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Final Paper -Argument

12/10/17

### Does Social Media Affect Users' Mental Health?

In this day and age almost, everyone uses social media. Many people use social media for several different reasons: expression of opinions, entertainment, to seek information, along with social interaction. Often times, when I am bored, I get on my phone and scroll down my news feed on Facebook. There is a little bit of everything on my news feed: fighting videos, music videos, dance videos, cooking videos, and many people on their soapboxes. There are peoples posting their awesome jobs, house, kids, wives, and lives. It often makes me question and I doing good life. Seeing those things causes me to do comparisons in my head subconsciously. I usually feel inadequate when I see things like that. I feel that I might not be doing enough to get to a successful point in my life. Sometimes I don't understand why others are doing so well, but I am struggling so. This way of thinking has many scholars wondering: is mental health affected by the use of social media? Social media allows one to speak without no repercussions (in most cases), portray themselves in any light they wish, along with minimal interaction. How does one use social media for the good features, without getting caught in whirlwind of social media? Social media can heavily affect a user's mental health because it content affects people socially and emotionally, it's addicting, and it can lower a person's self-confidence.

Social media delivers great blows socially and economically without many people noticing how it affects their day to day lives. According to Brian Jung's article, social media can give a false sense of connection, cyber-bullying, and a lack of privacy. A false sense of connection causes many people to confuse meaningful relationships with casual relationships.

Some people don't realize that these casual conversations are not a true friendship, and are devastated when they realize how lonely they actually are. Cyber-bullying has also been associated with causing depression in teenagers. The website LiveScience referred to a study that hinted at a causal relationship between cyber-bullying and depression. It noted that cyberbullying usually came before the depression. Social media often encourages users to share information. Depending on the user, this allows them to overshare their life. It allows user to portray themselves in an unrealistic light. Many users often are in competition with each other to see who is doing better, whether it is true or not.

Addiction. Dictionary.com defines it as "the state of being enslaved to a habit or practice or to something that is psychologically or physically habit-forming, as narcotics, to such an extent that its cessation causes severe trauma." How often do you check your social media? If you are an avid user, I expect that you check it often. I mean why not? It is literally one click away on your smartphone. I check my social media often. It is such a habit, I don't even think about it while I'm doing it. According to the article "6 Ways Social Media Affects Our Mental Health", a review suggested that addiction to social media is possible because people demonstrate addiction criteria such as: neglect of personal life, escapism, and mental preoccupation. How many times have you posted and checked in to see how many likes you accumulated? It happens.

Social media eventually effects a person's self-confidence. When we compare our lives with others it puts you in a bad head space, especially if it appears that you are doing worse than the comparison. According to Alice Walton, this habit is mentally unhealthy. It forces many users to make judgements of better or worse, upward or downward. Feeling that another person has it better than you will always make you feel inferior. This type of thinking has been linked to

cause depression in adults and teenagers. It also affects people through the way things are portrayed. Although social media can have these negatives impacts on your mental health, it can be beneficial in ways. Andrea K. McDaniels, social media can provide social support for users when they are struggling with life's problems. She also mentions that they are able to express themselves on different online platforms. What happens when they express themselves online and someone attacks them for that post? That thought? That mindset? What happens when those nice comments turn into hurtful ones? One's mental health takes a small hit.

Social media can affect one's mental health because it affects people socially and emotionally, it's addicting, and it can lower a person's self-confidence. Social media can give a false sense of connection, lack of privacy, and cyber-bullying. It has been linked to causing depression in teens as well as adults. It is addicting. Many users check their social media habitually. It is such habit that it lowers productivity. Many businesses have blocked social media websites to the drop of productivity when workers do have open access. Social media will also affect a person's self-confidence. Many users compare themselves to others on social media, often seeing themselves as the one who is behind in life. It is hard to compete with others. Especially when they have complete manipulation over how you see them. Many users have committed suicide due to the things they have endured on social media. Many teenagers and young children have taken their life due to the cyber-bullying they have endured. Students started to bully them at school and it carries over to the internet. According to LiveScience, many users suffer this type of bullying silently, often choosing to deal with it privately. They don't want to risk losing their internet privileges, so they just don't say anything. There are some positive to social media such as allowing users to express themselves, share with others to solve a problem, or get on a soap box. Although this can be therapeutic, it can backfire. It is imperative that we

pay attention to those around use, especially our children. We never know how this exposure is affecting their health. Social media affects the user's mental health. The affects that they can suffer can definitely change the lives of the users, especially if they are having major mental issues and refuse to seek help.

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Final Paper-List of Sources

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List of Sources

1. Pantic, Igor. "Online Social Networking and Mental Health". Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4183915/>. 2014. Accessed November 5, 2017.

This website will help with background information for my topic. It also puts up a good argument as to why social media heavily influences one's mental health.

2. Watson, Alice G. "6 Ways Social Media Affects Our Mental Health". Forbes, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alicegwalton/2017/06/30/a-run-down-of-social-medias-effects-on-our-mental-health/#5b4dbf5b2e5a>. 2017. Accessed November 5, 2017.

This source lists different reasons why social media affects our mental health. It also discusses the reasons in detail. This is great for supporting my position.

3. McDaniels, Andrea K. "Research Offers Mixed Messages on the Impact of Social Media on Adolescent Emotional Health". The Baltimore Sun, <http://www.baltimoresun.com/health/bs-hs-social-media-teens-20170526-story.html>. 2017. Accessed November 5, 2017.

This source would be good to oppose my opinion. It is putting doubt in the reader about mental health and social media. It even lists some positive effects of social media.

4. Pappas, Stephanie. "Cyberbullying on Social Media Linked to Teen Depression". Live Science, <https://www.livescience.com/51294-cyberbullying-social-media-teen-depression.html>. 2015. Accessed November 5, 2017.

This article highlights the link between cyber bullying and depression. It shows a clear connection between social media and mental health.

5. Jung, Brian. "The Negative Effect of Social Media on Society and Individuals". Chron, <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/negative-effect-social-media-society-individuals-27617.html>. 2017. Accessed November 5, 2017.

This article points out some of the reasons peoples use social media. It highlights the negative and positive effects of social media. It highlights some of the points in which I agree with on the negative effects of social media.