Impact of social media on teenagers' confidence and tendency in hustle culture.

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Authencity declaration:

I declare that the work in this research project is my own and is authentic. All resources and sources are acknowledged and cited, where sources and resources of other people have been used.

AKTOBE, 2023

Introduction

With contemporary requirements of society, social media, new trends, and common unhealthy normalizations and standards can be traumatizing for a lot of teenagers.

The main problem described is a hustle culture - a life of a masochistic work-ethic pattern, which leads to the loss of self-care alongside the process. Nowadays more and more people on social media popularize success and to get successful they promote a "work hard to success" lifestyle. Definitely, any kind of success requires a lot of determination and effort, however, this concept is widely misunderstood by society. In the hyper-competitive modern world, more and more people, especially students, put success and achievements in the 1st place sacrificing their health.

For example, it is almost impossible to not notice videos with motivational speeches of some authorities or those we call successful, these can be "10 hours study with me" YouTube videos or videos where people live to full productivity every day, another example is "1-billion-dollar morning routine". In general, content that promotes constant productive life, lifestyle and living for maximum. These make students more accustomed to the idea of toxic productivity - "The unhealthy desire to be productive all the time, even when it detriments our mental and physical health, the need to go the "extra mile" even when nobody expects you to" (Brittany Wong, 2021). The best instance would be a popular saying: "work while others sleep". Furthermore, this need to hustle is often forced even more by peers, who achieve something or show better academic results. Some feel more pressure than cheer whenever someone achieves or wins something. Example, students compare themselves to someone who posted hyper-laps of them studying and feel bad and guilty about themselves. This kind of content and events push a student to work more than they already did.

Among my friends, there are plenty who put so much energy into studying and school stuff that when you ask them how many hours did you sleep, they often reply with 4,5 or even less, there

was even 2 one time. Quite often students refuse to let themselves hang out often to study more. Myself, I had serious burnout during academics. Definitely, this kind of burnout and stress occur frequently among teenagers, and overworking is one of the most popular reasons.

Beyond hustle culture, the effect of social media on teenagers, especially on young ladies is a concerning problem. As mentioned before, endless comparisons in the field of academics push youngsters to work and work constantly. However, comparisons in body image and appearance are also quite inevitable. On Pinterest and Instagram feeds people post the best photos, with the best looks, on advertisements and journals most models are very fit, in films actresses and actors look their best. This is how the world of marketing and profit works. They more than just normalize, but standardize being skinny, regardless of the body type, metabolism, organism's needs and nationality/ethnicity. As a result, teenagers, especially girls go through many diets being very young. This often results in malnutrition, which is risky for a growing organism. According to Anastasia Gorbunova (2018), Anorexia and bulimia (illnesses connected with eating disorders) are even called female diseases. 80.2% of them are 10–18 aged girls. Moreover, the social comparison itself leads to insecurities, lack of confidence and self-esteem.

These are the main problems that teenagers face in the modern world. It is unfair that teenagers, my friends, our friends, who are not responsible for given problems, face so much stress because of them. It is crucial for society to know what is healthy and should be considered normal instead in order to provide a healthy, safe and secure environment for children, people who are responsible for the future of the planet.

Literature review

Teenagers account for a big part of our society, they play a significant role in the world's future development; therefore, building a green environment for their mental and physical health is crucial. However, nowadays, most teenagers inevitably face the issues of social media and hustle

culture, it is a mindset that drives people to work and work more in abnormal manner or amounts. As a result, teenagers experience problems with their mental and physical health.

According to the independent project of Ellyn Casali (2022), called "Disrupting Hustle Culture: An explorative research project addressing the question, "what does it mean to be productive?" hustle culture is a life of a masochistic work-ethic pattern, which leads to the toxification of the term "productivity" and loss of self-care alongside the process. Productivity means using given time efficiently. Nevertheless, society nowadays popularizes a more toxic version of it. In order to explain the meaning, Ellyn Casali states Brittany Wong's quote from 2021, which says that toxic productivity is "the unhealthy desire to be productive all the time, even when it detriments our mental and physical health…". Consequently, people who are ill with this idea and their surroundings feel guilty when they rest or do other things than work. For instance, as a student, Ellyn Casali (2022) mentions she had noticed a need for constant hustling. Otherwise she would already feel failed and anxious about her future.

Moreover, in her work, she refers to a famous psychologist, Erika Ferszt, who explains that productivity has become like a pill, cigarette, or drink to "relieve stress" and feel better. Hustlers start to develop thinking of work as "if I do more and if I achieve more, then I'll be "safe" or "'they' will love me" until relaxation feels risky.

This concept also widely spreads through social media. Hanum Fauzia (2022) explains that the younger generation is active on social media. Therefore by exposing themselves to others' lives and achievements, teenagers gain a desire to compete or work more to equalize their accomplishments. Ellyn Casali (2022) takes a well-known marketer, Jeremy Haynes, twit as an example, which "enforces a sense of pressure that if you aren't learning a new skill, gaining more knowledge or doing something that you have been postponing for a while under quarantine, then you simply lacked discipline". She also states that this situation, where entrepreneurial communities, companies and individuals of high societal status promote the

"hustle to become successful" mentality happens quite often. Another example is Elon Mask's post on Twitter, which speaks for itself: "There are way easier places to work, but nobody ever changed the world on 40 hours a week", which contributes to a feeling of needing to do more and more and feeling worthless if you are not.

The main characters in both examples are people who work in marketing. In general, the concept of "work hard for success" is mainly promoted in marketing and the creative industry, where speed is valued as it is more profitable. Another example is Miyazaki and his work "working to the bone". Most people forget that their field requires speed at work and start comparing themselves to them, again leading to hustle.

Ellyn also mentions that besides workplaces, hustle culture is inspired in schools. A simple example is the system of homework, which makes us comfortable with working more outside the school from young ages.

Hustle culture and toxic productivity can cause not only mental problems but also problems associated with physical health. The culture contributes to the release stress hormone cortisol in higher amounts than usual, which can lead to numerous diseases, like heart disease, memory impairments, etc. (Hanum Fauzia, 2021)

Another difficulty of being a teenager nowadays from rapidly promoting hustle culture is social media. The majority try to post their best images and moments in their lives on media platforms. Therefore the subconscious comparison between viewers and post-er is inevitable. As studies have found, social media harms people's self-esteem. According to research called "Impact of Social Media on Self-Esteem" from the European Scientific Journal, 88% of Facebook users are engaged in making social comparisons, and 98% are upward social comparisons. The same research also showed that the rise in consuming time on social media worsens the results more. People start to feel inferior and end up having low self-evaluations. (Jan Muqaddas, Soomro

Sanobia, Ahmad Nawaz. 2017) In addition, according to Eti, H. S. (2022) low self-confidence negatively affects to conspicuous consumption on social media, which affects others. Thus this low self-esteem virus keeps spreading on social media.

This also relates to the comparison of body image. In the Journal of eating disorders Genevieve Pepin and Natalie Endresz(2015) describe research on body image on social media platforms. 300 18–25 years old young adults participated in the experiment. According to the results, users of Facebook showed higher levels of will to change their appearance, to look skinnier or muscular and showed higher levels of pressure. Pinterest users also had this pressure. Another correlation was found between Pinterest and body shame and appearance control beliefs. Lastly, between Instagram and body surveillance and body image concerns. As a result, many young ladies force themselves through unhealthy ways of losing weight in harmful amounts, thus making damage to their digestive system and physical health and well-being in general.

Aims

The main purpose of this research is to popularize and familiarize people, parents and most importantly teenagers with the problem of hustle culture and the negative effects of social media.

Hypothesis:

1) What part (significant or insignificant) of students who use social media have experienced higher levels of doubts or insecurities about their appearance? What are the reasons behind this trend?
2) Among students, is there a tendency of feeling anxious when not working? In other words, what is the tendency of hustle culture like in school?
3) How do these problems affect students' mental and physical health?

Answers to these 3 hypotheses will show how much the given problem is spread among Kazakhstani teens and help in conducting an interview to fully finish the research and make certain conclusions.

Methods

The research attempted to identify how social media has an impact on Kazakhstani teenagers' confidence, health, welfare and tendency in hustle culture. Various methods were used for the investigation of this topic, which includes quantitative and qualitative information from primary and secondary sources.

As for the start, Internet research on the problem was carried out within a two-month period in order to gain reliable, up-to-date data and to get familiarized with the problem and different peoples' opinions on the issue. The study provided much information about the influence of social media on confidence, also mental and physical well-being of children, hustle culture, and toxic productivity in younger generations.

There are some benefits of internet-based data collection, such as availability (including cost, which is free), variety of relevant research and information from any part of the globe and lastly, collecting data online is much more time efficient compared to traditional methods of gathering information.

However, there were some challenges faced during internet-based data research. The most significant was that terms of "hustle culture" and "toxic productivity" are quite new. In general, this problem has started to popularize only recently, it was quite problematic to find reliable information on the theme. Most of the resources provided explanations and general descriptions of the issue, rather than research, observations and their results, in other words, more practical data.

As for the individual investigation, the interview method was chosen. According to Virginia Tech, interviews are the most efficient method used for qualitative research. It is explained by an opportunity to clarify, understand better and learn interviewees' opinions, behaviour and

experiences. Furthermore, the interviewer can contribute to a better understanding of the question, whereas in surveys it usually does not take place. Questions in interviews are commonly open-ended questions, therefore in-depth information can be collected. (Virginia Tech, 2018). Moreover, interviews can play a role in therapy. As the Journal of Research Initiatives claims, the researchers affect participants by taking part in the interview process with them and creating a relationship that, in many ways, is similar to that of a therapeutic relationship. (April Perry, Mary Grace Bigelow, Western Carolina University, 2020)

The interview was conducted among high school students of NIS Aktobe and a psychologist. A big part of the participants were teenagers because they are the main subject of the whole research and are believed to be significantly affected by social media. To gain some psychological insights into the problem and possible ways of treating the issue, it was decided to turn to a psychologist as a professional in this sphere. Interviews lasted for approximately 10 minutes, each containing from 5 to 10 questions depending on participants' answers. Some interviews were taken online through certain messengers. The questions aimed to:

1. Identify the presence of the issue and the levels of their severity among NIS students

2. Find the reasons and understand teenagers' behaviours associated with the problem

3. Familiarize students with the problem and terms

4. Get to know participants' viewpoints on the topic

However, there were some difficulties with conducting a comfortable interview, because most of the students were busy with their schedules, therefore finding a suitable time for a meeting was challenging. Also, since some students were uncomfortable with openly answering questions related to the topic, interviews were taken on the WhatsApp messenger application. Some students found it difficult to understand the issue, therefore it could have been more time-consuming than planned.

Collected data from the interviews as the primary source of the information were essential for the purposes of the project, since most of the students faced problems in their lives, it was possible to obtain detailed and well-explained answers.

Results

According to the interview, all of the participant-students are users of social media and most reported that social media plays an important role in their lives and can take a significant part of their leisure time. Applications that come to be in common use are TikTok, Instagram, WhatsApp and YouTube.

Following this, several questions were asked related to the impact of SM on confidence and mental well-being.

1. *Have you ever felt insecure or maybe even jealous while you were using social media?*

3 of the participants answered that they have experienced these feelings, however, all of them mentioned that it is a thing that is experienced at least once by most teenagers their age. Most of them mentioned pictures, selfies and achievements as an object of comparison, thus being a source of mentioned feelings. 3 mentioned that they try to avoid these feelings, 1 of which practices some methods

2. *Have you ever felt like changing your appearance, maybe losing or gaining weight, or changing your style after being on social media? Maybe you have gone through diets or exercise routines, something that would change your image. How these activities were healthy for you?*

The female part of students reported that they were prone to do these activities because of the comparison of their styles, preferences and self-image, including body image. Two have gone through different diets and lifestyles. One of them considers them healthy and not harmful, whereas others mentioned possible negative effects. "There were some negative consequences which still affect my life" says another student. In general, all students experienced the desire to

change, however now it can be inferred that now they know that diets, etc. should be personalized, and as a result healthy.

The following questions were about SM's effect on teens' confidence and hustle culture

3. *How do you think social media affects people's confidence? What kind of trend does it have among your peers?*

All the students reported that social media has a significant effect on pupils' self-esteem. They explained it by unstable mental health and generally, fluctuations, changes and instability which are normal for teenagers. Some mentioned the image of "perfect people" on social media, which is also said to affect teens. In addition, this trend was described as common among interviewees' surroundings.

4. *Students were asked if they are familiar with the terms "hustle culture" and "toxic productivity", and then the terms were explained. And interviewees were asked if they experienced it or have witnessed it among their surroundings and were asked about the processes' influence on the mental and physical health of teens.*

Some students had an idea of what the terms could mean, and some heard it from friends. Most explanations were similar to trying to be productive all the time or described as forced productivity encouraged by "productive routine" posts/videos on SM. One considers it as a way to get succeed somewhere. Some find it a real problem, that people might harm their health to achieve something.

Students gave examples from their own experiences, all could report anxiety and a feeling that something productive needs to be done when they rest, go out and do other stuff than work. "It's hard for me to realize that my body cannot work all the time properly without resting" mentioned one student. For some, it seems unavoidable. Several students mentioned their friends who also had gone through this process. According to one student, it is one of the most common topics for discussion among friends.

As for the influence of this on the health and well-being of students, according to all interviewees, this tendency is not healthy.

There was some advice given by those students:

- Relaxation as a part of the development

- Everything on social media cannot be true.

- What people show is not the way for all, each person has his/her own way to success.

- Even though this might be necessary for reaching goals sometimes, doing it by harming yourself will not be that useful

-

According to the results from the interview with a psychologist, the ability to filter information and identify himself with this information is a crucial skill in fighting the negative impact of SM on self-esteem. A student should understand that the information on social networks is completely different than in real life and some content creators can even use that.

Psychologist explains the desire to change in teens by the absence of self-acceptance, which can be caused by several circumstances, factors, intra-family, social, etc. Self-worth also is an important key to self-love. In general, this topic is very broad as the psychologist says.

Then, some consequences and the processes which hustle culture includes were explained. It can lead to burnout, a constant stressful state or chronic stress. She explained that, in order for a person to be happy, everything must be harmonious in him. And relaxation is also a part of it, otherwise will not be happy in other spheres of his life including achievements and work.

To conclude, there was some advice given by the specialist. Most importantly, social networks are a part of our life that we cannot ignore, but it is not the most crucial part. It should not be or become a value.

Conclusion

By considering results obtained from the interview and research it is possible to answer questions that occurred at the beginning of the study and make relevant conclusions.

1) What part (significant or insignificant) of students who use social media have experienced higher levels of doubts or insecurities about their appearance? What are the reasons behind this trend?

According to the interview results, all students experienced some desire to change their image after being on social media. This was caused by the tendency of making comparisons with others on social media. The interview also revealed that some students have gone through different diets and tried different lifestyles that were popular in order to change their body image. Generally, interviews showed that even SM has an invasive/intrusive nature in standardizing certain body images and appearance, which is easy to impose on teenagers. However, the situation hugely depends on a child's mental state. Thus, also considering the psychologist's advice, it can be concluded that parents should play a significant role in teaching a child to process the information on social networks and teaching self-love and self-acceptance.

2) Among students, is there a tendency of feeling anxious when not working? In other words, what is the tendency of hustle culture like in school?

According to the interview, this trend was present in all of the interviewees, and they also witnessed other of their peers dealing with it. Again, this can be caused by social comparisons and other environmental and personal factors. However, as the school's psychologist mentions it is not a secret that we live in a competitive environment where working is one of the most significant factors that let us stay afloat. Therefore, it is not hard to infer that hustle culture has thoroughly entered students' environment and is becoming more common due to social media.

3) How do these problems affect students' mental and physical health?

Social media has a great impact on students' health. As research and interviews reveal, many students experienced insecurities in their appearance. Not only their self-esteem suffers, but this can lead to some negative consequences. As a result of toxic ways of losing weight or changing their appearance, many teenagers sacrifice their health.

Since the study focused on two aspects that social media can affect, particularly hustle culture and self-confidence, further study should focus on one aspect to explore it fully. Furthermore, conclusions cannot be made for all countries or teenagers in general, due to the small scale of the research. If other students and specialists from other schools were included in the interview, conclusions could be more accurate. Also, an extensive survey would enrich the research, mainly in the parts where the numerical results are needed and are more appropriate. To conclude, the analysis provided a certain summary which is associated with a part of the high school students of NIS Aktobe. In my view, a more profound and more extensive study would enhance the research and give precise results.

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Appendix

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

DESCRIPTION: You are invited to participate in a research study that is aimed to understand and explain the tendency of hustle culture among high school students/teenagers and also impact of social media on it and teenagers' self-esteem.

You will be asked to answer 5-10 questions about correlation between social media consume and self-confidence and toxic productivity among teenagers. Please respond to the questions honestly and feel free to express your opinion because all your answers are important for this study. The interview will be audio recorded and the recorded materials will be used as a part of the presentation for Global Perspectives and Project Work class assignment.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation will take approximately 10 minutes.

ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY PROCEDURES: The interviews will be conducted in person, that is why is not possible to ensure your total anonymity. The interview will be audio recorded and materials will be used for a class assignment that is why it is not possible to ensure the confidentiality of the recorded materials. However, I can ensure that recorded materials will not be used or revealed anywhere else except for GPPW class.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS: If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. The alternative is not to participate. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Questions: If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research and its procedures, contact my GPPW teacher, Nathan Lawler, email: lawler_n@akb.nis.edu.kz

Please sign this consent from if you agree to participate in this study.

• I have carefully read the information provided;

• I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;

• I understand how the data collected will be used

• I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;

• With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Interview Protocol Form

Project: Impact of social media on self-esteem and hustle culture among teenagers

Research Question: How social media affect self-esteem and hustle culture among teenagers?

Date: 27.02.2023

Location: Aktobe, Kazakhstan

Interviewer: Ibrayem Tansholpan

Interviewee: 11th grade student at PMD NIS Aktobe.

Notes to interviewee:

Thank you for your participation. I believe your input will be valuable to this research. The interview took about 10 minutes, 10 major questions were asked. The interview was in English.

Transcript

- How often do you use social media?

- I use social media about every day. I think that it is a part of my life

- What kind of social media do you use?

- Often, I use Instagram and that is all

- Have you ever felt insecure or maybe even jealous while you were using social media?

- Sometimes, yes. Because when I see some accounts, some people that achieve more than me, I just feel some emotions. I would also like to be this girl, for example

- Have you ever felt like changing your appearance, maybe losing or gaining weight, or changing your style after being on social media?

- Yes, I felt this kind of feelings because of the beautiful pictures of other people and it sometimes motivates me to do these kind of things

- Have you ever gone through a diet or something because of that to change your appearance? How healthy do you think it was for you?

- No, I have never gone through a diet because of that, it is not healthy because on a diet you should have your own program, which is more appropriate for your organism

- How do you think social media affects people's confidence?

- It really affects because on social media people have some ideal type and when people want to achieve this perfection, all the things affect their confidence

- Thank you, have you seen that among your peers? You mentioned that social media affects confidence partially negatively, so have you ever witnessed that?

- Yes, among my friends, they try to do something unusual just to boost their confidence

- Thank you very much, now I would like to ask some questions about hustle culture. Are you familiar with this term? Or maybe toxic productivity?

- Yes, I am familiar, it is when people think that they should be productive or do something helpful for them all the time

- Thank you, you are actually right. This is a term that describes a process when people are addicted to working and think that they need to be productive all the time even though they sacrifice their health and well-being. So, do you think you or your surrounds experienced it?

- Yes, for example, me. Sometimes when I relax, I feel like I should do more exercises, more work to improve myself

- So, do you think it was healthy for you and how did you deal with it?

- I don't think that it's heathy, because everything should be on their time. Relaxing is not bad. To stay healthy, you should relax and that's okay. It's a crucial part of a development.

- You can also see this culture promoted on social media. The posts of who we call successful, motivational speeches and sayings like "work while others sleep". Moreover, now we live in the hyper-competitive world, so everyone by comparing themselves to others push themselves to work more and more. How much do you think teenagers are affected by this? How much healthy it is for them?

- Social media really affect teenagers because when they see success of somebody, they really want to reach it and when these kinds of people say like "work while others sleep", they say that only by this method people can be successful and their life will be better. So, teenagers accept the information like this and do it. That's not healthy because for the improvement each person has their own way

Interview Protocol Form

Project: Impact of social media on self-esteem and hustle culture among teenagers

Research Question: How social media affect self-esteem and hustle culture among teenagers?

Date: 21.02.2023

Location: Aktobe, Kazakhstan

Interviewer: Ibrayem Tansholpan

Interviewee: 11th grade student at PMD NIS Aktobe.

Notes to interviewee:

Thank you for your participation. I believe your input will be valuable to this research. The interview took about 10 minutes, 10 major questions were asked. The interview was in English.

Transcript

- The first question is how often do you use social media?

- Hello, I would answer that not so much and I use social media as it's needed. Sometimes, I just lie down and prefer to scroll down the phone

- Okay, what kind of social media do you use?

- These social media are well-known and commonly used among teenagers, YouTube, Instagram and TikTok

- Have you ever felt insecure or maybe even jealous while you were using social media? When you were scrolling and maybe when you saw someone then you thought "I want to be like him or her"?

- Of course, I guess that all teenagers went through this problem. After some practice, I started doing recently, I try to use social media less, so that I would not feel so insecure about myself

- Thank you, so have you ever felt like changing your appearance, maybe losing or gaining weight, maybe you have gone through diets or exercise routines to change your image?

- Yes, during the quarantine I spend a lot of time on social media, then I started to compare myself with other teenagers and their styles with my style, their body with my body. I felt so insecure and started to do some workouts and have like a healthy diet, lifestyle

- But how do you think how healthy these diets and lifestyle were for you?

- I'd say that it was kind of healthy and helped me in some way

- But it wasn't harmful, right?

- Yes

- Okay, well that's good. How do you think social media affects people's confidence? Especially teenagers'?

- I think that a lot of teenagers in their period, a lot of people start to feel insecure, have some problems. They pay so much attention to their appearance, in this period, so I think that social media affects a lot on people's confidence

- I got you, have you seen that among your peers, classmates, friends?

- As far as I remember, one of my friends started to lead a healthy lifestyle only after she got under the influence of some coaches and bloggers. But nowadays there are some coaches and bloggers who are interested only in money

- Thank you very much, now I would like to ask some questions about hustle culture. Are you familiar with this term? Or maybe toxic productivity?

- Yes, I heard something like this from my friends but I am not sure

- Okay, then let me explain a bit. This is a term that describes a process when people are addicted to working and think that they need to be productive all the time even though they sacrifice their health and well-being.

- Interesting

- So, do you think you or your surrounds experienced it?

- I don't know some details but one of my friends that I mentioned before went through this. Also, I met some other people with this but again I don't know about details

- Have you ever felt or do you feel anxious or guilty when you go out watch a film or rest?

- Yes, as I mentioned before during the quarantine when I started to have a healthy lifestyle, when I went with my friends for a walk or to watch a film, I would think "why do I have to watch this film with my friends" or "I should work more"

- You can also see this culture promoted on social media. The posts of who we call successful,

motivational speeches and sayings like "work while others sleep". Moreover, now we live in the hyper-competitive world, so everyone by comparing themselves to others push themselves to work more and more. How much do you think teenagers are affected by this?

- I can't judge the situation and can't answer for all people but I guess that all teenagers went through this once

- And do you think this lifestyle and social media is healthy for them around this culture?

- 50/50. As long as they know that some contents can be harmful for their health and as long as they can filter some information, I guess it will be healthy in some way, it can help to develop their selves and their lifestyle

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Interviewer: Ibrayem Tansholpan

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Notes to interviewee:

Thank you for your participation. I believe your input will be valuable to this research. The interview took about 10 minutes, 10 major questions were asked. The interview was in English.

Transcript

- How often do you use social media?

- As a teenager of modern world, I use social media everyday

- What kind of social media do you use?

- I prefer using Instagram, TikTok and WhatsApp

- Have you ever felt insecure, maybe even jealous while you were using social media?

- Every time when I open social media, I see all these beautiful pictures, selfies and it makes me to compare myself to them. But now I started to understand that it's because of my own insecurities and mental problems.

- Have you ever felt like changing your appearance, maybe losing or gaining weight, or changing your style after being on social media? Maybe you have gone through diets or exercise routines, something that would change your image?

- To be honest, yes. I remember how I tried to follow different diets for only to change my body image. Last year I forced myself to go for jogging everyday due to the influence of many people on the internet who run in the morning to "follow a healthy lifestyle".

- Thank you for your answer, so how healthy do you think it was for you?

- There were some negative consequences which still affect my life

- That's a pity, so how you think social media affects teenagers' confidence in general, from your observations?

- It affects a lot, especially, to teenagers who already have unstable mental health

- Thank you very much, now I would like to ask some questions about hustle culture

- Are you familiar with this term? Or maybe toxic productivity?

- I'm not sure about the term of hustle culture but I know what toxic productivity is, I think it's about people who force others to be productive by posting their fake "productive routine".

- Thanks, actually you are close to the definition of toxic productivity but to be sure, I will explain a bit

- Okay

- Hustle culture is a term that describes a process when people are addicted to working and think

that they need to be productive all the time by sacrificing their health and well-being. A similar thing relates to "toxic productivity", which happens when people consider that everything they do should be effective or productive. Through this people sometimes affect negatively on their health. So, do you think you or your surrounds experienced it?

- Sometimes I try to be more productive to reach my goals faster but then when I get burnout, I try to give a relax for myself. I know that some of my friends experienced it and we often talk about this topic.

- I see, but have you ever felt anxious or guilty when you go out, watch a film or rest?

- I think yes, it's hard for me to realize that my body cannot work all the time properly without resting.

- That's tough, thank you a lot and I have a last question for you. But before that I have a bit of information. On social media, you can see the posts of who we call successful, motivational speeches and sayings like "work while others sleep". Moreover, now we live in a hyper-competitive world, so everyone by comparing themselves to others pushes themselves to work more and more. How much do you think teenagers are affected by this? In your opinion, is it good for health?

- In my opinion, teenagers are the most affected group by toxic motivational posts and speakers. They already have unstable mental health, so they easily get affected and it leads to comparing themselves with these unrealistic posts on social media. Of course, this damages their mental health and physical health. That's why, I think it's important to remember that not everything that we see on social media is real.

Interview Protocol Form

Project: Impact of social media on self-esteem and hustle culture among teenagers

Research Question: How social media affect self-esteem and hustle culture among teenagers?

Date: 28.02.2023

Location: Aktobe, Kazakhstan

Interviewer: Ibrayem Tansholpan

Interviewee: psychologist at PMD NIS Aktobe.

Notes to interviewee:

Thank you for your participation. I believe your input will be valuable to this research. The interview took about 10 minutes, 4 major questions were asked. The interview was in English.

Transcript

- We know that social networks can sometimes negatively affect the self-esteem of a child, teenagers. How much do you think this is true?

- I think it is very important here, yes, indeed, how well the child is prepared socially and how well he is able to filter information and identify himself with this information. That is, the child should understand that the information on social networks is completely different than in real life. It is mostly unreliable and unrealistic and very many account creators use it

- Thank you, what can you say about this trend with self-esteem among teenagers?

- Yes, we work with teenagers. In general, a teenager's "I" concept and "who I really am" is still being formed and consciousness is being formed until the age of 21. This is exactly the contingent of people who do not know reliably about themselves who they are. And unfortunately, due to some circumstances, factors, intra-family, social and in general, for example, the child does not have this acceptance of who I am. That is, I am like this, with such weight, with such eye slits and so on. They have some kind of perfect shape, what they should be. Unfortunately, because of this, self-rejection may increase and the fact that they constantly compare themselves with other objects, of course, they may have low self-esteem. We meet with

such a contingent, we work to accept ourselves and accept others. What is self-esteem, is self-acceptance, self-love. I'm talking more about self-worth. Because self-esteem is one thing, a person can say I'm so good and cool, and at the same time he can do harmful things, which means there is no self-value. Therefore, this work is very broad

- Thank you for your answer, there are terms, like "hustle culture" and "toxic productivity", they describe a process when people are addicted to working and think that they need to be productive all the time even though they sacrifice their health and well-being. Have there been any cases when students have contacted you with this situation, problem?

- Of course, it's no secret what kind of environment we are in. Here is an area where it is necessary to achieve, where everyone wants to achieve, and they are constantly working on it, where a person develops competitiveness in himself. Of course, all these leads, I personally think, as a psychologist, to burnout. Then you need to say that this leads to a stressful state, chronic stress. Because, in order for a person to be happy, everything must be harmonious in him. And education, and creativity, and leisure, and friends, and sports, and everything. And when we do not see this balance, we necessarily begin to suffer some sphere of life and this leads to an intrapersonal catastrophe. A person feels deeply unhappy and is not even happy about his achievements.

- And the last question is are there any solutions, pieces of advice that you would give to students regarding the mentioned problems, hustle culture or low self-esteem due to the social media?

- I believe that social networks are also a part of our life and we cannot ignore it. But we must have a clear culture of differentiation that social networks are an addition to our life, but not the most important part. Most importantly, it should not be or become a value. This should be as an addition to what I have already. There always should be what you have and what you value. This is your "I", your family, your friends, your school, real life and a part of the social network. Yes, because it also makes your life interesting, saturated, because you also gain a lot of information,

you can share with what you know, it's normal. However, it is very important not to lose the edge, that is, it exists, it is a part of my life, but not the whole.

Interview Protocol Form

Project: Impact of social media on self-esteem and hustle culture among teenagers

Research Question: How social media affect self-esteem and hustle culture among teenagers?

Date: 01.03.2023

Location: Aktobe, Kazakhstan

Interviewer: Ibrayem Tansholpan

Interviewee: 11th grade student at PMD NIS Aktobe.

Notes to interviewee:

Thank you for your participation. I believe your input will be valuable to this research. The interview took about 10 minutes, 10 major questions were asked. The interview was in English

Transcript

- How often do you use social media?

- Hello! To be honest, social media takes a lot of my leisure time, even at classes I'd prefer chat with my friends, rather than studying

- I see, more precisely, what kind of social media do you use?

- I prefer social medias like WhatsApp, Instagram and TikTok

- Okay, then have you ever felt insecure, maybe even jealous while you were using those?

- Well, some people might get more insecure when see someone showing their achievements and etc. But I don't use social media to feel these terrible emotions

- That is good to hear, so you have never felt like changing your appearance, maybe losing or gaining weight, or changing your style after being on social media, right?

- No, I don't think so, maybe-maybe somewhere in my soul I have changed a little even, and haven't recognized something while I was getting influence from social media, but I can't really say that social media made me change.

- Thank you, but have you seen that among your peers? Maybe your friends struggled with this?

- Well, I don't know if my friends had some influence of social media on them, but I know that this issue is widespread among teenagers, they see someone who buys really expensive things, so they try to earn more and more money to reach that level, in order to be like that users in social media

- Thank you very much, now I would like to ask some questions about hustle culture. Are you familiar with this term? Or maybe toxic productivity?

- I think hustle culture, not as bad as people say, it is just a way to get succeed somewhere

- Okay, well then let me give a brief explanation for them. Generally, "hustle culture" is a term that describes a process when people are addicted to working and think that they need to be productive all the time by sacrificing their health and well-being.

- Do you think you or your surrounds experienced it?

- Hmm, I don't think that my surrounding are into this culture, but I think it is a real problem, that people might destroy their health to get they want

- Right, have you ever felt or do you feel anxious or guilty when you go out, watch a film or rest? Do thoughts of a "need to work more" bother you at those moments?

- Yes, this terrible feeling bothers me more and more last time, even if I know that I am on my rest time, I can't deal with that

- That's a pity, you can also notice this culture promoted on social media. The posts of who we call successful, motivational speeches and sayings like "work while others sleep". Moreover, now we live in a hyper-competitive world, so everyone by comparing themselves to others

pushes themselves to work more and more.

- How much do you think teenagers are affected by this? Is it healthy?

- It is not healthy for teenagers, but this issue is really inevitable, to get succeed you should do more than others do

- Are there any solutions, recommendations, or advice you would like to give to teenagers on this topic?

- I am not the person who will give some pieces of advises, but the only thing I can say, that reaching goals by harming yourself won't be that useful