

Understanding the impact of social media on adolescent mental health.

Tierra Mauricio*

Department of Psychiatry, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya

Introduction

In the digital age, social media has become an integral part of the lives of adolescents worldwide. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and Others offer adolescents new ways to connect, share experiences, and express themselves. However, the widespread use of social media has raised concerns about its potential impact on mental health, particularly among young people. This article aims to explore and understand the various ways in which social media may influence the mental well-being of adolescents. Adolescents today are known as "digital natives" due to their early exposure to technology and social media. They spend a significant amount of time engaging with various platforms, often using them to create and maintain social connections, share personal experiences, and seek validation from their peers. Social media can offer adolescents a sense of belonging and identity, but it also comes with potential risks [1,2].

One of the major concerns surrounding social media is the tendency for adolescents to compare themselves to others. Social media platforms often present a curated version of people's lives, showcasing only the positive aspects. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy and lower self-esteem when adolescents perceive themselves as not measuring up to the idealized lives of their peers. Constant exposure to these comparisons may contribute to anxiety, depression, and body image issues. Social media provides a platform for anonymous communication, which unfortunately enables cyberbullying and online harassment. Adolescents who experience bullying or negativity online may suffer from emotional distress and isolation. The constant fear of encountering hurtful content or negative comments can have a detrimental impact on their mental well-being [3].

The use of social media, especially before bedtime, has been linked to sleep disturbances in adolescents. The blue light emitted by screens interferes with the production of the sleep hormone melatonin, leading to difficulty falling asleep and disrupted sleep patterns. Poor sleep can exacerbate mental health issues such as anxiety and mood disorders.

Social media can intensify the fear of missing out on social events and experiences. Adolescents may feel compelled to stay connected and updated with the latest happenings, leading to increased screen time and a sense of being left out. This

constant need for online presence can heighten stress levels and negatively affect mental well-being.

Adolescents are vulnerable to developing social media addiction, wherein they feel an uncontrollable urge to check and engage with social media constantly. Excessive usage can interfere with their daily routines, schoolwork, and real-life interactions, further impacting their mental health.

While there are concerns about the impact of social media on adolescent mental health, it's essential to acknowledge its potential positive aspects. Social media can be a source of support, connection, and valuable information. Online communities can provide adolescents with safe spaces to discuss mental health challenges and seek advice from others facing similar issues [4].

Understanding the impact of social media on adolescent mental health is crucial in today's digital age. While social media offers numerous benefits, it also presents risks that can negatively affect the mental well-being of young individuals. As parents, educators, and mental health professionals, it is essential to foster healthy digital habits, promote open conversations about social media use, and provide resources for managing the potential negative effects. By doing so, we can help adolescents navigate the digital landscape while maintaining their mental health and well-being [5].

References

1. Singh D. Adaptive significance of female physical attractiveness: Role of waist-to-hip ratio. *J Pers Soc Psycho.* 1993;65(2):293.
2. Katzmarzyk PT, Perusse L, Rao DC, et al. Familial risk of overweight and obesity in the Canadian population using the WHO/NIH criteria. *Obes Res.* 2000;8(2):194-7.
3. Wardle J, Carnell S, Haworth CM, et al. Evidence for a strong genetic influence on childhood adiposity despite the force of the obesogenic environment. *Am J Clin Nutr.* 2008;87(2):398-404.
4. Katzmarzyk PT, Hebebrand J, Bouchard C. Spousal resemblance in the Canadian population: Implications for the obesity epidemic. *Int J Obes.* 2002;26(2):241-6.
5. Khosla T, Lowe CR. Indices of obesity derived from body weight and height. *Br J Prev Soc Med* 1967;21(3):122.

*Correspondence to: Tierra Mauricio, Department of Psychiatry, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya, E-mail: mauricio@tierra.es

Received: 29-Jul-2023, Manuscript No. AAJCAH-23-109694; Editor assigned: 03-Aug-2023, Pre QC No. AAJCAH-23-109694(PQ); Reviewed: 17-Aug-2023, QC No. AAJCAH-23-109694; Revised: 22-Aug-2023, Manuscript No. AAJCAH-23-109694(R); Published: 30-Aug-2023, DOI: 10.35841/aaajcah-7.4.164