



“Social Media and Mental Health Among Children and Teens”

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Abstract

Social media and their acceptance as normal elements of modern life, it may be time to confront the unintended consequences on student lives. The “always on” culture has created unreasonable expectations that users’ time, attention, and mental energy constantly be attuned to digital connections. There is almost a presumption that rapid responses to texts, messages, social media posts are a customary norm. We should not just bemoan and accept these issues as unfortunate consequences of progress. If we are serious about providing a “holistic” approach to student development and wellness, we must consider the emerging issues regarding mobile digital technologies as a legitimate factor with regard to mental health. Although a call for action regarding digital technologies and wellness within pharmacy and health professions education might be considered somewhat premature, we would not be the first to react. Psychiatrists have already begun to recommend that students identified as suffering from anxiety or depression should be monitored for smartphone addiction..

The Royal Society of Public Health has also called for education in UK public schools regarding safe use of social media, and a digital media component in the training of those supporting health and wellness. As health care educators, our first step should be to recognize the potential issues associated with smartphone use and critically examine the literature to understand the nature of the problems. As with most things, more research is needed to establish cause and effect (not just correlation) and to determine how prevalent the issues are or are becoming in health professions education. It is not yet clear whether smartphone and social media use leads to mental health issues directly or whether individuals vulnerable to the issues are more susceptible to use these technologies as a coping mechanism that in turn, exacerbates the problems. We are just now entering an era in which anxiety and depression are major threats to the greater student population’s academic success and overall wellness, therefore it will take time to unravel all the causes and potential solutions. Pharmacy school counselors and student affairs personnel who work with students suffering from mental health issues

will be critical in determining the extent of problems associated with smartphones and social media and the effectiveness of strategies to counteract them. Second, although much more is to be learned, enough is known to begin making our students aware of the connections between mental health and smartphones. We should begin to incorporate information regarding digital afflictions in our wellness education and promotions. Research regarding prevention and treatment of digital affliction is still ongoing, but some of the suggested strategies to help alleviate th Environmental health inequality occurs because marginalized communities have fewer resources and less political influence to demand better living conditions.

As a result, they often live near industrial zones, garbage dumps, or polluted water bodies, facing higher exposure to environmental risks compared to wealthier populations. Addressing these issues requires integrated approaches such as sustainable urban planning, improved waste management systems, equitable distribution of resources, and accessible healthcare services. Government policies and community participation play a crucial role in reducing disparities and promoting environmental justice. In conclusion, tackling urban poverty and environmental health inequality is essential for sustainable urban development. Ensuring equal access to a clean and healthy environment will not only improve public health outcomes but also contribute to social and economic stability in urban areas.

Keywords: smartphones, social media, mental health, anxiety, stress

Introduction

Finally, we need to understand how to maximize the use of these technologies for education and professional purposes, while helping our future health care practitioners recognize the risks of stress, anxiety, and depression that may accompany them. Because of the numerous positive attributes of these technologies, they will not be going away anytime soon; therefore, we must learn to adapt their uses in a way that is both beneficial and psychologically healthy. This is far from a simple issue, but it appears to be becoming an increasingly important one.

Environmental health inequality arises because the burden of pollution and environmental hazards is not equally distributed. Poor and marginalized communities often face greater exposure to environmental risks compared to wealthier groups who have access to cleaner and safer living conditions. This imbalance highlights the need for inclusive policies and sustainable urban planning. Understanding the relationship

between urban poverty and environmental health inequality is essential for developing effective solutions that promote social equity, public health, and sustainable development in urban areas.



The Effects Of Social Media On Mental Health

The platforms of social media are convenient and easy to use as they provide verbal exchange to its certain degree, hence students cannot live without them. Social media is used excessively in all societies, henceforth becoming very serious with sex tapes, nude pictures. On the issue of nude pictures and pornography, many students are rushing into doing sex and early marriages, and dropping out of school. If one is not addicted to social media, then there is no need to quit it. The addition of social media is harmful to mental health as it leads to many things like cyberbullying, stress, anxiety, distraction, and more. Users need to be very careful and use it until they benefit from it. Furthermore, studies have discovered that certain sports in social media, such as texting and getting a response, getting likes, notifications, and nice feedback, could be interesting and one becomes addicted. Such addiction has an instant effect on mental health, which leads to low self-esteem, feelings of envy, anxiety, sleeping sickness, and in the worst situation, they commit against the law.

Methodology

I used to have the mind that WhatsApp and Facebook are not good until one day, when I was stressed with some issues that had happened and I posted on Facebook. The help that I got motivated me and gave me encouragement that boosted my morale. (Participant 7) On Facebook, one can express their feelings without any fear of judgment because there are many people and they don't know who is posting what. (Participant 8) Unlike traditional support systems that may require formal appointments (like therapy or counseling), WhatsApp and Facebook allow for instant communication and solutions and I have seen that as good for me. This means one can get or receive quick responses when feeling overwhelmed. (FG participant) Social media has become an essential part of our lives. It is most convenient and easy to use. Social media simplifies our communication with friends and family regardless of location; it provides access to scattered information in one place and also promotes new connections. If you are not addicted to social media, then there is no need to quit social media. (FG participant) The above responses clearly showed that students get emotional support from using WhatsApp and Facebook. WhatsApp and Facebook have become valuable platforms for connecting students to mental health resources, offering guidance, support, and awareness on emotional well-being .

However, students must also be encouraged to seek professional mental health support when needed. Motivation and encouragement that come from each other will help in reducing anxiety and boosting one's confidence. Hossain added that social media gives counselling to those who might be having challenges, so it acts as a therapeutic way to resolve problems and cope with their situations .Social media is acting as a powerful tool for promoting mental well-being when used constructively .Another issue of communicating with relatives and friends was also mentioned as an advantage of using WhatsApp and Facebook. As many people move from one country to the other in search of greener pastures, those families use social media to communicate. Educational Benefits Educational benefits are among the positive impacts of social media, and this has been shown by the responses from different participants. The following excerpts are the evidence. We can have discussions on different educational topics to help each other.



Connection Between Social Media and Mental Health

I remember having some WhatsApp lectures during COVID-19, and it helped us. So, we use these platforms for educational purposes at times. (Participant 10) These platforms serve as interactive learning environments where students can engage in knowledge-sharing and collective problem-solving. We learn a lot by sharing lecture notes, study materials, and assignments through these platforms. (FG participant) Our lecturer put information on our WhatsApp group, like topics to discuss, PowerPoint presentations, and some communiques. Even if we are on our own, we can have discussions about exams, help each other with revisions..

Results

From the above sentiments, it clearly shows the positive impacts of social media. As the participants clearly said, the advantages and benefits of using WhatsApp and Facebook. The platforms will provide people instant access to information as people ask questions and can receive immediate responses from peers on the platforms. Learning is more efficient by using these platforms, as indicated by the respondents, who share ideas and discuss certain topics that others might have challenges with.

Also, discussions during or in preparation for exams. Additionally, students stay updated on class schedules, deadlines, and academic events, as they are given using the platforms mentioned above. students share revision guides, video tutorials, and other useful resources in preparation for examinations Social media has negative impacts on the mental health of students, as it is clearly shown by the respondents. The effects are anxiety, cyberbullying and toxic interactions, suicidal thoughts, among others. This is evidenced in the following selected excerpts: I was hurt when one commented on my Facebook about my situation that I had posted. I thought of suicide because I could not hold it. (Participant 5) We do not communicate face-to-face; we use video or WhatsApp calls. Hence, during these calls, we are disrupted in our studies as we spend more time on either WhatsApp or Facebook. I have noticed that I spend a lot of time on social media chatting with my friends rather than reading and this has affected my academic results. (participant 4) The platforms have really affected me as I see my school and college mates doing well through the pictures they post. I feel like I am wasting my time by being alive. Most of them have prospered and they live a pretty life compared to mine.

Conclusion

This study examined how social media affects student mental health in india. The results showed that social media has both positive and negative impacts on students' mental health. Relationships are affected by social media, causing depression and anxiety, as others may start to compare themselves with others and are dissatisfied with their lives. These findings underscore the need for culturally tailored interventions to address the negative effects, considering diverse demographic needs. Recognizing these nuances can guide the development of interventions to promote digital well-being use of social media. The purpose of this study is to encourage the students to use social media platforms in a balanced way that benefits them. Using social media in a balanced manner fosters the well-being of a person.

It is essential to alert the students about the possible positive and negative impacts of social media on their mental health done by developing age-appropriate health and safety standards for technology platforms and high standards of data privacy. In addition, policies that limit access to some social media for students aim to minimize the risk of harm to them. There is also a need for engagement with international partners working to protect students against online harm to their health and safety. There should be increased funding for future research on the benefits and harms of social media use, which helps in supporting the development, implementation, and evaluation of digital and media literacy curricula in schools, colleges, universities and within academic standards. It raises awareness on healthy social media usage. Future research should consider

investigating the particular contexts around social media usage (i.e., when do different age groups use social media, and what do they use it for).

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