

Jacob Carney

04/21/24

IDS300W

Interdisciplinary Research Paper

**"Are teens who spend more time on social media more likely to suffer anxiety and
depression?"**

Abstract:

This interdisciplinary research paper is going to utilize various fields in an attempt to discover the amount of anxiety and depression (mental health) that adolescents commonly grapple with and to establish the extent to which their use of social media is related to these conditions. It also tries to shed light on this complicated problem. Therefore, it uses a 10-step interdisciplinary research strategy that evaluates different fields of study, such as biology, Economics, and anthropology. The reports are straightforward and concise; therefore, they are comprehensible and understandable by all who could find them useful, like parents, educators, legislators, and mental health professionals. The outcomes of such multidisciplinary studies are then subjected to further empirical investigations, reviews, and replication studies by other researchers to ascertain their reliability and general applicability to everyone.

Introduction

The advent of Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok has created a new dimension of social life, self-image, and confidence among young people (Twenge, 2020). As individuals tend to accept tech sites more and more as the only places where they can connect with their friends and others, their mental well-being is possibly put at risk by

the overuse of these online sites. Scientists test whether adolescents excessively utilizing social media and having anxiety or depression psychological conditions are co-related or not. Much of the data seems to prove that all programs in the public health sphere that are aimed at the teenage group will significantly benefit from studying the connection between the mental health of teens and the use of social media. Additionally, scientists want to know how a teen's use of social media interferes with their mental health. As a result, corresponding interventions and services need to be implemented to address this group more precisely.

Researchers from varied fields, comprising neuroscientists, educators, sociologists, and psychologists, should be brought into play to understand the delicate tie that exists between social media and teenagers' mental health. Students in school obtain digital, media, and social media literacy skills, all of which suit them in today's digital world. Social science research has demonstrated that cultural norms and social dynamics greatly influence young people's online behavior they are surrounded by(Khan et al., 2021). Their social connections and networks further support teens, and social media's good or bad effects on their mental and emotional health are balanced.

Neuroscience tells us a lot about how digital stimuli and too much screen time affect teens' developing brains. There may be links between using social media and mental health problems and how well our brains work. Psychology looks into the thoughts and feelings that drive teen behavior. It examines how social media use affects relationships, self-esteem, and identity-building. An interdisciplinary strategy can help researchers learn more about the mental effects of teens' use of social media. This can help policymakers and treatment providers make policies and programs based on evidence to help today's teens succeed in the digital age.

1. Problem Definition

Contemporary concerns include how teenagers' extensive social media use may influence their mental health. How do teens' social media use and mental health disorders like worry and sadness relate? This study will illuminate the complex relationship between youths' social media use and physical and emotional health (Khan et al., 2021). By answering this question, researchers seek to understand more about teens' mental health in the digital era. This will enable them to create evidence-based therapies and support systems that meet this group's changing requirements.

2. Interdisciplinary Approach Justification

The relationship between social media and teen mental health is complex and requires research from other domains. This study can illuminate occurrences by drawing from sociology, education, neurology, and psychology. Each subject's varied perspectives and approaches enrich the research and deepen its analysis. Sociology studies group dynamics and how friends affect social media use. Psychology examines our thoughts and feelings (Kurten et al., 2023). Neuroscience explains how screen time and digital stimuli influence kids' brains.

Education research illustrates how social media use affects coursework and test performance. Since interdisciplinary research combines diverse perspectives and approaches, one can examine the issue from more sides and in more depth. This strategy helps researchers identify unnoticed connections between academic subjects. Examining how different characteristics and settings affect kids' social media use and mental health helps us comprehend the data more deeply. This study uses a cross-disciplinary approach to understand the complex subject better.

3. Finding Relevant Disciplines

To understand how social media affects teens' minds, psychologists, sociologists, neuroscientists, and educators must go deep. Psychology studies teens' ideas and feelings, including how social media affects relationships, self-image, and identity. A sociology study shows cultural norms and social dynamics influence teen online behavior. Teens' social networks and peer groups also mitigate social media's negative impacts on mental and emotional health (Bettmann et al., 2021). Neuroscience explains how digital stimuli and screen time influence teens' brains. Different perspectives on how social media use influences learning, academic success, and social and emotional growth demonstrate the importance of media and digital literacy skills for internet use.

Combining research from multiple domains helps us understand the complex relationship between teens' social media use and mental health. We can determine all the social media-related mental health issues for kids by working with experts from various sectors. This study analyzes data to identify social media use's impact on teens' mental well-being. It serves as a basis for digital regulations and programs that promote the mental health of teenagers.

4. Literature search

We used different academic databases and employed a systematic method of reviewing the material. This approach involved using search terms and requirements that could capture the relevant studies. PubMed, PsycINFO and Google Scholar were searched with keywords like "social media," "adolescents," "anxiety," and "depression"(Bettmann et al., 2021). The aim was to gather information from various sources. We select our literature review sources by publication date (2020–2023), study design (empirical research), and relevance to the survey subject. This study adhered to these high standards to conduct a literature review on youngsters' social media usage and mental health.

5. Ensuring Competence in Each Area

The complex interactions between adolescents' social media use and mental health can be understood by analyzing education, psychology, sociology, and neuroscience. Social comparison theory and self-esteem help us understand what affects teens' mental health and self-esteem. Sociological concepts like "social capital" and "social support" illuminate teens' mental and social development and online social networks. Neuroscientists have illuminated how screen time and digital technologies impair teen brain development (Twenge, 2020). They found that social media

addiction can worsen melancholy and anxiety. Media and digital citizenship programs teach youngsters social and emotional skills for today's digital world. Educational theories underpin these initiatives, which can impact youth.

6. Insight Analysis

It is important to do a thorough literature review across many fields to fully understand how social media affects the mental health of teens. Sociology helps us understand the cultural and social aspects of teens' use of social media, like how peer pressure and societal rules affect how they act online. Scientists who examine the mental and emotional aspects of teenagers' social media usage have studied issues such as self-esteem, identity development, and social contrast. Through neuroscience, new information is learned about how digital stimuli and long screen time affect the brains of growing teens. This groundbreaking research has shown possible connections between using social media and mental health issues. Education research has examined how the use of social media can influence learning, academic performance, and social and emotional development. They have revealed the importance of internet safety and digital and media literacy in using the Internet safely and responsibly.

To examine whether the results are equally valid in different areas, one must consider the study methods utilized, such as survey tools, experimental designs, and longitudinal studies. To decide on the reliability and validity of the results, it is important to consider measurement methods, sample size, and participant characteristics. Another factor determining the trustworthiness of results is the degree to which the researchers took care of biases, confounding variables, and methodological obstacles. The purpose of this research is to fill the gaps in our understanding of how teen mental health is related to social media use by bringing different branches of science together. Besides, it will examine gaps in current research programs and offer new research routes and approaches that will help promote the positive mental health of youngsters in the digital era. To support people in learning about this complicated problem, we will show how necessary it is to use new research techniques and collaborate with individuals from different areas of expertise.

7. Identifying Insight Conflicts

Examining articles that contradict or have dissimilar interpretations provides insight into the difficulties scientists face when researching the relationship between

teenagers' social media use and mental health. Some studies have demonstrated a direct correlation between social media use and problems with mental health, like depression or anxiety. Others state that there is no relation between social media use and mental health problems or even prove the negativity of the connection. The disparities might arise from the diverse research designs, evaluation techniques, and population and ecosystem factors samples.

Interaction with peers, home, and school atmosphere also can influence the relationship between social media use and mental health. In addition, individual factors such as age, social status, culture, etc., are the reason for the inconsistencies across research studies. This research project aims to bring up the issue of doing more detailed studies on teens' minds during social media use, which appears to be a complicated process, by exploring the potential causes of controversial outcomes. With these barriers confronted, researchers can strive for a more illustrious conception of the role that social media use plays in the mental health status of the youth.

8. Creating Common Ground

Those insights on the relationship between teens and social media and mental health problems can be the product of studies conducted in so many fields. Research

reveals that cyberbullying, social media comparison, and appearance on social networks constitute significant factors contributing to the mental health crises among the modern digital youth. Other new issues include how screen time affects sleep cycles, how offline and online social interactions affect each other, and how social support might help people deal with problems. Most people agree that cyberbullying and using social media too much is bad for kids' mental health, but there is some disagreement about how harmful the effects are. Studies have shown that moderating factors, like social support, can lessen the effects that were not meant to happen. It is also important to use preventative treatments and digital health measures.

9. Integrating Insights through Comprehensive Understanding

To fully understand how teens' use of social media impacts their mental health, it is important to combine studies from different fields. The subject's intricacies are developed through societies, psychology, neuroscience, and education perspectives. Through long-term exposure to social media in teens, we see social, personal, biological, social, and environmental factors affecting mental health. Furthermore, cultural norms, family dynamics, peer connections, socioeconomic background, and many other factors that these people come across in their environment can influence

the effect of social media use on people's mental health (Kurten et al., 2023). The matters, of course, are necessarily considered. It is necessary to consider a person's age, gender, character traits, and previous mental illness, along with the wide variability of social media users' responses, when we draw any conclusion (Puukko et al., 2020). Through our study of this critical topic to support adolescent mental health in the digital domain, we also aim to give much-needed findings that will be incorporated into larger sociocultural frameworks to help students through targeted interventions and support strategies.

10. Communicate and Test it

Only after scholars from various fields of knowledge have thoroughly studied teenagers' use of social media and its impact on their mental condition and develop efficient ways of conveying their conclusions can they start advocating for positive change. Additionally, include in your message a short and direct statement that spells out your study's results, conclusions, and implications. Other methods of empirical studies, such as replication and peer reviews, can also provide further checks for the trustworthiness of the findings. The next step in the process requires sharing the information with key groups, like mental health professionals, policymakers, parents,

and teachers (Puukko et al., 2020). Content like research papers, policy briefs, meeting plays, or public programs could be created. The researcher should also give a hand to ensure that longitudinal research methods and replication studies are applied so that verified data are obtained from the exploration. The findings will be added to the knowledge base of the area of investigation after they have been subjected to rigorous, validated, and could be applied in different situations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, one should reflect on personal character and the environment to see how social media affects mental health. Social support and Internet literacy are resilience factors that can lessen the harmful consequences of the Internet (Bettmann et al., 2021). By applying qualitative methods and conducting extended studies in the future, researchers can approach more complicated questions and find cause-effect relationships. There are two vital steps in any well-suited plan for managing adolescent mental problems, which are educating teens to cope with stress and to be responsible online (Puukko et al., 2020). Teachers, parents, psychologists, and politicians can cooperate across fields to create and carry out treatments that will allow teenagers to overcome online risks better and learn safe online behavior.

References

- Bettmann, J. E., Anstadt, G., Casselman, B., & Ganesh, K. (2021). Young adult depression and anxiety linked to social media use: Assessment and treatment. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 49*, 368-379.
- Khan, A., Lee, E. Y., Rosenbaum, S., Khan, S. R., & Tremblay, M. S. (2021). Dose-dependent and joint associations between screen time, physical activity, and mental wellbeing in adolescents: an international observational study. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health, 5*(10), 729-738.
- Kurten, S., Ghai, S., Odgers, C., Kievit, R., & Orben, A. (2023). Deprivation's role in adolescent social media use and its links to life satisfaction.
- Puukko, K., Hietajärvi, L., Maksniemi, E., Alho, K., & Salmela-Aro, K. (2020). Social media use and depressive symptoms—A longitudinal study from early to late adolescence. *International journal of environmental research and public health, 17*(16), 5921.
- Twenge, J. M. (2020). Increases in depression, self-harm, and suicide among US adolescents after 2012 and links to technology use: possible mechanisms. *Psychiatric Research and Clinical Practice, 2*(1), 19-25.