

## Influence of Social Media on Health of Youth

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### Abstract

With the fast development of technology, the use of social media has become a very common activity among all the age groups especially youngsters. Social media has opened new opportunities for the youth but it has also raised certain challenges which is a matter of concern. Children are growing up along with the social media technologies which has made social platforms an important aspect of their life. Actually, social media is transforming the behavior with which youth interact with their adults as well as how they make the use of technologies. In fact, social media technologies have become an integral part of youngsters. Nowadays introduction to digital screens has become easily accessible to children. With the passage of time when the children reach adolescence, they become addicted to these technologies. In this research paper I will try to give a brief overview of the influence of social media on health of youth.

**Keyword:** Influence of Social Media; Drug Menace; Psychological; Health rumours.

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### Introduction

In the past few years of rapid development of technology, the use of social media has shown a positive growth among youth. Social media is basically a communication tool that allows people to share thoughts, texts, images, videos and communicate with each other, it includes Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, Snapchat etc.<sup>1</sup> It is quite obvious that social media is becoming a part of youth's life. It has allowed users to communicate with friends and loved ones

in an easy way. The social media use has opened up new opportunities and also raised new health challenges for youth. Social media encourages youth to interact with each other for learning new things and exploring new ideas and possibilities in education. Social media is also helping the youth in promoting their new business start-ups. The social media can be a platform for Cyberbullying and sexual harassment towards youth. The social media has easily become a source of distraction for youth and has led a negative impact on psychological behavior of youth. The immense use of social networking sites has led to the rise of depression in youth.

### *The Social media's Positive impact the on Health of Youth*

Being connected with people is the source of good health. Social Media connects people from different parts of the world with each other. The people share thoughts and ideas with each other.<sup>2</sup>

Social media can be used to raise awareness about new emerging health issues in youth like Drug Menace, Tobacco use etc.

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Social media can be used to provide emotional support to people especially youth who are suffering from depression, anxiety, psychological problems etc.

The medical practitioners can use social media as a tool to expand their reach to patients. The doctors can use it to provide useful information regarding health issues, bust out health rumours and myths etc.<sup>2</sup>

Internet is a source of information which comprises of both authentic and inauthentic data, using social media the authentic information can be provided to youth. Social media can act as a filter to provide correct health information regarding cardiac diseases, psychological diseases, allergic diseases etc., to youth.<sup>2</sup>

The researchers can use the huge amount of data from social media for research purposes. The experts can then use this research to increase the knowledge regarding various health issues faced by the people especially youth.<sup>3</sup> The youth can use social media to raise awareness regarding a particular cause or to raise fund for that cause.

Nowadays social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram etc are becoming sources of income for youth, this in turn helps in reducing the mental pressure of earning money for survival.<sup>4</sup>

Education is the solution of all problems, social media promotes education in youth by providing articles, educational videos and other useful content.<sup>4</sup>

### ***The Social media's negative impact the on Health of Youth.***

- Social media's intensive use has increased the self-diagnosis and selfmedication among youth, which is very threatful most of the time.<sup>5</sup>
- The face-to-face interaction is important for good health but the immense use of social media has reduced this interaction, which has created certain health issues such as depression & anxiety among youth.<sup>6</sup>
- Its immense use has disturbed the normal sleep pattern among youth & thus has reduced the sleep time among youth which ultimately has given rise to health problems like Insomnia, Parasomnia etc.
- The prolonged use of social media via digital screens has increased the eye strains, excessive eye dryness among youth, which can lead to blurry vision, headaches and even neck and shoulder pains.<sup>7</sup>

- Today's youth share everything on social media which can create an unhealthy behaviour leading to arrogance, self-centeredness & egotism among the youth.
- FOMO which means fear of missing out has been triggered by the use of social media. FOMO can compel the users to pick up their phones for checking new updates every minute even while driving or doing some important work. This creates a health threat like accidents etc.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Conclusions and Future Directions***

With the advancement of science and technology, the social media technologies have become an integral part of youngsters. Social media has opened new opportunities for the youth but it has also raised certain challenges which is a matter of concern. The challenges or the social media negative impact on youth need to be tackled in a very professional way, the solutions to these challenges is a must for the betterment of the future and health of youth. Social media is transforming the behaviour with which youth interact. Active research should be done to understand this behavioural change.

The use of digital screens for social media has become easily accessible to children. With the passage of time when the children reach adolescence, they become addicted to these technologies. So active research should be done to provide solutions or alternatives to these ways of using social media.

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