Exploring the Impact of Social Media on Mental Health

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Abstract*: This study explores the impact of social media on mental health, revealing a complex relationship between the two. While excessive social media use can lead to negative effects like anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem, it can also have positive effects like connecting people, providing emotional support, and promoting mental well-being. The research shows that individual differences, usage patterns, and platform preferences influence social media's impact on mental health. To mitigate negative effects, strategies like taking breaks, setting boundaries, and following mental health-promoting accounts are recommended. The study highlights the need for responsible social media use and encourages individuals to be mindful of their online activities to foster a positive relationship between social media and mental health. By understanding social media's impact, we can develop healthy social media habits, inform policies, and promote mental health awareness. This research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on social media's effects on mental health, emphasizing the importance of balanced and informed social media use to protect and promote mental well-being.*

Keywords: Social Media, Mental Health, Anxiety, Depression, Emotional Health

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media is a big part of our lives. But too much social media can be bad for us. But, spending too much time on social media can be bad for our mental health. It can make us feel anxious, depressed, lonely, and unhappy with ourselves. This study wants to look at how social media affects our mental health. We want to know how social media affects us. We want to know what's good and bad about it. and how they affect our self-esteem, relationships, and overall well-being. We also want to know how social media affects different people, like young or old, male or female, and people from different cultures. By understanding this, we can find ways to use social media in a healthy way and avoid its negative effects.

Our goal is to help people use social media in a way that is good for their mental health, and to inform policies and practices that promote healthy social media use.

II. LITERATURE REVIEWS

A global study found a link between excessive social media use and negative effects. Our research showed that people of different ages are addicted to social media. Here are some literature reviews.

1. Social media too much can make young adults feel more anxious and depressed. This happens because they compare their lives to others' perfect online profiles and feel bad about themselves. Many studies have found a link between social media use and feelings of sadness, worry, and loneliness. Social media can also create unrealistic expectations and encourage people to buy things they don't need, making mental health issues worse. We need to understand how social media affects mental health so we can find ways to help people use it in a healthier way.

2. Too much social media can make young adults feel anxious and sad. They compare their lives to others' perfect photos and feel bad about themselves. This can lead to feelings of sadness, worry, and loneliness. Social media can also make people want things they don't need, which can make mental health problems worse. We need to know how social media affects our minds so we can use it in a way that's good for us.

3. Social media's effect on sleep and tiredness is a big worry. Looking at screens and getting constant notifications can disrupt sleep, leading to chronic tiredness. This can worsen mental health issues like depression and anxiety. Also, social media can trigger the brain's pleasure centers, releasing feel-good chemicals that can lead to addiction. Knowing

IJARSCT

ISSN (Online) 2581-9429

International Journal of Advanced Research in Science, Communication and Technology (IJARSCT)

International Open-Access, Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, Refereed, Multidisciplinary Online Journal

Impact Factor: 7.67

Volume 5, Issue 2, March 2025

how social media affects sleep and addiction is vital for creating effective solutions to promote healthy social media habits.

4. Long-term studies are necessary to understand how social media use affects mental health. Researchers need to study how social media impacts different groups, like kids and seniors. By doing this, researchers can create effective plans to help people use social media in a healthy way and reduce its negative effects on mental health. This includes giving parents, teachers, and mental health experts the tools they need to support healthy social media habits and address related mental health issues.

III. RESEARCH GAP

There's a need for more research on social media and mental health. We need to know more about how social media affects people's minds and feelings. We should study how different people, like kids and adults, are affected by social media. We also need better ways to measure how social media affects us. This will help us understand how to use social media in a healthy way.

In this study, we aim to investigate the impact of social media on mental health. We want to raise awareness that social media has both positive and negative effects on our minds. Our research shows that social media is not just harmful, but also has some benefits. We hope to inform others that social media can be both good and bad for mental health, depending on how it's used.

Objectives:
- To study the concept of social media.
- To understand the needs of social media.
- To understand how social media affects our mental health.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data:

We collected primary data from 100 respondents who shared their personal experiences with social media. They provided suggestions on how to minimize the negative effects of social media on mental health and ways to overcome them. Additionally, they expressed their opinions on the positive impact of social media on mental health.

Secondary data

We collected information from already published sources like reports, online data, news articles, and media outlets to learn about social media's effects on mental health.
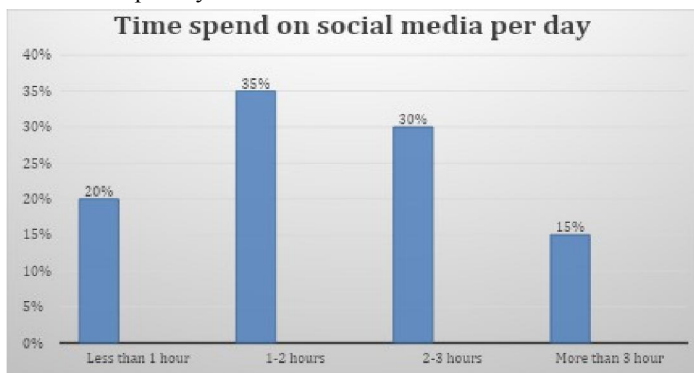
V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

We asked 100 people for their thoughts and opinions on reducing the negative effects of social media on mental health. They shared their suggestions, which are listed below:

Table no.1 Time spend on social media per day.

Sr. no.	Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Less than 1hour	20	20%
2	1-2 hour	35	35%
3	2-3 hour	30	30%
4	More than 3 hour	15	15%
	Total	100	100%

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DOI: 10.48175/568

ISSN
2581-9429
IJARSCT

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Graph no.1 Time spend on social media per day.

Above table no. 1 and graph no.1 represents, time spend on social media per day. The survey found that respondents spend varying amounts of time on social media daily. 20% of respondents (20 people) spend less than 1 hour, while 35% (35 people) spend 1-2 hours. 30% (30 people) spend 2-3 hours, and 15% (15 people) spend more than 3 hours on social media daily.

Table no.2 Preferred Social Media Platforms

Sr. no.	particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Instagram	35	35%
2	Facebook	30	30%
3	Twitter	15	15%
4	Snapchat	10	10%
5	Other	10	10%
	total	100	100%

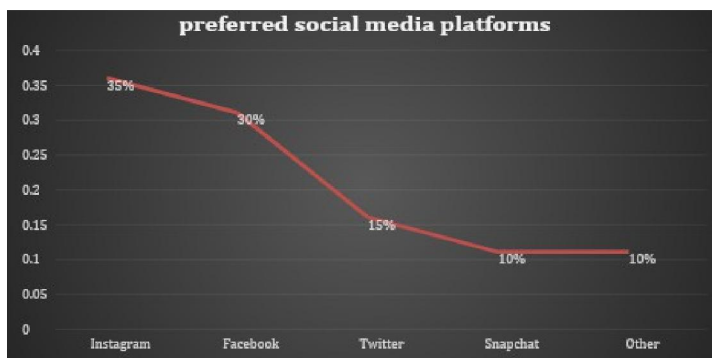Graph no.2 Preferred social media platforms

Table no.2 and graph no. 2 represents, Preferred social media platforms.

The survey found that respondents have different preferences when it comes to social media platforms. Instagram is the most popular, with 35% of respondents (35 people) using it. Facebook comes in second, with 30% of respondents (30 people) using it. Twitter is used by 15% of respondents (15 people), while Snapchat is used by 10% (10 people). The remaining 10% (10 people) prefer other social media platforms.

Table no.3 Frequency of Feeling Anxious or Overwhelmed.

Sr. no.	particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Never	20	20%
2	Rarely	30	30%
3	Sometime	25	25%
4	Often	15	15%

5	Always	10	10%
6	Total	100	100%

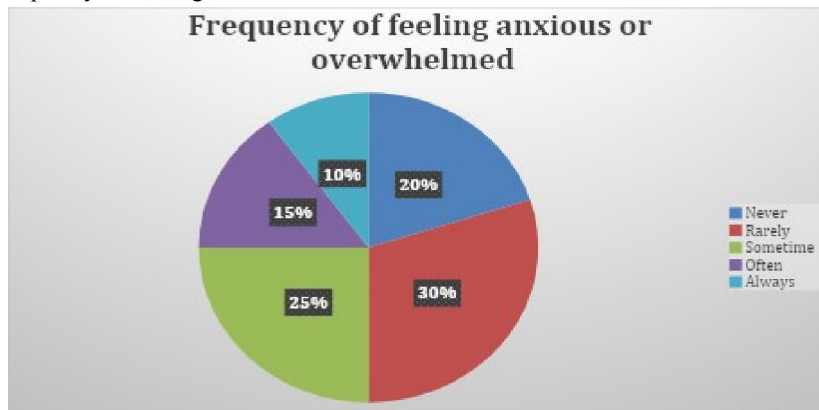Pie diagram no.1 Frequency of Feeling Anxious or Overwhelmed.

Table no.3 and pie diagram no.1 represents, Frequency of Feeling Anxious or Overwhelmed. When it comes to feeling anxious or overwhelmed, respondents have different experiences. 20% of respondents (20 people) never feel this way. 30% (30 people) rarely feel anxious or overwhelmed. 25% (25 people) feel this way sometimes, while 15% (15 people) feel it often. The remaining 10% (10 people) always feel anxious or overwhelmed.

Table no.4 Needs for Social Media

Sr. .no.	particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Connect with friends	40	40%
2	Stay informed	25	25%
3	Share thoughts	20	20%
4	Relax	15	15%
	Total	100	100%

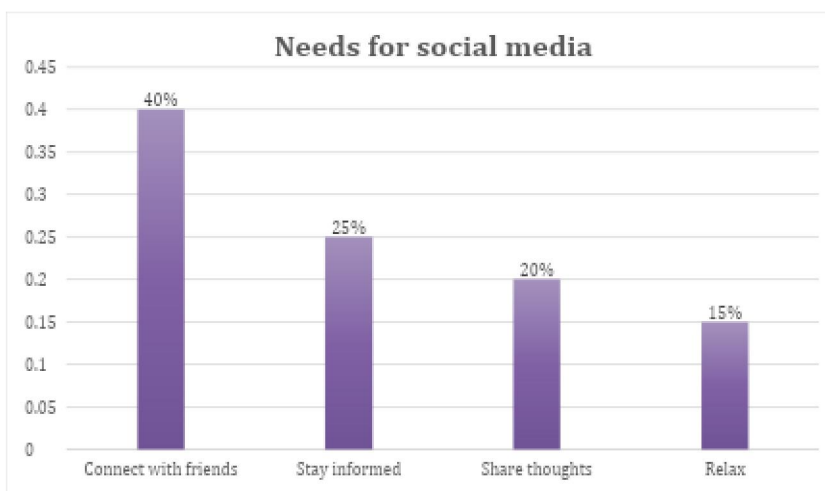Graph no.3 Needs for Social Media

Table no.4 and graph no 3 represents, needs for social media. Respondents use social media for various reasons. The top reason is to connect with friends, with 40% of respondents (40 people) using social media for this purpose. 25% (25 people) use social media to stay informed, while 20% (20 people) use it to share their thoughts. 15% (15 people) use social media to relax.

Table no.5 Affects of social media on mental health

Sr. no.	particulars	No. of respondents	percentage
1	Positively	30	30%
2	Negatively	35	35%
3	No impact	20	20%
4	Both positively and negatively	15	15%
	Total	100	100%

Table no. 5 represents, affects of social media on mental health. The survey revealed that 30% of respondents experience positive effects on their mental health due to social media. In contrast, 35% reported negative effects. Meanwhile, 20% stated that social media has no impact on their mental health. Additionally, 15% acknowledged that social media has both positive and negative effects on their mental well-being.

VI. FINDINGS

After conducting an overall research and interpreting the data, we have found the following results.

- Too much social media can be bad for your mental health
- Social media can also be a helpful tool for mental health.
- Social media affects people differently, depending on who they are and how they use it.
- Social media can help or hurt your mental health, depending on you
- Social media can lead to bullying, bad sleep, and low self-esteem, which is bad for your mental health.
- Social media can help you feel better, less lonely, and more friends.

Suggestion:

Many respondents in the research provided suggestions on how to reduce the negative effects of social media on mental health. Suggestions are given below.

- Be kind to yourself when comparing to others online.
- Taking regular breaks and disconnecting from social media for a few days or a week can also be beneficial.
- Create a relaxing environment for social media use
- Blocking or muting upsetting content on social media can help you feel better
- Follow accounts that promote mental well-being.
- Set boundaries on social media use to protect mental health.
- Take breaks from social media to reduce negative effects.

VII. CONCLUSION

Social media has both good and bad effects on mental health. It can cause anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem if used too much. However, it can also connect people, provide emotional support, and promote mental well-being. The impact of social media varies depending on individual differences, usage patterns, and platform preferences. To avoid negative effects, it's essential to take breaks, set boundaries, and follow mental health-promoting accounts. By being mindful of our social media use, we can stay mentally healthy and have a positive online experience. Additionally, being aware of our online activities and taking steps to protect our mental health can lead to a more balanced and fulfilling life. By making informed choices, we can harness the benefits of social media while minimizing its negative effects. This way, we can use social media to enhance our lives without compromising our mental well-being

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DOI: 10.48175/568

ISSN
2581-9429
IJARSCT

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