



Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

## **Impact of Frequent Use of Social Media on Human Health**

Sultan Mahmood

Department of Mass communication, Government college university (38000) Faisalabad, Pakistan. Email: Sb.ibrahimi@gmail.com

Samana Raza

Bachelor of Arts, University of Sargodha (40100), Pakistan. Email: hsamana73@gmail.com

Asad Ali

M.PHIL Scholar at School of Sociology, Quaid e Azam University, Islamabad (15320), Pakistan. Email: Asadali.bakhrani@gmail.com

Saima Batool

Department of Biochemistry, Bahauddin Zakariya University (60800) Multan, Pakistan. Email: saimabatooldmc@gmail.com

Fatima Bibi

Department of Psychology, University of Mianwali (42200), Pakistan. Email: fsaif2520@gmail.com

Syed Muhammad Mudassir Ud Din

Department of Psychology, University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muzaffarabad. Email: mudassirmosavi7@gmail.com

Kashif Ali

Department of Educational Sciences, National University of Modern Language Islamabad NUML (44000), Pakistan. Email: kashifali77205@gmail.com

Swera Hafeez

Department of Anthropology, ARID AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY RAWALPINDI (46000), Pakistan. Email: swerahafeez022@gmail.com

Ahmad Ali

Department of Governance and Public Policy (GPP), National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad (44000), Pakistan. Email: ahmadalihafizi1455@gmail.com

Dilawar Abbas

Department of Governance & public policy, National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad (44000), Pakistan. Email: dilabbas2001@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

Social media has significantly evolved in tenure of its volume, quality, and utility,



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

in the past twenty years. Similarly, to check how essential nutrients support physical health, engaging the contents that benefit the mental well-being. Advances in technology have made this enriching content widely accessible through social media websites, which helps in conversation about mental health issues in contemporary society. Nonetheless, the beginning of the internet and social websites has directed to a shift towards virtual interactions, often resulting in feelings of being alone, which have negative consequences on intellectual and physical health. The major threat for parents, communities, and scholars is the adolescents' frequent use of social networking websites, as it has advantages and disadvantages. This study is conducted to know, how the frequent use of social sites impacts mental well-being. The results of this research indicate that younger generation of this era is the victim of mental health issues due to excessive use of social communication sites. Teenagers are a bit worried about likes and comments on their posts that they share on social media websites. It is necessary to explore the linkage between social communication websites and mental well-being because of extensive use of social sites by younger generation. Exploring the relationship between mental health and social websites is the initial step, after that we have to check that, how social sites affect the mental health of our youth.

Key Words: Social media, Mental health, Adolescents

### **Introduction**

For parents, scholars, and society the major threat is the excessive use of social communication sites as a concern to psychological health. The most common activity for the current generation is to devote more time watching social media websites. Web 2.0 and 3.0 including sites like Facebook, twitter, Snapchat and many more as well as online games like PUBG and YouTube are responsible for the bad impacts on the mental health of current generation. These sites of amusement for younger generation are expanding more rapidly and threatening psychological health. Merriam-Webster (2014) stated that, "social media include the sites through which people can connect to online communities, to share their thinking, creative ideas, and media like photos and videos". Since last 10 years social websites such as Twitter and Facebook have extremely changed the experience of online browsing, allowing their clients to share their messages, ideas, pictures, videos, and their personal information's.

Social site users showing huge interest in online interaction in their everyday lives, as a result of increasing users of social media websites. Mark Zuckerberg on august 27, 2015 stated that Facebook had approximately 1 billion users, and one person from every 7 people daily engaged globally to stay connected to their fellows and society.

The lack of awareness about the consequences of abundant use of social sites on the mental well-being of adolescents is a rising challenge for the researchers. Earlier research has shown the linkage between social communication websites and several negative impacts such as increased nervousness, stress, sadness, and feeling alone. The extreme use of social media has bad impacts on the mental well-being of young ones.

### **Social media use and mental health**



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

In 2020, about 3.8 billion people are utilizing their time by using social media, which account for around 50 percent of the worldwide people (We Are Social 2020). Earlier researches explain that, individuals having issues about psychological disorders are frequent users of social sites, utilizing advanced technologies, and extreme use of smartphones to communicate with their friends and family (Firth et al. 2015; Glick et al. 2016; Torous et al. 2014 a, b). Furthermore, the earlier studies proven that the extreme usage of social communication websites put bad impacts on psychological health and individuals are facing different mental health challenges. The results of earlier studies from 2015 shows that the 50 percent of psychiatric patients were frequent users of social media, including younger generation of the society (Trefflich et al. 2015). About 47 percent outdoor and indoor patients of schizophrenia are the frequent users of social media websites, among 79 percent of individuals log in to their social sites once a week (Miller et al. 2015). The increasing hype of social communication websites between the mentally ill patients has addressed the rising trajectory, as the studies of 2017 shows that around 70 percent individuals who are facing mental illness are excessive users of social media websites, and belongs to lower income community of the society (Brunette et al. 2019).

Further studies shows that the individuals who facing mental illness issues shown the keen interest in utilizing social media sites as compared to the general public, with some individuals using 79 percent of social communication sites (Naslund et al. 2016). Similar issues are found through recent studies between middle-aged and older adults who are the victims of mental illness and receiving treatment from community, and 72 percent of these patients are users of social communication sites (Aschbrenner et al. 2018 b). Another study revealed that the individuals experiencing the beginning of psychosis were frequent consumer of social media websites (Abdel-Baki et al. 2017).

Research held by the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) revealed that the individuals suffering from schizophrenia spectrum disorder approximately spent 2 hours of every day on browsing social media sites (Gay et al. 2016). Over 97 percent go young adults and adolescents aging between 12 to 21 suffering from psychosis and mental illness disorders spent 2.5 hours daily on social communication sites (Birnbaum et al. 2017 b). About 98 percent of teenagers aging from 13 to 18 are heavy users of social sites like YouTube snapchat, reported by community mental health clinics (Aschbrenner et al. 2019).

### **Anxiety due to the use of social media**

The results of numerous researches show the association between mental illness and social communication sites. Similarly, the results of the research show that 45 percent of the Britin community feel anxious when they are unable to log in their social communication accounts (Anxiety 2012). Rosen et al. (2013) stated that the younger group frequently check the notifications of their social communication accounts. Moreover, adolescents occasionally feel nervous when they cannot view messages of their social accounts, which might result in Phantom Vibration Syndrome. The victims of this syndrome often feel that their mobile is vibrating's (Drouin et al. 2012; Rothberg et al. 2010). Victims of PVS continuously check the messages of social communication sites to reduce their anxiety.



Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

## **Stress due to social media**

Addiction of social communication sites is widespread in this current generation, and breaking the streak of this addiction can be challenging and raises more issues. By avoiding from likes and comments can save the individuals from more complications. People usually compare their lives with the ideal survives of others. Dick (2013) stated that the social communication sites like as Facebook, twitter provide vast information that are useful to us, but these sites also harm our personal privacy. The feedback on shred photos and videos by community can cause the stress and mental illness. Extreme use of social communication sites urges the feeling of being unhappy and distracts college and university students from their studies (The Hearty Soul 2016). Earlier studies found the encouraging and harmful impacts of social communication sites, encouraging possessions include easily access to precise information's, while drawbacks include mental illness, stress, depression and online harassment (Kaur and Bashir 2015). Research conducted on social media users aging from 11 to 93 resulted that the users of younger ages are more susceptible to mental health issues (Strickland 2014). A study states that the students of colleges that uses to spent time on Facebook feels more stress and depression (Park, Song and Lee 2014). Kaur and Bhat (2016) also indicate how social media sites impact the mental well-being. So, we can conclude that the continuous use of social communication sites had adverse effects on mental well-being and psychological health.

## **Depression due to social media**

The recent studies proved that the social media websites are the pivot point of mental illness and psychological disorders in younger generation of modern era. Excessive use of these sites may lead to serious issues of mental illness such as anxiety, depression and stress. Research states that the spending more time on Facebook can increase the levels of depression in adolescents (Pantic et al. 2012). Individuals who spent considerable time on social communication sites face the issues of loneliness and stress among the students (Lou et al. 2012). Excessive usage of social communication sites can cause psychological issues, adjustment issues and self-esteem issues (Kalpidou et al. 2011). A study directed by Davila (2012) states that the social media sites have more negative impacts than that of positive impacts. Some other activities like playing games, chatting and browsing study material can reduce the risk of depression (Kraut et al. 1998) (Shah and Grant 2002).

## **Loneliness due to social media**

The huge increase in social websites use, among the adolescents is notable and due to over use the generation of current time feeling loneliness than earlier generations, possibly making them the loneliest group of the era (Pittman and Reich 2016). In this modern era loneliness is a critical problem that may leads towards the savior mental illness issues (Patterson and Veenstra 2010) (Boivin et al. 1995). It is reported that the severe usage of social communication sites leads to the social distancing in the real communities and societies. Over time usage of social media sites by teenagers can cause the feeling of loneliness (Yao and Zhong 2013). Excessive use of social sites can exert bad impacts on intellectual power of



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

younger generations (Kim et al. 2009). The Mental Health Foundation of UK stated that 60 percent of youth aging from 18 to 34 feel alone, if they don't have access to their social accounts (Murphy, 2010). Recent studies indicate the students having a greater number of friends on Facebook will feel more loneliness (Skues et al. 2012). On the other hand, the individuals who less engaged with social networks usually experience higher level of shyness, resulting in less social activity (Deters and Mehel 2012). Research states that the updates through social communication sites can help alleviate feelings of loneliness (Sheldon 2012).

### **Mental health and social relationships**

Friendships are vital for our mental well-being (Mental Health Foundation). The value and amount of social interactions can effect moral behaviors, physical health, and psychological well-being (Umberson and Montez 2010). Several studies indicate that social sustenance can reduce feelings of isolation and nervousness (Johnson et al. 2001). Participating in co-curricular activities and playing outdoor games can lessen loneliness (Weaver et al. 2005) and improve the mental health and physical health (Schneider et al. 1991). Depression has association with poor social connections, loneliness and elevated suicide risk (Schuster et al. 1990). Interpersonal communication helps to improve mental health (Reich et al. 2010). Different research shows that strong social connections are necessary for mental health and well-being. Moreover, sustenance from fellows, and society can reduce mental illness issues, following stressful circumstances and relief from depression as well as anxiety (Maulik et al. 2011).

### **Conclusion**

This research explains the brief review of a substantial amount of data related to the linkage between social communication sites and mental health. The results of the study show the significant association between social websites use and intellectual illness, particularly among younger generations. The mental illness issues that urge during adolescence can cause long-term difficulties, indicating the necessity for more research in this field of study. The present studies clearly demonstrate a strong linkage between the use of social communication sites and the mental well-being of youth, and have to mitigate this major issue of the present time. The harmful effects of social communication websites can adversely impact this generation, especially youth. This research reveals the association among social media activity and mental well-being concerns in current time and examines the threats of this relationship to youth. It helps to overcome the various issues faced by youth, which include online harassment, depression, sexting, fatigue, loneliness, cyberbullying, suppression of emotions, and concentration difficulties. Each of these issues directly or indirectly affects the mental well-being of youth. The studies show that our youth is at risk, especially in this challenging social environment. To mitigate these risks, counseling programs, educational programs, and effective strategies should be implemented in schools, colleges, and institutions. Awareness campaigns can enhance understanding of how social communication websites affects the mental health of youth. Moreover, social communication sites should be restricted to



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

particular age groups, and applications that promote vulgar content, hate or racism should be removed from the internet.

### References

- Boivin, M., Hymel, S., & Bukowski, W. M. (1995). The roles of social withdrawal, peer rejection, and victimization by peers in predicting loneliness and depressed mood in childhood. *Development and Psychopathology*, 7(4), 765-785.
- Chou, K. L., Liang, K., & Sareen, J. (2011). The association between social isolation and DSM-IV mood, anxiety, and substance use disorders: wave 2 of the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions. *The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 72(11), 1515.
- Davila, J., Hershenberg, R., Feinstein, B. A., Gorman, K., Bhatia, V., & Starr, L. R. (2012). Frequency and quality of social networking among young adults: Associations with depressive symptoms, rumination, and co-rumination. *Psychology of popular media culture*, 1(2), 72.
- Deters, F. G., & Mehl, M. R. (2013). Does posting Facebook status updates increase or decrease loneliness? An online social networking experiment. *Social psychological and personality science*, 4(5), 579-586.
- Bashir, H., & Bhat, S. A. (2017). Effects of social media on mental health: A review. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 4(3), 125-131.
- Drouin, M., Kaiser, D. H., & Miller, D. A. (2012). Phantom vibrations among undergraduates: Prevalence and associated psychological characteristics. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(4), 1490-1496.
- Gonzalez, J. S., Penedo, F. J., Antoni, M. H., Durán, R. E., McPherson-Baker, S., Ironson, G., ... & Schneiderman, N. (2004). Social support, positive states of mind, and HIV treatment adherence in men and women living with HIV/AIDS. *Health Psychology*, 23(4), 413.
- Gray, R., Vitak, J., Easton, E. W., & Ellison, N. B. (2013). Examining social adjustment to college in the age of social media: Factors influencing successful transitions and persistence. *Computers & Education*, 67, 193-207.
- Holma, K. M., Melartin, T. K., Haukka, J., Holma, I. A., Sokero, T. P., & Isometsä, E. T. (2010). Incidence and predictors of suicide attempts in DSM-IV major depressive disorder: a five-year prospective study. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 167(7), 801-808.
- Johnson, J. G., Alloy, L. B., Panzarella, C., Metalsky, G. I., Rabkin, J. G., Williams, J. B., & Abramson, L. Y. (2001). Hopelessness as a mediator of the association between social support and depressive symptoms: findings of a study of men with HIV. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, 69(6), 1056.
- Kalpidou, M., Costin, D., & Morris, J. (2011). The relationship between Facebook and the well-being of undergraduate college students. *CyberPsychology, behavior, and social networking*, 14(4), 183-189.
- Batool, M., & Nasir, M. (2024). Social Media Usage by Teenager and Adult Students and Its Impact on Their Academic Performance and Mental Health: A Post COVID-19 Comparative Analysis. *UCP Journal of Business Perspectives*, 2(1), 26-42.



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

- Kim, J., LaRose, R., & Peng, W. (2009). Loneliness as the cause and the effect of problematic Internet use: The relationship between Internet use and psychological well-being. *Cyberpsychology & behavior*, 12(4), 451-455.
- Kraut, R., Patterson, M., Lundmark, V., Kiesler, S., Mukophadhyay, T., & Scherlis, W. (1998). Internet paradox: A social technology that reduces social involvement and psychological well-being? *American psychologist*, 53(9), 1017.
- Lou, L. L., Yan, Z., Nickerson, A., & McMorris, R. (2012). An examination of the reciprocal relationship of loneliness and Facebook use among first-year college students. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 46(1), 105-117.
- Maulik, P. K., Eaton, W. W., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2011). The effect of social networks and social support on mental health services use, following a life event, among the Baltimore Epidemiologic Catchment Area cohort. *The journal of behavioral health services & research*, 38, 29-50.
- Moody, E. J. (2001). Internet use and its relationship to loneliness. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 4(3), 393-401.
- Murphy, C. (2010). Young more lonely than the old, the UK survey suggests. *BBC News*.
- Pantic, I., Damjanovic, A., Todorovic, J., Topalovic, D., Bojovic-Jovic, D., Ristic, S., & Pantic, S. (2012). Association between online social networking and depression in high school students: behavioral physiology viewpoint. *Psychiatria Danubina*, 24(1.), 90-93.
- Park, N., Song, H., & Lee, K. M. (2014). Social networking sites and other media use, acculturation stress, and psychological well-being among East Asian college students in the United States. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 36, 138-146.
- Patterson, A. C., & Veenstra, G. (2010). Loneliness and risk of mortality: A longitudinal investigation in Alameda County, California. *Social science & medicine*, 71(1), 181-186.
- Pittman, M., & Reich, B. (2016). Social media and loneliness: Why an Instagram picture may be worth more than a thousand Twitter words. *Computers in human behavior*, 62, 155-167.
- Reich, W. A., Lounsbury, D. W., Zaid-Muhammad, S., & Rapkin, B. D. (2010). Forms of social support and their relationships to mental health in HIV-positive persons. *Psychology, Health & Medicine*, 15(2), 135-145.
- Rosen, L. D. (2012). *iDisorder: Understanding Our Obsession with Technology and Overcoming Its Hold on Us*. MacMillan CA.
- Rothberg, M. B., Arora, A., Hermann, J., Kleppel, R., St Marie, P., & Visintainer, P. (2010). Phantom vibration syndrome among medical staff: a cross-sectional survey. *Bmj*, 341.
- Schneider, S. G., Taylor, S. E., Hammen, C., Kemeny, M. E., & Dudley, J. (1991). Factors influencing suicide intent in gay and bisexual suicide ideators: Differing models for men with and without human immunodeficiency virus. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 61(5), 776.
- Schuster, T. L., Kessler, R. C., & Aseltine Jr, R. H. (1990). Supportive interactions, negative interactions, and depressed mood. *American journal of community psychology*, 18(3), 423-438.



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

- Sheldon, P. (2012). Profiling the non-users: Examination of life-position indicators, sensation seeking, shyness, and loneliness among users and non-users of social network sites. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(5), 1960-1965.
- Skues, J. L., Williams, B., & Wise, L. (2012). The effects of personality traits, self-esteem, loneliness, and narcissism on Facebook use among university students. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(6), 2414-2419.
- Strickland, A. (2014). Exploring the effects of social media use on the mental health of young adults.
- Pahore, M. R., Adnan, M., & Hameed, B. (2021). Social media usage and mental health: A cross-sectional study in Pakistan. *Global Mass Communication Studies Review*, VI (1), 242-253.
- Umberson, D., & Karas Montez, J. (2010). Social relationships and health: A flashpoint for health policy. *Journal of health and social behavior*, 51(1\_suppl), S54-S66.
- Yao, M. Z., & Zhong, Z. J. (2014). Loneliness, social contacts, and Internet addiction: A cross-lagged panel study. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 30, 164-170.