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IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUTH IN PAKISTAN: A REFORMATION PLAN, BASED ON A CROSS- SECTIONAL INSIGHT

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ABSTRACT

During past 10 years, online social networking has exercised great effects on how people communicate and socialize. This change in terms of communication, has shown a strong impact on people's mental health and added to multiple psychological issues. This study aims at investigating the impact of social media on the mental health of the youngsters in Lahore, Pakistan. Also this research attempts at identifying the relation between social media usage and mental health. This research highlights the positive and negative effects of social media on the young people. It also helps in suggesting the right choice of social media platform to be used without getting being affected mentally. In order to carry out this study, using Quantitative research method and employing survey tool, the study concludes that 42% of the people prefer to use WhatsApp the most on daily bases. 23.1% of the people spend 10 hours while 28.2% of people spend 6 hours daily on their phone/laptop. 34% of people use social media for entertainment purposes, and 26% of people use it for educational purposes. In the light of the survey conducted, it is recommended that maintaining balance in the social media usage time is very important otherwise, it could disturb the mental health of the students.

RATIONALE

The purpose of this study is to explore the possible impacts of social media usage on people's mental health, mainly the youth. To what extent, this usage

affects the mental health of the youth? Will social media become a bad influence on future generations? To find answers to all these questions, this research, using quantitative method, is conducted.

OBJECTIVES

- This research aims to find out the positive and negative impacts of social media on the mental health of people, especially teenagers.
- To find out whether there is a positive impact on mental health or negative.
- To find out whether the mental health of people was good before social media or after social media editions in their lives.
- It also aims to provide solutions using social media for less time and getting and get more knowledge.
- To find which social media platform to use and when without mental health being affected.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Karim F, Oyewande A A, Abdalla L F, et al. (June 15, 2020) Social Media Use and Its Connection to Mental Health: A Systematic Review.

States that Social media are responsible for aggravating mental health problems. This systematic study summarizes the effects of social network usage on mental health. Fifty papers were shortlisted from google scholar databases, and after the application of various inclusion and exclusion criteria, 16 papers were chosen and all papers were evaluated for quality. Eight papers were cross-sectional studies, three were longitudinal studies, two were qualitative studies, and others were systematic reviews. Findings were classified into two outcomes of mental health: anxiety and depression. Social media activity such as time spent to have a positive effect on the mental health domain. However, due to the cross-sectional design and methodological limitations of sampling, there are considerable differences. The structure of social media influences on mental health needs to be further analyzed through qualitative research and vertical cohort studies.

During the past decade, online social networking has caused profound changes in the way people communicate and interact. It is unclear, however, whether some of these changes may affect certain normal aspects of human behavior and cause psychiatric disorders. Several studies have indicated that the prolonged use of social networking sites (SNS), such as Facebook, may be related to signs and symptoms of depression. In addition, some authors have indicated that certain SNS activities might be associated with low self-esteem, especially in children and adolescents. Other studies have presented opposite results in terms of positive impact of social networking on self-esteem. The relationship between SNS use and mental problems to this day remains controversial, and research on this issue is faced with numerous challenges. This concise review

focuses on the recent findings regarding the suggested connection between SNS and mental health issues such as depressive symptoms, changes in self-esteem, and Internet addiction.

According to Van der Schyff, K., Flowerday, & Furnell (2020), individuals were segmented and profiled in some targeted ads based on particular characteristics (data). Data were being used by governments more and more in monitoring methods. For instance, the PRISM program enables the US government to ask Internet service providers, such as social networking sites, for their data. The soft sell that social media surveillance and the resulting loss of privacy are unavoidable, however, has been made easier by these surveillance methods. In other words, it is impossible to evade the realities of social media surveillance.

Barber, K. S., Zaeem, R. N., and Chang, K. C. (2020, December) claim that a user's real-life friends are disclosed to the SNO via social media, which is extremely important information. The user then publishes remarks and pictures, some of which some SNOs may claim to be their own. Finally, even if they are lawful and suitable in the given situation, these remarks and images could still do the user material harm should they surface in another situation, putting them at risk of being used as leverage in blackmail. SNOs have databases containing this data for millions of users, and it's possible that their incentives—which mostly revolve around growth—are not the same as those of their consumers

According to BHANDARI, V. (2018), we are in a time of "dataveillance," in which communication can be simply and more thoroughly observed with the aid of information technology. Both state and private actors have expressed privacy concerns as a result of this. When a user accesses social media platform, they unknowingly leave electronic traces and reveal personal information about themselves, including their political affiliation, dietary preferences, linguistic preferences, and sexual preferences. The use of big data has led to the expansion of tech businesses whose services include the buying and selling of personal data derived from that data.

According to Xu, H., & Jia, H. (2015), a large number of data collectors, data brokers, aggregation services, and various enterprises currently collect and use personal data without the consent of the data subjects, creating a dark data ecosystem. According to estimates, 4000 distinct businesses are operating in the dark data market, and many of these brokers sell the information to anyone willing to pay. Three essential features set the emerging field of big data analytics apart from conventional data analytics. Petabytes of data are used in a single Big Data dataset for analysis in the following three areas: volume; velocity; and variety. Real-time or almost real-time information is gathered and evaluated for agile decision-making.

According to Kim, T., & Atkin, D. J. (2019), technological advancements in new media have led to an expansion of online government monitoring programs. For the providers of web services like instant messaging and social network services, surveillance might be a severe concern (SNSs). Furthermore, the less tech-savvy consumers of new media services have been harmed by the

absence of legislation on surveillance system innovations, which was driven by private data management businesses. Koreans were switching from the popular KakaoTalk messenger service, which was being watched by Korean prosecutors, to the encrypted German messenger service called Telegram when the news of the Korean government's monitoring of an SNS messenger service was reported through major television news shows in 2014.

According to Dilmaghani, S., Brust, M. R., Danoy, G., Cassagnes, N., Pecero, J., and Bouvry (2019, December), the incorporation of AI in a variety of fields [4] has considerably raised concerns about data security and privacy. Images, speech, comments, and postings on social media platforms [5], [6], financial transactions, and health record information are just a few examples of the sensitive data that powers AI. By feeding such data to AI systems, they become susceptible to security and privacy threats, which have recently grown much more common. The current and future Edge AI digital marketing setting, according to Sachdev, R. (2020, April), raises several security and privacy concerns. Because of the serious harm that these problems could cause to users of digital marketing services, mitigations for security and privacy problems must be put into place. Purely cloud-based models have the potential to have numerous security and privacy problems, which are still being extensively researched. In response to the security and privacy concerns raised by this architecture, edge computing is hailed as offering several advantages.

The "nothing to hide" defense has gained popularity in the post-9/11 environment, according to Miedema, T. E. (2020), where security concerns and "the fight against terror" have been used to justify the extensive collection of private communications and information. A small number of government personnel or possibly just government computers will receive specific bits of information as a result of NSA spying, data mining, or other government information-gathering activities.

According to Hagen, J., & Lysne (2016), the right to privacy is seriously threatened by the growing technical feasibility of close surveillance of every individual in society. People are prone to act more cautiously if they are aware that they are being watched. This is the chilling effect, both in terms of its psychological impact and its societal repercussions. It is conceivable that outdated software and unpatched systems, along with the complexity and lack of transparency of digital value chains, may continue to pose security challenges in the future. Privacy breaches and the wrongful use of personal data may be even worse nightmares. An opponent can steal identities, engage in blackmail, and exert tremendous pressure on specific people and groups of people with access to data registries and the capacity to combine and analyze personal data, including personal statements and movements over time.

According to Brown (2015), 1.19 billion people used social media platforms like Twitter, Google+, YouTube, and Facebook monthly as of October 2013. The primary goal of social media providers is to use all of this data to construct profiles that can be used to show users tailored advertisements, even though people normally use social media to chat and exchange images, web links, and other forms of information with their friends. For social, environmental,

economic, or political governance, more purposeful monitoring of persons is frequently conducted in an adversarial and inquisitorial setting, with an increasing reliance on digital tools for data collection and analysis. 3. Meth

The Effects of Social Media on Mental Health

This article discusses different issues like loneliness, depression, and anxiety caused in young adults' by excessive usage of social media. They get addicted to apps like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok, which makes them interactive and they expect to get likes and comments. But when this doesn't happen, they feel disappointed. Usage of filters keeps their illusion and they show them different online than in their real life. Fear of missing out is another factor caused by social media usage. Constant scrolling and checking phones cause a noxious effect on work and study. Articles also state signs when you should stop using social media fluently. These signs are feeling increased anxiety, depression, or loneliness spending more time on social media, Comparison with others, noticing your work and relationships are affecting you, not taking care of yourself, and many more. To help yourself in staying away from excessive usage of social media, you should arrange family get-togethers, and meet your friends face to face.

Impact of social media on youth mental health: statistics, tips, and resources

This article tells us that young adults (age 18 to 25) have the highest incidence of mental illness of any adult age group: 25.8%, compared to 22.2% for ages 26 to 49, and 13.8% for ages 50 and up. The three most popular social media platforms used by young are YouTube (used by 85% of teens, Instagram (72%), and Snapchat (69%). The percentage of teens who report using Facebook declined to 51% in 2018 from 71%, according to a 2014-2015 teen survey. Research has also determined six different behaviors of teens online. A survey conducted says that the majority of teenagers believe that they face online harassment and 63% identify it as a "major problem. Minute amount of people believe that it "leads to psychological issues or drama." the symptoms of social media anxiety disorder include spending more than 6 hours on social media in a day, not staying with family and friends, lack of focus at school, checking social media again and again, etc. Tips to prevent yourself from overdosing on social media are setting a time limit spent on social media, and believe that what you see on social media is not real in actual life. Some tips for parents are also discussed in this article.

Anxiety, loneliness, and Fear of Missing Out: The impact of social media on young people's mental health

The writer states that way of interaction has revolutionized in past test years rapidly. Social media has become a fundamental part of our lives. Studies show that the young generation is more addicted to social media than alcohol and drugs. Urging to check social media, again and again, leads to instant gratification and dopamine production. This causes a bad effect on sleep cycles and health. Another factor caused by social media in teens is FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out), a desire to stay connected continuously. This leads to

unaccommodating expectations that lead to lower self-esteem and disappointment. Research shows that over usage of social media is highly causing loneliness, depression, and anxiety in teens. We all have to rectify behaviors and health issues in teenagers.

The correlation between social media and mental health

This article enlightens both the conclusive and gloomy effects of social media on mental health. Do social media impact positively or negatively? It all depends upon the person using it. Some bright sides of social media are that it helps you stay connected with friends and family, increases your network, helps you in learning, marketing your business, finding new people, sharing your thought and opinions, doing research, and much more. Apart from the positive side, social media causes a serious effect on mental health by causing chronic stress, depression, anxiety, and loneliness. It also causes vexation, scarcity, and isolation. Posting countless selfies and expressing your thoughts fluently can lead to an unwholesome feeling of self. Changing your facial looks and beautification through filters brings fakeness in personality and also a fake self-obsession. Cyberbullying, mental health issues, and anxiety are also increasing issues caused by social media. Usage of social media can be minimized by limiting usage, turning off notifications, staying away from devices, and spending time with family.

Why Social Media affects Mental Health

In this virtual world, social media is considered a most powerful medium to convey your message, interact with people or advertise your brand. However, social media is a stumbling block for teens. A survey says that a teenager spends more than 9 hours on social media every day. 2019 study shows that excessive social media usage causes irregular sleep, leading to mental and physical health issues. Another drawback of social media is that teens can easily spread rumors, blackmail, and usage of abusive words. Negative impacts of social media on health include inadequacy, dissatisfaction, loneliness, distancing with family, and lack of self-care. On the other hand, there are numerous convulsive effects of social media. It helps you to socialize, interact with people of your mindset, speak about issues, show your skills, get an education, and much more. Managing effects, preventing negative effects, how to prevent suicide, and a conclusion is also discussed in this article.

Social Media Use and Its Connection to Mental Health

A recent study that is gaining ground and popularity quickly is social media. As a result, it has a lot of untapped and unexpectedly positive answers attached to it. Recent research has revealed that using social media platforms negatively impacts users' psychological well-being. However, it is still unclear how much social media use affects the general populace. According to this study's systematic evaluation, social media envy can have an impact on people's levels of anxiety and sadness. There are many additional possible causes of anxiety and sadness that need to be investigated. The results of this study imply that potential social media causative factors should be taken into account when

working with individuals who have been given an anxiety or depression diagnosis. Additionally, if other links with another construct were explored using the study's findings, this might strengthen the conclusions and help lower rates of anxiety, depression, and suicide.

Online Social Networking and Mental Health

Online social networking has significantly altered how individuals engage and communicate during the last ten years. However, it is unknown if some of these changes could have an impact on typical human behavior and result in psychiatric diseases. According to much research, chronic usage of social networking sites (SNS), like Facebook, may be linked to depressive indications and symptoms. Additionally, some scholars have suggested that some SNS activities, particularly those involving children and adolescents, may be linked to low self-esteem. In contrast, several research has shown that social networking hurts self-esteem. There is still debate over the link between SNS use and mental health issues, and it is difficult to research this subject. Research shows that the main mental health issue caused by social media usage is depression.

The relationship between highly visual social media and young people's mental health: A scoping review

Teenagers make up a large share of users of these platforms. There is conflicting data from prior studies addressing the impacts of online social technology on the mental health of this age group, and it is unclear whether visual content alone has different psychological effects from text-based social media. The findings show a lack of evidence that only looks at HVSM. The majority of literature uses quantitative techniques to accomplish its goals. Numerous findings lack the complexity that qualitative data would offer to understand the causes of these contradictory results and are inconsistent in many ways. Posting countless selfies and expressing your thoughts fluently can lead to an unwholesome feeling of self. Changing your facial looks and beautification through filters brings fakeness in personality and also a fake self-obsession. Cyberbullying, mental health issues, and anxiety are also increasing issues caused by social media.

Investigating the role of social media on mental health

The results of the current study on the impact of social media on mental health demonstrate that each of these media has a unique role to play in the positive and bad effects it has on mental health. The key is to be able to grow and strengthen the beneficial benefits while minimizing the negative impacts of social media on mental health. By doing this, you may transform a potential problem into an opportunity. Creating and implementing a warning system to inform frequent users of social media about the dangers of addiction. Preparing students and teachers for safe use of social media by developing and implementing programs on topics including social media addiction, body image on the internet, and cyberbullying. Negative effects included anxiety, depression, loneliness, poor sleep quality, poor mental health indicators,

thoughts of self-harm and suicide, increased levels of psychological distress, cyberbullying, body image dissatisfaction, fear of missing out and decreased life satisfaction.

Exploring the Effects of Social Media Use on the Mental Health of Young Adults

According to recent studies, increased social media use is associated with declining mental health. This connection is particularly alarming because young adults, who are the most frequent users of social media, have a disproportionately high risk of developing mental health difficulties. Since the relationship between social media and mental health is still unknown, this thesis investigates the individual and social theories that could explain it. The implications of sedentary behaviors on mental health, displacement behavior, sleep disruption from blue light exposure, the impacts of social media on romantic relationships, and the effects of social media on platonic relationships are some of the theories that are covered.

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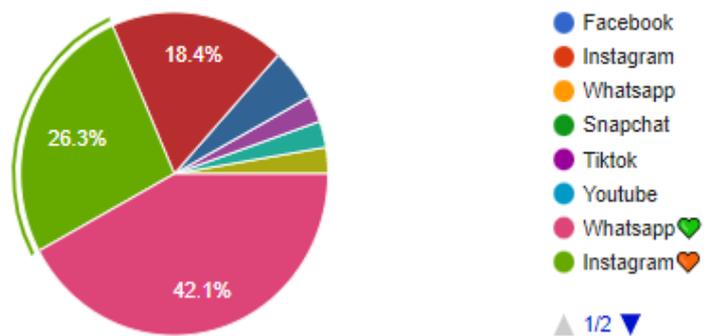
METHODOLOGY:

We have done Quantitative analysis by doing surveys. It was a cross-sectional study conducted among students, working men and women, and relatives. 39 people participated in this survey. Data has been collected through a survey among a large number of social media users. The platform we used for the survey is **Google Forms**. Survey participation of these members provided a great deal of information on the perceptions and current assessment process of heavy social media. We also requested the survey participants recruit their friends to complete the online survey. Both males and females participated in the survey. Mainly people from the age of 17-30 participated in this survey. The collected data was entered and analyzed by a statistical tool.

Demographics:

Which social media platform you use mostly?

38 responses

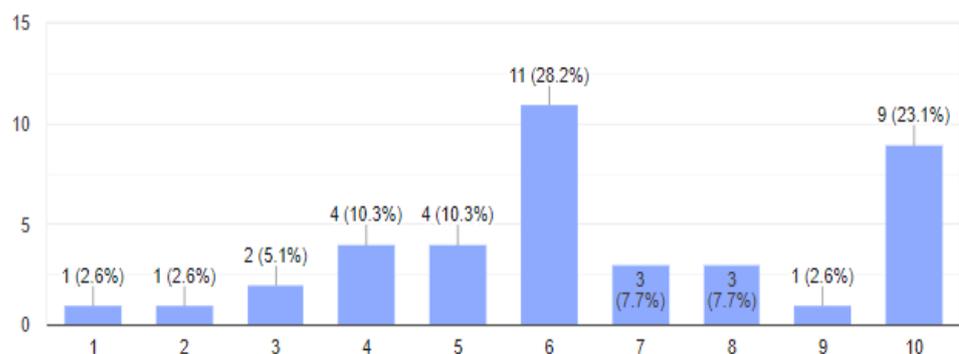


42.1% of people use WhatsApp most of all social media platforms. On the second number comes Snapchat with 26.3%.

How many hours you watch your phone/ laptop daily?(Total screen time)



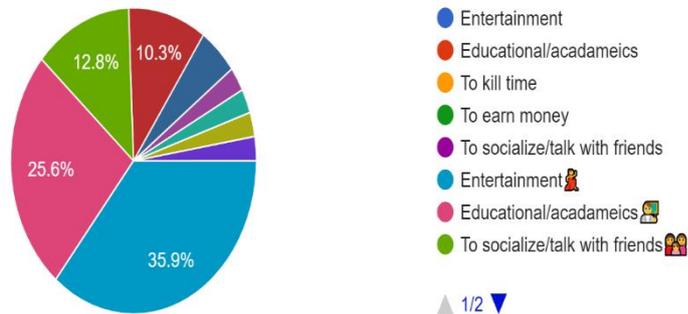
39 responses



28.2% of people spend 6 hours daily on screen while 23.1% spend 10 hours daily.

You use social media for which purpose?

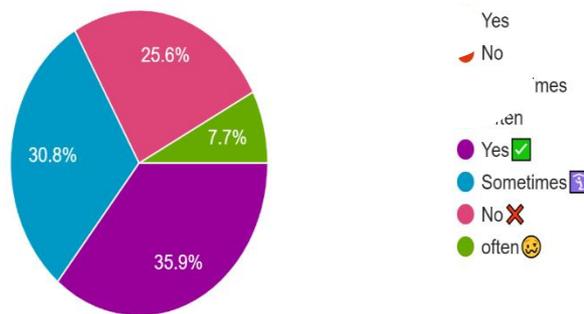
39 responses



35% use social media for entertainment purposes, and 25.6% of the people use social media for educational purposes.

Have you ever felt sleepless/bad tempered because of over usage of social media?

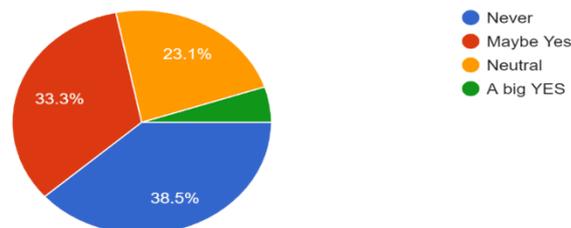
39 responses



66% feel sleepless and bad-tempered because of over usage of social media while 25% don't feel sleepless and bad tempered.

Have you ever felt disappointed/ low after seeing other people's fancy lifestyle?

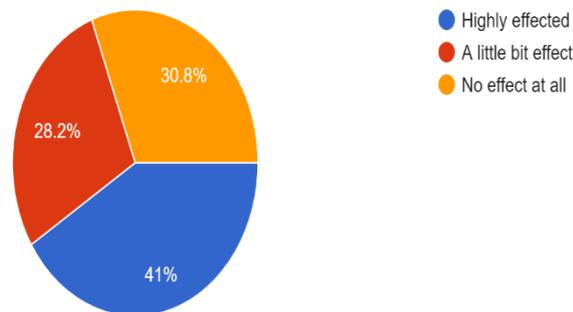
39 responses



44% of people feel disappointed/low after seeing the fancy lifestyle of people while 38.5% of people have no effect on the fancy lifestyle of people.

Do you think social media effect your studies/work because you mind is not focused?

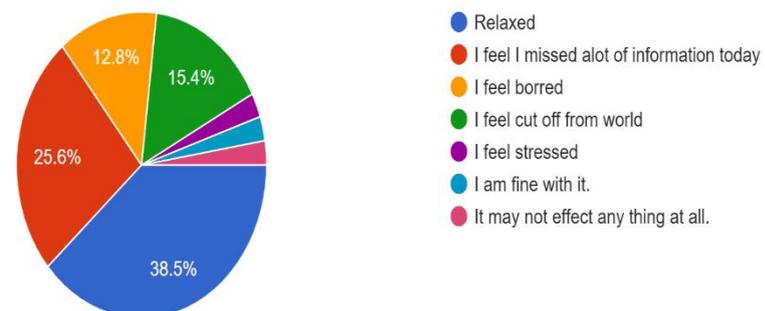
39 responses



41% feel a disturbance in work and social media because of social media. 30% of people’s work and study is not affected.

How do you feel if you don't use social media whole day?

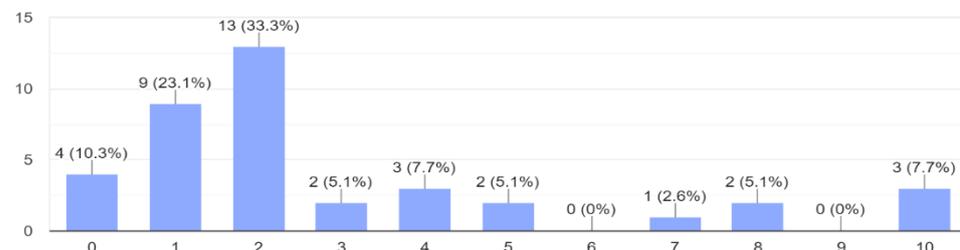
39 responses



38.5% of people feel relaxed if they don't use social media the whole day and 25.6% feel missed out on a lot of information.

At scale of 0-10, how many hours you use social media before going to sleep?

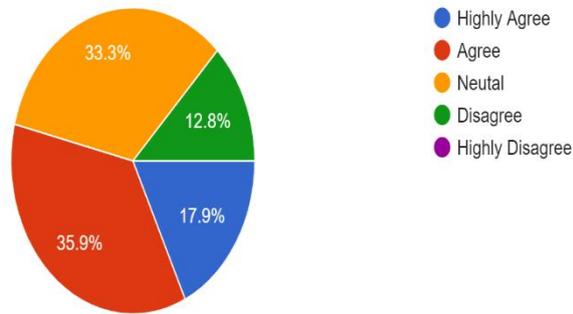
39 responses



33.3% of people use social media for 2 hours before sleeping while 23.1% use social media for 1 hour.

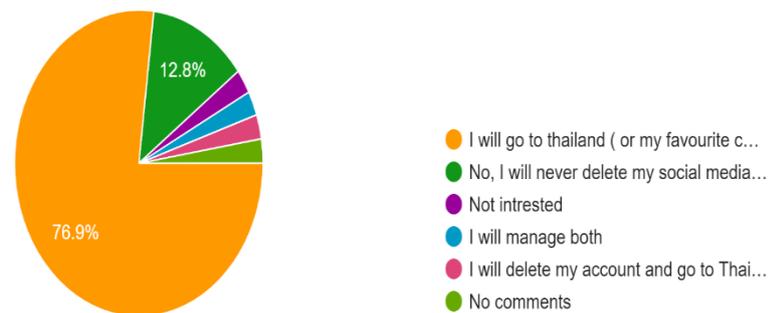
Do you agree social media has positive impact on your life than negative?

39 responses



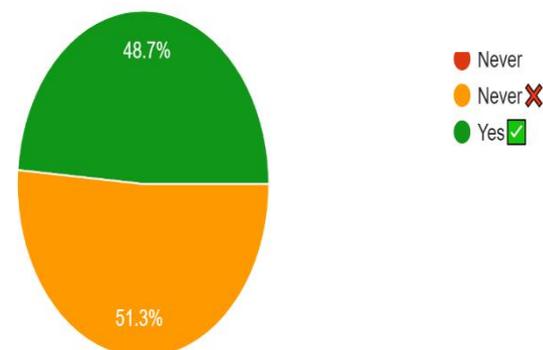
If you get a chance to visit Thailand(or any of your favourite country) for 2 months but you have to delete your social media accounts. What will you do?

39 responses



Have you ever attended seminar/awareness lecture on Impact of social media on mental health?

39 responses



51.3% people of have attended seminars on impact of social media on mental health while 48.7% people are unaware.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

- 42.1% of people spend most of their time on WhatsApp, 26.3% on Instagram, 18.4% on Facebook, and the rest, on Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, and LinkedIn.
- On average, 23.1% of people spend 10 hours while 28.2% of people spend 6 hours daily on their phone/laptop.
- 34% of youngsters use social media for entertainment purposes, 26% people use it for educational purposes, and 13% use it to socialize and talk with friends.
- Due to over usage of social media, 36% of people feel sleepless and bad-tempered, 31% feel it sometimes while 26% do not feel sleepless.
- 38.4% of people feel disappointed after seeing people's fancy lifestyles on social media. Surprisingly, the same amount of people that is 38.5% is never affected by this.
- 74.2% of people keep checking their social media notifications on their phones after a few minutes.
- 69.2% of people feel that their work/study is badly affected by social media.
- 38.5% of people feel relaxed if they don't use social media, 26.6% of people feel they missed a lot of information, 15.4% people feel cut off from the world and 12.8% of people feel bored.
- 33% of people use social media for 2 hours before going to sleep while 23% use it for 1 hour.
- 53.8% of people believe that social media has a positive impact on their lives while 33.3% of people are neutral. Only 12.8% disagree with this fact.
- 48.7% of people have attended awareness seminars on the impact of social media on mental health while 51.3% are unaware.

RESULTS:

- Majority of people spend most of their time on WhatsApp.
- Majority of people spend more than 10 hours on social media which is alarming.
- Most people use social media for entertainment than educational activities which is highly discouraged.

- People feel more likely to be sleepless and bad-tempered because of over usage of social media which means social media is badly affecting their mental health
- More people feel disappointed and low when they see the fancy lifestyle of other people on social media which adds to inferiority complex and leads to fakeness and artificiality.
- 3/4 of people keep checking their notifications on social media on phones which leads to lack of concentration and imbalance in studies and work.
- People feel relaxed when they stay away from social media which reveals that social media affects mental health badly.
- Using social media for 2 hours before going to sleep affects, eyes, muscles, sleep cycle, and mental peace.
- Our survey participants believe that social media is playing a positive role in their life but our results are the opposite which mean that there is a great need to impart awareness to the people pertaining to their understanding of the effects of social media on mental health.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- People should reduce their average social media usage time to balance their sleep cycle which affects positively on the mental health.
- People should keep their phones miles away while studying or working. It will help to maintain their focus on their target as checking social media notifications again and again do distract them from learning and maintaining focus.
- People should spend more time reading books and doing indoor and outdoor activities to keep their minds healthy and not be tired of social media due to over usage.
- Social Media should not only be considered as a medium of entertainment but also it should be regarded as a channel of education, awareness, and information
- Awareness seminars about the use of social media need to be conducted.
- Need to impart awareness to the students about the healthy living and maintaining balance in the day-to-day activities, is important.

Tips for Healthy Social Media Use:

We all are familiar with the functioning of the algorithm —the more you look at your phone, the more it will send compelling content to keep your eyes from looking away. It's an uphill task to break habits of checking TikTok or Instagram and constantly refreshing to see more, but it's

important to spare some time away for mental and physical health. Parents can set a good example through their own virtual behavior. Here are a few things you can follow :

1. Delete the social media apps from your phone. You need not to delete your account, but deleting the apps from your phone will take away the urge to refresh the page every time you unlock your device.
2. Spend time with your friends and family and leave the devices at home. I will add to socializing skill. We all know how hard it is to ditch your phone, but try it and you will find how much more are you the part of your system and surrounding.
3. By disabling the notifications, you for a particular hour, keep yourself away from the unnecessary social crowd. These notifications act as a reminder to keep your mind engaged and pre-occupied. Without the constant reminders, you will find yourself checking in less.
4. Limit time. Turn time controls on so that when you reach your limit, you are kicked out of the app.

LIMITATIONS:

- The sample taken belongs to a specific area of city Lahore so it cannot be applied to the whole youth of Pakistan.
- Youth from some of the renowned universities participated in the survey so it cannot be generalized to the youth of all academic institutions.
- Data was collected in a limited period of time.
- Population sample size was very small.

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