How Social Media is Linked with Depression

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Introduction:

High use of social media is linked to depression and other mental disorders, such as anxiety and lack of focus, and can also impact physical well-being. The research tends to study the relationship between social media usage and depression. Depression is a feeling of sadness and loneliness. It affects the way we think and act. Depression is common among people who spend a lot of time on social media. Depression is caused by the need for approval, comparison, jealousy, and other factors that result when individuals use social media to interact, connect, and peep into the lives of other people on social media.

Research Summary:

Internet and social-media use is widespread among adolescents, but the percentages in the original paragraph are dated and mix different technologies. Pew Research Center's 2024 survey found that 95% of U.S. teens aged 13–17 had access to a smartphone, 90% used YouTube, roughly six in ten used TikTok and Instagram, and 55% used Snapchat. Nearly all teens reported going online daily, while 46% said they were online almost constantly. These figures describe access and use; they do not by themselves prove that social media causes depression.

There has been an increase in the number of mobile phone users and social media website users. Increased exposure to social media is linked to various outcomes such as lack of concentration, anxiety, and depression. Social websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and others have allowed users to create a network where they can comment, post pictures and statuses, and perform other activities. Social media users have formed their virtual world online. This world is quite different from the actual world in which they live. Association with social media is associated with both positive and negative results. People who are overly exposed to social media suffer from bullying, isolation, and episodes of depression. Social media, on the other side, provides a platform for users to self-disclose themselves and update others about what is happening in their lives and what they think. Social media enable users to express themselves and connect with the world. Increased use of social media impacts physical well-being as well as mental health. According to research, the high use of gadgets and other technology delays speech in children. Depression is one of the worst outcomes of the use of social media.

Anxiety and depression are among the worst outcomes of social media usage. Although social media websites are created to connect people and form a global village, the worst outcomes could occur due to overexposure. Extroverts who enjoy people around themselves and want to increase their social

circle spend more time on social media. They want to be connected with people, and they need to interact with more people than others. Such people develop a greater need to be approved by society. They want people to accept them. However, if such approval is not received, these people suffer from anxiety and depression (Steers et al., 2016).

People of all genders will likely suffer from active and passive social media use. Active use refers to using social media to interact and connect with others. Passive use refers to the use in which social media users peep into the lives of others using social media platforms. Both active and passive users are likely to experience depression, a sense of loneliness, and anxiety. Depression causes a loss of interest, focus, and sadness and alters the way people think and act (Eggermont, Frison, & Steven, 2016).

Social media consists of websites and applications that allow users to share information and interact. Depression is an important mental-health condition, but the broad “leading cause” and $83 billion claims in the original paragraph are not presented with a current, verifiable basis. Evidence also does not support assuming that all young users become depressed. In a 2025 Pew Research Center survey, 19% of U.S. teens said social media had hurt their mental health, while 50% said its effect was neither helpful nor harmful and others reported benefits such as connection and creativity.

Research Question:

To find the relationship between social media usage and depression among people of different ages.

Significance:

The research will find how depression is linked to people who use social media. The findings will make a valuable contribution by suggesting which particular age group suffers the most from social media exposure and how such exposure can be reduced. Correlation and regression will show the relationship and strength between the independent variable (social media usage) and the dependent variable (depression).

Hypothesis:

Ho: there is no relationship between social media usage and depression

H1: there is a relationship between social media usage and depression

References

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