



THE PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG TEENAGERS AND ITS AFFECTS

Social Science

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to understand the perception and potential effects of consumption of social media on teenagers and young adults. The data for the study was collected using a questionnaire. A simple random sample of 120 students and young adults age (13-24) was used. We conclude that social media is a powerful tool if used in moderation. If used in excess it can act as a powerful negative agent and tank your academic life and mental health. If used in moderation it can help you build connections and collaborate with other individuals. Students should consider social media use carefully. It is associated with a high negative impact on productivity, lead to students skipping classes and procrastination. These services can reduce your capacity to focus on other activities and also distract you from your learning activities. Using these services while trying to do an assignment or other task can also reduce your quality of work. They can also have a negative hit on your mental health and hinder your personal growth.

KEYWORDS

Social media, teenagers, Social Media, Student, negative affects

INTRODUCTION

Social media refers to any service, platform or application which allows people to share and exchange information, interact with each other, and share different types of content.

Any elements present within these social media services which can make the user engaged and coming back to more can be regarded as an addictive element.

Over the past decade we have seen Social Media revolutionize the way we communicate with others. The number of people who use Social Media have grown rapidly. These services have several benefits and can be used in a number of ways. S Anne Moorhead, Diane E. Hazlett, Laura Harrison, Jennifer K Carroll, Anthea Irwin and Ciska Hoving found that Social media is a medium of benefit for health communication. It can be used by public, patients and health professionals to better communicate about health and related issues.

Social media can also help with development of one's identity as it is a valuable means of self self expression allowing users to show passion for their craft along with raising issues which they care about. Uhls, Yalda T., Nicole B. Ellison, and Kavary Subrahmanyam found that today's online world help reflect, complement, and reinforce off-line relationships along with using these services for their adolescent developmental tasks.

However these services have also raised concerns regarding their use and primarily negative effects on academic performance and mental health. More time spent on these services can lead to less time spent studying leading to lower academic performance. A study conducted by Abdulahi, Behrang Samadi and Behrooz Gharleghi found that there is a small performance relation between students using Facebook and there academic performance.

These services can also lead to reduced online privacy and can lead to private and sensitive information being leaked. Yanbo Wang , Qingfei Min , and Shengnan Han concluded that trust of these services and the privacy risk are both significantly correlated with individual behavior on SMP's. The relation between trust and different type of behavior was found to be similar along with the relation between risk and behavior.

Chapter 2

Review of literature

Luca Braghieri, Ro'ee Levy and Alexey Makarin (2022), emphasized that the effects of introduction of social media are likely to be far reaching. They found a negative effect on student mental health and facebook adoption and use at a university.

Hassan Ebrahimpour Sadagheyani and Farin Tatari (2020), found that social media has both negative and positive effects on a person's

mental health, it is more of a double edged sword . They recommended that certain actions be taken to implement strategies to reduce these negative effects. Heavy users of social media should be given a warning about social media addiction, students and pupils should be trained about the safe usage of these services, adolescents should be trained to ascertain valid information from these services amongst other amongst other things.

Elia Abi-Jaoude MSc MD, Karline Treurnicht Naylor MPH MD, Antonio Pignatiello MD (2020), emphasized that youth could benefit from proven individual and systematic interventions to help them better understand and protect themselves against harm and social media in a manner that protects their mental health. Many benefits including access to media literacy, creativity, self expression, sense of belonging, helpful discussions and low barriers to entry cannot be emitted.

John A. Naslund, Ameya Bondre, John Torous, Kelly A. Aschbrenner (2020), found that social media is being used by people to share their experience with mental illness, seek support from others, access mental health services and cope with the symptoms. Popularity of these social media services could be used to allow individuals who are suffering from these mental illnesses to seek evidence-based treatment and support.

Emily Weinstein (2018), concluded that teenagers experience both positive and negative effects from social media. There is a "Both/and" model at play rather than a "either/or" model. Cutting social media off completely might lead to them not seeing evidence of "exclusion" while also leading to them loosing a valuable friendship. SMP use might lead to a positive use case one day and a negative on the next.

D. A. Al-Sabti, A. V. Singh and S. K. Jha (2017) found that social media use is a gateway to being a victim to cybercrime. Improper use of this technology and sharing of personal information leads to a lack of privacy and exposes teenagers to a significant risk. Teenagers are also unlikely to aware of these privacy risks exposing them even further. On these sties teenagers however young they are can also receive and send inappropriate messages that may not be suitable to their age.

Hilal Bashir and Shabir Ahmad Bhat (2017), emphasized that social media usage has dangerous effects for the youth due to it's negative effect on mental health. These services can cause problems during the young period of a child's life and act as "epidemic" throughout their respective life. They also emphasized the continual research into this topic. Literature present at the time reflected an extremely negative association between the mental heath and social media usage.

Shabnoor Siddiqui, Tajinder Singh (2016), emphasized that social media increased the quality and rate of collaboration for students. Business owners are better able to accomplish their business

objectives. Social media can also introduce false information to the student, people's privacy can become virtually non-existent, wrong advertisements can negatively impact productivity in an organization and improper blogs can influence the youth into taking inappropriate or violent actions.

Wilfred W.F. Lau (2016), emphasized that there is a growing concern about social media's effect on students due to its growing adoption amongst students. Some potential negative effects are inappropriate interactions between students and teachers which may occur online, influence of informal relation with teacher which disrupts class time, and cyber bullying. Social media might disrupt the traditional student-teacher relationship and it is possible that said relation has become less defined over time. Social media may also negatively affect student's well-being, and personal growth.

Brooks, Stoney(2015) found that personal social media usage has negative effects on efficiency and well-being, notably that social media usage is linked with lower task performance, increased technostress, and lower happiness. As the usage of these services grows, so will the total negative impact on population as a whole. Having an understanding of why these effects occur and how to remedy them will be imperative for future use of these platforms.

Abdullah Al-Bahrani, Darshak Patel, Brandon Sheridan (2015), emphasized that social media is still relatively new. They showcased that economics instructors are more interested in using social media in the classroom. Students enrolled in Principal of Microeconomics and Macroeconomics show some concern for their privacy, but at the same time would welcome connections with their teachers. Social media services lead to more opportunities while also leading to improved learning outcomes.

Jin Moa (2014), found that most students have a positive attitude social media's use in education. There is disconnect between students perception and actual understanding and adoption of social media in education. Even though participants are positive about the use of social media in education, they do not have a proper understanding of social media as a tool as a concept for formal and structured learning in education environments.

Eileen Fischer, A.Rebecca Reuber (2011) reached the conclusion that social media channels like Twitter could be highly valuable to entrepreneurs. Some people may be overwhelmed by the amount of information available on these platforms. These services help them "observe" the consumer and get closer to them in a way not possible before. Entrepreneurs are also likely to find new opportunities and bring about these opportunities to fruition.

Qingya Wang, Wei Chen and Yu Liang (2011), concluded that students were likely to be affected by social media. Social media is an attractive service, allowing students to make friends with other students, and also provides students with a good way to cope with pressure. Students' grades are also affected by these services. A better balance needs to be struck between social media and academics.

Need of Study

As we continue to step into a world where everyone is one social media, it is imperative that the downsides not be ignored. Social Media apps are usually the first and last thing to be opened on our mobile phones. But how do these services really impact us? These apps stimulate the brains of the individuals using them, they give them rewards for just swiping their fingers. This result is dwindling motivation for people to do any other activity like studying when they can get the same dopamine hits from doing little to no amount of work. The quick succession in which these "hits" are awarded programs their mind to wait less and less time to get these hits, leading to a lower attention span. These apps reduce the capacity of individuals to work on meaningful tasks like studying or any other hobby they might want to pursue. They can't focus on the things being taught in the classroom. This can have destructive effects on the youth as they might never be able to truly understand the material being taught leading to lower scores in those classes. If physical evidence is produced for this phenomenon, then governments around the world might be able to act regarding the addictive elements present within these services.

Objective of the study->

To gauge our the perception of social media amongst teenagers and the

potentially addictive elements present.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

Demographic Analysis

*Percentages may not add up due to rounding error.

Social media service used (Multiple services accept in response)

1.

Variable	Number of respondents	% of total
Instagram	104	86.67
Snapchat	60	50
Facebook	42	35
Twitter	40	33.33
Reddit	14	11.67
Other	20	16.67

Social media usage while studying

2.

Variable	Number of respondents	% of total
Yes	26	21.67
No	36	30
Maybe/Sometimes	58	48.33

Number of people who would like to reduce their social media usage

3.

Variable	Number of respondents	% of total
Yes	68	56.67
No	22	18.3
Maybe	30	25

Time spent on social media service per day

4.

Variable	Number of respondents	% of total
Less than 30 minutes per day	8	6.7
30 minutes to an hour per day	16	13.3
1-2 hours per day	56	46.7
2-4 hours per day	28	23.33
4 hours or more per day	12	10

Location at which social media service was used(Multiple responses accepted)

5.

Variable	Number of respondents	% of total
While at school/college	10	8.3
During my free time	112	93.3
During meal times	48	40
Other	6	5

Attempt to limit social media usage

6.

Variable	Number of respondents	% of total
Yes	76	63.3
No	24	20
Maybe	20	16.67

Hours spent on self studying on average per day

7.

Variable	Number of respondents	% of total
Less than 30 minutes per day	6	6
30 minutes to an hour per day	10	8.3
1-2 hours per day	34	28.3
2-3 hours per day	48	40
3-5 hours per day	16	13.3
More than 5 hours per day	6	5

Average grades

8.

Variable	Number of respondents	% of total
A	87	72.5
B	27	22.5
C	2	1.7
D or below	4	3.33

Late in submitting an assignment because of time spent on social media

9.

Variable	Number of respondents	% of total
Yes	36	30
No	56	46.7
Maybe	28	23.3

10.

Factor name	Name of dimension/factor	Variables	Factor Loadings
F1	Social media and its effects on productivity and mental well being	1) You feel that social media is a distraction to your learning activities.	.606
		2) Using social media and doing some other tasks reduces your efficiency.	.572
		3) Social media negatively affects your mental health	.764
		4) Social media services are a strong waste of time	.689
		5) Sharing notes or information about classes via social media leads to many students thinking they do not have to attend lectures	.689
		6) Social media leads to procrastination	.501
		7) The social media algorithms used by social media services that try to keep you on those apps for as long as possible	.651
		8) The Colors used by social media services like instagram and snapchat are very appealing	.639
		9) Using social media while doing assignments negatively affects the quality of your work	.439
		10) Social media services hinder your personal growth	.768
		11) Social media reduces your capacity to focus on other activities	.737
		12) Social validation through likes, comments and shares tends to impact self-esteem	.652
F2	Addictive elements and their effects on academic performance:	1) Short form video content is addictive.	.505
		2) There is a significant relationship between student's academic performances and social media adoption and use.	.530
		3) Long bouts of not using social media can make you easily annoyed	.706
		4) You experience a strong fear of missing out when not using social media	.646
		5) Social media has affected your academic performance negatively	.757
		6) Social media gives us a false sense of connection with our loved ones	.567
		7) You think about social media whenever you aren't using it, so much so that it's the first thing you turn to whenever you have the opportunity.	.489
		8) The infinite scrolling feature present within social media applications leads to more time spent on the service than intended	.808
			.654

F3	Social media as a mode of self expression	1) Social media helps you take more part in your interests 2) Social media can be used to raise awareness about the issues you care about	.705 .815
F4	Echo chambers and there formation on social media	1) Social media tends to put you in echo chambers where only your viewpoint is promoted and the other view points are discouraged 2) Short form video content reduces your attention span	.848 .443
F5	Social media as a vector for fake and negative news	1) Social media strongly promotes negative news 2) Social media services like Facebook and Instagram tend to promote a lot of fake news	.494 .810
F6	Social media's use in classrooms	1) Teachers should encourage the use of social media in the classroom 2) The sound of a social media notification is very appealing 3) Social media provides you with a platform for academic group work	.099 .717 .759

Explanation of the Factors:

Factor 1- Social media and its effects on productivity and mental well being:

This factor was responsible for 34.314% of the variance and showed that social media has a large hit on the productivity of individuals and their mental well being as well. This highlights one of the downsides of these services as it drives down the productivity of an individual. Driving down the productivity lead to less mental wellbeings

Factor 2- Addictive elements and their effects on academic performance:

This was the second most important factor and accounted for about 8.440% of the variance and showcased that there are a lot of addictive elements present in social media. These elements are designed to decrease the friction between the user and the service so they can use them as much as possible and this exact reason tends to result in the decline of the academic performances of students as well.

Factor 3- Self Expression:

This factor accounted for 7.910% of the variance and established one of the upsides of these services. These services allow for teenagers to express themselves the way they want to. With the help of these services they are able to raise awareness about the issues they choose to and indulge in discussion of their favorite topics.

Factor 4- Echo chamber:

This factor accounted for 6.239% of the variation and showcased one of the ways these platforms keep their users engaged. When the user expresses there views of a particular topic they are shown posts pertaining to their particular viewpoints. This also results in creation of "echo chambers" where only one view point is promoted and every other view point is discouraged. These "echo chambers" can radicalize an individual in support of a viewpoint.

Factor 5- News:

This factor accounted for 5.014% of the variation and showed another possible downsides of these social media services. When people use these sites, they are subject to a lot of news. A large majority of the time the topics depicted are very negative so that they can drive up engagement with the service itself. Other times fake news is spread on these services by people with false contrarian beliefs.

Factor 6- Use in classrooms:

This factor accounted for 4.194% of the variance and showed one of the other benefits of these services. These services allow for students to communicate with each other. This exact thing builds gateways for sharing of new ideas and allows for them to thrive together.

CONCLUSION

Implications and Recommendations-

Our findings indicate that social media use is associated with both positive and negative effects. Respondents agreed on the fact that social media is associated with a negative effect on academic performance. These services can distract the users from their goals and other learning activities and become strong time wasters along with leading to procrastination. Multitasking while using social media can strongly reduce the quality of their work along with leading to lower focus. These services can also have a negative impact on the user's mental health along with making them dependent on them for social validation via likes and comments. Respondents indicated that there are several addictive elements present within these services. These elements are designed to be that way so users can keep using them. These services employ a variety of these elements to keep the users hooked. The colors used by these services are very appealing. The short form video content on these services such as Instagram reels or Youtube shorts can allow for users to think they are spending less time on these services by watching short videos of usually 15-60 seconds. These short video contents can also lead to shortened attention spans. The infinite scrolling feature can lead to browsing around these services for more time than intended. A feeling of fear of missing out is also invoked by these services. The users want to find out what the latest trends are or what their friends are up to leading to more time spent on these services. The notification sound of these services are also very appealing and make the user wait for another notification. The algorithms used by these platforms also promote your personal opinion to you leading to a formation of "echo chambers" where other opinions are discouraged. These platforms can also act as vectors for fake and negative news. However not all is bad in these services. These platforms can act as a valuable platform for doing academic group-work. These services can also act as a valuable way to express the user's self identity and develop oneself. The users can spread awareness about the issues which matter to them and also find communities where they can participate in their interests. The use of these services should be controlled, however not totally finished due to the presence of both negative and positive impacts.

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