Examining The Influence of Social Media on Mental Health: A Comparative Study of Generational Differences

Basayya Mathapati, Research Scholar (Sociology) Sunrise University, Alwar

Dr. Sweety Srivastava (Assistant Professor), Research Supervisor School of Arts & Social Studies, Sunrise University, Alwar

Abstract

This research examines at how social media affects students' mental health. 100 MBA students provided main and secondary data for the descriptive study design. According to the survey, most students use many social networking sites and spend a lot of time on them, which is linked to symptoms of anxiety and sadness. Significant correlations between the number of social networking sites, social media use, and mental health indicators were found by statistical analysis. The results highlight the need of initiatives to encourage students to adopt better social media practices.

Keywords: Social media, mental health, students, depression, anxiety, social networking sites, excessive usage, intervention

1. INTRODUCTION

Academics, parents, and society at large are concerned about the impact of social media usage on people's mental health. Among today's internet users, excessive time spent on social networking sites ranks high. Websites that allow users to communicate with one another over web 2.0 and 3.0 platforms are known as social media. Examples of such websites include online games, virtual worlds (e.g., Second Life, The Sims), YouTube, blogs, and apps (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace). These modern websites are more popular and make it easier for kids to interact and have fun. In the past decade, social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter have created an unprecedented amount of user-generated material, including views, ideas, images, and videos. The increased number of frequent users shows that social media users have quickly integrated online social contact into their everyday lives. Facebook reported one billion active users on August 27, 2015. One out of every seven people on the world used Facebook at least once a day to stay in contact with loved ones. Marketing, politics, education, health, and interpersonal relationships are just a few areas of contemporary digital life that are profoundly affected by social media. Despite the fact that social media has only been around for a short time, various studies have looked at how daily usage impacts people's physical and mental health. In a handful of these fields, social media undoubtedly excels. This ignorance is especially troubling in light of the fact that today's youngsters spend a significant lot of time engaging with one another online and might be more prone to adverse effects as a result. A vast amount of research defines the negative repercussions of social media usage, including increased stress, anxiety, despair, and loneliness. The rising usage of social media by younger generations has generated worries about its possible harmful implications.

1.1.Social Media & Anxiety

There is a lot of evidence between social media and compulsive behavior. When 45% of adults in the UK experience an outage affecting their social media accounts, it's clear that something is seriously wrong. Messages on social networking programs are often checked by virtual generation (Net & i-Generation). According to research, younger generations become upset when they can't use social media without their buddies. What an addict perceives as vibrations on his phone is really known as Phantom Vibration Syndrome (PVS). If a PVS person is nervous and can't stop checking their social media accounts, it's an indication of phone addiction.

1.2. Social Media & Stress

These days, it may be difficult to cut off use of social media once one starts. Addiction to these platforms has increased dramatically in recent years. It becomes more difficult to stop when you get positive feedback from comments and likes. Some people find it easy to judge their own lives by comparing them to their friends' picture-perfect lives. Despite the benefits

of reading informative content and keeping in contact with friends via free social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, Dick (2013) argues that doing so comes at the cost of users' privacy and discretion. Anxiety disorders are among the most common mental health concerns nowadays. People become anxious when they see a large number of likes and comments on their social media posts. In today's society, almost everyone is surrounded by social media.

1.3. Social Media and Depression

According to the study, social media contributes to mental health issues. Too much social media use, it may lead to a cascade of negative emotions, beginning with worry and ending with despair. Facebook usage is positively correlated with adolescent depression, it turns out. These findings are consistent with those of Rosen et al. (2013), who found that heavy social media users who also spent a lot of time controlling their online personas and participating in online activities suffered from severe depressive disorder. Additionally, it was mentioned that Facebook users tend to feel more alone. Use of social media is also associated with an increase in adjustment and self-esteem problems, among others.

1.4. Social media and loneliness

Surprisingly, despite greater connectivity than ever before, young adults make up the bulk of social media users. This is because today's youth are the most socially isolated age ever. Loneliness is a big concern in today's virtual world since it is frequently associated with serious health problems. When a person feels lonely, it might be because their social life isn't as active as they would want it to be. According to some authors, prolonged exposure to filthy, compulsive, and overly-reliant internet resources might amplify feelings of isolation. Emotional loneliness is more common among younger generations because of their heavy internet usage.

1.5. Social Relationships and Mental Health

The Mental Health Foundation asserts that having friends is crucial to taking care of one's mental health. Risk of death, psychological well-being, and physiological habits are all affected by the quantity and quality of one's social networks (Umberson & Montez, 2010). A large body of empirical research suggests that social support may mitigate feelings of hopelessness, prevent avoidant coping strategies, lessen isolation, and strengthen positive outlooks. In contrast, suicidal ideation, poor social ties, and overall social isolation are all associated with depression. Social support is linked to better mental health, according to Reich et al. (2010). If you want to improve your mental health, you must have social contacts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Barry, C. T., & Wong, M. Y. (2020) the rise of instantaneous communication and social media has brought many benefits, but one potential downside is the danger of FOMO, or the fear of missing out, on important social events. In order to explore potential generational or individual consequences of the disease, this study evaluated age cohort differences and self-perception correlations of FoMO. In terms of overall FoMO, FoMO with respect to close friends, and FoMO with regard to family, there were no cohort differences. All age groups showed a correlation between high levels of FoMO and loneliness and poor self-esteem, especially for those who also used social media more often. Therefore, the current research suggests that certain people who use social media heavily may find FoMO about other people's actions to be more harmful.

Coyne, et. al. (2020) Current research, however, is characterized by cross-sectional studies and a lack of analytical methodologies for following individuals' progress over time. This research examines the intra-individual associations between social media usage and anxiety and depression over the course of eight years. The participants were 500 teens (ranging in age from 13 to 20) who were asked to fill out surveys annually. There was no correlation between increased social media use and an increase in individual-level mental health problems when the researchers examined mental health problems throughout stages of development. With

any luck, the research community will be able to use these results to shift its focus away from screen time.

Braghieri, et. al. (2022) Our quasi-experimental estimations of social media's impacts on mental health are based on a one-of-a-kind natural experiment: the slow launch of Facebook throughout US schools. Using student mental health data obtained throughout Facebook's expansion, our research employs a broad difference-in-differences empirical approach. We find that students' mental health suffers when Facebook is introduced to a college. It also made students more likely to admit that their mental health was interfering with their schoolwork. The results are due to Facebook's encouragement of unfavorable social comparisons, according to further study on the systems involved.

Ali Taha, et. al. (2021) The global coronavirus outbreak impacted every element of our life, including the routines, inclinations, and purchasing patterns of consumers. This essay seeks to investigate how social media affects consumer behavior. Specifically, it looks at how social media influenced people's preferences for certain e-commerce sites during the first COVID-19 pandemic wave. Spearman's rank correlation coefficient showed a substantial link between variables. The Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis H tests were used to evaluate demographic differences (age, gender, and residency). Social media usage was weakly associated with online shop purchases promoted on social media. Different demographic characteristics showed statistically significant disparities in social media usage during the first wave of COVID-19.

Vizcaya-Moreno& Pérez-Cañaveras(2020) Nursing education and the nursing profession will undergo transformations due to the distinct perspectives, values, and practices shown by nursing students from Generation Z. This cross-sectional study aimed to examine the characteristics and social media use of nursing students from Generation Z, as well as the most favored and successful teaching modalities for clinical training. The subjects were Spanish college students from Generation Z who were majoring in nursing. For clinical learning, participants spent 1.37 hours per week on social media. They favored mentoring based on clinical expertise, online tutorials or videos, interactive games, and virtual learning environments. In terms of generational traits, most people agreed or strongly agreed that they were avid digital users and high technology consumers. The authors believe that, given the fast shifting circumstances brought on by the Covid-19 epidemic, it is imperative that we learn more about the potential applications of instructional methodologies during clinical learning.

2.1. Research Objectives

1. To investigate the connection between student use of social media and mental health problems.
2. To look at the relationship between students' use of social networking sites and their symptoms of anxiety and despair.
3. To investigate the effects on students' mental health of spending too much time on social media.
4. To determine how common mental health conditions like anxiety and depression that are linked to social media are among MBA students.
5. To find viable treatments targeted at encouraging better social media practices and reducing the detrimental impacts of social media on students' mental health.

2.2. Research Hypothesis

H_{01}: The quantity of social networking sites and the amount of time spent on them are related.

H_{02}: The quantity of social networking sites and social media use are related.

H_{03}: The quantity of social networking sites and depressive symptoms are not the same.

H_{04}: There is a connection between experiencing anxiety and being more engaged on social media than in real life.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used descriptive research. Primary and secondary data were collected for the study. The poll provided primary data, while websites, magazines, and journals provided secondary data. One hundred MBA students made up the sample. There was only a basic random sample. The participants were given a standardized questionnaire. Questions about demographics were asked in the first section, and in the second, there were free-choice questions covering a range of topics, including the pattern of social networking usage, the amount of time spent, health problems include insomnia, sadness, and anxiety, as well as regular social media use and interaction. The statistical approaches used in the inquiry were crosstabs, Anova, and correlation. We used SPSS v. 16.0 to conduct the analysis.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Testing of Hypothesis

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.624	14

Cronbach's alpha was used in order to carry out the verification of dependability. There has an overall reliability score of 0.624. As a result, more research could benefit from the poll.

Table 2: Analysis of multiple responses: $Purpose Frequencies

$Purpose of SNS[a]	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Academics	72	22.6%	75.6%
Games	52	14.5%	54.4%
Movies	48	17.4%	56.7%
Sports	38	14.5%	46.7%
Entertainment	72	24.5%	82.2%
Serials	30	8.2%	32.2%
Total	312	100%	358.9%

a. Value 1 was computed for the dichotomy group.

Table 2 displays the following statistics on the use of social media by students: 22.6% for academic purposes, 14.5 for gaming, 17.4 for movie viewing, 14.5 for sports, 24.5 for entertainment, and 8.2% for serials. Mustafa (2017) states that the identification of social media's purpose is mostly instructional, with enjoyment coming in second When it comes to the goal of social connection, students use social media at a low level.

Table 3: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	48.523[a]	17	.001
Likelihood Ratio	46.626	17	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.964	2	.000
N of Valid Cases	100		

The significance value, 0.000, is less than 0.05 based on Table 3 above. Rejecting the null hypothesis, we find that the number of social networking sites correlates with the amount of time spent on social media.

Table 4: Cross tabs Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	36.117[a]	17	.000
Likelihood Ratio	26.436	17	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	27.963	2	.000
N of Valid Cases	100		

The significance value, 0.000, is less than 0.05 based on Table 4 above. Rejecting the null hypothesis, we find that the number of social networking sites correlates with the amount of time spent on social media.

Table 5: Anova

Number of SNS	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.248	4	4.632	3.662	.056
Within Groups	126.854	95	2.492		
Total	142.102	99			

The significant value of 0.056, which is less than 0.05, may be found in Table 5 above. We reject the null hypothesis since the number of social networking sites is not related to depressed symptoms.

5. CONCLUSION

This research provides valuable insights into the correlation between MBA students' use of social media and mental health concerns. The results show a strong correlation between social media addiction and mental health issues including anxiety and despair. The findings highlight the need of programs that encourage better online behaviors and lessen the impact on mental health. To tackle the intricate interactions of students' mental health and social media, future research should include longitudinal studies and focused treatments. This research helps fill gaps in our knowledge about the effects of social media on students' mental health and provides direction for future efforts to address this issue.

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