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## Effects of Social Media on Mental Health

*<sup>1</sup>Brahmadathan. M, <sup>2</sup>Sonali Kumari, <sup>3</sup>Rubina Parveen, <sup>4</sup>Pippalla Gowthami, <sup>5</sup>Dr. Richa Bhatia*

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab

<sup>5</sup> Assistant Professor, Lovely Professional University.

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### ABSTRACT

From the past two decades social media beheld a sporadic enhancement in quantity, quality, and utility. As the body of an individual is nourished by the intake of necessary mineral elements obtained through nutrition, likewise the human mind is nurtured by the availability of nutrition for thoughts. Nowadays which is readily available through the advancement of technology, thereby opening a platform for discussion between social media and mental health of the present era. From the dawn of internet and social networking sites human resources of the contemporary world have become more social virtually but less practically. This virtual life is isolating the present man from other fellow beings thereby affecting his health (mental & physical) and overall balance. Increased usage of social networking among adults of the present era is a matter of concern for the parents, society & researchers, as there are always two sides (positive & negative) of every innovation. The aim of present research is to explore the effect of social media on mental health. To achieve said purpose, the investigator reviewed and synthesized available related literature. Literature summed so far reveals that the younger generation operates susceptible. As a confronting population of the present era, the younger generation is experiencing an embryonic stage of life and is at higher risk of serious mental health problems. Younger generation of the present era is acting as active users of social media which has affinity towards the problems of mental health. The present perilous situation requires more understanding, to know the relation between social media and mental health problems is just a kickoff point. Exploring and understanding the means with which social media is affecting the mental health of the present younger generation is a succeeding step which can illuminate the connections which are at play among these variables of the young generation.

Keywords: -

- Social media
- Mental Health
- Adolescents

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### Introduction

Social media sites have a stronger influence on mental health the sooner kids begin using them. For females, this is especially true. Teenage girls sometimes act aggressively in relationships by isolating people and making unpleasant statements, but teenage boys often exhibit hostility physically. Such hazardous contacts are more likely to occur thanks to social media.

In his example, Sperling uses a seventh grader whose old best buddy picks a new one, and shares photos of the two of them at the movies or on a weekend getaway. "The girl may have been left out of her closest friend's activities twenty years ago, but she may not have known about it until she was expressly informed," Sperling claims.

Social media not only gives young people a window through which to watch wasted opportunities, but it also distorts perceptions of reality and appearances. A period when young bodies are changing increases the probability of viewing unrealistic, filtered photographs on Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat.

Teenagers once read publications that included model images that had been edited. These pictures are now always only a thumb scroll away. It's simple to locate and simple to use apps that provide the user airbrushing, teeth whitening, and more filters. Everyone, not just superstars, has a flawless appearance. Teenagers may find it difficult to distinguish between what is genuine and what isn't when a filter is given to the digital world, which comes at a challenging period for them both physically and emotionally.

"With all of the developmental changes that adolescents go through, middle school is already difficult for them. They are entrusted with creating their identities while they go through puberty at a time when their frontal lobes are still developing, and they lack impulse control. All of this occurs as the importance of their peer interactions increases, according to Sperling.

There is no safety net before they publish or click the send button, making them an extremely susceptible group. I believe that is something to keep in mind.

Even adults are susceptible. Plastic surgeons have noticed an increase in demands from clients who want to resemble their filtered Instagram and Snapchat photographs in recent years. A newlywed couple who nearly split up after their honeymoon is the subject of a New York Times article that appeared in June 2018. The lady spent less time with her spouse and more time arranging the vacation and sharing selfies.

In terms of people's mental health, the imbalance brought about by excessive social media use is of major concern to society, scholars, and parents. The excessive use of social media websites is one of the most popular modern pastimes. Web 2.0 & 3.0 sites, including

applications like Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace, online gaming, and virtual worlds like Second Life, Sims, YouTube, blogs, and others, may all be categorised as social media.

These websites of the modern period are expanding rapidly and serve as easily accessible gateways for leisure and communication for the younger generation. Social media are "means of electronic communication (as Websites for social networking and micro-blogging) via which users build online communities to exchange information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)," according to Merriam-Webster's from 2014. Social networking websites like Facebook, Twitter, and others have greatly improved the virtual world during the last ten years by enabling users to share their thoughts, feelings, ideas, and private material like photos and videos in unprecedented amounts. Additionally, as indicated by the rising number of everyday users, social media users have quickly embraced online social contact as a necessary component of daily life. In reality, as of August 27, 2015, Facebook alone claimed an estimated 1 billion active users. It indicates that one in seven individuals on the planet utilised Facebook to interact with their friends and family in a single day. (Mark Zuckerberg shared this on August 27, 2015)

As a result, social media has a significant impact on a variety of modern digital life areas outside online communication, including business, politics, education, health, and even fundamental human connection. Although the social media phenomena is still relatively young, several empirical studies have assessed the overall impact of frequent usage of social media on users' physical and mental health. In many of these areas, social media clearly offers advantages.

This lack of awareness is particularly concerning in the context of today's younger generation, since teenagers and young adults spend a significant amount of time engaging in online socialising and may thus be at a higher risk of harmful consequences. A Numerous studies categorise the relationship between social media usage and its unfavourable effects, such as a rise in anxiety, tension, despair, and loneliness. Concerns about social media's negative impacts are raised by the younger generation's greater use of it.

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## Motivation

It is undeniable that social media is extraordinarily popular, but why do so many people use it? Recent neuropsychological research could hold one answer: the self-disclosure one would engage in on social media activates the intrinsic reward system of the brain in much the same way as powerful primary rewards such as food and sex (Tamir & Mitchell, 2012). Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) purport that people are motivated to use Facebook for two primary reasons: a need to belong and a need for self-presentation. In their analysis, Toma and Hancock (2013) found that Facebook profiles help satisfy individuals' need for self-worth and self-integrity. Alternatively, a Pew Research Center project found that the most popular reasons for using social media included staying in touch with current friends and family, although other reasons emerged as well: making new friends, reading comments by celebrities and politicians, and finding potential romantic partners.

This project also shed light on how different age groups use social media. Middle aged and older adults reported a greater emphasis on using social media to connect with others with common interests and hobbies, while young adults did not rank that as a popular reason to use social media. In contrast, younger adults (younger than 30) kept their focus on connecting with those already present in their lives. During the latest 5 years, the number of preadolescents and adolescents using long range interpersonal communication destinations has extended altogether. According to the new review, 22% of teenagers sign on to their top decision informal communication locales north of 10 times every day, and most of youngsters sign on to SNS at least a couple of times a day. 75% of youngsters as of now use telephones, and 25% use them for virtual entertainment, 54% use them for informing, and 24% use them for texting. Subsequently, an immense measure of this ongoing age's social and energetic progression is occurring while on the Web and cell phones. (Hinduja S, Patchin J, 2010). As of late, a couple of experts have related long range informal communication destinations with a couple of mental issues which incorporate sadness and uneasiness. Since long range interpersonal communication locales are a respectably new miracle, various requests concerning the expected impact on psychological well-being stay unanswered.

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## Research Strategy

The research was conducted to identify studies analysing the role of social media on mental health. Google Scholar was used as our main database to find the relevant articles. Keywords that were used for the search were: "social media", "mental health", "social networking" AND "mental health", and "social networking" OR "social media" AND "mental health". We had mainly taken secondary data. This study has attempted to systematically analyse the existing literature on the effect of social media use on mental health. Although the results of the study were not completely consistent, this review found a general association between social media use and mental health issues. Although there is positive evidence for a link between social media and mental health, the opposite has been reported. A new study found that individuals who are involved in social media, games, texts, mobile phones, etc. are more likely to experience depression. The previous study found a 70% increase in self-reported depressive symptoms among the group using social media. The other social media influence that causes depression is sexual fun. The intimacy fun happens when social media promotes putting on a facade

that highlights the fun and excitement but does not tell us much about where we are struggling in our daily lives at a deeper level. Another study revealed that depression and time spent on Facebook by adolescents are positively correlated. More importantly, symptoms of major depression have been found among the individuals who spent most of their time in online activities and performing image management on social networking sites. An illustrative examination was considered for the current review. Both essential and optional information was gathered for concentrate deliberately. Essential information was gathered from the survey and optional information was gathered from sites, magazines, and diaries. The example size gathered was 90 MBA understudies. A basic irregular inspecting was utilized. An organized poll was dispersed to the members. The principal area remembered inquiries for segment information and the subsequent area included fred decision questions which contain different builds like example of person to person communication use, time spent, ordinary action in informal communication destinations

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## Research Methodology

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to measure the relationship between social media usage and perceived mental health issues among college students, mainly LPU students and will be accomplished by conducting an electronic survey distributed to students like google forms and all. The following research questions were used to guide the collection and analysis of data in this study:

(1) What are the patterns of social media usage among students? and (2) What is the relationship between frequency of social media usage and perceived mental health issues among students in terms of (a) depression, (b) anxiety, and (c), suicidality? The alternative hypotheses tested in the study to answer the second research question are: There will be a positive relationship between the frequency of social media usage and depression. There will be a positive relationship between the frequency of social media usage and anxiety. There will be a positive relationship between the frequency of social media usage and suicidality.

To protect the anonymity of the participants and encourage responses, a waiver of consent was solicited by the researcher and completion of the survey represented the participants' informed consent. There were no incentives offered. Surveys will be distributing during a two-week period, to encourage participation, one follow-up email was sent one week after the initial invitation

1. **Research Design:** The research design for this study will be a quantitative survey research. A survey is an effective research method when attempting to determine how a specific population thinks, behaves, or believes. The survey will be conducted online and will consist of a series of questions designed to elicit information about social media usage among students and the impact it has on their academic performance.
2. **Sampling Procedure:** The target population for this study will be undergraduate students at universities in the United States. A probability sampling technique will be used to randomly select a sample of students from the population. The sample size will be determined using the sample size calculator and will be sufficient to represent the population accurately.
3. **Data Collection Method:** The data will be collected through an online survey questionnaire. The questionnaire will be distributed through various social media platforms and email to the selected participants. The survey will consist of close-ended questions, including Likert scales and multiple-choice questions.
4. **Data Analysis:** The collected data will be analysed using quantitative techniques. The statistical software package, such as SPSS or R, will be used for data cleaning, coding, and analysis. Descriptive and inferential statistics will be used to summarize the data, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis will be used to test the relationship between social media usage and academic performance, controlling for demographic variables.
5. **Ethical Considerations:** The research will adhere to ethical principles, including informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality of participants. Participants will be informed about the purpose of the study, and their consent will be sought before participating. Also, the data collected will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

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## Review of literature

### *Social Media & Anxiety*

Several research have suggested a connection between social media and obsessive behaviour. 45 percent of British individuals have reported feeling restless while unable to access their social networking accounts, according to a study (Anxiety 2012). The virtual generation (Net & iGeneration), according to Rosenetal. (2013), frequently checks the message on their social networking application. In addition, it has been shown that younger generations experience phantom vibration syndrome when they are unable to read messages from their social networking programmes in comparison to their elders (PVS). This is nothing more than a person who is addicted's impression of the vibration on his cell phone (Drouin et al., 2012).

Williams and Teasdale (2018) found that people who use social media for an extended period of time run the risk of developing mental health problems. Social media addiction is at an all-time high in the modern day; once someone joins, it is tough to stop using it. Positive feedback from comments and likes makes it more challenging to quit. Some people contrast their life with their friends' spotless existence. According to Dick (2013), using free social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter allows users to stay in touch with friends and read useful material while also giving up a lot of discretion and privacy. Anxiety is one of the main mental health issues in the modern society. People worry about the views and remarks on the photos and videos they

share. Hardly anybody is immune to social media in the modern day. According to The Hearty Soul (2016), using social networking apps increases your risk of depression and the longer you spend on social media, like Facebook and Twitter lessen the chances that pupils will be able to concentrate better and feel less anxious. Both good and negative impacts of social media on teenage mental health were examined by Kaur & Bashir (2015). Positive benefits include socialising, improved communication, learning opportunities, and access to health information. Negative effects include sexting, depression, cyberbullying, harassment online, exhaustion, stress, emotional repression, and a reduction in intellectual capacity. Almost everyone in the world today, from 11 to 93, is linked to social media. Young adults are the most frequent users of social media, and a study by Strickland (2014) found that they are also disproportionately at risk of developing mental health issues. Another study by Park, Song, and Lee (2014) found a favorable correlation between college students' acculturative stress and social media applications like Facebook. Kaur and Bhat (2016), who conducted a thorough examination into the impact of stress on students' mental health and make the argument that stress might have a detrimental impact on students' mental health. Therefore, we might draw the conclusion that youth's mental health may be impacted by excessive social media use. In the modern era, social media addiction is at an all-time high; once one joins, it is difficult to stop using it. It becomes more difficult to quit when comments and likes are encouraging. Some people contrast their life with their friends' immaculate existence. According to Dick (2013), using free social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter allows users to stay in touch with friends and read useful material while also giving up a lot of discretion and privacy. Anxiety is one of the main mental health issues in the modern society. People are concerned with the reactions to the pictures and videos they post online. Hardly anybody is immune to social media in the modern day.

### ***Social Media & Depression:***

The literature mentioned above makes it very evident that social media is the primary factor that not only exacerbates but also feeds mental health issues. Utilizing social media in excess results in dreadful outcomes that begin with worry and end in sadness. According to (Panticetal., 2012), there is a correlation between teenage depression and Facebook use.

These findings were replicated by Rosenetal. (2013), who showed that those who spent most of their time online and managing their image on social networking sites had substantial depressive symptoms. In a similar vein, Louetal. (2012) claimed that students who use Facebook frequently report feeling more lonely. Additionally, it has been discovered that using social media worsens psycho-social issues including self-esteem and adjustment (Kalpidouetal., 2011). According to Davila's (2012) research, young people with severe depressive symptoms had less positive and more negative social connections. On the other hand, Shah & Grant (2002) and Krautetal. (1998) showed evidence of an inverse relationship between depression and internet use, and they further argue that various social activities like gaming and talking reduce the risk of depression.

### ***Social media and loneliness:***

Young adults are the main demographic that uses social media at an astounding pace. Surprisingly, despite having better connectedness, today's youth are the loneliest generation ever (Pittman & Reich 2016). Since loneliness is often linked to major health issues, it is one of the main worries of today's virtual society (Patterson & Veenstra, 2010; Biovin, Hymen & Bukowski, 1995). The difference between a person's actual and desired degree of social interactions in their social life is how loneliness is best understood. Uncontrolled, unsanitary, and obsessive use of online resources over time, as well as a greater degree of internet usage among the younger generation, both contribute to increased feelings of emotional loneliness, claim Kim, LaRose, and Peng (2009); Yao & Zhong (2013). (Moody, 2001) While the Mental Health Foundation of the UK claims that despite having access to all social media platforms and the infrastructure necessary to run these platforms, 60% of young individuals in the age range of 18 to 34 reported feeling lonely (Murphy, 2010). Researchers Skues, Williams, and Wise (2012) found that the more Facebook friends a student reported having, the more loneliness they experience. In contrast, Deters & Mehl (2012) found that those who use social networking less often score higher for shyness and loneliness and are also less socially engaged. Sheldon (2012) also found that individuals who update their statuses more frequently experience less loneliness (2012). Patel, et al. (2016.) brought up that web-based systems administration is making an issue like disquiet, distress, and dietary issues. Plus, the use of web-based entertainment has been ending up being a logically problematic issue for more youthful since more contributes their energy investigating anyway online entertainment applications and they get nothing as result it is a gigantic risk of young person's psychological health. It is generally found that superfluous use of SNS can provoke raised wretchedness, disquiet, torment, discouragement, and frustration with life, thusly self-destructing mental prosperity (Woods and Scott, 2016), SM use was out and out associated with extended misery (Lin et al; 2016). Regardless of what may be generally anticipated of past clarification Townsend, et al. (2016) contemplated that web-based entertainment turns into a prevention in versus meeting and people normally live alone when they talk with others as result it become their penchant that means that pressure, bitterness, and self-derivation. GermannMolz and Paris, (2015) described that the juvenile looks at online life in light on the grounds that the state-of-the-art advancement draws in them, likewise they contribute their aptitudes to their friends furthermore they contact with family, hence it makes their mental health more grounded.

Gipson, et al. (2015) depicted that an adolescence period youth's mental prosperity and feeling thriving, yet they have a shortfall of information, further mentioned that how state they are strong or how to keep this condition. Zhang, et al. (2015) correspondence and social affiliation may be empowered by virtual entertainment life. Springs (2015) showed that the young people who use progressively virtual entertainment by and large fall into trouble and consistently they are disturbed and depleted. Amedie (2015) communicated that virtual entertainment become the explanation nervousness and dependency for youngsters, when the clients consider other to be as energetic and more workplaces then they feel miserable as it is become mental issue for youths. Like quick Clarke, Kuosmanen, and Barry (2015) depicted that online entertainment assembles the sensation of youngsters.

Jelenchick et al. (2013) states that there is no confirmation of interrelationship among SNS and clinical discouragement. Jelenchick explored the association between person-to-person communication use and melancholy in youngsters. According to their investigation, despondency can't be indeed connected with the individual to person-to-person communication media usage among American young people. Mustafa Koc (2013) deduced that unprecedented impulse and disquiet surely check Facebook propensity. According to Gabre and Kumar (2012), Facebook prompts increase in sensations of tension and failed to keep a grip on things among undergraduates. Depression is a basic peril factor for a particularly normal cardiovascular issue and considerably influences self-destruction event. Moreover, this issue is one of the essential explanations behind the weakness to work and along these lines

### ***Social Media's Positive Impact on Mental Health***

Two research articles using quantitative correlational methodology have shown that social media, specifically Facebook, has the potential to improve mental health (Johnston et al., 2013; Zhang, 2017). Posting about one's difficulties on Facebook can result in perceived social support, which may lead to an improvement in mental health (Johnston et al., 2013; Zhang, 2017). According to Johnston et al. (2013), Facebook usage can increase self-esteem and enhance mental health by creating a support system through social capital relationships. Both studies collected data through surveys, with Zhang (2017) focusing on the relationship between self-disclosure of stressful life events on Facebook, life satisfaction, and depression, while Johnston et al. (2013) focused on the correlation between Facebook use and the maintenance of social relationships. Overall, these studies suggest that social media can positively impact mental health.

However, these studies have some limitations. Johnston et al. (2013) has been criticized for discussing the use and gratification theory in the literature review without linking it to the study's finding that social media has a positive impact on mental health. Additionally, Zhang's (2017) research was conducted in China, which may limit the generalization of the results to students in the United States. Despite these limitations, these studies provide valuable information for future research in this field.

### ***Social Media's Negative Impact on Mental Health***

According to two qualitative investigations (Virden et al., 2014; Radovic et al., 2017), social media negatively affects mental health. In order to record social media experiences, Radovic et al. (2017) did a phenomenological study by speaking with 23 people who had been diagnosed with depression. Their conclusions suggest that social media users frequently judge and seek acceptance from others, which can cause sadness and decrease life satisfaction. Similar to this, Virden et al. (2014) used focus groups in a phenomenological study to examine how high-risk social media behaviours are perceived. They discovered that when people do not think about the effects of their online behaviour, using social media can result in psychological anguish.

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## **Scope of the study**

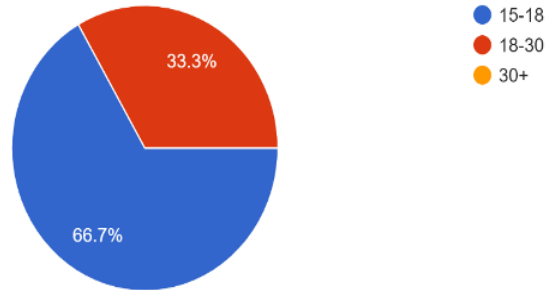
For many college students, social media is consistently used daily. The relationship between social media usage and perceived mental health is important in understanding the complexities of the needs of college students. On-campus counsellors could further explore the nature of the relationship between social media usage and perceived mental health by asking students if they attribute any of their distress to something observed on social media. Further understanding of the potential causes of students' mental health symptoms can help create individualized coping methods when experiencing distress. Along with the previously mentioned implication for practice, it would be beneficial for student affairs practitioners to analyse how the university's social media accounts are utilized when marketing to current and future students. Presenting information about resources available on campus should a student be experiencing mental distress is equally as important as providing information about opportunities for student engagement and employment to students while attending the university. Similarly, student affairs practitioners should develop content that destigmatizes mental health concerns. While a student may be aware that there are resources available, the student may be afraid to utilize resources because of a lack of normalization around discussing mental health concerns. Creating social media campaigns that destigmatize mental health concerns could reach the students and promote accessing mental health services.

Moreover, with an understanding that social media usage can increase comparison, increasing programming and opportunities that encourage appreciation, gratitude, and selfcare can help students cultivate self-worth both with and without a social media presence

**Results :-**

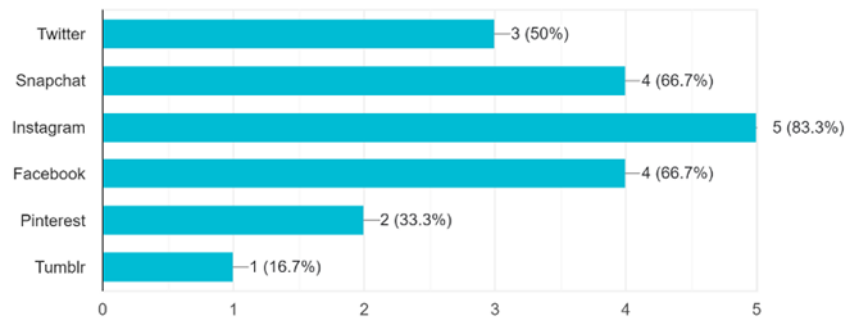
How old are you?

6 responses



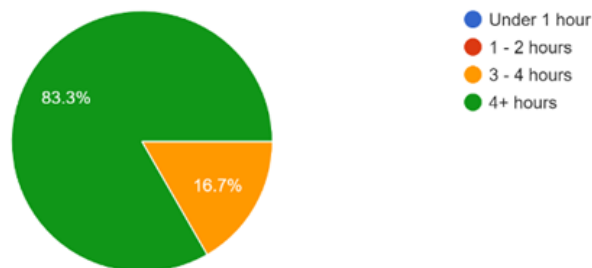
Which social media platforms do you use? Tick all that apply

6 responses



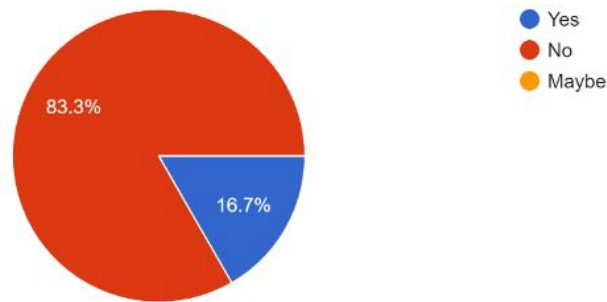
How many hours a day do you approximately use any form of social media? (e.g Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter etc)

6 responses



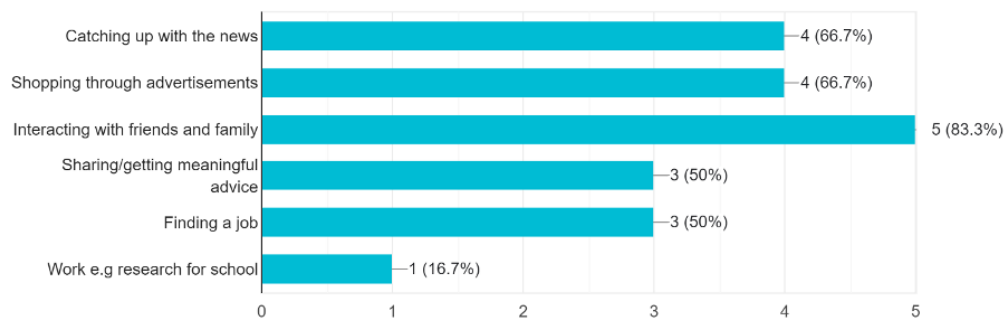
Do you think it is healthy to spend that much time online?

6 responses



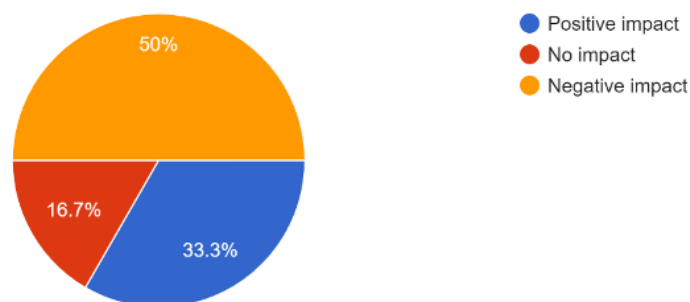
Do you benefit from any of the following when using social media?

6 responses



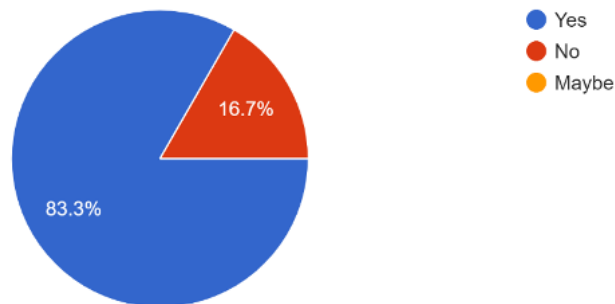
What impact do you think social media has had on you?

6 responses



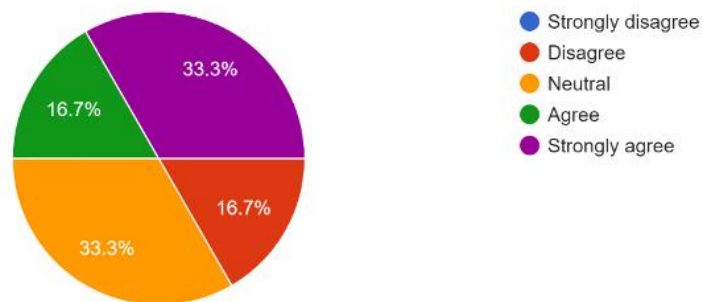
Have you ever deleted a post because it hasn't received 'enough' likes?

6 responses



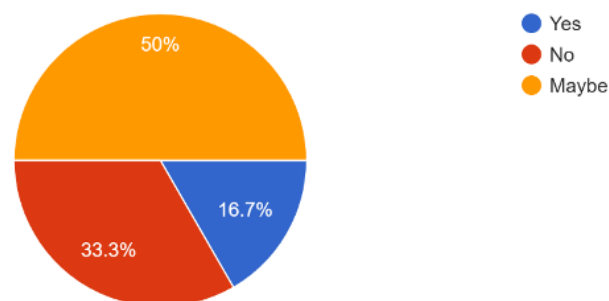
"Social media negatively impacts mental health"

6 responses



Do you think social media platforms are doing enough to tackle the issue of mental health? (e.g: Instagram removing likes from pictures etc)

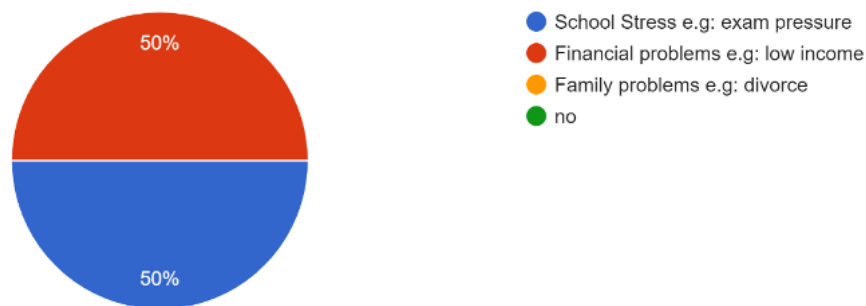
6 responses





Do you think that any of the following also contribute to mental health problems in young people?

6 responses



## Overview on the results

For many college students, social media is consistently used daily. The relationship between social media usage and perceived mental health is important in understanding the complexities of the needs of college students. On-campus counsellors could further explore the nature of the relationship between social media usage and perceived mental health by asking students if they attribute any of their distress to something observed on social media. Further understanding of the potential causes of students' mental health symptoms can help create individualized coping methods when experiencing distress. Along with the previously mentioned implication for practice, it would be beneficial for student affairs practitioners to analyse how the university's social media accounts are utilized when marketing to current and future students. Social media has become a ubiquitous part of modern life, and its influence on various aspects of society, including education, has been increasingly studied in recent years. The aim of this research project is to investigate the impact of social media usage on students. Specifically, the project seeks to identify the positive and negative effects of social media use on students' academic performance, mental health, and social behavior.

To achieve these goals, the project will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with students. The survey will assess students' frequency and duration of social media use, as well as their perceptions of its impact on their academic performance, mental health, and social behavior. The interviews will provide more in-depth insight into students' experiences and perspectives regarding social media usage.

The research project will also explore the various factors that influence social media use among students, including gender, age, and social background. By examining these factors, the project aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the impact of social media on students and to identify potential interventions or strategies that can mitigate any negative effects. The findings from this research project will contribute to the growing body of knowledge on social media and its impact on students. The project's results can inform educators, parents, and policymakers about the potential risks and benefits of social media use among students and can provide recommendations for creating healthy and productive social media habits. Ultimately, the research project aims to shed light on this important issue and to help create a safer and more positive social media environment for students. Presenting information about resources available on campus should a student be experiencing mental distress is equally as important as providing information about opportunities for student engagement and employment to students while attending the university. Similarly, student affairs practitioners should develop content that destigmatizes mental health concerns. While a student may be aware that there are resources available, the student may be afraid to utilize resources because of a lack of normalization around discussing mental health concerns. Creating social media campaigns that destigmatize mental health concerns could reach the students and promote accessing mental health services. Moreover, with an understanding that social media usage can increase comparison, increasing programming and opportunities that encourage appreciation, gratitude, and selfcare can help students cultivate self-worth both with and without a social media presence.

1. Objectives: The main objective of this research is to investigate the impact of social media usage on the academic performance of undergraduate students. The study aims to determine the relationship between social media use and academic performance and to identify the factors that influence this relationship.
2. Participants: The study will involve undergraduate students from universities in the United States. The participants will be selected using a probability sampling technique to ensure representativeness of the population. The sample size will be determined based on the sample size calculator and will be sufficient to obtain statistically significant results.
3. Variables: The study will focus on two main variables: social media usage and academic performance. Social media usage will be measured by the frequency and duration of social media use, the types of social media platforms used, and the purposes of social media use. Academic performance will be measured by participants' grade point average (GPA) and self-reported academic achievements.

4. **Methodology:** The research will use a quantitative survey design to collect data on social media usage and academic performance. The survey will consist of close-ended questions, including Likert scales and multiple-choice questions. The survey questionnaire will be distributed online via various social media platforms and email to the selected participants. Data collected from the survey will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including multiple regression analysis.
5. **Limitations:** The study's limitations include the potential for response bias, as participants may not provide accurate information about their social media use and academic performance. Additionally, the study's results may not be generalizable to all undergraduate students, as the study only includes participants from universities in the United States.

In conclusion, the scope of this research project on the impact of social media usage on students includes investigating the relationship between social media usage and academic performance among undergraduate students in the United States. The study will focus on two main variables, use a quantitative survey design, and will have some limitations to consider when interpreting the results.

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## Identity expression

Two studies—one quantitative and the other mixed-method—found that people use social media to project an image of themselves that they believe is more positive than who they are in real life (Hanna et al., 2017; Reich, 2010). The survey evaluated people's views towards sadness, anxiety, self-objectification, comparison, and self-esteem. According to the findings, Facebook users try to project a positive image of themselves (Hanna, et al., 2017). Similar findings from two focus groups and a poll showed that users of social media, especially on MySpace and Facebook, developed an attractive, untrue portrayal of who they are offline (Reich, 2010). Overall, both findings indicate that social media gives people the freedom to present themselves whatever they like, which exposes them to objectification and comparison. Social media can have an effect on the mental health of college students since they can be impressionable and depend on outside affirmation (Baxter Magolda, 2008).

Both Reich (2010) and Hanna et al. (2017) have limitations. For instance, Hanna et al. asked questions about body shame, mental health, and self-esteem in order to focus on psychological well-being. Due to the limitations of the study, additional research is required to evaluate other aspects of psychological health, such as suicidal ideation (Hanna et al., 2017). Additionally, Reich's evaluation was carried out in 2010, when MySpace was a popular social networking platform. Because MySpace is no longer the most popular social media platform, data found from MySpace users may not apply to contemporary students.

Using free social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter allows users to stay in touch with friends and read useful material while also giving up a lot of discretion and privacy. Anxiety is one of the main mental health issues in the modern society. People worry about the views and remarks on the photos and videos they share. Hardly anybody is immune to social media in the modern day. According to The Hearty Soul (2016), using social networking apps increases your risk of depression and the longer you spend on social media, like Facebook and Twitter lessen the chances that pupils will be able to concentrate better and feel less anxious. Both good and negative impacts of social media on teenage mental health were examined by Kaur & Bashir (2015). Positive benefits include socialising, improved communication, learning opportunities, and access to health information. Negative effects include sexting, depression, cyberbullying, harassment online, exhaustion, stress, emotional repression, and a reduction in intellectual capacity. Almost everyone in the world today, from 11 to 93, is linked to social media. By completing an electronic survey that was given to students in the spring of 2019, the objective of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the association between social media usage and perceived mental health difficulties among college students. The data collection and analysis for this study were guided by the following research questions: (1) What are the trends in student use of social media? Additionally, how frequently do students use social media in relation to perceived mental health problems such as sadness, anxiety, and suicidality? H2a: The following alternative hypotheses were examined in the study to address the second

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## Conclusion

Although existing research documented that social media can influence an individual's mental health, it was not known if and to what degree there is a relationship between social media usage and mental health among college students. Results from this study indicated that there was a weak positive correlation between the relationship of social media usage and both depression and anxiety among undergraduate students, as well as a non-significant positive relationship between social media usage and suicidality. It was also discovered that the top reason that participants use social media was for entertainment, and participants utilized the social media platform Facebook the most. Participants suggested that their social media usage both positively and negatively influenced their mental health because they used it to maintain connections with family and friends, while also comparing themselves to others. Results from this study affirm previous research findings that social media can positively and negatively impact mental health. Previous studies found that social media platforms have developed an easier method of maintaining connections with family and friends who live far away and increased social support, yet, social media has also created a space that promotes the comparison of lives, seeking approval, and perpetuates unrealistic expectations. There was a weak positive correlation found between both anxiety and depression and social media usage. The researcher speculates that the correlation between social media usage and adverse mental health symptoms is caused by the constant comparison and perception that others are doing better than oneself because of social media posts. Social media usage may play a more significant role in a college students' mental health than previously realized. While correlation does not equal causation, it is concerning how many participants are experiencing the previously mentioned mental health symptoms.

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