

A Study on Effect of Social Media Addiction on Mental Health

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Abstract: Social media is ingrained more deeply into our everyday lives, and some claim that as a result, people's mental health is suffering. Social media addiction is a concerning condition that can indicate a number of mental diseases. The relationship between social media use and mental health issues is examined in this article. This study examined a number of variables, including the quantity and quality of sleep, stress, anxiety, and depression, as well as the frequency of phone usage and the emotional investment people have in social media. According to the study, those who spend a lot of time on social media have worse self-esteem, less restful sleep, and increased levels of stress, anxiety, and melancholy. These findings imply that excessive mobile phone use for social media may be associated with unfavourable psychological traits and even suicidal thoughts in certain individuals. Comprehensive research found that teens who use social media had higher rates of depression and anxiety than those who don't.

Keywords: Social media, mental health, stress, addiction, psychological.

1. Introduction

A. Internet

Most countries have had to deal with an increase in the number of internet users during the past 10 years. According to the Iranian Internet Network Information Center, 32 million Iranians now use the internet. The significance of this issue in Iranians' daily life in the present may be seen in this statistic. With its increased accessibility, the Internet has swiftly become interwoven in every facet of our lives.

The potential negative impacts of excessive internet use, as well as the related physical and psychological difficulties, are all recognized by experts in education, social pathology, and psychology. People are said to have an internet addiction if they become unable to manage their daily actions and, on average, use the internet for more than 38 hours per week. Internet addiction is frequently characterized as an impulse control disorder that is somewhat similar to compulsive gambling but does not involve the use of a drug that generates an intoxicating effect.

The issue of internet addiction is one that affects contemporary culture, and a lot of study has been done on it. Over the past few years, use of the Internet has become more widespread. Along with all of the advantages that the internet offers, issues related to excessive usage are starting to surface.

The term "internet addiction problem" refers to a disease that is the result of the interdisciplinary study of several disciplines, including medicine, computer science, sociology, law, ethics, and psychology, all of which have performed research on the topic from various angles.

Tolerance, withdrawal symptoms, emotional issues, and difficulty forming social connections are all features of internet addiction, a psychological illness. If someone uses the internet a lot, there can be problems in their personal, professional, academic, and/or social lives. 18% of the research participants had pathological behaviors.

Internet users whose excessive use of the internet was causing problems in their academic, social, and interpersonal lives. Some customers have experienced issues as a result of heavy Internet usage. Internet users who use it in this way may have increased psychological arousal, which can result in sleep loss, prolonged fasting, and a lack of physical activity. Anxiety, depression, and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) are all potential negative effects of using these products excessively. Problematic Internet use may be linked to emotional distress, functional limitations, and mental health concerns. As a result, several studies have discovered a connection between teen mental health problems and internet addiction.

B. Social Media and Addiction

The quantity of information technology that has been created over the past two decades has significantly increased, which has given rise to several new worries about the potential link between using the internet and particular mental health disorders. Numerous research undertaken to date have put out the theory that regular internet use in general as well as engagement in specific online activities, such social networking, may be associated with an increased chance of suffering emotions of loneliness, poor self-esteem, and depression.

The phrase "social media" describes a number of internet-based tools and platforms that enhance and expand users' capacity for information sharing. The focus of the site is on the community's comments, contacts, and content sharing. This interactive media has a number of fascinating elements, including forums, podcasts, microblogging, and social networking. It has significantly altered the communication process and made communicating with anyone, no matter

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where they may be on the planet, more simpler. The prevalence of social media addiction has increased since the start of the previous decade. Even while the great majority of social media users don't encounter any issues as a result of their behavior, some individuals might develop an addiction to the social networking sites. According to recent studies, 5–10% of people fit the bill for social media addiction. When someone is dependent on social media, their brain might experience a large range of detrimental effects. Social media use may affect a person physically as well as psychologically. Social media addiction leads to a variety of interpersonal issues and makes users neglect their other important daily responsibilities. The practice of spending excessive amounts of time on social networking sites is referred to as "social media addiction." Addiction to social media can lead to increased stress and concern as well as other health problems. The results of a student's excessive use of social media are evident in their grades. Addiction to social media hurts a person's intimate connections. Some people are more prone to depression than others due to their regular usage of social networking sites. Social media addiction has mostly led to a decreased ability to engage with people in the real world. It changes how socialization proceeds. Or to put it another way, social media addiction is characterized by tolerance and withdrawal.

Humans are social creatures. We require the companionship of people in order to thrive in life, and the quality of our relationships has a big influence on how happy and mentally healthy we are. Being socially connected can help you avoid feelings of loneliness, prevent aging, and even extend your life, in addition to lowering anxiety and depression and raising self-worth and happiness. However, a lack of solid social bonds might endanger your mental and emotional health.

Many of us now use social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat, YouTube, and Instagram to stay in touch with friends and family. Social media, however helpful it may be, will never be a replacement for in-person communication. The hormones that alleviate stress and improve your sense of wellbeing are stimulated by human touch. Even while social media is meant to bring people together, excessive use of it can make you feel more isolated and alone and exacerbate mental health conditions like anxiety and depression.

Today, the majority of us use social networking sites on our smartphones or tablets. Staying in contact is simple because to the availability of social media at all times. Impulsive behavior problems may result from the constant notifications and messages that interfere with your ability to concentrate and focus, interrupt your sleep, and make you dependent on your phone.

The purpose of social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and others is to keep you online so you can check for updates frequently. Businesses profit in this way. You will have the same psychological desires as someone who is dependent on gambling or a substance like alcohol or drugs if you are addicted to social media. A like, a share, or a good response to a post may have the same effects as a slot machine win, a bite of chocolate, or a cigarette when it comes to releasing dopamine in the brain. The more time you spend on social media, even if

it has a detrimental effect on other aspects of your life, the more you want to continue doing it.

2. Literature Review

According to Elisa Wegmann *et al.*, user training should concentrate on helping users learn how to deal with uncomfortable emotions and helpless sensations (2015) In challenging situations, techniques may be devised, or it may be decided to face obstacles rather than escape them. Our research shows that using social networking sites to accomplish requirements and goals is appealing. Users must be able to manage their online behavior, though, in order to keep their expectations of the Internet realistic. People also need to discover methods to feel good, interact with others, and increase their sense of self-worth. Students can learn about the benefits and drawbacks of social networking services (SNS). SNS usage that is effective should allow users to utilize the platform thoughtfully, critically, and with an awareness of potential outcomes (whether positive or negative).

Lütfiye Can *et al.* (2016) said that their study focused on users of social networking sites on a regular basis. People were observed while they were using social media to observe how they responded to arbitrary advertisements. It is well known that ads are one of the most significant methods used by businesses to sell their goods. Through advertising, they increase consumer awareness of their goods, which also fosters demand for them. Through the course of this research, it has become evident that people's psychological ties to social networking sites can affect those people's views about ads on such sites, at least in part. However, compared to what was previously thought, the effectiveness of such repercussions is substantially less. Many users of social networking sites have said that they dislike and are apathetic to ads. The advantage of marketing managers should also be considered while evaluating these results. Users of social networking services are more likely to be interested in advertisements that are visually appealing and interesting. Using viral ads is another option, which social networking site users may not always be aware of (which they would not regard as an advertisement). This method may result in greater brand recognition. As is well known, viral advertisements may use a made-up narrative to appeal to viewers' sympathies while also promoting a product. To find out whether or whether social media advertising that go viral are more effective than typical SNS advertisements, more study may be done.

According to Yubo Hou *et al.*, researchers discovered that the intervention decreased the students' reliance on social media and enhanced both their emotional well-being and academic achievement (2019). These new studies have significant implications for theory and practice in addition to contributing to the amount of research already available on the issue of social media addiction.

Because this term relates to a socially created reality, Betül Keles *et al.* (2019) came to the conclusion that there is a "association" between social media use and mental health difficulties. Scientifically speaking, this is not a given to be true. Instead than depending on what is assumed to be the case,

researchers who are impartial explore correlations. The statistical concept of correlation in this context is not particularly novel. The third concern is causality, which calls for proof of causal direction. We can only presume that the link is causally connected due to a lack of data, but we are unable to confirm this at this time.

According to Yogi Tri Prasetyo et al. research (2021), those who use social media often had worse sleep, worse self-esteem, and higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression than people who use it seldom. They learned this via their investigation. According to these studies, excessive social media usage on mobile devices may cause psychiatric issues, including suicidal thoughts.

Internet addiction among high school students has been linked to an increased risk of depressive symptoms, according to Nikolina Banjanin and colleagues' research (2015). The argument that time spent on social networking sites causes depression was not sufficiently supported by the available research. The relationship between internet use and depression was shown to be unaffected by participation in social networking-related activities. This is the first study to examine the relationship between the Young Internet Addiction Test and the Center for Epidemiologic Studies of Depression Test among a sample of teens. The foundation for additional investigation into the potential effects of internet use on mental health is laid by these findings.

In the 2011 study by Seyyed Salman Alavi and colleagues, it was discovered that psychiatric symptoms, with the exception of paranoia, such as somatization, sensitivity, sorrow, anxiety, aggressiveness, phobias, and psychosis, were connected with a diagnosis of Internet addiction. The participants' age, gender, level of education, marital status, and type of institutions they attended were all taken into consideration when doing this.

The usage of WhatsApp strengthened social capital forms and raised the psychological well-being of individuals with high levels of social capital, according to research by Bano et al. (2019) on 266 students, underscoring the significance of social integration in mediating this beneficial impact.

The importance of having a varied network of connections, which eventually boosts the potential social capital, was stressed by Kim and Kim (2017). When people from various social circles are able to interact, support one another, and gain information from one another's experiences, social capital (the capacity to connect with others in a common interest, knowledge, or skill base) is developed. By encouraging good impacts on connections like acceptance, trust, and reciprocity—all of which are connected to favorable effects on health and well-being—social media can benefit people's physical and mental health. This is particularly valid when it enables individuals to preserve their social capital outside of online networks.

"What is Social Media Addiction?"

Over the past ten years, monitoring and scrolling through social media in one's free time has grown more and more commonplace. Although social media isn't an issue for the great majority of people, a small proportion of its users become addicted to it and use the sites excessively or obsessively.

Psychologists estimate that between 5 and 10% of American people already fit the bill for social media addiction. An excessive preoccupation with social media, an unrestrained want to log on or use social media, and devoting so much time and effort to social media that it interferes with other essential aspects of a person's daily life are all characteristics of a social media addiction.

Social media abuse can present in ways that are eerily reminiscent of other types of addiction. One of the most typical indications of a mental health issue is relapse. The other is withdrawal.

Social networking sites provide their users with dopamine-producing social connections, which helps to partially explain the phenomenon of social media addiction. To keep their users using their products as much as possible, social media platforms like Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram alter the same brain circuitry as that affected by gambling and recreational drugs. Profits are maximized by doing this. The steady stream of information that is shared, liked, and retweeted on these websites causes the brain's reward center to react physiologically, much as when using cocaine. Social media contact has been compared by psychologists and neuroscientists to receiving a dopamine injection directly into the body.

"How Social Media Affects the Brain"

The usage of social media can cause reliance on both the body and the mind through changing brain chemistry. According to Harvard University research, self-disclosure on social networking sites stimulates the same brain area as addictive drug use does. Decisions and moods can be influenced by this region of the brain and the chemical messengers that link to it. For instance, following a pleasurable event or the use of an addictive drug, dopamine levels rise in the brain's major dopamine-producing regions. The brain experiences a "reward" as a consequence, and it tends to link occurrences of positive reinforcement with the substance or action in question.

When a person receives a notification from a social networking site, such as "like" or "mentioned," dopamine is produced in the brain, which causes a good feeling to be released. You can gain from social media in the form of attention from others in an almost infinite number of ways with just a little bit of effort. Positive reinforcement, such as getting "likes," "retweets," and emoticons, causes people's brains to reorganize.

The reward centers of the brain are triggered when people talk about themselves in their postings, which makes social media addiction worse. People talk about themselves 30 to 40 percent of the time in real life, according to estimates. Social media heavily emphasizes personal branding, and as a result, self-promotional content makes up an astonishing 80 percent of postings. There's a potential that a photo someone shares on social media may receive a lot of likes and comments. Dopamine is released as a result, rewarding the behavior and motivating the person to continue using social media.

If using social media as a coping method for stress, loneliness, or grief becomes habitual, it may be detrimental. These individuals are driven to social media because it offers

them ongoing advantages that they do not experience in their daily lives, and as a result, their engagement in the activity is increasing. Constant usage can cause a number of interpersonal problems, such as neglecting real-life relationships, obligations at work or school, and one's physical health, all of which can worsen an individual's already low mood. There are several instances of these problems, such as: People are using social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter even more regularly than previously to try to lift their spirits. People's psychological dependency on social media platforms increases as a result of this practice of numbing negative emotions on these sites.

"Social Media and Mental Health"

Social media use is clearly associated with poor mental health and low self-confidence, according to research. Social media use may have both beneficial and negative impacts, but excessive use can make users feel lonely and depressed. These unfavorable emotional responses may be influenced by the social urge to share and the comparison of material possessions and lifestyles that these websites promote.

Because of this, advertisements and posts on Facebook and Instagram are tailored to appeal to people in certain ways depending on their tastes. Users may experience happiness or inspiration as a consequence of reading posts from other users about their amazing professions, beautiful companions, or nice houses. After viewing these images and realizing that their own lives aren't as "perfect" as those they see on social media sites like Facebook and Instagram, some people may become unhappy or even suicidal.

According to a recent study, people who use social networking sites often are more likely to think that other users are superior to them, especially if those users are people they don't know well in real life. Social media users are urged to contrast their actual selves with others' filtered and edited online personas, which can be detrimental to their mental well-being and self-esteem. Social media usage too much can cause anxiety, desperation, and a general loss of satisfaction with life and oneself. When one regularly compares themselves to others, social anxiety disorder typically manifests as self-consciousness, the need for perfection, and the need for order.

By fostering a fear of missing out (FOMO), which is an excessive worry that one will be excluded from a gathering, using online media can worsen social anxiety. Users may experience anxiety that no one is missing them as a result of seeing pictures of events that they were not invited to or glimpses of exciting activities that they were unable to attend due to job or school commitments. As an alternative, some users could worry that their absence will make them invisible. The fear of missing out (FOMO) can have a negative influence on a person's sense of self-worth and drive them to check social media sites compulsively to make sure they are not missing anything. Using this kind of conduct in the workplace or at school might lead to issues. According to the findings of a research done at Harvard University, social media use has a significant negative influence on people's mental health, their relationships in the real world, and their academic achievement.

"Symptoms that our Mental Health is Being Affected by Social Media"

No matter how much time a person spends on social media, how frequently they check for new postings, or how frequently they update their profiles, using it may be harmful at any stage of life. In actuality, it depends on how much time you spend on social media and your reasons for doing so.

Your use of social media may be problematic if it makes you feel jealous, dissatisfied, or angry, disrupts your job or school, or makes it difficult for you to maintain in-person relationships. Additionally, it's time to reevaluate your attitude to social media if your main reasons for accessing your accounts are boredom or loneliness, or even the expectation that your posts will make others feel envious or angry.

The following are warning signs that your usage of social media may be harming your mental health:

- More time spent on social media than with friends in the real world Using social media as a substitute for face-to-face engagement has become commonplace. A common motivation for checking social media while out with friends is the fear that other people are having a better time than you.
- Comparing oneself to others on social media in an unfavourable light. A negative body image or low self-esteem may be to blame. It's possible that you're prone to eating disorders.
- Cyberbullying has happened to me. Worse yet, you may feel powerless in the face of what others may say about you online.
- Working or studying when distracted. You're under a lot of pressure to post frequently, to receive a lot of feedback or likes on your posts, or to engage with your friends' postings as fast and enthusiastically as possible.
- Lack of time to think on one's own actions. Everyone's spare time is taken up with social media, so there's no time to reflect on who you are, what you believe, or why you act the way you do, which is essential for personal growth.
- Engaging in unsafe activity with the purpose of gaining social media likes, shares, or positive feedback. Pranks, posting humiliating stuff online, cyberbullying, and using your phone while driving are just some of the dangers you face when using your phone.
- Having trouble getting a good night's rest. How often do you check your social media accounts before you go to sleep, during the night, or after you wake up? When your sleep is disrupted by the light from smartphones and other electronic gadgets, it might have a negative impact on your mental health.
- People who are experiencing worsening mental health issues. When you use social media, you are more likely to feel nervous, depressed, or lonely than when you don't.

On May 20, the Mental Health Foundation in the UK will wrap off its "mental-health awareness week." In the UK, one in four persons has received a diagnosis of a mental health

condition at some time in their lives, which is anticipated to have a negative effect on GDP growth of 4.5 percent annually. More and more studies show that adolescents who rely too heavily on social media are more prone to develop these diseases.

A 2017 survey found that social media sites including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter had a detrimental effect on young people's health in the United Kingdom. In general, they believed that these networks allowed them to express themselves more freely and create new social networks with like-minded individuals. They claim that the platforms increased their feelings of dread and hopelessness, prevented them from getting adequate sleep, put them in situations where they were subject to bullying, and gave them "FOMO" and body image worries. The results of an academic study show that heavy users are more prone to develop more severe symptoms of these diseases.

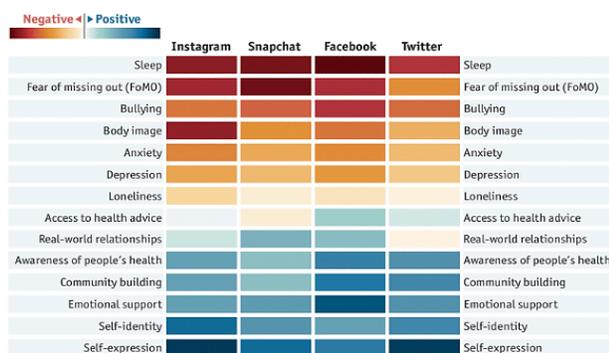


Fig. 1.

3. Bullying on Social Media

Bullying is primarily done for the purpose of elevating one's own self-esteem. In bullying someone, they are giving the person they're bullying a taste of how tumultuous and chaotic their inner world is. These people give others a taste of the turmoil and chaos that exists inside of them. An easier option than dealing with our own inner problems through a continuous, healthy therapeutic approach (counselling or therapy) is to project them onto others (known as projection). The widespread use of social media has made it easier than ever before to spread negative vibes. Because cyberbullying can now be done anonymously, it makes it much easier to bully people without worrying about the consequences; this needs to change.

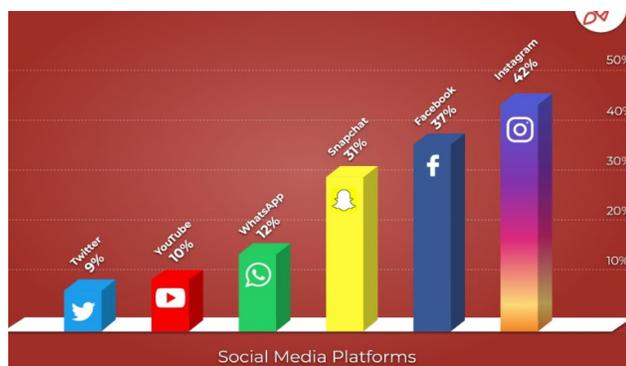


Fig. 2.

4. Conclusion

One of the goals of this study was to examine the link between social media and mental health issues. According to previous studies, social media addicts believe that other social media users are more successful and happier than them. Users' mental health might be negatively impacted by the continuous comparisons they make to others on social media networks. As well as being unhappy in their daily lives, someone who is hooked to social media is also more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety. Increased self-consciousness and risk of developing a social anxiety disorder can result from this. Addiction to social media has become a major problem, especially among teens. Low self-esteem and eating disorders can both be caused by constantly comparing oneself to others. Social media addiction can be avoided by cutting back on time spent on social media, limiting time spent on social media, or avoiding mobile devices before night, all of which reduce the likelihood of developing an addiction. Addiction to social media is now untreatable due to a lack of specialised treatment options.

Future studies should focus on how people become addicted to social media in order to better understand the impact this has on their overall health, according to the findings. It is possible to enhance the final product in a number of ways, and doing so would raise the overall quality of the work. It will take a lot of time and effort to determine how these effects will affect the future and uncover the fundamental reasons. Future study on social media addiction will be guided by the existing findings, which can be used to address good social media behaviours geared toward young adults.

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