

Impact of Social Media on Students' Mental Health and Learning: A Brief Review

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Abstract: *Social media platforms are designed to grab your attention, keep you online and frequently checking your screen for updates. This is how companies make money. But, like gambling compulsion or addiction to nicotine, alcohol or drugs, social media use can create psychological cravings. When you get a like, share, or favourable reaction to a post, it can trigger the release of dopamine in the brain, the same "reward" chemical that occurs after winning at a slot machine, having a piece of chocolate, or lighting up. . For example, smoking cigarettes. The more you feel rewarded, the more time you will want to spend on social media, even if it is detrimental to other aspects of your life. Similarly, the use of social media, which is popular even among school students, has entered into the daily processes and is being discussed more and its various positive and negative effects have been identified. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the impact of social media on the mental health and learning of these students, and this research was conducted with that objective in mind. For that, the facts were summarized based on the research data done by the researchers. According to that, nowadays the use of social media is widespread among schools and children, but it was clear that the use of social media provides a haven for sharing knowledge and acquiring new knowledge, but it causes bad effects through constant use and misuse. Without proper guidelines. That is, through misuse of social media, students experience anxiety, lack of creativity, stress, anti - social behavior, depression, cyberbullying, sexism, fatigue, emotional suppression, and retardation in learning. Specifically, it shows a low nature of achieving learning goals and there is a risk of resorting to various anti - social activities and there is a possibility of resorting to various addictions. That is, school students should use social media under proper guidance and should be given proper knowledge about the use of social media, and should be properly guided to use this social media as a tool to achieve their learning goals. If not, the risk of future generations being in serious danger is not far away.*

Keywords: Education, Learning, Social media, Mental health, Students, Effects

1. Introduction

In today's world, many of us rely on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, and Instagram to find and connect with each other. Although each has its own benefits, it's important to remember that social media can never be a replacement for real - world human connections. It takes personal contact with others to trigger hormones that reduce stress and make you feel happier, healthier, and more positive. Ironically, for a technology designed to bring people closer, spending too much time on social media can actually make you feel more lonely and isolated — and increase mental health problems like anxiety and depression. Social media is rapidly expanding day by day and is developing in different aspects. Social media is affecting the mental health and education of students in various ways, there is an urgent need to investigate it. Although there are various definitions of mental health, it can simply be defined as emotional, mental and social well - being. The mental level of every person is different. Also, the way each person thinks, feels and acts varies according to their mental level. Furthermore, it also helps determine how a person deals with stress and interacts with others. It is widely accepted that mental health and mental well - being are essential to a happy, fulfilling and meaningful life. (Thirunavurakasu et al, 2013). Research has shown that engaging in various forms of social media can improve communication, social relationships and technology skills for children and young people. (Zheng, et al., 2020). Mental health problems can hamper a student's energy levels, concentration, confidence, mental ability and optimism, performance and are associated with low grades in academic

subjects and dropping out of school. (American College Health Association, 2015). Also, excessive use of social media is similar to addiction (Hussain & Griffiths, 2021. Hussain & Starcevic, 2020). It is one of the most common mental illnesses among young people with serious negative consequences such as anxiety, mood, attention, conduct disorders, and low self - esteem (Depachang et al, 2021. Lebni et al, 2020., O'Reilly et al, 2018). Without prompt diagnosis and treatment, children with mental disorders may have problems at home, at school, and with friendships. Mental disorders can interfere with a child's healthy development and are linked to problems in adulthood. Adolescent mental health problems often go hand in hand with other health and behavioural risks, such as increased risk of drug use, experiencing violence, and engaging in high - risk sex that can lead to HIV, STDs, and unintended pregnancy. Could be the reason. (Haddad et al., 2021). Incorporating social media can be a challenging instructional strategy as it seeks to balance academic authority with active student participation. Collaboration through social media supports creativity. Social media provides a platform to gain comprehensive knowledge about a subject, making it easier for students to pursue their studies. (Kelleher and Stevens, 2009). As a result, students and teachers become equal partners in the knowledge - sharing process. Although it has many benefits, it facilitates cyber - theft, abuse and cyber - harassment. (Chen & Bryer, 2012; Frye et al., 2010; Jackson, 2011; Smiles & Gannon - Leary, 2011). To avoid this, it is necessary to establish standards and create proper guidelines for the use of social media. If you're spending excessive time on social media and feelings of sadness, dissatisfaction, despair, or loneliness are

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affecting your life, it may be time to re-examine your online habits and find a healthy balance.

There are different types of social media that exist today:

- Social Networking (Facebook, Linked - In, Google+)
- Micro blogging (Twitter, Tumblr)
- Photo Sharing (Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest)
- Video Sharing (YouTube, Facebook - live, Periscope, Vimeo)

According to one of the recent report, percentage of students who use each platform goes as follows:

- Facebook – 96%
- YouTube – 84%
- Blogs – 20%
- Twitter – 14%
- MySpace – 12%
- LinkedIn – 10%

Role of social media in students' life

Student's life, in a way, revolves around social media. After social media, students, teachers and parents have partially replaced the traditional education and are relying on it for information about classes, tests and results. Students find it easier to communicate, share and discuss with their professors and peers. The important thing to remember is that social media plays a huge role in helping students learn, network, and discover professional possibilities. Additionally, it is important to follow usage restrictions as misuse or adverse effects can have harmful effects. Let us discuss the strengths and disadvantages of social media in a student's life. Listed below are the reasons why social media networks create and bring a strong foundation for the students.

1) Make friends online:

Social media platforms provide a space to communicate with each other, which is helpful for students' education. Online courses are popular because they allow students to learn from any location. Most of the famous engineering colleges in India and Coimbatore have started offering online courses.

2) Get information easily:

The information includes current events, news, career opportunities, how-tos, facts and creative fields to help youth discover and learn new things. People can get important information about anything with just a few quick clicks on social media platforms, and that information is available in real time.

3) Enjoy the privilege of being in a community:

Social media helps bring together individuals with similar interests, exposes them to the outside world and helps them learn how to interact with vast communities. They can connect with anyone and share their thoughts about their mutual interest. It promotes community feeling.

4) Have fun with your friends:

Social media is a great place to learn because it attracts many inventive people who enjoy developing unique ideas in the same field. Online games are another type of entertainment that is popular among students and has developed large communities. Students use these methods to divert attention from stress.

5) Learn for Free:

The major benefit of social media for students is learning. When they are unable to interact with their teachers in person, students use social media to communicate with them and ask questions. Presently, thanks to the amazing features of social media, any student can study anything from anywhere in the world.

Other Benefits of Social Media There are no limits in learning and showcasing skills. Focus on your personal work and keep in mind that you should not let social media dominate your life. We have complied with the consequences of the negative effects of social media platforms.

Social Media and Students

Social media is a platform where people from all over the world can connect and interact with each other. Social media has gained a lot of momentum in the last few years. Since almost everyone has a smartphone, it becomes easier for them to use social networking sites. Everyone will have at least one account on some social media website. Students are also using social media a lot. While there is a common belief that students waste a lot of time in social media, according to Barreto and Whitehair (2017), social media are a variety of electronic communications designed to share information, personal messages, ideas, and other content. Is defined as. Between communities, and social media like Facebook and Twitter are growing at an unprecedented rate. Krasnova et al (2008) state that social networks provide an environment for like-minded users to gather and exchange ideas. Tooby, Maon, and Ghazali (2013) found that online social networks have a positive impact on students' social and mental health. He further said that this has a positive impact on user trust. In addition, there is the opportunity to use social media such as Facebook, YouTube and Instagram, which are widely used as supportive learning environments among students. (Kaya and Bison, 2016). Shill (2011) states in his research that social media sites encourage students to engage in negative behaviours such as drug addiction and various antisocial activities.

Impact of social media on students' mental health

Social media use activates the brain's reward centre by releasing dopamine, a chemical associated with pleasurable activities such as sex, food and social interaction, and linked to increased risk of addiction, anxiety, depression and physical illness. (Laake et al, 2021). Young people and school students are often identified as the group most affected by mental illness and they turn to social media to disrupt their studies. (Kessler and Ustun, 2008; Laird, 2017). There is an inverse relationship between time spent on social media and susceptibility to mental illness. (Muringassery and George, 2021). Bashir and Bhat (2017) found that the negative effects of social media include antisocial behaviour, depression, cyberbullying, sexism, fatigue, stress, emotional suppression, addiction, and degradation. According to research conducted by Strickland (2014) regarding cognitive abilities, every person in the world between the ages of 11–93 is connected to social media, and among them, young adults are the most active users of social media. Young people are more exposed to social media like Facebook and are at higher risk of mental health problems. (Jeong et al, 2014). Research conducted by Bashir and Bhat (2017) revealed that stress has a negative

impact on students' mental health. Social networking sites are increasing day by day and it helps in various ways to surf and make connections with peers, school friends and people with similar interests. Similarly, they reported in their study that the reason why people suffer from mental health problems is that they overuse social media (Deepa and Priya, 2020). Schöning et al. (2017) further reported that excessive Internet surfing causes problems in emotional well-being. Naveen (2017) revealed through research that people who use the Internet for a long time are prone to accidents. Taking similar views to the above, Deepa and Priya, (2020) state that social media use leads to hostile and unsafe behavior and is clearly harmful to the emotional well-being of young people in particular. Furthermore, he said that 21st century youth spend 12 - 15 hours a day using phones, computers, workstations, televisions and other devices. Therefore, there is a real threat to the mental health of youth through surfing the internet and the incidence of side effects is increasing as the situation is becoming widespread day by day.

Impact of social media on students' learning

Ebner and colleagues (2010) use microblogs as a form of social media to help students learn informally outside of classrooms. Furthermore, social media are used for educational purposes such as sharing practical and academic information, experiences, social support, and connecting with peers among students. Also, programs such as music that clear students' minds can be accessed through social media (Hrustinsky and Aghai, 2012). Several studies have found a relationship between the use of social networking sites and student engagement. This is because students who are constantly interacting on social media are more aware of the changes and updates happening in the world (Heibarger and Harper, 2008; Rutherford, 2010; Rodriguez, 2011; Junco et al., 2012). Scholars such as Cole et al, 2009 and Valjataga and Fiedler, 2009 have shown in their research that although social media can enhance students' learning ability based on supporting student interaction, various problems can arise through it. Are. It has also been shown that this has the potential to curb various anti-social acts and addictions. Arnold and Paulus (2010) indicated that students use social media independently and incorporate technology to achieve their educational goals. Additionally, Lin et al., 2013 indicated that as a student's age increases, the frequency of off-topic discussions also increases. Researchers say this is because social media provides unnecessary stimulation and can distract students (Hurt et al., 2012; Tarantino et al., 2008). While social media creates a positive haven for knowledge creation and dissemination, it also creates a platform for cyber-theft, abuse and cyberbullying. (Jackson, 2011; Chen & Bryer, 2012). Considering the various social media, students mostly like to use Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, and giving guidelines to those students to focus on their academic progress can help a lot in avoiding the negative aspects of social media. Can. (Rithika and Selvaraj (2013). That is, the use of social media in the classrooms of students should be done through proper guidelines.

Positive Effects of Social Media on Students' Mental Health

1) **Connection and Support:** Social media platforms provide an opportunity for college students to connect with family, friends, and peers. This is especially true

during times of physical separation, such as moving away to college, or friends moving away to their respective universities. Having an online support network can provide comfort, and reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation, which can help ease the transition to college.

- 2) **Information and Awareness:** Social media can allow college students to stay informed about various current events, mental health issues, self-care techniques, and resources for seeking help. Online communities can, at times, also create safe spaces for individuals to share their struggles and experiences, thereby fostering a sense of belonging.
- 3) **Expression and Creativity:** Social media platforms can serve as creative outlets for college students to express themselves through art, music, writing or video.
- 4) **Employment Opportunities:** As we all know that academic gap is one of the major issues that students are facing nowadays. It is very difficult for a student to get a job despite completing his degree. Social media helps them to gain opportunities. Many companies update about vacancies on their social media accounts. Students who follow these companies on social media can apply by sending their biodata to them. LinkedIn is one such social media platform where students largely apply for internships and jobs.
- 5) **Experience Global Exposure:** Social media is such a wide platform that students can connect with anyone in the world. They also learn about the diverse cultures that exist around the world. This includes their culture, traditions, language, lifestyle, food habits and many interesting beautiful things. They can also learn about the different courses available in universities around the world.
- 6) **For creative expression:** Many students will be scared thinking what will happen if they speak out. It helps students to share their ideas without any fear. Social media allows students to express themselves in many ways, such as posting photos, blogs, personal articles, videos, audio clips, etc. Such events will identify the talents of the students and give them opportunities in life.
- 7) **Learning & Networking:** In this process of social learning, it becomes very important for students to stay connected with peers. Students can make friends with friends of friends and build a stronger network. They may get to know many new people and start building new relationships with them. Earlier it was very difficult to get any information about celebrities. Everyone just had to see him on TV and in newspapers. With social media coming into limelight, it has become very easy for everyone to follow celebrities and influencers. Therefore, social media has played a very important role in connecting students with the people they aspire to.

Negative Effects of Social Media on Students' Mental Health

- 1) **FOMO:** Fear of missing out on exciting events or opportunities (FOMO) can lead to feelings of inadequacy and loneliness and can create pressure to feel that the student must attend every event.
- 2) **Comparison:** The proliferation of social media has given rise to the ability to compare oneself with others. When we compare ourselves to what we see on social media we're usually comparing ourselves to the postings of

people doing things they love and posting the best shots from those often - idealized activities.

- 3) **Harassment:** This kind of online abuse can seriously affect self - esteem, sometimes leading to anxiety and depression.
 - 4) **Sleep disturbance:** Excessive use of social media, especially before sleeping, can disrupt sleep patterns among students. Insufficient sleep can increase stress and lead to a decline in overall mental health.
 - 5) **Addiction and time management:** Constant engagement with social media can lead to lack of time management or even addiction, which can impact academic performance and overall well - being.
 - 6) **Filtered reality:** The selective and curated nature of social media posts often creates a filtered and idealized reality. This discrepancy between online and offline lives can contribute to feelings of inadequacy and contribute to anxiety and depression.
 - 7) **Addiction:** Excessive use of social media can lead to addiction which can have profound negative effects on their mental and physical health. Once a student becomes overly dependent on social media, he/she easily gets distracted from his/her studies. Recent studies have shown that students often spend too much time on social media and neglect to complete important tasks necessary for their academic success.
 - 8) **Problem of Socialization:** Typically, social media discourages offline interactions with friends and family and encourages isolation. As a result, self - isolation has a negative impact on mental health, and some students stop going out or meeting people.
 - 9) **Cyberbullying:** Cybercrime is the main risk and threat facing contemporary society. The ability to use social media with anonymous identity is one of its features. These cyber criminals harass other individuals by sending inappropriate messages, leaving objectionable comments on images shared by other people and in many other ways. For entertainment, they create false accounts in which they represent themselves and harass others. The consequences of cyberbullying, including panic attacks, clinical depression, and other serious mental health problems, can be very long - lasting.
 - 10) **Inappropriate Content:** Everyone has the ability to express themselves freely on social media platforms, which is a good thing in the modern world, but this freedom of expression often has negative effects. Students and teenagers who use social media may do so knowingly or unknowingly, which can have many negative effects on their future. Due to this they become mentally unstable and may lose the understanding of right and wrong or any other serious consequences.
- 3) **Encouraging mindfulness practices:** Students will improve their ability to control what they can and live in the present reality.
 - 4) **Limiting screen time or spending less time on social media:** Setting boundaries and limiting excessive screen time can help students reduce the negative impact of social media on their mental health and leave room for improvement in other areas of their lives.
 - 5) **Avoid scrolling through social media before bed or first thing in the morning:** Most people use wake - up alarms on their phones, making it easy to reach for their phones in bed. Unfortunately, the constant stream of news, selfies and updates doesn't set the best conditions for starting your day or relaxing. It is recommended that you establish a more mindful routine around your bedtime and morning time.
 - 6) **Turn off all notifications and check social media at specific times:** You probably know how easy it is to check and respond to notifications showing the latest comments on your posts. Remember, you are in control and you can turn off those notifications and only check your social media accounts at certain times. This can prevent a lot of anxiety from happening on social media.
 - 7) **Create a 'feel - good' social media follow list:** Consider unfollowing accounts that may elicit those negative feelings and follow people and brands that make you feel good, provide entertainment, or inspire you to reach your goals.
 - 8) **Hit that 'Delete Friend' or 'Unfollow' button:** Remove toxic friends. Block them if you need to. Social distancing is good for you! If people don't lift you up, cut them down. Take control of who sees your life updates and who becomes a part of your life. If you feel like someone has judged you, misunderstood you, or isn't the same person you were with your partner in high school, get over it. It's perfectly okay to limit who sees your posts.
 - 9) **Follow Inspirational Accounts:** Now that you've removed some of your toxic friends and accounts that make you feel bad about yourself, replace them with accounts that spread positivity.
 - 10) **Use social platforms for improvement, progress and development:** TikTok is a great platform to find ideas and learn tips and tricks. Instead of focusing on influencer/celebrity content, watch videos that can help you in your personal or professional life. From recipe videos, fitness inspiration and self - help tips to makeup tutorials, career advice and educational content, find categories that will improve your mood.
 - 11) **Ignore negative news:** Please understand, social media does not always represent official news. Now, if you are following official pages that provide confirmed news, that's great. However, you may form the wrong opinion by reading countless pages of false information. If you are dealing with unofficial accounts, you should not trust them and believe all information to be accurate. Etc.

Mitigating the Negative Effects

- 1) **Digital Wellness Education:** Students can educate themselves about responsible social media use, the impact of online behaviour, and strategies to maintain a healthy balance between virtual and real - life interactions.
- 2) **Developing offline connections:** Encouraging students to form meaningful offline connections and engage in activities outside of social media can strengthen their sense of belonging to their community and reduce the negative effects of online comparison.

Social media undoubtedly plays an important role in the lives of college students, providing both positive connections and detrimental effects on their mental health. Although it provides opportunities for support and self - expression, the negative effects of social comparison, cyberbullying, and addiction can be harmful.

2. Conclusion

Social media is gaining popularity day by day and has now become more popular among school students and youth. The younger generation has increasingly adopted the use of these social media by forming friendly relationships and sometimes creating suitable environments to spend time through this social media. Social media is already a part of our lives and is a type of technology that will continue to evolve. The products and services offered through social media and the connections it fosters will benefit all generations. Earlier people used to read newspapers after waking up in the morning, but now everyone looks at their social media accounts for updates. People's lifestyle is changing due to the development of social media. As a result, everyone is addicted to social media in some way or the other. Most of all, it is a great place to interact with friends and colleagues. But if the same thing is used wrongly then it becomes very destructive. Therefore, we should use social media only to a limited extent but not more than that. In this article, we have discussed only the top 5 benefits of social media for students, but social media is useful for students in many ways. Thanks to the universities and autonomous engineering colleges in Coimbatore and India for helping the students through online courses., Social media is helpful for students until they get used to it; otherwise, it could be harmful for them. It all depends on how users use social media, understand its advantages and disadvantages, and understand the impact of their actions. As a positive outcome of the use of social media by students, it creates a conducive environment for acquiring new knowledge, updating knowledge, sharing and distributing knowledge, aesthetic enjoyment, religious preaching, socializing, and business and shopping. The negatives here are the spread of missocialization and antisocial behaviour, stress, anxiety, students abandoning their learning goals and moving on to other goals, cyber theft, abuse and cyberbullying, antisocial behaviour, depression, sex, fatigue, stress, emotional Repression, addiction, degradation, etc. Similarly, through inappropriate use of social media, the desire to learn is reduced, creativity is damaged and the quality of learning is compromised. If this social practice is used with proper standards and understanding, possible side effects can be avoided. Therefore, it is imperative to provide proper guidance to school students especially regarding the use of social media.

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