other hand, excessive use of social media and its obsession is causing the risk of OCD. This is due to urge of opening social media accounts in short intervals leads to the feeling of restlessness among youth as they thought they would miss something important (Hoglund and Leadbeater, 2004).

DISTRACTION

Social media has become the distraction from everything for youth as they spend more time on the networking sites and less time on any productive activity. Most of the time in school and during lectures students are seeing serving on net rather than focus on their studies.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Due to the use and highly addiction to social media the youth has distanced themselves from real life socializing, there behaviour turns to be anti -social because they find happiness in likes, comments and followers on their social media profile.

NARCISSISM

Excessive self-admiration and desire to be centre of attraction leads to narcissism. But this is not much concerned for others as hunger for attention is normal in the sight of social media.

NORMALIZING VIOLENCE

The more we read and hear about violence we consider it normal as when we something daily or frequently we consider it normal. Considering violence normal or neutral is affecting youth.

UNCLEAR OPINION

No one can guarantee the content posted on social media is authentic or fake. As most of the time misleading or false information is circulating on the media which leads to develop an unclear opinion on any issue.

PROVOCATIVE CONTENT

Community standards has been set by social media networking but still one cannot get rid of offensive or violent content. Many times, the youth are motivated

to recourse violence by political parties through provoking posts as this cause anger and frustration among youth.

Conclusion

Researches cannot prove the positive or negative impact of social media on youth however, it can highlight the aspects that have negative affect on the youth. Parents need to monitor their child as we all are busy in our issues and daily life chores still need to take time out to look after the activities of our children. Raising a child in today's world is difficult because we cannot monitor our child 24/7 but still it's our duty to let them know good and bad aspects of the society and live a life in right direction. Proper attention to children is very essential before it's too late.

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