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**Topic:** S**ocial Science**

**Research Paper:** <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10476631/>

<https://www.helpguide.org/mental-health/wellbeing/social-media-and-mental-health>

### Initial Prompt

**Description**:

Examine social media's impact on mental health, particularly among teens, and evaluate potential risks and benefits, as well as solutions for reducing negative impacts.

**Summary :**

While social media can have positive effects on mental health, such as increased connectivity and idea sharing, excessive use can lead to negative outcomes, including depression, anxiety, and stress. With over 3.4 billion users worldwide, social media has transformed the way people connect and communicate. The misplaced behavior theory proposes that people may engage in impulsive actions, including social media use, as a coping mechanism for stress, leading to a loop of undesirable behaviors and outcomes. Adolescents are particularly sensitive to the negative impacts of social media,

including cyber bullying, body shaming, &feelings of isolation, stressing the need for intervention and prevention measures.

### Iteration 1

### **Description :**

### Discuss the relationship between social media use and mental health in teenagers, including the potential risks and benefits, and the importance of distinguishing between active and passive social media usage.

**Summary :**

While there's a general link between social media use and depression in teenagers has yielded inconsistent results, with some studies suggesting a correlation and others finding no harm or even benefits for certain groups. Social media can increase the risk of self-harm, loneliness, and empathy loss, but it can also provide opportunities for connection and self-expression. The distinction between active and passive social media usage is important, as active use involves creating and engaging with content, while passive use involves only consuming others' content. Understanding the nuances of social media use is crucial for evaluating its impact on mental health.

Iteration 2

**Description:**

Does Social Media Have a Positive or Negative Impact on Adolescents and Young Adults?

**Summary:**

The impact of social media on adolescents mental health is complex and multifaceted. Policymakers and the public often overlook the diverse ways people use digital technology, treating it as a single entity. Self-reports, the primary method for measuring technology use, can be inaccurate. Research suggests that social media may have a slightly negative but significantly damaging impact on mental health. A deeper understanding of personal traits, behaviours, and experiences on social media is needed to identify risks and benefits. Teenagers perceptions of social media's effects vary, with some seeing benefits and others highlighting risks like bullying and decreased face-to-face interaction.

### Final Prompt

**Description:**

Analyze the dangers of social media on young adults mental health, including peer pressure, and exposure to harmful content. How do social media use and sleep quality impact depression symptoms, and what factors influence this relationship?

**Summary:**

Social media can be harmful to young adults' mental health, Peer pressure, and exposure to risky behaviour online can lead to depression, self-harm, and suicidal thoughts. Social media can also disrupt sleep patterns, which is essential for physical and mental development. The more time spent on social media, the higher the risk of depression and other mental health issues. It's crucial to consider how social media use affects mental health and to research ways to mitigate its negative effects. Parents, cultural norms, and individual characteristics also play a role in shaping the relationship between social media use and mental health.

**Insights:-**

* The impact of digital technology on young people is not a passive process, but rather an active one where they employ technology in their daily lives.
* While the average kid is unlikely to be harmed by digital technology, there are situations where it can have negative effects, such as the link between social media use and adolescent depression.
* Longitudinal studies are needed to better understand the relationship between social media use and mental health.
* Social media plays a significant role in the social and personal lives of young people.
* Professional organizations provide guidance to parents, educators, and institutions based on incomplete and contradictory knowledge about young people and digital technology.
* Policies restricting teen access to new technologies may be ineffective in promoting social interaction and developing digital skills.
* More research is needed to make definitive recommendations for parents, educators, and institutions on how to support young people's mental health in the digital era.

**Applications :-**

* **Mental Health Assessments:** Practitioners can assess the risk of social media use on adolescent mental health and develop strategies to mitigate its negative effects.
* **Education and Awareness:** Educate teenagers, parents, and educators about the risks and benefits of social media use, including privacy concerns, cyber bullying, and negative effects on mental health.
* **Healthy Social Media Use:** Promote ethical social media use among adolescents, highlighting its potential benefits, such as expanding opportunities for connection and conversation, boosting self-esteem, and promoting health.
* **Media Literacy:** Teach teenagers to critically evaluate social media content, identify biases, and develop healthy online habits.
* **Sleep Hygiene:** Educate teenagers and parents about the importance of sleep hygiene, including limiting screen time before bed, to reduce chronic sleep loss and its negative effects on cognitive ability, school performance, and socio-emotional functioning.
* **Family-Based Interventions:** Clinicians can work with young people and their families to develop strategies to reduce the risks of social media and smart phone use, using open, nonjudgmental, and developmentally appropriate tactics.
* **Digital Wellness Programs:** Develop digital wellness programs that promote healthy social media use, provide resources for mental health support, and offer alternative activities to reduce screen time.

**Clarity:**

Social media’s impact on adolescent mental health is complex. While risks like cyber bullying and privacy concerns exist, ethical use can offer benefits such as improved self-esteem and access to information. Clinicians should use nonjudgmental approaches to help mitigate risks associated with social media and smart phone use.

**Accuracy:**

Social media's effects on mental health are debated; evidence links its use to increased mental distress and self-harming behaviours’. Despite some benefits, like enhanced self-esteem and access to health info, empirical research remains limited. Clinicians should address social media risks with developmentally appropriate, open strategies. Furthermore, studies have connected excessive social media use to higher levels of loneliness, anxiety, and depression. Addiction to social media can have a negative influence on everyday functioning and mental health.

**Relevance:**

Understanding social media's dual impact on adolescent mental health is crucial for clinicians. With rising risks of distress and self-harm, effective strategies are needed

to guide ethical use and mitigate negative effects, emphasizing the need for continued research and practical intervention approaches. Additionally undermining trust, the dissemination of false narratives and misinformation on social media can also add to public confusion and worry.

### Reflection:

### Reflecting on my learning experience, I realized that understanding the impact of social media on adolescent mental health is a complex and multifaceted issue. The study highlighted the need for more longitudinal research to establish a clearer connection between social media use and depression. I faced challenges in grasping the nuances of the topic, particularly the contradictory findings and incomplete knowledge in the field.

### Despite these challenges, I gained valuable insights into the importance of considering the social and personal lives of young people in the digital era. I learned that restricting access to technology may not be an effective solution, as it can hinder the development of essential digital and relational skills. Instead, it's crucial to focus on promoting healthy technology use and providing support to young people during times of need.

* A significant obstacle encountered in this research was managing the copious amount of data and contrasting viewpoints regarding the topic. It was crucial to assess sources attentively and discern between reliable studies and hearsay. Furthermore, a thorough examination of numerous research and publications was necessary to comprehend the complex ways that social media influences diverse age groups and demographics.

### The purpose of this study was to identify studies on the influence of technology, primarily social media, on the psychosocial functioning, health, and well-being of adolescents and young adults.