

Teenagers, Use SNS Carefully

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Let's say 'Did you push the like on my Instagram selfie yesterday?' to our parents. The expected answer from him is this: 'What is Instagram'?

With the development of social network services (SNS), many people, especially teenagers, have begun to leave their emotions to SNS and rely on it. Surely, SNS would never have emerged in my parents' generation - my parents would have played soccer with friends, played hide-and-seek. However, in recent years, with the increasing number of SNS users and their hours of use, mental-health-related issues such as depression and suicide have become more serious among teenagers (not yet known whether SNS and those issues are related or not). As a result, whether or not SNS has a negative impact on teenage mental health has become a hot-issue. First of all, among many speculations, I will briefly look at some research from each point of view thoroughly based on scientific facts or data.

There is a position that SNS has a negative impact on teenage mental health. The proportion of (U.S.) young people who between the ages of 13 and 17 years who have a smartphone has reached 89%, more than doubling over a 6-year period, the data review said. At the same time, 70% of teenagers use social media multiple times per day, up from a third of teens in 2012. it is surely tough to tell whether this rise in social media and smartphone use is actually causing the increase in rates of mental health issue among teens. However, other data seems to suggest it might be. For instance, the Canadian researchers pointed to two studies - one conducted in the United States, the other in Germany - which found that kids who spent more time on Facebook were more prone to negative states such as envy and insecurity about their status, compared to others in their online network. Much of this was centered around FOMO (fear of missing out), those studies showed. Another systematic review of 20 studies found that use of social media was associated with body image concerns and disordered eating.

The opposite stance is also here: An eight-year study conducted by Brigham Young University found that the amount of time spent on social

media is not directly increasing anxiety or depression in teenagers. While the study highlighted that the amount of time teens spend on social media is now estimated at 2.6 hours per day, and has risen by 62.5 percent since 2012 - and continues to grow - this use of social media isn't causing the anxiety or depression. One of the study's co-authors Sarah Coyne, professor of family life at Brigham Young University, explained that the increase in use of social media didn't make respondents more depressed, nor did decreased use result in less anxiety, which is quite trustworthy explanation because it is about long-term impacts of social media on users unlike other studies. In addition, SNS-advocates say SNS could be used in healthier ways for teenagers. This includes being an active user instead of a passive user through actively commenting, posting and liking others' posts. And if one uses SNS without certain purpose, one can easily be swayed by a drop in self-esteem or a rise in depression; Coyne explained that specifically seeking out information or to connect with others can have a more positive effect than simply scrolling through social media due to boredom.

Each interpretation of the two positions is so different, although it is from the same data! Why is that? Because the analyzers interpreted it according to their favor to make certain story. After presenting statistics on the increase in mental-health-related-diseases such as depression and suicide rates over the years, the stance emphasizing the negative aspects of SNS has linked it to the increase in SNS usage, creating a story as if the development of SNS had 'directly' caused such diseases. On the contrary, the denial position of the negative aspects of SNS focused on the lack of reliability of that link to show and reinforce that 'using SNS does not directly influence on such negative mental health' .

Then which would the answer? In my opinion, neither is the answer. See this (part of CHILD MIND article '*Does Social Media Cause Depression?*'); Indeed, one exception to the depression correlation is girls who are high users of social media but also keep up a high level of face-to-face social interaction. *The Twenge study showed that those girls who interact intensely offline as well as through social media don't show the increase in depressive symptoms that those who interact less in person do.* And also see this; *Some experts see the rise in depression as evidence that the connections social media users form electronically are less emotionally satisfying, leaving them feeling socially isolated.*

Besides this, there are numerous studies who proved that whether the teen is swayed by using SNS to get depressed and negative or not is decided by whether the teens actively do the deep (enough to be get emotionally satisfied) interaction with others in real world and by whether the users clearly have their own purpose for using SNS or not. So when we data scientists judge this situation, we should consider the features who might has an impact on the target class (the teenagers for now) such as not only SNS using time but also human interaction and purpose . Drawing conclusion based on single feature of SNS using time is undisputedly unreasonable; both positions should be aware of this and take many other factors carefully into consideration too.

So, not to be swayed by SNS, always be 1) intentional and 2) active in real-world as well when using it ; this attitude will decide whether SNS becomes devil or your good friend, teenagers.