Qualitative Investigation into the Mental Health Effects of Social Media among Educated Individuals

Annu Biswas¹& Shinjan Ghosh²

¹Assistant Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology, School of Health and Medical Sciences, Adamas University, Kolkata

Email: annu1.biswas@adamasuniversity.ac.in

²Shinjan Ghosh: Licensed Clinical Psychologist (RCI no. A90691), Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, School of Health and Medical Sciences, Adamas University, Kolkata

Abstract

In today's digital era, social media has become an integral part of daily life, offering both opportunities and challenges for mental health. While it fosters social connections and provides platforms for sharing experiences, it also exposes users to risks like cyberbullying, information overload, and unhealthy comparisons. This qualitative study explores the nuanced relationship between social media usage and mental health within the educated Bengali community, focusing on individuals who engage with social media regularly and have experienced its negative effects. Using purposive sampling, seven participants aged 35 to 45 were selected, each with a minimum of two hours of daily social media usage and prior negative exposure. A focus group discussion was conducted, and the data was thematically analyzed to uncover both positive and negative perceptions of social media's impact on mental health. Key findings reveal the dual nature of social media, highlighting its role in emotional support and mental health awareness, as well as concerns related to low self-esteem, cyberbullying, and social media addiction. The study emphasizes the need for digital literacy, early intervention, and responsible content creation as strategies to mitigate these risks.

Keywords: Social Media, Mental Health, Educated Users' Perspectives, Qualitative Analysis

Introduction

A fundamental aspect of almost everybody's lives in the 21st century is the technological advancement of media (Nesi, 2020). A showground within the world of electronic media consists of internet services on telecommunication devices such as phones, instant messaging applications, interactive multiplayer video games, virtual reality sites, social networks, emails, and the list is endless. The young generation of the new millennium is the first to grow up with what is considered technology. People are immersed in a world of social media. This generation is "always connected" when they enter the critical mental and physical growth developmental stages. They have constant exposure and interaction with cell phones, computers and the internet (Vaingankar et al., 2022).

One very crucial and prominently most important feature that technology accompanies is that the millennial now finds it very easy to remain attached to friends, family, and acquaintances, thereby creating a large social network and sphere of influence. They are used to staying in touch with relatives on a more regular basis and find that they need constant social interaction when going about everyday activities (Khalaf et al., 2023).

It is proposed that the alluring prospects of advanced technology constitute what is termed a relatively safe place to have social interaction without requiring the social skills demanded in in-person interaction (Zsila & Meyes, 2023). The environment of social media might provide a comfortable setting for an introverted or shy child to interact with peers. It is believed to contribute a stage for everybody to remain connected to relatives, with updates about the events in their lives. On the contrary, critics argue that one concerning aspect of growing up in this century is the desensitization to aspects that were formerly understood as taboo (Daneback et al., 2018). With the increased participation in this shared virtual social space and the open web available as an instant tool, many have been subjected to a myriad of content that some would deem not inappropriate, such as pictures and videos of violence, pornographic material, language and conversation that includes lewd or obscene content, notorious social issues and more (Nicklin et al., 2020). Controversy has it that there are psychological and societal repercussions that might be consequent from repeated and regular participation in social media.

Advanced equipment is a hiding room for the destructive and often lethal bully- cyberspace (Kaloeti et al., 2021). It is the utilization of the internet or other digital devices such as emails, messaging, texts, networking websites, web pages, blogs, chat rooms or interactive game sites to send negative and harmful messages and images. Social media presents a virtual, unreachable world in which others may find an easy platform for cyber bullying, particularly sex badgering (Finkelhor et al., 2022). Cyber-bullying is relational aggression intended to make the victim feel frightened, humiliated, helpless, and too often hopeless (Giumetti et al., 2022). It can be anonymously done. Perpetrators can torture and harass without detection. It can be conducted 24/7, and it constantly appears on the phone and computer that a young person uses on a daily basis. It assaults privacy boundaries in a way that magnifies horror as it makes damaging materials public to an infinite audience who can instantly download, save or forward them to others.

Statistics reveal every 25 per cent of students from 6th grade and above have been exposed to virtual bullying in the United States (Peebles. E, 2014). NCRB data accounts state that cybercrimes in India increased by 63.48 per cent from 2018 to 2019, which saw an expansion of 12.32 per cent in 2020 (Kaur et al., 2023). Perpetrators usually engage in social sabotage of others. Girls are twice as likely victims than boys. On the other hand, boys are further expected to target girls and less aggressive males. Sexual and homophobic harassment is emerging as a prevalent aspect of cyberbullying (Elipe et al., 2017). Cyberbullying is most prevalent among 15 and 16-year-olds, and the more that young people share their identities and thoughts on social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook, the more likely they are to be targeted than those who do not use the sites.

One of the consequences of virtual sexual harassment is the dismissal by many young adults that it's not a valid form of harassment (Biber et al, 2002). While the scope of sexual harassment has changed greatly with the popularity of social media, education among teens has not. Often, the traditional teachings and warnings of previous generation are the standards by which children now-a-days gauge the seriousness of the situation (Bozzola et al, 2022). If they haven't been touched inappropriately or lived in person, they may not recognize the violation as harassment. Also, many cases remain under-reported as with

reporting, one may face the public embarrassment and humiliation that might ensue with online sexual bullying (Aitchison et al., 2021).

What was formerly taken as confidential and delicate has now become public for all eyes to see. Even though there are numerous aspects to sexual relationships that go beyond virtual flirting and visual objectification of bodies, assumptions have it that young people of this age are becoming indifferent to the knowledge and are indulgent in things that are not meant to blast out to the public. However, extremely private affairs are published on various social media platforms or pornographic websites as a form of revenge porn (Walker et al., 2017). Also, it is not yet fully understood whether online discussions and contents of a sexual nature are desensitizing personal, emotional and physical implications of sex in the young generation, leading to sexual dysfunction in extreme cases (Park et al., 2016).

Youthful communities may find themselves lacking or unworthy when exposed to photos and videos of naked models and pornography stars; this is another major concern. Unease due to body image is more virulent than ever. It isn't known to what extent the social media is or is not inflicting a plethora of self doubt and physical insecurity (Jiotsa et al., 2021).

Since there is no interactional evidence prevalent in the culture and neither such data exists in the scientific community due to ethical restraints, it is not known how young people feel and know what is appropriate and what isn't in case of sexual bullying and if they feel confident of what's okay and what isn't while using social media. Whether and to what extent the young generation is aware of maintaining a privacy boundary for their safety isn't entirely comprehended,

despite knowing that the internet is a permanent place of online content and everything leaves a digital footprint (Olinder et al., 2020). Once things are out on the internet, they can remain there indefinitely.

Only those who experience and live with social media on a day-to-day basis can explain to what extent it is an obligation or mess of their lives. The force of social media that it imposes through its pros and cons in real life needs to be pictured so that the uncertainty and vagueness about its impact can be made distinctive and sharpened, which is not possible unless the speculations mentioned above are approached with an aim to providing a scientific answer regarding "how and what" in the media impacts the perception of the real world of these individuals. This will lead to effective measures that can be taken to protect the youth from the supposed disadvantages.

Justification for the Study

The paucity of in-depth understanding of how impact of social media is perceived, especially among educated and informed classes of the society who have faced negative consequences themselves, directs towards a need for better comprehension. It is essential to know how they interpret the weight of social media on their own mental health and the measures to tackle its impact.

Therefore, this research paper attempted to understand how the "educated section" of society "using social media on a regular basis" and "had formerly experienced negative events" using it "perceive social media usage, its negative & positive influences on mental health and possible interventions in the present" that can be further proposed for policy changes.

Aim of the Study

This study aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of how individuals representing the educated section of the Bengali society with negative exposure to social media perceive the impact of social media on mental health and probable suggestions they have as interventions for dealing with it.

Research Methodology

To convene the objective of the study, a focused group discussion (FGD) was performed, as this method is appropriate for presenting impending and original postulations, participants' views and opinions. The interview was carried out on a sample of 7 partakers chosen through purposive sampling and the researcher moderated throughout the interview.

Table 1: Characteristics of the Participants

Participant 1	Gender and origin: Male, West Bengal Age and profession: 35 years, Research Scholar Educational Level: PhD (pursuing) Social Media Usage Daily: Yes, History of being cyber stalked Hours of Social Media Usage: More than 10 waking hours
Participant 2	Gender and origin: Male, West Bengal Age and profession: 37 years, Marketing Manager Educational Level: MBA Social Media Usage Daily: Yes, History of online sexual harassment. Hours of Social Media Usage: More than 15 waking hours
Participant 3	Gender and origin: Female, West Bengal Age and profession: 39 years, School Teacher (PGT) Educational Level: Masters, M.Ed Social Media Usage Daily: Yes, history of account being hacked. Hours of Social Media Usage: 6-8 waking hours
Participant 4	Gender and origin: Female, West Bengal Age and profession: 42 years, Physician (Dermatologist) Educational Level: MBBS, MD Dermatology Social Media Usage Daily: Yes, history of both children with cyber bullying Hours of Social Media Usage: 2 – 2.5 hours roughly
Participant 5	Gender and origin: Female, West Bengal Age and profession: 45 years, Consultant Clinical Psychologist Educational Level: M.Phil in Clinical Psychology Social Media Usage Daily: Yes, deals with clients of internet addiction Hours of Social Media Usage: 6-7 hours daily
Participant 6	Gender and origin: Male, West Bengal Age and profession: 41 years, Social Media Influencer Educational Level: MA Social Media Usage Daily: Yes, had identity theft & misuse on social media Hours of Social Media Usage: 14- 16 hours, heavy use.
Participant 7	Gender and origin: Female, West Bengal Age and profession: 43 years, Researcher Educational Level: PhD, Post- Doc Social Media Usage Daily: Yes, history of internet addiction Hours of Social Media Usage: 3-4 hours daily

Description: The participants selected had past negative exposure to social media usage, the highest educational qualification being a Masters's Degree in a relevant discipline and the age range of 35 to 45 years.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

- Participants for the study were chosen based on the following inclusion criteria:

- Having regular social media use with at least 2 hours of daily engagement

- Prior negative experiences from social media usage

- Minimum educational qualification of Masters in any relevant area

- Age range: 35- 45 years

- Must belong to the Bengali community

Exclusion criteria

- Anybody not giving consent to participate in the study

- Anyone with prior experience of partaking in a similar kind of research activity

Data Collection and Analysis

The questions for the interview were pre-decided by the researcher; new questions were data-driven and were prompted by the researcher during the interview process. The interview took place under controlled conditions at an official setup. The duration of the interview was 40 minutes. The language used for the interview was English. The complete interview was recorded in audio format with the consent of the participants and transcribed later for analysis purposes.

The data was thematically analyzed to generate themes and sub-themes for an in-depth understanding of the perceived impact of social media on mental health among the sample. The raw data was structured into codes and themes as per the steps as follows:

- Familiarization- the researcher read the transcripts multiple times to get accustomed to the data

- Identifying thematic framework- to support the theory-based strategy of positive & negative social media impact on mental health and possible interventions, a thematic framework was followed.

- Indexing- additional codes and themes were derived from the data

- Mapping- Quotes from the interview were assigned under codes, and these codes were rearranged to the right theme.

- Interpretation- finally, with the analysis, the process was completed.

This method has been adapted from the framework model to ease data collection and investigation for the current exploration (Pope et al., 2000). Lastly, findings have been compared and corroborated with the available literature. Ethical considerations were duly maintained in terms of informed consent, prior agreement for participation and confidentiality of the participants' identity throughout the interview as well as during transcription of data and analysis process.

Results

The verbatim references provided insights into the participants' views and experiences, illustrating the main themes of the discussion. Based on the verbatim references provided in the focused group discussion on how social media impacts youth mental health, several sub-themes have been identified within the main themes. These sub-themes have offered a more detailed understanding of the participants' perspectives. The data is represented as below:

Table 2: Optimistic Perception among the Participants

Theme	Sub Theme	Illustrative Quotes from the interview
Positive Impact of Social Media	Emotional Support and Connection	"I think social media can be a platform for emotional support and connection. It helps young people like me to find like-minded individuals and communities that can provide a sense of belonging." (P1)
	Dissemination of Mental Health Information	"I agree. It also allows for the propagation of mental health information and resources, which can be beneficial for youth seeking help or information." (P3)
	Raising Awareness to reduce Stigma	"Social media can be a powerful tool for raising awareness of mental health issues. I have seen that actually. It's a platform where young people can share their stories and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health." (P6)

Table 3: Harmful Aspects of Social Media

Theme	Sub Theme	Illustrative Quotes from the interview
Concerns and Negative Impacts	Comparison and Low Self-Esteem	"One concern I have is the constant comparison that happens on social media. Young people often compare their lives to the curated and idealized versions they see online, which can lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem." (P2)
	Cyberbullying	"I'm worried about cyberbullying. My children have faced online harassment, and I've seen the devastating impact it can have on their mental well-being." (P4)
	Anxiety and Depression due to Pressure to Conform	"As a mental health counsellor, I've noticed that excessive social media use can contribute to anxiety and depression, especially when young people feel pressured to maintain a certain image or keep up with trends." (P5)
	Balancing Online and Offline lives to reduce risk of addiction	"I think there's also a risk of addiction. Social media platforms are designed to keep users engaged, and some young people may struggle to find a healthy balance between online and offline life." (P6)
	Sleep Disturbances	"From a research perspective, I've seen studies linking heavy social media use to sleep disturbances and reduced face-to-face social interactions, which can impact overall mental well-being." (P7)
	Information Overload due to overwhelming content	"I've observed that social media can sometimes lead to information overload. Young people are bombarded with news, opinions, and images, which can be overwhelming and contribute to stress." (P3)
	Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) and anticipating social exclusion	"Additionally, the fear of missing out is real. Seeing others' seemingly exciting lives and experiences online has made many of my friends, family and even I feel left out, which can negatively affect our mental health." (P1)

Table 4: Prospective Suggestions

Theme	Sub Theme	Illustrative Quotes from the interview
Potential Solutions and Strategies	Digital Detox and Screen Time Management	"To address FOMO and comparison, it's crucial for individuals to practice digital detox and limit their screen time. Encouraging young people to take breaks from social media can help them regain perspective." (P1)
	Education and Digital Literacy	"Schools can play a role by including digital literacy and mental health education in the curriculum. Teaching students how to critically evaluate online content and manage their digital well-being is essential." (P3)
	Open Communication	"Parents should maintain open communication with their children about their online experiences. Creating a safe space where kids can talk about any issues they encounter online is vital." (P4)
	Early Intervention	"As mental health professionals, we should be proactive in offering support and resources for youth dealing with social media-related stress. Early intervention can make a significant difference." (P5)
	Responsible Content Creation	"Content creators, like myself, should be mindful of the impact our content can have on young audiences. Promoting authenticity, positivity, and responsible online behavior is essential." (P6)
	Policy Considerations for Content Moderation	"Policymakers can consider regulations or guidelines for social media platforms to encourage responsible content moderation and limit the exposure of young users to harmful content." (P7)
	Promoting Offline Activities	"Encouraging offline activities and hobbies is crucial. Schools and parents can promote extracurricular activities that allow young people to disconnect from screens and engage in real-life experiences." (P2)

Table 5: Role of Consumers

Theme	Sub Theme	Illustrative Quotes from the interview
Collaborative Approach	Youth Involvement	"Absolutely, and it's also crucial for young people themselves to be part of this conversation and advocate for their own well-being." (P1)

Discussion

Table 2 is reflective of participant quotes depicting their "perception regarding the positive impact of social media" on youth mental health. The chief sub-themes that have been distinguished are three in number with supportive verbatim data. The

first eminent sub-theme, "emotional support and connection", provides insight into participants' understanding of reasons for dependency on social media as they attribute its usefulness to discovering like-minded individuals and communities that provide them with a sense of belongingness. Literature corroborating this finding indicates that social media is a place where youth seek meaningful connections that, over time, displace the social reality of youth, which consists of face-to-face enriching and deeper social interactions (Smith et al., 2021).

Another sub-theme, "dissemination of mental health information," is indicative that youth who seek mental health supervision for psychological issues they deal with often seek information from social media as they consider it as beneficial. This finding, too, is confirmed in literature as studies have shown a high level of reliability that youth develop towards information that is being circulated over social media (Majerczak et al., 2022). However, when information is pertaining to physical and mental health, the credibility of these is much in speculation due to factors such as internet bots, fake accounts, clickbaits, filter bubbles, and even internet trolls (Buckels et al., 2014).

The third sub-theme, "raising awareness", is reflective that youth perceive social media as a platform for sharing stories and reducing stigma surrounding mental health. This belief among youth is authenticated through a unique literature stating that there is a strong positive relationship between the components of social media campaigns, public awareness and behavioural change, and hence with this scope, youth might opt to share over social media, their personal experiences for better reach and spreading knowledge (Abuhashesh et al., 2021)

Table 3 pertains to "concerns and negative impacts of social media on mental health" as perceived by the participants. There have been 7 sub-themes identified under this broader theme that have emerged from the data. Participants suggested that today's youth engage in comparing themselves constantly with whatever they see online. If the comparisons lead to the realization that one is not close to how one is supposed to be with respect to the ideal conceptualizations of self, it leads to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. This finding is supported by studies suggestive of social media usage leading to depression, feelings of isolation and shrinking self-esteem (Andrade et al., 2023).

Participants raised concerns regarding cyberbullying and its devastating impact on mental well-being due to extreme online harassment that is faced by youth today, especially teenagers who are novices on social media usage. This finding is confirmed through major studies stating that adolescents who underwent online harassment developed depressive symptoms compared to those who were never exposed to cyberspace nuisance (Maurya et al., 2022).

Participants expressed that the propensity to develop psychiatric conditions, such as anxiety and depression, is prevalent among young people with excessive social media use. The pressure to conform has been reasoned as the cause for it, which means youth often face the pressure to uphold a certain image to keep up with the trends to maintain their status quo within society. Investigational studies showing how peer pressure considerably predicted adolescents' addictive usage of social media and consequent co-morbid psychiatric states support this notion held by the participants (Xu et al., 2023).

Participants emphasized that the engaging design of social media platforms keeps the users engaged and can cause addictive tendencies. Therefore, this necessity for a healthier balance between online and offline life has been pressed by the participants. A study by Lin, Su & Potenza, 2018, suggests that online and offline integration is eminent to unite self-identity and interpersonal functioning supports this stance. Also, it is suggestive that subjects practising a balance between online and offline life experience higher life fulfilment and lower internet dependence.

It was opined by the participants that constant flow of news, opinions and images can get psychologically overwhelming and contribute to stress due to information overload. Jiang & Beaudoin, 2016 also suggested that individuals using social media face too much information or the complexity of information might go beyond processing capacity.

The sub-theme of "fear of missing out (FOMO)" is indicative that participants have experienced feelings of being left out if do not check their social media handles constantly. Also, frequent monitoring of others' seemingly exciting lives while not being in a capacity to experience the same, can direct towards the feelings of social exclusion and distress. This appends to the negative effect on mental health. Consistent with this view, one study suggested raising awareness of the psychological effects of social media usage in consideration of social comparison and the precedential anxiety that results (Alabri. A., 2022)

Table 4 comprises the theme of "potential solutions and strategies" as suggested and perceived by the participants. There are 6 sub-themes that have been identified under this theme with corresponding data. Participants have proposed that taking

breaks from social media is essential for regaining a balanced perspective towards self and others. Reducing screen time, as per participants, is essential for digital detoxification. An expert study complements this belief as it states that boundless use of technology results in major physical and psychological disorders. So, digital detoxification needs to be sustained by old methods, such as gardening, artwork, and reading, in order to divert the mind from tech devices (Bhattacharya et al., 2019).

Beginning from the school level, the importance of digital literacy in order to facilitate the critical evaluation of online content that one is exposed to and the consequent outcome on mental health has been argued by the participants. A relevant experimental study is indicative that with the introduction of digital literacy programs, there were reportedly larger improvements in functional skills and psychiatric outcomes amongst the populace with serious mental conditions due to excessive internet consumption (Camacho, E. &Torous, J. 2022).

The importance of open parental communication has been acknowledged by the participants in order for children to share their online experiences without hesitation. They emphasized the significance of a safe space where concerns can be communicated without delay before it becomes a mental health issue. This area is quite under-researched as one bibliometric study highlights current research trends for cyber parental control and has mixed opinions regarding providing a safe Internet environment by making parents practice control over using Internet access (Altarturi et al., 2020).

As per participants, youth dealing with social media stress ought to be provided with early intervention in the form of psychological services like counselling, therapy and medications, whichever is necessary. Also, proactive

support in terms of resources and accurate information regarding where to seek help needs to be given to make a noteworthy impact in their lives. Although much of the literature doesn't directly talk about any forms of psychotherapy designed to cater to social media or internet addiction, a review study is suggestive that cognitive restructuring and psychotherapeutic strategies might facilitate individuals tormented by social media addiction due to unmet needs for real-life relationship satisfaction (Xuan et al., 2020).

The necessity of responsible content creation to promote authenticity, positivity and mindful online behaviour on the part of users has been recommended by the participants. This recommendation is supported by literature stating that in today's time, any online content or post has the capacity to quickly influence millions of people, especially adolescents with limited cognitive faculty, to judge the worth of the content, persuading people to do and not do certain behaviour (Yuvarani et al., 2021).

Regulatory guiding principles for social media spaces to encourage responsible content upload to regulate and channel the exposure of harmful content to young users need to be under policy consideration as per participants. This notion is supported in the literature as essential elements for social media policy that have been identified but not implemented stringently are citizen conduct, legal issues, content, acceptable use and security (Hrdinová et al., 2010).

Participants have the opinion that for young individuals, especially adolescents, encouraging offline activities and hobbies, & promoting extracurricular activities can allow them to disconnect from screens while engaging in real-life experiences. Multiple studies confirm this view indicating that offline activities can enhance the quality of social relationships shared both online and offline (Falavarjani et al., 2019).

Table 5 showcases the value of collaboration among the youth in advocating the significance of reasonable social media usage and subsequent mental health. While not much literature identifies the importance of youth involvement, nations have already been called upon to advocate actively and put mental health to the core front by the World Health Organization. Mental health is the agenda can be put forward with the collective efforts of policymakers at the government level, advocacy groups, mental health professionals, families and organizations (Funk et al., 2015). Hence, anything, including excessive social media usage, that impacts mental health and subsequently alters physical health must not be taken lightly and should be proactively taken under advocacy initiatives.

Conclusion

In concluding remarks, it can be affirmed that the current study provides an in-depth understanding of how individuals who have had negative experiences with social media don't necessarily view using social media as totally negative. Rather, they have a balanced perspective and view the impact of using social media on mental health both positively and negatively. Accordingly, they have suggested measures to tackle the negative exposure, most of which have been long-established through scientific investigations. It becomes essential, henceforth, to not take social media consumption for granted, as with good aspects, it comes with a myriad of negative exposure which has the full potential to impact one's psychological health in a detrimental way. This research paper discusses the need to

seriously take advocacy of the internet and handling of social media with its psychological impact on policy changes.

Recommendations

Educational institutions and parents need to emphasize digital literacy programs that can help individuals critically evaluate online content. These programs should equip young users with the skills to discern credible information from misleading or harmful content.

Encouraging open, safe space and non-judgmental communication about online experiences is crucial. This can help in early interventions to prevent or tackle mental health concerns arising from social media use. It is essential to educate youth about the significance of balancing online and offline activities, and promote breaks from social media, diversifying offline hobbies and extracurricular activities that enhance mental health.

Psychological issues exacerbated by excessive social media use require intervention through services of counseling and therapy, and therefore, mental health advocacy is recommended. Policymakers and social media platforms have to stringently implement regulatory guidelines that check answerable content creation and appropriate content upload.

Lastly, the youth of today is encouraged to advocate for responsible social media usage and mental health awareness as their voices will play a noteworthy role in influencing policy changes and public awareness campaigns.

Further Scope of Investigations

Future research can delve deeper into the existing regulatory guidelines and their effectiveness in protecting the youth from harmful content on social media in addition to overall online environment and user experiences prevalent in today's time.

The efficiency of digital literacy programs in equipping young minds with skills to critically evaluate online information can be assessed to highlight the impact of such programs on mental health outcomes.

Investigating the function of parental control and its consequence on creating a secure online atmosphere for children can be a valuable area of study.

Also, further studies can focus on the development and evaluation of specific interventions and psychotherapeutic strategies aimed at mitigating the result of excessive social media use on mental health.

Finally, an investigation into the involvement of youth in advocacy initiatives and the actual impact of their efforts on policy changes and mental health awareness is a promising area of study.

References

Abuhashesh, M. Y., Al-Dmour, H., Masa'deh, R., Salman, A., Al-Dmour, R., Boguszewicz-Kreft, M., &AlAmaireh, Q. N. (2021). The Role of Social Media in Raising Public Health Awareness during the Pandemic COVID-19: An International Comparative Study. *Informatics*, 8(4), 80. https://doi.org/10.3390/informatics8040080

Aitchison, G., &Meckled-Garcia, S. (2021). Against Online Public Shaming: Ethical Problems with Mass Social Media. *Social Theory and Practice*, 47(1), 1–31. http://www.jstor.org/stable/45378050

Alabri, A. (2022). Fear of missing out (FOMO): The effects of the need to belong, perceived centrality, and fear of social exclusion. *Human behavior and emerging technologies*, 2022.

Altarturi, H. H., Saadoon, M., & Anuar, N. B. (2020). Cyber parental control: A bibliometric study. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 116, 105134.

Andrade, F. C., Erwin, S., Burnell, K., Jackson, J., Storch, M., Nicholas, J., & Zucker, N. (2023). Intervening on Social Comparisons on Social Media: Electronic Daily Diary Pilot Study. *JMIR mental health*, 10, e42024. https://doi.org/10.2196/42024

Bhattacharya, S., & Raghuvanshi, S. (2019). Digital detoxification: A pressing need for restoring balance in tech-driven life. *IAHRW International Journal of Social Sciences Review*, 7(4).

Biber, Jodi & Doverspike, Dennis &Baznik, Daniel & Cober, Alana & Ritter, Barbara. (2002). Sexual Harassment in Online Communications: Effects of Gender and Discourse Medium. *Cyberpsychology &behavior : the impact of the Internet, multimedia and virtual reality on behavior and society*. 5. 33-42. 10.1089/109493102753685863.

Bozzola E, Spina G, Agostiniani R, Barni S, Russo R, Scarpato E, Di Mauro A, Di Stefano AV, Caruso C, Corsello G, Staiano A. The Use of Social Media in Children and Adolescents: Scoping Review on the Potential Risks. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2022 Aug 12;19(16):9960. doi: 10.3390/ijerph19169960. PMID: 36011593; PMCID: PMC9407706.

Buckels E.E., Trapnell P.D., Paulhus D.L. Trolls just want to have fun. Personal. *Individ*. Differ. 2014;67:97–102. doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2014.01.016

Camacho, E., &Torous, J. (2023). Impact of Digital Literacy Training on Outcomes for People With Serious Mental Illness in Community and Inpatient Settings. *Psychiatric Services*, 74(5), 534-538.

Douglas Smith, Trinity Leonis *&* S. Anandavalli (2021) Belonging and loneliness in cyberspace: impacts of social media on adolescents' well-being, *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 73:1, 12-23, DOI: 10.1080/00049530.2021.1898914

Elipe P, de la Oliva Muñoz M, Del Rey R. Homophobic Bullying and Cyberbullying: Study of a Silenced Problem. *J Homosex*. 2018;65(5):672-686. doi: 10.1080/00918369.2017.1333809. Epub 2017 Jul 6. PMID: 28569622.

Falavarjani, S. A. M., Zarrinkalam, F., Jovanovic, J., Bagheri, E., & Ghorbani, A. A. (2019). The reflection of offline activities on users' online social behavior: An observational study. *Information Processing & Management, 56(6), 102070.*

Finkelhor D, Turner H, Colburn D. Prevalence of Online Sexual Offenses Against Children in the US. JAMA Netw Open. 2022 Oct 3;5(10):e2234471. doi: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.34471. PMID: 36239942; PMCID: PMC9568794.

Funk, M., Minoletti, A., Drew, N., Taylor, J., & Saraceno, B. (2006). Advocacy for mental health: roles for consumer and family organizations and governments*. Health promotion international*, 21(1), 70-75.

Gary W. Giumetti, Robin M. Kowalski, Cyberbullying via social media and well-being, *Current Opinion in Psychology*, Volume 45, 2022, 101314, ISSN 2352-250X, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2022.101314.

Hrdinová, J., Helbig, N., & Peters, C. S. (2010). Designing social media policy for government: Eight essential elements. Albany, NY: Center for Technology in Government, University at Albany.

Jiang S., Beaudoin C. E. (2016). Health literacy and the internet: An exploratory study on the 2013 HINTS survey. Computers in Human Behavior, 58, 240–248. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.01.007

Jiotsa B, Naccache B, Duval M, Rocher B, Grall-Bronnec M. Social Media Use and Body Image Disorders: Association between Frequency of Comparing One's Own Physical Appearance to That of People Being Followed on Social Media and Body Dissatisfaction

and Drive for Thinness. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2021 Mar 11; 18(6):2880. doi: 10.3390/ijerph18062880. PMID: 33799804; PMCID: PMC8001450.

K. Daneback, A. Ševčíková, S. Ježek, Exposure to online sexual materials in adolescence and desensitization to sexual content, *Sexologies*, Volume 27, Issue 3, 2018, Pages e71-e76, ISSN 1158-1360, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sexol.2018.04.001

Kaloeti. D. V. S, Manalu. R, Kristiana. I. F, Bidzan. M, The Role of Social Media Use in Peer Bullying Victimization and Onset of Anxiety Among Indonesian Elementary School Children, *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol: 12, 2021, DOI=10.3389/fpsyg.2021.635725, ISSN=1664-1078

Kaur, M., Saini, M. Indian government initiatives on cyberbullying: A case study on cyberbullying in Indian higher education institutions. *Educ Inf Technol 28, 581–615 (2023).* https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-022-11168-4

Khalaf A M, Alubied A A, (August 05, 2023) The Impact of Social Media on the Mental Health of Adolescents and Young Adults: A Systematic Review. *Cureus* 15(8): e42990. doi:10.7759/cureus.42990

Lin, X., Su, W., & Potenza, M. N. (2018). Development of an Online and Offline Integration Hypothesis for Healthy Internet Use: Theory and Preliminary Evidence. *Frontiers in psychology*, 9, 492. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00492

Majerczak P, Strzelecki A. Trust, Media Credibility, Social Ties, and the Intention to Share towards Information Verification in an Age of Fake News. *Behav Sci (Basel).* 2022 Feb 16;12(2):51. doi: 10.3390/bs12020051. PMID: 35200302; PMCID: PMC8869166.

Maurya, C., Muhammad, T., Dhillon, P. et al. The effects of cyberbullying victimization on depression and suicidal ideation among adolescents and young adults: a three year cohort study from India. *BMC Psychiatry 22*, 599 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-022-04238-x

Nesi, J. (2020). The impact of social media on youth mental health: challenges and opportunities. *North Carolina medical journal*, 81(2), 116-121.

Nicklin LL, Swain E, Lloyd J. Reactions to Unsolicited Violent, and Sexual, Explicit Media Content Shared over Social Media: Gender Differences and Links with Prior Exposure. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2020 Jun 16;17(12):4296. doi: 10.3390/ijerph17124296. PMID: 32560142; PMCID: PMC7345319.

OLINDER, Nina & TSVETKOV, Alexey & FEDYAKIN, Konstantin & ZABURDAEVA, Kristina. (2020). Using Digital Footprints in Social Research: an Interdisciplinary Approach. *WISDOM*. 16. 124-135. 10.24234/wisdom.v16i3.403.

Park BY, Wilson G, Berger J, Christman M, Reina B, Bishop F, Klam WP, Doan AP. Is Internet Pornography Causing Sexual Dysfunctions? A Review with Clinical Reports. *Behav Sci (Basel).* 2016 Aug 5;6(3):17. doi: 10.3390/bs6030017. Erratum in: Behav Sci (Basel). 2018 Jun 01;8(6): PMID: 27527226; PMCID: PMC5039517.

Peebles E. Cyberbullying: Hiding behind the screen. *Paediatr Child Health*. 2014 Dec;19(10):527-8. doi: 10.1093/pch/19.10.527. PMID: 25587229; PMCID: PMC4276384.

Pope C, Ziebland S, Mays N. Qualitative research in health care: analysing qualitative data. *BMJ*. (2000) 320:114–6. doi: 10.1136/bmj.320.7227.114

Vaingankar JA, van Dam RM, Samari E, Chang S, Seow E, Chua YC, Luo N, Verma S, Subramaniam M. Social Media-Driven Routes to Positive Mental Health Among Youth: Qualitative Enquiry and Concept Mapping Study. *JMIR Pediatr Parent*. 2022 Mar 4;5(1):e32758. doi: 10.2196/32758. PMID: 35254285; PMCID: PMC8933808.

Walker, K & Sleath, E 2017, 'A systematic review of the current knowledge regarding revenge pornography and non-consensual sharing of sexually explicit media' Aggression and

Violent Behavior, vol 36, no. September-October, pp. 9-24 https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2017.06.010

Xu, X., Han, W., & Liu, Q. (2023). Peer pressure and adolescent mobile social media addiction: Moderation analysis of self-esteem and self-concept clarity. *Frontiers in public health*, 11, 1115661. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1115661

Xuan, Y. J., & Amat, M. A. C. (2020). Social media addiction and young people: A systematic review of literature. *J. Crit. Rev*, 7(13), 537-541.

Yuvarani, P., & Saravanan, M. B. (2021). The Power of Social Persuasion–Digital Marketing For Brands by the Consumers Using Instagram Reel During the Pandemic Period 2020-21. E-Isbn, 41.

Zsila, Á., Reyes, M.E.S. Pros & cons: impacts of social media on mental health. *BMC Psychol* 11, 201 (2023). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-023-01243-x