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The Digital Dilemma: How Social Media is Affecting our Emotional Well-being

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Abstract

Internet and Social media have become an essential part of our daily routine, allowing us to connect and be close with others, share information, and engage in various activities. Nevertheless, the extensive use of social media has raised many questions about its influence on our health and emotional well-being. The purpose of this review is to provide an in-depth analysis of the literature on how social media distresses our emotional well-being. Current review was conducted by investigating existing literature, the works was obtained through searches on academic databases, including PubMed, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar. The literature found that social networking use can have undesirable effects on the emotional well-being, which may include increased feelings of anxiety and depression, decreased quality of social relationships, and declined in levels of life gratification. As a conclusion, the impact of media platforms on emotional well-being is multifaceted and sophisticated. While social media use has been associated with positive outcomes such as increased social support and improved mood, it has also been associated with negative outcomes such as increased anxiety, decreased life satisfaction, poorer sleep quality, decreased social relationships, decreased academic performance, cyberbullying, and negative body image.

Keywords: Social media, Emotional well-being, Platforms, Websites, Digital dilemma

1. Introduction

Internet and Social media have become an essential part of our daily routine, allowing us to connect and be close with others, share information, and engage in various activities (Scott *et al.*, 2022). Nevertheless, the extensive use of social media has raised many questions about its influence on our health and emotional well-being. The purpose of this review is to provide an in-depth analysis of the literature on how social media distresses our emotional well-being.

As time advanced, the persistent integration of social media applications into the fabric of modern society has deeply transformed the way individuals communicate, access information, and hypothesis their social characters (González-Bailón & Lelkes, 2022). This typical alteration has accompanied in an era of incomparable connectivity and data spreading. However, the exponential evolution and existance of social media have announced a complicated and active

digital scene, characterized by a coming together of potential benefits and unplanned significances.

This review goes-on to embark on a wide-ranging exploration of the involved interaction between social media and the delicate tapestry of anthropological sentiments. As the digital phase flourishes, so too do the worries surrounding the impact of these platforms on our emotional well-being (McCarthy *et al.*, 2023). This investigation explores into a vast body of empirical studies, academic frameworks, and interdisciplinary standpoints to highlight the precise behaviors in which social media lines with emotional states, both positively and negatively.

By explicating the complex mechanisms and multifaceted factors supporting the digital dilemma, this review attempts to pay attention to a nuanced considerate of the intricate network of interactions between entities, technology, and the emotional magnitudes of human existence. It is authoritative to unravel the

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intricate nuances of this dynamic relationship, as it holds profound allegations for mental health, social dynamics, and the broader well-being of individuals in the Third Industrial Revolution.

2. Literature review

A negative effect on our emotional well-being could be produced by using social networking websites as it shown by many studies, increased feelings of depression and anxiety had been linked to media platforms use for instance (Perrin, 2015; Woods & Scott, 2016). This could occur because of social judgment, where users of social media tend to compare their lives to others and have sense as insufficient (Lin *et al.*, 2016; Shakyia & Christakis, 2017). Moreover, lesser stages of life fulfillment had been linked with social media use also (Krasnova *et al.*, 2013).

Another effect could be as a result of using Social media may also disturb our sleep quality, which is crucial for psychological welfare (Tandoc *et al.*, 2015). Studies done by researchers have shown that using social media in uncontrolled way can interfere with our sleep patterns and cause sleep deprivation, which can result in negative mood states and emotional instability (Chen *et al.*, 2022; Hampton *et al.*, 2016). Furthermore, our social relationships can affect by social media use, which are vital for emotional well-being. Studies have shown that extreme social media use can lead to a decrease in face-to-face interactions and a reduction in the value of societal relationships (Ellison *et al.*, 2007; McAndrew & Jeong, 2012). Feelings of Social isolation and loneliness can result in, which considered to be a risk factors for mental health problems (Huang, 2010).

Social media network use, furthermore, can affect our academic functioning, which is also linked to emotional well-being. Revisions have shown also that social media use can divert students from their studies and lead to poor speculative performance (Ellison *et al.*, 2011). This can result in feelings of anxiety and stress, which can undesirably influence emotional well-being.

3. Methods

Current review was conducted by investigating existing literature on the subject of social media and emotional well-being. The works was obtained through searches on academic databases and websites, including PubMed, PsycINFO, and Google Scholar. We looked for keywords included “emotional well-being”, “social media”, “anxiety”, “depression”, “life satisfaction,” “social relationships”, “sleep quality”, and “academic performance.”

4. Results

The literature found that social networking use can have undesirable effects on the emotional well-being, which may include increased feelings of anxiety and depression, decreased quality of social relationships, and declined in levels of life gratification. Moreover, social media use can affect our sleep quality and academic performance, which are essential for emotional well-being.

4.1. Social media use and depression

Many studies have examined the association between social media applications use and depression. A study conducted by Jönsson *et al.* (2017) found that frequent internet use in Digital Life was associated with increased symptoms of depression in young adults. Similarly, a study conducted by Jelenchick *et al.* (2013) found that internet community use was related to increased depressive symptoms in adolescents. Another study by Perrin (Perrin, 2015) found that Facebook use, predict declines in idiosyncratic well-being in young adults.

Till now, The mechanisms behind relationship between depression and social media use are not so clear. But, researchers have found that social comparison may take a part in the play. Social comparison theory proposes that people evaluate their own abilities and attributes by comparing themselves to others (Wang *et al.*, 2012). On social media platforms, individuals are exposed to idealized images of others' lives, which can cause feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem (Lin *et al.*, 2016; Shakyia & Christakis, 2017). This can contribute to the development of depressive symptoms.

4.2. Social media use and anxiety

There's been a lot of research on social media and how it affects anxiety, especially in young people. One study found college students who used social media a over the average were more likely to have anxiety (Woods & Scott, 2016). teens who went overboard on social media were more prone to anxiety and social phobia, also showed by another study (Andreassen & Pallesen, 2014).

It's not completely clear why this occurs, but there are some thoughts. Maybe all that social media can make you have sense of isolation, even though you're connected to the whole world online (Przybylski & Weinstein, 2017). On the other hand, maybe it's the pressure to keep up with the whole thing and reply to communications all the time that makes people anxious and tensed (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011).

4.3. Social media use and life satisfaction

Our fascination with social media isn't always a recipe for happiness. A recent study by [Krasnova et al. \(2013\)](#) suggests a negative link between social media use and life satisfaction, especially when people use it for constant comparisons (think: "My friend's vacation looks amazing, and here I am stuck at work"). Similarly, [Vannucci et al. \(2017\)](#) found that mindlessly scrolling through Facebook, without actively engaging with content, is associated with a decline in well-being and overall satisfaction with their life.

The reasons behind this connection remain somewhat murky. However, some research suggests social media use might be chipping away at the quality of our real-life relationships, which in turn contributes to lower life satisfaction ([Ellison et al., 2007](#)). Furthermore, social media might be fueling the flames of FOMO (fear of missing out), leading to anxiety and dissatisfaction with our own lives ([Turel & Qahri-Saremi, 2016](#)).

4.4. Social media use and sleep quality

Researchers had tried to examining the link between public networks using and sleep quality. [Chen et al. \(2022\)](#) in their study revealed that when using internet community and social media applications before going to bed was connected to worse sleep quality and shorter sleep interval. Similarly, another study done by [Rosen et al. \(2014\)](#) exposed similar results with the previous researchers that using electronic devices for serving the internet before bedtime was connected to poorer sleep quality. The precise reasons behind the association between internet communities (social media) use and sleep quality are not fully known. Yet, studies have proposed that the body's internal clock may be disordered by using social media, which controls sleep patterns ([Twenge & Campbell, 2018](#)). In addition, social media applications consuming could result in amplified mental alertness, making it harder to both fall asleep and remain asleep ([Jelenchick et al., 2013](#)).

4.5. Social media use and social relationships

The association between the exploitation of social media and interpersonal connections have been delved by Academic papers to reveals its possible relationship. A study conducted by [McAndrew & Jeong \(2012\)](#) discovered that the continuous use of social media when using internet was connected to a decline in in-person social activities and a diminished quality of interpersonal connections. Similarly, research by [Ellison et al. \(2007\)](#) also revealed that social media

usage by users was tied to a decrease in overall life contentment as a result of weakened public relationships. The precise reasons behind the connection between social media tradition and interpersonal connections persist somewhat unknown. However, studies have proposed that social media usage may contribute to a decline in the quality of social exchanges, as individuals may feel less attached and struggle to effectively communicate face-to-face ([Appel et al., 2016](#)). Additionally, the use of social media may also lead to a decrease in empathy, a crucial aspect for establishing and nurturing social connections ([Rosen et al., 2013](#)).

4.6. Social media use and academic performance

Studies have tested the connection among social media use and educational overall performance. An observation through [Ellison et al. \(2011\)](#) located that social media use was negatively associated with instructional performance in college students. Similarly, a paper via [Naslund et al. \(2020\)](#) determined that social media use changed into negatively related to college students' GPA.

The mechanisms describe the relationship among social media use and educational performance also are not fully understood. However, studies have cautioned that social media use can distract students from their studies, leading to procrastination and terrible time control ([Kross et al., 2013](#)). Moreover, social media use also can intervene with cognitive processing and reminiscence consolidation, that are critical for educational achievement ([Chen et al., 2022](#)).

4.7. Social media use and cyberbullying

Cyberbullying and its relationship with social media use had examined by studies, for example, [Jönsson et al. \(2017\)](#) found that internet community use for social media applications was certainly associated with cyberbullying victimization and victimization. Similarly, a study by [Gokul & C \(2023\)](#) found that social media use was associated with an increased risk of cyber harassment and victimization.

The Poor and misunderstanding for the clarification that determine the association between cyberbullying and internet use especially in social media applications. Therefore, researches have shown that social media can be used to provide a clarification for anonymity and anonymity suppression, which can lead to cyberbullying ([Barlett, 2023](#)). Furthermore, the use of social media can also facilitate the spread of gossip and negative information, potentially leading to personal victimization as a result of cyberbullying ([Kee et al., 2022](#)).

4.8. Social media use and body image

Social media can be considered as a double-edged sword for young women, especially when it comes to body shape. Fardouly *et al.* (2015) in a research suggests that spending a long period on social media platforms is linked to being more worried about their looks and feeling worse about their bodies. This isn't surprising for Aparicio-Martinez *et al.* (2019) study which found that young women exposed to images of slim ideal bodies on social platforms were more likely to have negative body image and even participate in unhealthy eating behaviors, when we consider another supportive study.

Till now, the exact reasons why media platforms take a toll on body shape are still being explored. However, some scholars believe it sets unrealistic attractiveness ideals (Henriques & Patnaik, 2020). Scrolling through feeds occupied with superficially perfect bodies can make you feel like you can never measure up, leading to amplified anxiety about your look. Societal assessment also plays a role (Pedalino & Camerini, 2022). It's easy to fall into the deception of comparing yourself to the filtered and cautiously curated pictures you see online, which can be a formula for feeling terrible about your own figure.

5. Conclusion

As a conclusion, the impact of media platforms on emotional well-being is multifaceted and sophisticated. While social media use has been associated with positive outcomes such as increased social support and improved mood, it has also been associated with negative outcomes such as increased anxiety, decreased life satisfaction, poorer sleep quality, decreased social relationships, decreased academic performance, cyberbullying, and negative body image. Despite the mechanisms that connect these relationships are not so clear to researchers, but scientific papers suggest that social comparison, FOMO, decreased empathy, cyberbullying, and unrealistic beauty standards may play a role. It is important for people to be alert of their social media practice and to participate in strategies to promote optimistic consequences and minimize undesirable results.

Additionally, it is important for researchers to continue to explore the relationship between social media use and psychological Health, as the scenery of social media is constantly moving and evolving. Moreover, it is inevitable for legislators and educators to develop interferences and policies to promote positive social media use and to lessen the negative costs of social media usage, particularly among susceptible people such as youngsters and young adults.

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