

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND MENTAL HEALTH OF ADOLESCENTS: A REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

Use of social media has brought world closer and every individual finds it easy to befriend any person living in any part of the world. People communicate through social media websites more than using their cell phones. Some people just use it as fun. A good number of people use them as their favorite time pass who share every kind of trash on different social networking sites. Social network sites have increased tremendously in its popularity in our society where the majority of users are adolescents. use of social media is a way of

communicating with friends, families all around the world but there are many negative impacts of social media in adolescent's mental health. Social media plays a very important role in environment of children because the process of information, reaction to a particular situation and remembrance of events have impact on developing brain of adolescents. Social media is now serving as a need more than a want. The excessive use of social media websites is a great concern for parents and society as for as mental health is concerned. The most popular online social networking sites are available for free use such as face book, instagram, twitter, snap chat and you tube, MySpace etc. The most popular social media site is face book, majority of adolescents use face book as a form of communication. Adolescents now-a days are checking their face book every minute and with the result this addiction cause various mental health issues.

### Review literature

**Social media use:** According to one of the report it was mentioned that smart phone access has become more prevalent, 95% of adolescents have access to a smart phone, and 45% are online 'almost constantly. It was reported that a growing share of adolescents using the internet on a near-constant basis. In 2014-15 survey internet use by adolescent age group was only 24% but now its constant use has increased to 45%. Roughly nine-in-ten teens go online

at least multiple times per day. As far as frequency of internet use is concerned there are some gender and cultural differences in teens. Half of teenage girls (50%) are near-constant online users, compared with 39% of teenage boys. And Hispanic teens are more likely than whites to report using the internet almost constantly (54% vs. 41%).<sup>[1]</sup>

According to statistics India has world's largest number of Face book users with over 195 million users, overtaking US by over 4 million subscribers. 73 Million users are active daily on Mobiles and revisits Face book more than 3 times in a day. Most of the Users are with age group of 18-24 from India, which is the largest and fastest growing population segment.

Consequently, the users can access Face book in 12 languages and 670 Million users are connected to at least one News Publishers page. 76% of Face book users are Men, and 24% users are women, which illustrates the barriers women face in India to access technology and information.<sup>[2]</sup>

Furthermore it is estimated that In 2019 there will be around 258.27 million social network users in India, up from close to 168 million in 2016.<sup>[3]</sup>

### **Negative effects of Social media on mental health of adolescents**

One of the report mentioned in (The economist) A survey done by Royal society for public health believed that face book, intagram, snapchat and twitter have detrimental effects on adolescents wellbeing. Furthermore the excess use of social media showed signs of anxiety, depression, sleep deprivation, exposure to bullying and created worries about their body image.

In 2014 five neuroscientists in their experiment concluded that Face book triggers the same impulsive part of the brain as gambling and substance abuse.<sup>[4]</sup>

A systematic review by I.Pantic, in 2014 focused on the recent findings regarding the suggested connection between social networking sites and mental health issues such as depressive symptoms, changes in self-esteem, and Internet addiction. The study indicated that the prolonged use of social networking sites (SNS), such as Face book, may be related to signs and symptoms of depression.<sup>[5]</sup>

Banyai F et al, in 2017 conducted a survey which revealed that 4.5% of the adolescents belonged to the at-risk group, and reported low self-esteem, high level of depression

symptoms, and elevated social media use. The study concluded that adolescents at-risk of problematic social media use should be targeted by school-based prevention and intervention programs.<sup>[6]</sup>

The thematic analysis of study conducted by Michelle *et al.*, suggested that adolescents perceived social media as a threat to mental wellbeing. It was believed that social media cause mood and anxiety disorders for some adolescents, viewed as a platform for cyber bullying and was often framed as a kind of ‘addiction.’<sup>[7]</sup>

Another mental issue due to overuse of social media is face book depression due to cyber bullying. Depression can lead to many adolescents becoming suicidal. There are some research studies which explained that online connections with small groups of people can be beneficial to teens, but other research studies reveals that there is increase in symptoms of anxiety, depression, and eating disorders.

**Adolescents at risk:** Adolescence is a transitional stage of physical and psychological development that generally occurs during the period from puberty to legal adulthood. Adolescence is usually associated with the teenage years, but its physical, psychological or cultural expressions may begin earlier and end later. It is a period of multiple transitions involving education, training, employment and unemployment, as well as transitions from one living circumstance to another.<sup>[8]</sup>

It is alarming to realize that adolescent population is particularly prone to experiencing mental illness reason is that they are avid users of social media Adolescence is the period of time during which a person grows into an adult, but are emotionally not mature. Adolescents can use social media to find community, but their mental health is often negatively affected by making this cultural comparisons.

Conducted study by Amelia S in 2014 on, “Effects of Social Media Use on the Mental Health of Young Adults” The thesis explored that the impact of sedentary behaviors on mental health, displaced behavior, sleep interruption due to , social media’s exposure. The review of the research on the connection between social media use and degraded mental health demonstrated that the potential harmful effects surrounding social media use have profound consequences for young adults also.<sup>[9]</sup>

A study conducted by Pietro F et al, in 2017. The study revealed that excessive and/or unskilled use of the Internet can negatively impact physical, psychological, and social dimensions, as well as some aspects of the material and developmental well-being of children.<sup>[10]</sup>

Some studies mentioned that 48 percent of teens who spend five hours per day on an electronic device have at least one suicide risk factor, compared to 33 percent of teens who spend two hours a day on an electronic device.<sup>[11]</sup>

Cristopar B, Chloi S, Shannelle B and Rebecca A L in 2017 investigated adolescent and parent reports of adolescent social media use and its relation to adolescent psychosocial adjustment. The study explored that Parent and adolescent reports of the number of adolescents' social media accounts were moderately correlated with parent-reported DSM-5 symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity/impulsivity, ODD, anxiety, and depressive symptoms, as well as adolescent-reported fear of missing out and loneliness. The study concluded that anxiety and depressive symptoms were highest among adolescents with a relatively high number of parent-reported social media accounts and relatively high FoMO.<sup>[12]</sup>

Another study conducted by Guorun A E, in 2015. The study indicated that adolescents who use social network sites more frequently are not only adversely affected by the usage (both mental and physical well-being) but also having indirect effects on depression through self-esteem.<sup>[13]</sup>

Most teens surveyed who are regular media users have lots of friends, get along well with their parents, and are happy at school.<sup>[14]</sup> However, peer rejection and a lack of close friends are among the strongest predictors of depression and negative self-views.

Teens who are the heaviest media users report being less content and are more likely to report that they get into trouble a lot, are often sad or unhappy, and are often bored.<sup>[14]</sup> In a survey it was found that 21% of teens to be at risk for depression. Some teens have reported that Facebook can incite fights, especially with the creation of “burn” pages created for the explicit purpose of taunting or teasing others.<sup>[15]</sup> Use of social media also creates an opportunity for emotional distress from receiving threatening, harassing, or humiliating communication from another teen, called cyberbullying. Cyberbullying appears similar in prevalence to offline bullying.<sup>[16]</sup> Cyberbullying has been shown to cause higher levels of depression and anxiety for victims than traditional bullying and has also been connected to

cases of youth suicide with teens known to engage in reading hurtful comments days before their suicide attempts.<sup>[17]</sup> Those most at risk for cyberbullying include lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) and allied youth. “Allied youth” refers to young people who are openly supportive of LGBT youth. A 2010 study found that 54% of these youths report being cyberbullied within the last 30 days.<sup>[18]</sup> Females are the next most likely group to be cyberbullied, with 21% of female teens reporting cyberbullying (Blumenfeld, 2010).

Those who are victims of online harassment are also more likely to be perpetrators.<sup>[19]</sup>

Teens most at risk for cyberbullying are also those at risk of offline harms, such as teens who have experienced sexual or physical abuse or those living in poor home environments.<sup>[20]</sup> While most teens use messaging responsibly, it is still an extremely powerful and private communication tool that can be used irresponsibly. With texting, teens cannot see the reaction of the person receiving the message, so their actions can be separated from the consequences. Almost half of teen cell phone owners reported regret over a text message they have sent.<sup>[21]</sup>

Teens in relationships may also receive nude pictures or be pressured to send nude pictures of themselves to a partner. Relationship abuse can also include sending nonstop text messages or posting cruel comments on a boyfriend’s or girlfriend’s Facebook or MySpace page.<sup>[22]</sup> Cell phones, instant messaging, and social networking websites are all increasingly being used to monitor, threaten, and harass relationship partners. One in three teens in relationships has been text messaged up to 30 times an hour by a partner to find out where they are, what they are doing, or who they are with.<sup>[23]</sup> online sexual solicitation is defined as “the act of encouraging someone to talk about sex, to do something sexual, or to share personal sexual information even when that person does not want to”.<sup>[24]</sup> Online sexual predation occurs when an adult makes contact with a minor with intent to engage in sexual activities that would result in statutory rape. Youth are much more likely to receive sexual solicitation between same-age youth than sexual predation and most of these solicitations come from same-age peers who are known offline.<sup>[25]</sup> The sexual solicitation rate for teens is estimated at between 13-19%.<sup>[26]</sup>

Most studies show that teens do care about privacy. When teens are concerned about risks, they will engage in privacy protecting behaviors, such as adjusting their profiles to “private” from “public” access, refusing to provide identifying information or false information, and

avoiding certain websites.<sup>[28]</sup> However, most youth do not read websites' privacy policies or may be unaware that their information is at risk of disclosure to third parties like advertisers. Though concerned about talking to people they don't know online, teens appear to be less worried about posting information about themselves. Twenty-one percent of teens say it is safe to post personal information, including photos, online to a public profile.<sup>[27]</sup>

A 2016 survey study of 467 Scottish students, aged 11 to 17, was conducted by Woods and Scott.<sup>[8]</sup> The study's purpose was to examine how social media use relates to an adolescent's anxiety and depression, low self-esteem, and poor sleep quality. The survey was used to measure overall social media use, anxiety and depression, self-esteem, sleep quality, and emotional investment in social media. The items were assessed using the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), and a modified Social Integration and Emotional Connections subscale of the Social Media Use Integration Scale. The study concluded that overall social media use, emotional investment in social media, and nighttime-specific social media use were associated with higher levels of anxiety and depression, lower self-esteem, and poorer sleep quality in adolescents.<sup>[28]</sup>

A descriptive study using a relational survey design was conducted by Kiracaburun of 1130 participants aged 12 to 18 who were attending schools in the Aegean region (2016). The authors sought to examine the relationship between depression, self-esteem, daily internet use, and social media addiction. Data from the participants were collected using the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI) tool, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), daily Internet use, and Social Media Addiction Scale. Data were then analyzed using the structural equation model, descriptive statistics, and Pearson correlation. The study demonstrated significant relationships between self-esteem, depression, social media addiction, and daily internet use. Self-esteem and depression were associated with each other, and both caused an increase in daily internet use, while social media positively affected depression levels in an indirect way. An increased risk was observed for depression in adolescents who spend a greater amount of time on social media. In conclusion, depression can be predicted by social media addiction, self-esteem, and daily Internet use in adolescents. It can be concluded that adolescents who have low self-esteem gravitate to the cyber world for interactions. This allows them to act anonymously and say and do what they please, while avoiding real world interactions.<sup>[29]</sup>

An observational, population-based, cross-sectional study was conducted by Pantic et al of 160 high school participants from Central Serbia. The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between social networking and depression indicators in the adolescent population. Participants were asked questions from a structured questionnaire, as well as the Beck Depression Inventory, second edition (BDI-II-II). Statistical analysis and descriptive statistics were used after the data were collected. The results showed a statistically significant correlation between the amount of time that students reported using social networking and scores on the BDI-II-II, indicating that social networking in adolescents is related to depression. The depression score increased as the amount of time reported using social media increased.<sup>[30]</sup>

In 2016, a survey study was conducted by Chapin<sup>[14]</sup> of 1488 adolescents. The purpose was to document adolescent experience with cyberbullying in relationships on Facebook. Participants answered questions related to Facebook use and experience with cyberbullying using a Likert-type scale. The information was applied to the Precaution Adoption Process Model (PAPM) to understand how adolescents use safety to secure their social media worlds and to understand their lack of precaution. The study documented that 84% of the population used Facebook daily, and 30% of the participants stated that they were cyberbullied. Of the 30% who were cyberbullied, 12.5% ceased use of the social media site, while 18% reported the cyberbullying to a parent. In conclusion, cyberbullying may be a consequence of Facebook use, and most adolescents are aware of the problem but have not intervened. In addition, adolescents still maintained the belief that they would not be cyberbullied when compared with their peers.<sup>[31]</sup>

Social media sites allow today's youth the opportunity to connect with others in multiple platforms and venues. Because engaging in various forms of social media has become a routine activity for adolescents today, it is found that social media can trigger susceptibility to an eating disorder among adolescents.<sup>[32]</sup>

Several studies have illustrated that adolescents' displays on social media (i.e., MySpace and Facebook) frequently include portrayal of health-risk behaviors related to alcohol, other substances, and sexual behaviors. Alcohol-related displays may include texts (e.g., "Matt got drunk last night"), photographs depicting alcohol consumption, or links to alcohol-related groups or companies.

The patterns of displaying such health-risk behaviors online commonly are consistent with offline reporting. For example, adolescents who display one health-risk behavior (e.g., sexual activity) on social media are more likely to also display other behaviors (e.g., alcohol use). Also, risk behaviors may be displayed online within peer groups, just as offline peer groups commonly report engagement in similar behaviors. Thus, adolescents are more likely to display references to sexual behavior if a peer displayed similar references. Finally, displayed alcohol references have been linked to alcohol behaviors offline, because older adolescents whose Facebook posts suggested problem drinking behaviors are more likely to score as “at risk” on a problem-drinking screen.<sup>[33]</sup>

**Future recommendation:** The investigator reviewed and synthesized extensively related literature of social media and some factors of mental health. The relation between usage of social media and depraved mental health determines the significance of the topic. Present literature reflects the deprived association between usage of social media and mental health. The literature reviewed in various section of present paper elucidates the substantial value of association between social media usage and mental health problems of Of adolescents. This Paper offers an insight in the complex connection of social media usage and explores mental health problems of adolescents. The excess use of social media can create gape in relations between parents and teachers which in turn cause lack of concentration and low academic performance. Literature summed so far reveals that younger generation operates susceptibly. Adolescent age group is life of curiosities and experiencing emerging stage of life are at higher risk of serious mental health problem. To reduce these risks preventive measures should be taken like information and counseling sessions can be structured at schools and colleges. A proper awareness programme can be organized to understand the negative effects of usage of social media on mental health among adolescents. The mobile phones should not be allowed in schools. Topics about social media use should be included in curriculum of students. There is further need of research in field of science in schools and colleges about social media and its effects on mental health of young generation.

## CONCLUSION

Parents as well as teachers are role model for children. parents should give attention and time to their children. They should help to learn to balance social media with real life friendships. Honest communication shows them that they are there to support them in every difficult situation. Parents should not give easy access to mobile phones. Parents should not spend

hours on the computer when their children are at home and should not update their Facebook status constantly. They should focus on family time. Parents should try to avoid giving their child a phone until secondary school. Disconnect on weekends and show them that there is a whole world out there that doesn't require a handheld screen. They may miss their phone a lot less than they think they will and this is a very good lesson to learn. The biggest gift we can give our children is to help them think critically about what it all means. There should be some change in our education system. Schools should educate children about online safety, teachers should advise them on how to behave as a good digital citizen.

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